

Text Forms

The following describe the specific elements of common text forms explored in grade six, seven, and eight. Refer to the Organization Trait to distinguish between appropriate and strong achievement.

Form: Persuasive

Purpose: to discuss and/or debate ideas developing an argument to convince the reader to agree with the writer's premise

Opening Statement: provides an overview of the topic and states the writer's position (*Racial slurs are damaging and should not be permitted.*)

Arguments and Reasons: provides three or more arguments or assertions that have supporting statements (*I believe...because...*) drawn from facts or personal experience; begins to identify other points of view and counter-arguments

Conclusion: includes a statement to reinforce or summarize position

Special Features

- persuasive devices (quotes from experts, examples, anecdotes, flattery, authorial intrusion, irony, wit, humour)
- linking words/phrases (because, however, also)
- present tense
- first person singular or plural (I, we)
- persuasive adjectives/adverbs (most, must, strongly)
- technical terms which are often verbs changed into nouns (new-comers become immigrants)

Form: Explanatory Report

Purpose: to tell how/why something came to be or to explain how something works

Statement or definition: identifies topic with a statement, question or definition

Explanation of how or why: analyzes a process (movements in the earth's crust) showing the relationship among the parts including cause and effect connections

Summary: states unusual features of the phenomenon and/or reiterates the main points

Special Features

- may include a title, illustrations or diagrams
- connecting words to signal cause-effect (if, because, then) and/or sequence (next, then, when)
- present tense with some passive verbs (are folding/faulting)
- technical, subject-specific vocabulary

Form: Memoir

Purpose: to capture a defining personal memory

Orientation: begins with a purposeful lead, identifies the personal event and may give the reason for selecting the topic

Key Events: has key events in logical order (single day, flashback) with sufficient relevant details including the subject's feelings revealed through describing actions or using quotes

Conclusion: communicates the larger meaning or reason for the writing

Special Features

- literary language (powerful nouns and verbs, figurative language)
- linking words and phrases (later that afternoon, as I walked out)
- past tense

Form: Biography and Autobiography

Purpose: to give a true or fictionalized account of a person's life

Orientation: identifies the subject, the important events in the subject's life, and the reason for the selections

Events: important events are described in a logical order (chronological, categories); provides reasons for omitting significant parts of the subject's life (only focusing on the childhood or adult years)

Conclusion: includes a personal response, evaluative statement, or a comment on the significance of the subject

Special Features

- subject's feelings may be revealed in quotes
- supplemental texts (interviews, awards, newspaper clippings, foreword, afterword)
- dialogue

Form: Hybrid Texts (multigenre texts)

As writers become familiar with certain writing forms and as they read mentor texts that mix two or more genres, they begin to produce hybrid texts to communicate information in different ways (procedures and explanation, narrative and letters). The different forms to be combined are chosen with a clear purpose and integrated into one harmonious text that communicates a message.

Form: Descriptive Report

Purpose: to describe a topic

Introduction: introduces a manageable topic with a definition or a classification (*Three types of soil are*)

Description of Topic: includes factual details, from a variety of sources (books, photographs, websites), to support sub-topics (attributes, weather systems) sequenced in a specific way

Conclusion: summarizes, or restates, key ideas; may include an impersonal evaluative comment

Special Features

- includes a title, headings, illustrations, maps, or photographs with labels or captions
- connecting words and phrases (also, many other, has a variety of)
- present tense
- language to show comparisons/contrasts (as hard as), definitions (are called), classification (belong to)

Form: Instructions/Procedures

Purpose: to tell how to do something

Goal or aim: identifies topic by title or opening statement(s)

Materials/ingredients: lists materials

Method/process: includes key steps in correct order with adequate details focusing on how/when

Conclusion or Evaluation: includes a closing statement or an evaluation which may be a photograph or drawing of the completed item

Special Features

- may include headings, illustrations, diagrams or labels
- numbered-steps or words showing sequence (first, next, then)
- point form or full sentences starting with sequence words or verbs
- present tense often written as commands
- technical language - verbs, adverbs and adjectives (whip the cooled cream vigorously)

Form: Narrative (short story)

Purpose: to entertain with an imaginative experience

Orientation (time, place and characters): attempts to establish an emotional response through the development of character, setting, and plot and sets the mood or tone (humour, personalization, sarcasm)

Events: develop the main character, including insights into their actions and feelings, and build tension that leads to the climax

Resolution: the complication is generally resolved and the loose ends are tied up

Special Features

- use of literary devices to create imagery (metaphor, personification, idiom, hyperbole)
- connecting words related to time (later on, after that,)
- action verbs and verbs related to character's thoughts and feelings
- include dialogue (with change in tense from past to present)
- pronouns refer to specific characters

Form: Poetry

Purpose: to entertain, communicate deep meaning or create a new perspective on a subject

Organization: a variety of forms with specific structures (ballad, Haiku, Cinquain, sonnet, diamantes) as well as free verse which has no set structure or conventions

Special Features

- title communicates the meaning of the poem
- lines of text usually short and concise
- words evoke strong images, moods, and/or emotions
- poetic devices (repetition, refrain, rhyme, rhythm, sensory images)
- literary devices are used (alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, symbolism, personification, rhetorical question)
- the line breaks and white space on the page may have meaning

Important Note: In all forms of writing, where appropriate, all research references are cited.



Writing Strategies and Behaviours Appropriate Achievement

Students

- select and develop a topic within a chosen form demonstrating an awareness of audience; some writing may combine text forms (hybrids)
- write with purpose and understand the influence and power of the writer
- gather ideas from a variety of sources and use a framework (e.g., web, graphic organizer) to sort and classify the information/ideas, organize perspectives, and make new connections; apply knowledge of copyright/plagiarism
- draft a piece of writing making critical choices about ideas/content based on the purpose and intended audience
- independently reread to add to, delete from, or reorganize the text to clarify and strengthen content
- request, obtain, and make decisions about, constructive criticism
- understand revision supports clarification and strengthens communication
- reread writing aloud for fluency; make changes to sentence structures and word choices to provide variety
- use appropriate tools (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, grammar checker, and text models) to edit conventions, and strengthen word choice
- use a variety of publishing formats (e.g., books, pamphlets, posters, web sites) with appropriate text and text features
- identify helpful strategies before, during, and after the writing
- explain form choice as it pertains to purpose and intended audience

Writing Strategies and Behaviours Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement apply the strategies and behaviours described at the appropriate level in an increasingly independent manner. They also take more risks and attempt techniques observed during independent reading.

Writing Achievement Standards

Appropriate Achievement Students

Content

overall topic, degree of focus and related details

- select a specific topic with a main idea that supports the purpose and audience
- include straightforward and thoughtful ideas/events
- include relevant information with details to enhance the ideas

Organization

structure and form, dependent on purpose and audience

- select an appropriate form and establish the purpose in the introduction
- show evidence of logical sequencing
- express related ideas in paragraphs
- include a reasonable conclusion

See Text Forms for elements of narrative and information texts.

Word Choice

vocabulary, language, and phrasing

- include precise/interesting words and/or technical language (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs)
- begin to use figurative language (e.g., metaphor, simile)

Voice

evidence of author's style, personality, and experience

- connect the audience to the topic/theme
- show commitment to the topic
- begin to generate strong feeling, energy, and individuality

Sentence Structure

variety and complexity of sentences

- include different kinds of sentences, with a variety of complex structures
- include a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create a natural flow of ideas

Conventions

spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage (grammar)

- use correct end punctuation and capitalization
- include internal punctuation (e.g., commas, semi-colons, colons, quotation marks, and apostrophes) and paragraphing of dialogue
- spell familiar and commonly used words correctly; use knowledge of rules to attempt difficult spellings
- use standard grammatical structures (subject/verb agreement and verb tense)
- attempt to use correct pronoun agreement (subjective and objective forms) and clear noun-pronoun relationships

Writing Achievement Standards

Strong Achievement Students

- introduce a specific topic with a main idea that carries the purpose and audience
- include original and thoughtful ideas
- support ideas with relevant details

- include a strong lead to establish the purpose and form
- demonstrate logical sequencing
- include connections between and within paragraphs
- provide an effective conclusion

See Text Forms for elements of narrative and information texts.

- effectively include varied and precise word choices (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs)
- use figurative language (e.g. metaphor, simile, analogy)

- skilfully connect with the audience
- reveal the writer's stance toward the topic
- demonstrate strong feeling, energy, and individuality

- construct fluent complex sentences
- include an effective variety of sentence lengths and beginnings

- show control with a range of punctuation
- incorporate correct spelling of difficult words including difficult homophones (e.g., principal-principle, council-counsel); may consult references
- consistently use standard grammatical structures
- use pronouns that agree in person, number, part of speech, and type

Conference Prompts

What and why do you want your reader to know about this topic?

What specific details do you need to add to enhance this part?

Have you included details that are not supporting your purpose/plot plan that could be left out?

What other resources could you use to research this part?

How did you get your reader's attention?

Does your ending pull your ideas together?

Here's where I got confused _____.

How can you show that this part connects to the part you wrote here?

What did you do to help you organize your writing before you began?

What text features or illustrations could be used to make this part clearer to the reader?

Find a place in your writing where you think you made a clear picture for your reader.

What did you do to make that part work so well?

Show me the thesaurus words that you used to replace some of your ordinary words

What are some words we've been learning in (subject area) that would help you tell about this topic?

Where did you try to really make your stance on this topic come through?

Do you think your audience will agree with this?

This part made me feel ____ .

What is the strongest sentence in your piece and what makes it strong?

How can we make this sentence _____ (longer, shorter, etc.)?

Reread this part and see if it is easy to read aloud.

Let's look at the spell and grammar checker suggestions.

I am not entirely sure which character ____ (a pronoun) is.

General Conference Prompts

What could be accomplished through this piece of writing?

After you checked your work using our class checklist, which trait are you really proud of?

What are some changes you made in this piece that made it better?

What did you decide to revise after you shared your draft with a peer?

What constructive criticism did you give to a peer after reading his/her piece?

On what would you like to work to improve in your next piece?

What is the best way to publish this writing?

What form of writing would you like to work on next? What are you

reading right now that could be a mentor text for your writing?