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 issues are damaging and should not be permitted.)
Arguments and Reasoning: provides three or more arguments or assertions that have supporting statements. (Believe, because, due to...) 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 (quotations from experts, examples, anecdotes, fallacies, ad hominem, irony, allusion, hyperbole, sarcasm)
- linking words/phrases (because, however, also)
- present tense
- idiom singular or plural (I, we)
- persuasive adjectives/adverbs (most, most, strongly)
- technical terms which are often verbs changed into nouns (new-corners become immigrants)

Form: Explanatory Report
Purpose: To tell how/why something came to be or 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 and 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 effect
- 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, language to show comparisons/contrasts (as hard as), definitions are called, classification (belong to))

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 dialogue). The different forms are to be combined with a clear purpose and integrated into one harmonious text that communicates a message.
**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-noun relationships

### Strong Achievement

**Students**

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

**Organization**
- 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.

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

**Voice**
- skillfully connect with the audience
- reveal the writer’s stance toward the topic
- demonstrate strong feeling, energy, and individuality

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

**Conventions**
- show control with a range of punctuation
- incorporate correct spelling of difficult words including difficult homophones (e.g., principal-principle, counsel-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 changes could you make in this piece that made it better?
- What did you do to help you organize your writing before you began?
- 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?