

Text Forms

The following describes the specific elements of common text forms at the end of grade four. Refer to the **Organization Trait** to distinguish between appropriate and strong achievement.

Form: Persuasive

Purpose: to convince someone to do something or to think in a particular way

Opening statement – identifies a clear position or desired action (I believe...)

Arguments and Reasons – provides three or more arguments that have supporting statements (I think... because...)

Conclusion – includes a conclusion that reinforces position

Special Features

- linking words/phrases (because, so then, but)
- present tense
- first person singular or plural (I, we)
- persuasive adjectives/adverbs (most, must, strongly)

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 – describes parts (e.g., rock formations) and explains how or why something happens in a logical order; cause-effect connections may not be clear in all instances

Summary – connects to topic or question but may be abrupt

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
- subject-specific vocabulary

Form: Recount

Purpose: to tell about past events (personal or others' experiences)

Orientation – identifies when, where, who, and what, with attempt to narrow focus

Key Events in Time Order – has key events in logical order with sufficient relevant details

Concluding Statement – includes a personal response or evaluation (*This is just one fun thing I did in July, and it was the best!*)

Special Features

- may include a title
- linking words and phrases (first, later, after that, before)
- past tense
- first (I or we) or third person (he, she, they)
- action verbs
- may include dialogue

Form: Descriptive Report

Purpose: to describe a topic

Introduction – introduces topic with definition or a classification (*The prairies are ...*)

Description of Topic – includes factual details, drawn from two or more sources (books, photographs, personal experience, websites) to support sub-topics (e.g., location, attributes, sites)

Conclusion – attempts to summarize with concluding statement(s)

Special Features

- may include a title, illustrations, maps, or photographs with labels or captions
- connecting words and phrases (another, they are)
- present tense
- language to show comparisons/contrasts (as big as, not like)
- subject-specific vocabulary

Form: Instructions/Procedures

Purpose: to tell how to do something

Goal or aim – identifies by title or opening statement(s)

Materials/ingredients – lists materials

Method/process – includes key steps in order with some relevant details focusing on how and when

Conclusion or Evaluation – includes a closing statement or an evaluation (*Test your paper airplane and see how far it flies!*)

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
- may be written in second person (*First, you...*)

Form: Narrative

Purpose: to entertain with an imaginative experience

Orientation (time, place and characters) – introduces characters and setting (*Once there was a girl named Aleesha. She was watching TV...*)

Problem – establishes a problem at the beginning (*Mom, I want to be a butterfly dancer!*)

Events – may include some character description but tends to focus on actions, not always clearly connected, to develop plot

Resolution – includes a brief but reasonable ending and may have some "loose ends"

Special Features

- may include a title or illustrations
- connecting words related to time (first, next, later)
- past tense
- usually first (I, we) or third person (he, she, they)
- action verbs and verbs related to character's thoughts and feelings
- may include dialogue (with change in tense from past to present)



Writing Achievement Standards End of Grade 4

Writing Strategies and Behaviours Appropriate Achievement

Students

- select a topic and begin to narrow the focus (e.g., equipment for hockey vs. hockey) through discussion, topic lists/personal interests, books, or student samples demonstrating an awareness of audience and purpose
- gather ideas from a variety of sources and use an organizational framework (e.g., web, drawing, graphic organizer, research, jot notes, sample of selected form)
- draft a piece of writing showing awareness of need to develop a topic, provide the reader with sufficient information, and consider the reader's reaction (e.g., include clear connecting words, interesting word choices)
- use writing tools such as a dictionary, thesaurus, and class charts
- revise a piece of writing after rereading, peer-or teacher-conferencing, or using class revision charts (e.g., trying effective leads, interesting words, alternate endings); will add, delete, or substitute ideas
- reread writing aloud to check for fluency; begin to make changes to sentence structures
- use an editing checklist with minimal support (e.g., spelling, capitals, end punctuation, commas, beginning paragraphing skills); require support for editing dialogue
- use criteria to select a piece to be published (e.g., e-mail, bulletin board, oral share, portfolio, brochure) with appropriate text features

Writing Strategies and Behaviours Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement apply strategies and exhibit behaviours at the appropriate level in an increasingly independent manner, and

- apply writing strategies consistently and with minimal prompting
- recognize purpose and audience and select form and content accordingly
- draft a piece of writing with awareness of need to maintain a focus and support main idea with specific and relevant details; revise work-in-progress
- take risks with writing (e.g., try a new form, use new vocabulary, use complex sentences)
- write independently due to increased control of conventions



Education and Early
Childhood Development
English Programs

Writing Achievement Standards

Appropriate Achievement Students

Content

overall topic, degree of focus, and related details

- begin to narrow topic to a main idea; this central message may not be readily apparent
- include a series of related ideas/events, usually based on relevant personal experiences, opinions or accurate information
- include relevant details to support the ideas/events; a few details may lack clarity and/or pertinence

Organization

structure and form, dependent on purpose and audience

- establish a purpose and select an appropriate form
- include an introduction, with a title or heading where appropriate; provide minimal context for the reader
- present most ideas/events in a logical order
- link ideas with a variety of ordering and connecting words and phrases to create some smooth transitions
- group key ideas/events; showing some evidence of conventional paragraphing
- include a conclusion but may not sum up ideas/events

See **Text Forms** for elements of narrative and information texts.

Word Choice

vocabulary, language, and phrasing

- include a few precise or interesting words, technical language, or creative phrases
- include a few descriptive words (e.g., adjectives, adverbs) and make varied verb choices

Voice

evidence of author's style, personality, and experience

- show some awareness of audience according to purpose (e.g., letter, report, recount, persuasive writing); attempts appropriate tone
- demonstrate knowledge of and interest in subject
- convey general feeling/mood or personal style

Sentence Structure

variety and complexity of sentences

- include a variety of mostly complete sentence types and structures; may be some run-on/incomplete sentences in complex structures
- include sentences with variations in lengths and beginnings (e.g., nouns, pronouns, phrases) resulting in a few effective transitions

Conventions

spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage (grammar)

- use correct end punctuation for the majority of sentences
- use commas and apostrophes correctly in most instances (e.g., series, dates, contractions, singular possessives)
- use quotation marks in many instances of direct speech; may lack internal punctuation and capitalization
- consistently use capital letters for proper nouns (e.g., people, days of the week, months, common place names), first word of a sentence, and the pronoun "I"; generally use capital letters for common holidays and titles; may capitalize a few words unnecessarily
- spell many familiar words correctly; use visual/sound patterns to make close approximations of unfamiliar words
- generally use basic grammatical structures correctly (e.g., common subject/verb agreements, regular verb tenses, use of pronouns – *Joe and I*)

Writing Achievement Standards

Strong Achievement Students

- determine a main idea and generally sustain this central message
- include a series of related ideas/events, usually based on relevant personal experiences, supported opinions, or complete/accurate information
- include relevant details to support the ideas/events; some details add interest or originality

- establish a purpose and select an appropriate form
- include an effective introduction and, where appropriate, a title or heading; provide context and attempt to engage the reader
- generally present ideas/events in a logical order
- link ideas with a variety of words and phrases to make some purposeful and smooth transitions
- use paragraphs for most related information or events
- include a clear conclusion that briefly sums up key ideas/events

See **Text Forms** for elements of narrative and information texts.

- include a variety of precise or interesting words, technical language, or creative phrases
- include descriptive words (e.g., adjectives, adverbs) and some well-chosen verbs

- show awareness of audience according to purpose; tone is suitable and takes reader into consideration
- demonstrate engagement with the subject
- convey an identifiable feeling/tone or an individual style; some risk-taking and originality are evident

- include a variety of sentence types and structures (run-on/incomplete sentences may occur occasionally)
- include sentences that vary in length and beginnings creating an easy-to-read flow

- use commas and apostrophes consistently and correctly (e.g., series, dates, contractions, singular possessives)
- use quotation marks in most instances of direct speech; the quote generally shows internal punctuation and capitalization, but split quotations may not be accurately punctuated and capitalized
- correctly use capital letters for proper names (e.g., people, days of the week, months, common place names), first word of a sentence, pronoun "I"; and in most cases, for common holidays and titles
- spell most familiar words correctly; use visual/sound patterns to make close approximations of unfamiliar words
- use basic grammatical structures correctly in most cases (e.g., common subject/verb agreements, regular verb tenses, use of pronouns – *Joe and I*)

Conference Prompts

*What do you want your reader to know about this topic?
What special details do you need to add for this part?*

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

How did you get your reader's attention?

Does your ending pull your ideas together?

*Here's where I got confused ____ .
What did you mean by?*

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

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?

Highlight three "tired" words in your writing. What words can you use to replace them? Where might you get ideas for new words?

What are some words we've been learning in science that would help you tell about this topic?

Why did you write this? Who is your reader?

Where did you try to really make your voice come through?

Will your reader be able to tell how you know a lot about ____?

This part made me feel ____.

What is the strongest sentence/paragraph 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 read this out loud. When we need to take a breath, we need to add some punctuation.

Find a place in your writing where you used dialogue. Check the example and see if you used quotation marks in the right place.

Have you checked for everything on the editing checklist? What do you need help with?

Where can you check the spelling of this word?

General Prompts

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

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

What would you like to work on improving for your next piece?

What is the best piece of advice you could give to the class about writing?