



Applying the Common Core Standards To Literacy Instruction

Writing Matters puts you and your students ahead of the curve.

The Common Core Standards in Context

For students, writing is a key means of asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject, and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought, and felt. To be college- and career- ready writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately. They need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing—for example, to use narrative strategies within argument and explanation within narrative—to produce complex and nuanced writing. They need to be able to use technology strategically when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing. They have to become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner. They must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality first-draft text under a tight deadline as well as the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it. ¹

¹ This description is from the *Range of Writing* section of the Common Core Standards for middle school. The Standards can be found at <http://www.corestandards.org>

Writing Matters™

Aligned to The Common Core Standards for Literacy
<http://www.corestandards.org/>

Writing Standards – Middle School

Text Types and Purposes	Writing Matters Genre Study
1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	Editorials, Response to Literature
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.	Feature Articles
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction
Production and Distribution of Writing	
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature
Research to Build and Present Knowledge	
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	Editorials Feature Articles
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.	Editorials Feature Articles
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	Response to Literature Editorials Feature Articles
Range of Writing	
10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature

Language Standards – Middle School

Conventions of Standard English	Writing Matters Genre Study
1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	
6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature

Reading Standards – Middle School

Key Ideas and Details	Writing Matters Genre Study
1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	Response to Literature
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	Response to Literature Feature Articles Editorials
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	Editorials Feature Articles Memoir Response to Literature Short Fiction
Craft and Structure	
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.	Response to Literature Editorials Feature Articles
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	Editorials
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	
7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	Editorials Feature Articles
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	Editorials
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	Response to Literature Editorials Feature Articles
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	
10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	Mastering the Essentials, Memoir, Short Fiction, Poetry, Editorials, Feature Article, Response to Literature

Writing Matters™

Writing Matters is grounded in best practice in writing instruction, drawing from extensive research. Content was developed with nationally recognized author-educators, including Heather Lattimer and Georgia Heard, bringing best practice to life in the form of lessons and activities enhanced by 21st century tools. Genre study units feature animations that clarify concepts and engage students, especially visual learners. Online, students share and discuss their work collaboratively, accessing their virtual writing room from school or home. Using targeted, ongoing performance data, teachers offer just-in-time online feedback and track student progress. Parents review student learning materials. At the end of each unit, every student becomes an online published writer, ready to master another genre. Lesson plans, available in digital and print formats, include differentiated strategies for beginning, intermediate and experienced writers. Digital materials and assessment resources can be customized by schools and are Moodle compliant, easily integrated into a school's Learning Management System.

Writing Matters provides teachers with powerful new ways to improve student outcomes in writing, utilizing 21st century resources to prepare today's "digital natives" for success in school and beyond. The program engages upper elementary and middle students in the writing process through a series of four to six week units, addressing specific genres. Original content and interactive technology are seamlessly integrated, helping students develop their writing skills as they generate ideas and topics, organize, compose, revise and publish their work online — from school or from home. A comprehensive professional development program offers teachers the support they need to implement the curriculum and assess student performance. *Writing Matters'* assessment and curriculum are closely aligned to the Common Core Standards. Its innovative tools were recommended by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

Study Units/Genres:

- **Mastering the Essentials**
- **Writing Memoir**
- **Response to Literature**
- **Writing Editorials**
- **Writing Feature Articles**
- **Writing Poetry**
- **Writing Short Fiction**

Writing Matters is presented as a model digital curriculum in Teaching Matters' Partnership for School Innovation and is also available as stand-alone program.