



Nevada Formative Writing Tools

Grade 5

Evaluation Guides

2013

Nevada Department of Education

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The Nevada Formative Writing Tools

The Nevada Formative Writing Tools are designed to energize and empower teachers to shift writing instruction to meet the demands of the Common Core Standards and improve student writing.

On October 24, 2012, a committee of educators met in Carson City to fundamentally change the Nevada fifth and eighth grade writing assessments. This committee grappled with an expanding understanding of the Common Core Standards (CCS), the spring 2015 administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments, the testing requirements of NRS 389.550, and the realization that the current writing assessment had evolved into a summative assessment (rather than its original formative intent). The committee charged the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) with redesigning the current fifth and eighth grade writing assessments into formative tools that will allow teachers to assess students at multiple points during the school year and adjust their instruction to match the needs of students.

The NDE established a workgroup with statewide representation of classroom teachers, administrators, district curriculum experts, and trainers from all of the Regional Professional Development Programs to create new formative writing tools. When incorporated into classroom practice, these tools provide the information needed to adjust teaching and support learning. They will help teachers determine next steps for instruction so that students meet the CCS end-of-grade expectations.

A substantial body of research shows descriptive feedback is the most effective instructional strategy for students to improve in their writing. Therefore, the main purpose of the Nevada Formative Writing Tools is to help students better understand what they are doing well and get specific feedback on how to move to the next step in their learning progression.

What are Formative Writing Tools?

When incorporated into regular classroom practice, the Nevada Formative Writing Tools provide the information needed to adjust teaching and learning while it's happening. In this sense, the tools inform both teachers and students about student understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made. These adjustments help to ensure students achieve targeted standards. Formative tools help teachers determine next steps during the learning process as the instruction approaches the summative assessment of student learning.

The Nevada Formative Writing Tools establish a vision for good writing, build a common vocabulary, and enhance assessment and instruction. The formative tools include:

- Evaluation Guides released in January 2013;
- Exemplars (also called anchor papers) released in February 2013; and
- Fifth Grade Opinion Writing Tasks and Eighth Graded Argumentative Writing Tasks released in February 2013.

Introduction to the Evaluation Guides

The first set of formative writing tools released by the NDE is the evaluation guides. Aligned to the CCS, the evaluation guides include rubrics developed by Smarter Balanced, teacher checklists that support the rubrics, student writing guides for the three modes of writing, teaching tips for using the evaluation guides, and a glossary of writing terms.

The Nevada Formative Writing Tools are designed to provide information to adjust teaching and inform learning.

Smarter Balanced Rubrics

In preparation for the implementation of the spring 2015 assessments, Smarter Balanced released a set of analytic writing rubrics and encouraged educators to use them to begin planning the shifts in instruction that will be required to help students meet the demands of the standards. These analytic rubrics include four levels of performance for the five traits (or criteria) that will be evaluated. Carefully crafted performance descriptors articulate what writing looks like along the progression of each trait.

The rubrics include several features to help teachers, students, and parents understand what good writing looks like, and prepare for the new assessments. Teachers and students will use these rubrics in many aspects of their teaching and learning. For example, the rubrics can be used as a tool for evaluating classroom writing assignments, monitoring student progress, and helping students understand and develop the skills necessary to write.

Each performance level is designed to describe performance on each trait so that teachers can provide specific instructional feedback to students and not necessarily to assign scores. If districts or schools decide to use the rubrics for grading classroom assignments, they are encouraged to establish clear policies for their use. Because the rubrics are part of the formative writing tools, the NDE has not and will not establish passing scores.

Teacher Checklists

Grade level checklists were designed to support teachers as they learn to use the Smarter Balanced rubrics (opinion/argumentative, informative/explanatory, and narrative). While the Smarter Balanced rubrics were designed for grade bands (i.e. grades 3 through 8 in narrative writing), the checklists clarify essential knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to the grade. The checklists are fundamental for documenting student strengths and areas to improve when conferencing with students and parents, and will support the consistency of evaluating the Nevada Formative Writing Tasks.

Use the checklists when learning the analytic rubrics, to document specific student strengths and areas to improve, and when conferencing with students and parents.

Student Writing Guides

The Student Writing Guides are easily used by students before, during, and after the writing process.

Closely aligned to the CCS and Smarter Balanced writing rubrics, the Student Writing Guides are designed to communicate writing expectations in clear, student-friendly language. Therefore, the guides can be used by students during all phases of the writing process and for all types of writing assignments. As a prewriting and drafting tool, they establish a vision for good writing and provide common vocabulary for students to use when talking about their writing. The guides are also valuable tools during the drafting, editing, and revising stages, serving as a tool for self-reflection and peer revising/editing. As a post-writing tool, the guides can be used for teacher and peer conferencing, setting goals for improvement, and helping students articulate their analysis of other students' writing.

Teaching Tips

At first glance, it is easy to see how the evaluation guides can be used as a tool for assessment; however, with a little creativity and teaching ingenuity, the evaluation guides can also serve as a rich source of information for instruction. The teaching tips are practical ideas for using the rubrics, teacher checklists, and student writing guides as part of day-to-day writing instruction.

Use the evaluation guides as a regular part of day-to-day teaching and learning.

Glossary

Finally, a glossary is provided to define and elaborate terms used in the grade level rubrics and checklists, and serves as a starting place to establish a common vocabulary for writing.

2013 Opinion Writing Rubric (Grades 3-5)

	4	3	2	1
Statement of Purpose/Focus	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opinion is clearly stated, focused, and strongly maintained opinion is communicated clearly within the context 	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opinion is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present context provided for the claim is adequate 	<p>The response is somewhat sustained with some extraneous material or a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be clearly focused on the opinion but is insufficiently sustained opinion on the issue may be unclear and unfocused 	<p>The response may be related to the purpose but may offer little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be very brief may have a major drift opinion may be confusing or ambiguous
Organization	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies logical progression of ideas from beginning to end effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose 	<p>The response has a recognizable organizational structure, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end adequate introduction and conclusion 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end conclusion and introduction, if present, are weak 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few or no transitional strategies are evident frequent extraneous ideas may intrude
Elaboration of Evidence	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of evidence from sources is smoothly integrated, comprehensive, and relevant effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides adequate support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes the use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise adequate use of some elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence from sources is weakly integrated, and citations, if present, are uneven weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of evidence from sources is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant
Language and Vocabulary	<p>The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of domain-specific vocabulary that may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses limited language or domain-specific vocabulary may have little sense of audience and purpose
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some errors in usage and sentence formation are present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> errors are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscured



A response gets no credit (0) if it provides no evidence of the ability to [fill in with key language from the intended target].

This rubric was released by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium to help teachers, administrators, and policymakers better understand the Common Core Standards and prepare for the implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessments. The Nevada Department of Education has reformatted it to fit on one page.

Working Copy January 30, 2013

2013 Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric (Grades 3-5)

	4	3	2	1
Statement of Purpose/Focus	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> controlling idea or main idea of a topic is focused, clearly stated, and strongly maintained controlling idea or main idea of a topic is introduced and communicated clearly within the context 	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present some context for the controlling idea or main idea of the topic is adequate 	<p>The response is somewhat sustained and may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be clearly focused on the controlling or main idea, but is insufficiently sustained controlling idea or main idea may be unclear and somewhat unfocused 	<p>The response may be related to the topic but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be very brief may have a major drift focus may be confusing or ambiguous
Organization	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of a variety of transitional strategies logical progression of ideas from beginning to end effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose 	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end adequate introduction and conclusion 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end conclusion and introduction, if present, are weak 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few or no transitional strategies are evident frequent extraneous ideas may intrude
Elaboration of Evidence	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of evidence from sources is smoothly integrated, comprehensive, and relevant effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides adequate support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise adequate use of some elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence from sources is weakly integrated, and citations, if present, are uneven weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of evidence from the source material is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant
Language and Vocabulary	<p>The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of domain-specific vocabulary that may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses limited language or domain-specific vocabulary may have little sense of audience and purpose
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few, if any, errors are present in usage and sentence formation effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some errors in usage and sentence formation may be present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> errors are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscure

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2013 Narrative Writing Rubric (Grades 3-8)

		4	3	2	1
9	Narrative Focus	The narrative, real or imagined, is clearly focused and maintained throughout: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively establishes a setting, narrator and/or characters, and point of view (point of view begins in 7th grade) 	The narrative, real or imagined, is adequately focused and generally maintained throughout: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequately establishes a setting, narrator and/or characters, and point of view (point of view begins in 7th grade) 	The narrative, real or imagined, is somewhat maintained and may have a minor drift in focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inconsistently establishes a setting, narrator and/or characters, and point of view (point of view begins in 7th grade) 	The narrative, real or imagined, may be maintained but may provide little or no focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be very brief may have a major drift focus may be confusing or ambiguous
	Organization	The narrative, real or imagined, has an effective plot, helping create unity and completeness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies logical sequence of events from beginning to end effective opening and closure for audience and purpose 	The narrative, real or imagined, has an evident plot, helping create a sense of unity and completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of a variety of transitional strategies adequate sequence of events from beginning to end adequate opening and closure for audience and purpose 	The narrative, real or imagined, has an inconsistent plot, and flaws are evident: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inconsistent use of basic transitional strategies with little variety uneven sequence of events from beginning to end opening and closure, if present, are weak weak connection among ideas 	The narrative, real or imagined, has little or no discernible plot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few or no transitional strategies are evident frequent extraneous ideas may intrude
	Elaboration of Narrative	The narrative, real or imagined, provides thorough and effective elaboration, using details, dialogue, and description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective use of a variety of narrative techniques that advance the story or illustrate the experience 	The narrative, real or imagined, provides adequate elaboration, using details, dialogue, and description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of a variety of narrative techniques that generally advance the story or illustrate the experience 	The narrative, real or imagined, provides uneven, cursory elaboration using partial and uneven details, dialogue, and description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrative techniques, if present, are uneven and inconsistent 	The narrative, real or imagined, provides minimal elaboration using little or no details, dialogue, and description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of narrative techniques is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant
	Language and Vocabulary	The narrative, real or imagined, clearly and effectively expresses experiences or events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language clearly advance the purpose 	The narrative, real or imagined, adequately expresses experiences or events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language generally advance the purpose 	The narrative, real or imagined, unevenly expresses experiences or events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> partial or weak use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that may not advance the purpose 	The narrative, real or imagined, expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses limited language may have little sense of purpose
	Conventions	The narrative, real or imagined, demonstrates a strong command of conventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	The narrative, real or imagined, demonstrates an adequate command of conventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some errors in usage and sentence formation but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	The narrative, real or imagined, demonstrates a partial command of conventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	The narrative, real or imagined, demonstrates a lack of command of conventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> errors are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscured



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Teacher Checklist

Grade 5 Opinion Writing (part 1)

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

	4 Deep Command	3 Sufficient Command	2 Partial Command	1 Limited Command
Statement of Purpose/Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly states opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Purposefully focused <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly maintained throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly communicates opinion within the context	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately states opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Generally focused <input type="checkbox"/> Generally maintained (some loosely related material may be present) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately provides context for the opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat clear or unclear opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat focused or somewhat unfocused or minor drift in focus <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat or insufficiently sustained with some extraneous material <input type="checkbox"/> Some context is provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks opinion or confusing or ambiguous or may be related to purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks focus or major drift in focus <input type="checkbox"/> Too brief to be maintained <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficiently provides context or lacks context
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly and effectively introduces the topic or text with attention to audience and purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Logically groups and orders reasons from beginning to end <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively uses a variety of transitional strategies to link opinion and reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively provides a concluding statement or section that is related to the opinion that addresses audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately introduces the topic or text <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately groups and orders reasons from beginning to end <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses a variety of linking words, phrases, and clauses to link opinion and reasons (some ideas may be loosely connected) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately provides a concluding statement or section that is related to the opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> Weak introduction <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven grouping and progression of reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistently uses basic transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Weak concluding statement or section	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks introduction <input type="checkbox"/> Does not group reasons or unrelated reasons intrude <input type="checkbox"/> Few or no transitions used <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks concluding statement or section
Elaboration of Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoroughly and convincingly supports opinion and reasons with sources, facts, and details <input type="checkbox"/> Smoothly integrates comprehensive and relevant evidence from sources (sources are specific and precise) <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively uses a variety of elaborative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately supports opinion and reasons with sources, facts, and details <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately integrates evidence from sources (sources may be general or imprecise) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses some elaborative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or cursory support of opinion and reasons with partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details <input type="checkbox"/> Weakly integrates evidence from sources (uneven or inconsistent citations) <input type="checkbox"/> Weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal support of opinion and reasons with minimal or no use of sources, facts, and details <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal or no integration of evidence from sources (sources are minimal or absent or in error or irrelevant) <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal or no use of elaborative techniques

Opinion checklist continues on next page.

Teacher Checklist

Grade 5 Opinion Writing (part 2)

	4 Deep Command	3 Sufficient Command	2 Partial Command	1 Limited Command
Language and Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectively expresses ideas using precise academic language <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively expresses ideas using precise domain-specific vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly uses language and vocabulary that is appropriate for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally appropriate use of academic language (may mix precise and more general language) <input type="checkbox"/> Generally appropriate use of domain-specific vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses language and vocabulary that is generally appropriate for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Uneven use of academic language or simplistic language <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven use of domain-specific vocabulary or simplistic vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or inappropriate use of language and vocabulary for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited or vague or unclear or confusing use of language <input type="checkbox"/> Limited or vague or unclear or confusing use of academic vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Little sense of audience and purpose
Conventions	<input type="checkbox"/> Few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation <input type="checkbox"/> Effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Some errors in usage and sentence formation are present (no systemic pattern of errors) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent errors in usage and sentence formation may obscure meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent errors in usage and sentence formation obscure meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling obscure meaning

Comments:

The purpose of this checklist is (1) to support teachers as they learn to use the 2013 Opinion Writing Rubric (Grades 3-5); (2) to clarify essential knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to fifth grade; (3) to use as a tool for conferencing with individual students; and (4) to use as an optional tool to enhance the consistency of evaluating the Nevada Formative Writing Assessment Tasks.

Teacher Checklist

Grade 5 Informative/Explanatory Writing (part 1)

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

	4 Deep Command	3 Sufficient Command	2 Partial Command	1 Limited Command
Statement of Purpose/Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly states controlling or main idea <input type="checkbox"/> Purposefully focused <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly maintained throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly provides context for the controlling or main idea	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately states controlling or main idea <input type="checkbox"/> Generally focused <input type="checkbox"/> Generally maintained (some loosely related material may be present) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately provides context for the controlling or main idea	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat clear or unclear controlling or main idea <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat focused or somewhat unfocused or minor drift in focus <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficiently or somewhat sustained with some extraneous material <input type="checkbox"/> Some context is provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks controlling or main idea or confusing or ambiguous or may be related to topic <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks focus or major drift in focus <input type="checkbox"/> Too brief to be maintained <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficiently provides context or lacks context
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly and effectively introduces the topic with attention to audience and purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end <input type="checkbox"/> Logically groups related information <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively uses a variety of transitional strategies to link ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of formatting, illustrations, and multimedia (when useful) <input type="checkbox"/> Effective concluding statement or section is related to the information or explanation that addresses audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately introduces the topic <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately groups related information <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses a variety of linking words, phrases, and clauses (some ideas may be loosely connected) <input type="checkbox"/> Some use of formatting, illustrations, and multimedia (when useful) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate concluding statement or section is related to the information or explanation	<input type="checkbox"/> Weak introduction <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end <input type="checkbox"/> Limited grouping of some information <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistently uses a limited number of basic transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Limited use of formatting and graphics <input type="checkbox"/> Weak concluding statement or section	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks introduction <input type="checkbox"/> No progression of ideas or frequent extraneous ideas intrude <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of grouping related information <input type="checkbox"/> Few or no transitions used <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal or no use of formatting and graphics <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks concluding statement or section
Elaboration of Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoroughly and convincingly supports controlling or main idea with information, examples, and sources related to topic <input type="checkbox"/> Smoothly integrates comprehensive and relevant evidence from sources (sources are specific and precise) <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively uses a variety of elaborative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately supports controlling or main idea with information, examples, and sources related to topic <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately integrates evidence from sources (sources may be general or imprecise) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses some elaborative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or cursory support of controlling or main idea with partial or uneven use of information, examples, and sources <input type="checkbox"/> Weakly integrates evidence from sources (uneven or inconsistent citations) <input type="checkbox"/> Weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal support of controlling or main idea with minimal or no use of information, examples, and sources related to topic <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal or no integration of evidence from sources (sources are minimal or absent or in error or irrelevant) <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal or no use of elaborative techniques

Informative/Explanatory checklist continues on next page

Teacher Checklist

Grade 5 Informative/Explanatory Writing (part 2)

	4 Deep Command	3 Sufficient Command	2 Partial Command	1 Limited Command
Language and Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectively expresses ideas using precise academic language <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively expresses ideas using precise domain-specific vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly uses language and vocabulary that is appropriate for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally appropriate use of academic language (may mix precise and more general language) <input type="checkbox"/> Generally appropriate use of domain-specific vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses language and vocabulary that is generally appropriate for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Uneven use of academic language or simplistic language <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven use of domain-specific vocabulary or simplistic vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or inappropriate use of language and vocabulary for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited or vague or unclear or confusing use of language <input type="checkbox"/> Limited or vague or unclear or confusing use of academic vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Little sense of audience and purpose
Conventions	<input type="checkbox"/> Few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation <input type="checkbox"/> Effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Some errors in usage and sentence formation are present (no systemic pattern of errors) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent errors in usage and sentence formation may obscure meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent errors in usage and sentence formation obscure meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling obscure meaning

Comments:

The purpose of this checklist is (1) to support teachers as they learn to use the 2013 Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric (Grades 3-5); (2) to clarify essential knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to fifth grade; (3) to use as a tool for conferencing with individual students; and (4) to use as an optional tool to enhance the consistency of evaluating the Nevada Formative Writing Assessment Tasks.

Teacher Checklist

Grade 5 Narrative (Real or Imagined) Writing (part 1)

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear even sequences.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

	4 Deep Command	3 Sufficient Command	2 Partial Command	1 Limited Command
Narrative Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly focused and maintained throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively establishes a setting <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively establishes a narrator and/or characters	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequately focused and maintained throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately establishes a setting <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately establishes a narrator and/or characters	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat focused and maintained or minor drift <input type="checkbox"/> Vaguely establishes a setting <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistently establishes a narrator and/or characters	<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no focus or confusing or major drift or too brief to be maintained <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks setting <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks narrator and/or characters
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear opening orients the reader by establishing a situation (audience and purpose) <input type="checkbox"/> Logical and natural sequence of events, from beginning to end, creates unity and completeness <input type="checkbox"/> Effective and consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Clear closure/conclusion provides the reader a sense of completeness for the experiences or events	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate opening orients the reader by establishing a situation (audience and purpose) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate and natural sequence of events, from beginning to end, creates a sense of unity (may have minor flaws) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses (some ideas may be loosely connected) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate closure/conclusion completes the experiences or events	<input type="checkbox"/> Weak opening that may not orient the reader to the situation <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven sequence of events from beginning to end (may have obvious flaws) <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent use of basic transitional words and/or phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Weak closure/conclusion that leaves unanswered questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks opening <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no discernible plot or extraneous ideas intrude <input type="checkbox"/> Few or no use of transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Limited or no closure/conclusion
Elaboration of Narrative	<input type="checkbox"/> Thorough and effective use of details <input type="checkbox"/> Thorough and effective use of dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Thorough and effective use of description <input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of narrative techniques advances the story, illustrates the experience, or shows the responses of characters to the situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of details <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of description <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of narrative techniques advances the story, illustrates the experience, or shows the responses of characters to the situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Partial or uneven use of details <input type="checkbox"/> Partial or uneven use of dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Partial or uneven use of description <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or inconsistent use of narrative techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no use of details <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no use of dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no use of description <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal or no or irrelevant use of narrative techniques

Narrative checklist continues on next page.

Teacher Checklist

Grade 5 Narrative (Real or Imagined) Writing (part 2)

	4 Deep Command	3 Sufficient Command	2 Partial Command	1 Limited Command
Language and Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of sensory details clearly advances the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of concrete words and phrases clearly advances the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of figurative language that clearly advances the purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of sensory details generally advances the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of concrete words and phrases generally advances the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of figurative language that generally advances the purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or weak use of sensory details may not advance the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or weak use of concrete words and phrases may not advance the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven or weak use of figurative language may not advance the purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Vague or confusing or missing sensory details <input type="checkbox"/> Vague or confusing or missing concrete words <input type="checkbox"/> Vague or confusing or missing figurative language
Conventions	<input type="checkbox"/> Few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation <input type="checkbox"/> Effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Some errors in usage and sentence formation are present (no systemic pattern of errors) <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent errors in usage and sentence formation may obscure meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent errors in usage and sentence formation obscure meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling obscure meaning

Comments:

The purpose of this checklist is (1) to support teachers as they learn to use the 2013 Narrative Writing Rubric (Grades 3-8); (2) to clarify essential knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to fifth grade; (3) to use as a tool for conferencing with individual students; and (4) to use as an optional tool to enhance the consistency of evaluating the Nevada Formative Writing Assessment Tasks.

Grade 5

Student Guide for Opinion Writing

Statement of Purpose/Focus

- I clearly state my opinion.
- I maintain focus throughout my writing.
- I support my opinion with context.

Organization

- I clearly introduce my topic.
- I logically organize my reasons and evidence from beginning to end.
- I use a variety of transitional strategies that help connect my opinion and reasons.
- I include a concluding statement or section that is related to my opinion.
- I address audience and purpose in my introduction and conclusion.

Elaboration of Evidence

- I support my opinion with facts, details, and reasons.
- I include relevant evidence from sources.
- I support my opinion with facts, details, reasons, and evidence from sources.
- I use elaborative techniques that support my opinion.

Language and Vocabulary

- I express my ideas with academic language.
- I use domain-specific vocabulary.
- I use language appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Conventions

- I edit my paper for correct usage.
- I edit my paper for correct punctuation.
- I edit my paper for correct capitalization.
- I edit my paper for correct spelling.
- I edit my paper for sentence formation.



Grade 5

Student Guide for Informative/Explanatory Writing

Statement of Purpose/Focus

- I clearly state my controlling or main idea.
- I maintain focus throughout my writing.
- I support my controlling or main with context.

Organization

- I clearly introduce my topic.
- I logically organize ideas from beginning to end.
- I use a variety of transitional strategies that link my ideas.
- I include a concluding statement or section that is related to my information or explanation.
- I address audience and purpose in my introduction and conclusion.

Elaboration of Evidence

- I support my controlling or main idea with information and examples.
- I include relevant evidence from sources.
- I use elaborative techniques that support my controlling or main idea.

Language and Vocabulary

- I express my ideas with academic language.
- I use domain-specific vocabulary.
- I use language appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Conventions

- I edit my paper for correct usage.
- I edit my paper for correct punctuation.
- I edit my paper for correct capitalization.
- I edit my paper for correct spelling.
- I edit my paper for sentence formation.



Grade 5

Student Guide for Narrative (Real or Imagined) Writing

Narrative Focus

- I maintain focus throughout my writing.
- I establish a setting.
- I establish a narrator and/or characters.

Organization

- I include an opening that establishes a situation.
- I include a plot with a natural sequence of events.
- I effectively use a variety of transitional strategies.
- I provide a conclusion with a sense of closure and completeness.

Elaboration of Narrative

- I provide details.
- I provide description.
- I use narrative techniques to advance the story, illustrate the experience, or show how characters respond to the situation.

Language and Vocabulary

- I use appropriate sensory details.
- I use concrete words and phrases.
- I use appropriate figurative language.

Conventions

- I edit my paper for correct usage.
- I edit my paper for correct punctuation.
- I edit my paper for correct capitalization.
- I edit my paper for correct spelling.
- I edit my paper for sentence formation.



Teaching Tips

Out with the Old, In with the New!

Set your old rubrics next to the Smarter Balanced rubrics. Compare and contrast how these rubrics are similar and different. Identify ways the new rubrics will add depth and rigor to your writing instruction. If the old rubrics don't measure up, then toss them out.

Step into the Writer's Shoes

After students understand the Smarter Balanced rubrics and/or checklists, ask them to evaluate, revise, and edit a sample essay.

- Display an old pair of tennis shoes and tell the class that they will step into another student's shoes and help him/her to improve an essay. (Consider using a current or former student's essay, after obtaining his/her permission, or you might compose an essay of your own.)
- Display the essay on an overhead or document camera and read it along with the class.
- Distribute the rubric or checklist and evaluate the essay as a class. The class can assign levels for each trait or you can provide those levels. Go through the checklist to determine the strengths and what areas need improvement. The most important task is to discuss areas that need to be improved.
- Ask students to work in pairs to revise and edit this sample as if they were the author of the essay.
- Make it a contest by challenging teams of two students to improve the essay to the top level in all traits or categories.
- Have teams switch papers and use the rubric or checklist to double-check the levels assigned to each trait. They should justify their levels by highlighting the text in the essay that matches the rubric or checklist.
- Have teams share with the class and determine which pair of students wins.



Who is My Audience?

Students need an awareness of the audience and purpose each time they write. Knowing your audience and purpose can have a huge impact when addressing *Statement of Purpose/Focus*, *Elaboration of Evidence*, *Language and Vocabulary*, and *Conventions*. Ask students to reflect on audience and purpose during the various stages of the writing process, especially when revising. Prompt them to reflect on their use of language and evidence in reaching these two elements within their own writing.

Don't be a Flip Flopper

When asked to write an opinion or argument, it is important for students to take a stance and stick to it. Even if they are asked to write on a topic about which they do not have a strong opinion, students should take a position and support it. In other words, don't flip flop back and forth explaining the positives about both choices. Let students know that it is acceptable to address an opposing or alternate view if they are pointing out something that will reinforce their opinion or argument. When students are asked to write an opinion or argument about something they don't really like either choice, it is okay to pretend. Authors write works of fiction all the time, students can too! If students are communicating an opinion that is only partially true, they should remember to keep a ring of honesty to it so that it sounds as if they truly believe all of their points are valid and important, even if they don't matter that much to the students. The most important thing for students to remember when writing an opinion or argument is to take a stance and stick to it with well-developed and valid support from beginning to end.

Paraphrasing vs. Plagiarizing

Explain the difference between paraphrasing and plagiarizing, using definitions in the glossary. Be sure students understand that using another person's words or ideas without crediting the original writer is wrong. Discuss some of the consequences of plagiarizing (i.e., failing the assignment or class, being required to do the work over, suspension/expulsion, lawsuits, fines, or being fired from a job). Reinforce that paraphrasing is an alternate to plagiarizing.

Using a short article or essay, model paraphrasing. Emphasize that if students cannot paraphrase after reading, they need to go back and reread to clarify information. In pairs, have students use the same article or essay to practice paraphrasing so that they can learn to use the strategy independently.

Students will need prompting and encouragement to use this strategy after the initial instruction is completed. The lesson can be extended to help students prepare to write reports about particular topics.

One Brick at a Time

Learning the language of the rubrics, checklists, and writing guides can be a daunting task for students. The Great Wall of China wasn't built in a day. Instead, it was built one brick at a time. Dedicate a space in your classroom to display grade-specific writing vocabulary (a writing word wall). Each week add one or two new grade-specific words. Help students define the word and provide examples. This will help develop a common writing language in the classroom.

While reviewing the rubrics/checklists with your students, use the glossary to define unfamiliar terms. Encourage students to refer to the glossary when using the rubrics, checklists, and planning guides.

As you are working on each mode of writing, consider having students develop their own glossary with definitions and examples. Encourage them to write "in-your-own-words" definitions and help them find examples from the texts you study in class.

Put on Your Coaching Hat



Conferring with students is a vital part of formative assessment. View yourself as a writing coach, not as an evaluator. Using the checklist, student writing guide, and their completed pieces help students to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and discover ways to improve their writing. As you discuss a student's work, refer to specific evidence in the writing that is reflected in the checklist. Don't overwhelm a student with all of the problems at once. Focus on one or two things that will make the biggest impact on the student's writing.

You can also share the coaching hat with your students by having them use the checklists or guides for peer conferencing. Have students read each other's work and use the checklists or guides to give specific feedback. This will allow the students to become more familiar with the e guides, while receiving and offering suggestions on how to improve their own writing. When students view other pieces of writing, they will find areas of strength and weakness in both their peers' writing as well as their own.

Not Everything is as Fast as a Cheetah

There is a fine line between painting a picture with words and loading an essay with clichés. Most teachers know clichés when they smell them. Help your students sniff them out and replace them with well-chosen, vivid language.

It's All about Good Writing

Teach students to write so they can communicate emotions, ideas, and information to the world around them. Don't teach students writing so that they will pass tests. If you teach them to be good writers, they can't help but do well on tests!

Glossary

- academic language**—vocabulary and phrasing used in textbooks, in classrooms, and on tests; a way of saying or writing something using different words and structure from everyday spoken English
- alternate claim**—different view of an issue or topic; ideas or opinions that differ
- ambiguous**—something that is unclear, confusing, or can be understood in more than one way
- analyze**—to examine carefully and in detail to identify causes, key factors, possible results, etc.; to study something closely
- argumentative writing**— a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer's position, belief, or conclusion is valid; using persuasive strategies to change the reader's point of view, to bring about some action on the reader's part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer's explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem
- appeals to emotion**—manipulating the emotions, rather than the reason or logic, of an audience in order to convince readers of a point of view or a course of action
- audience awareness**—the degree to which the writer understands the intended readers of the work, and their particular characteristics and needs
- audience**—the intended readers of a particular piece of writing
- balance**—the arrangement of words, phrases, or ideas so that two or more concepts or sections are given equal emphasis
- citation**—reference to a published or unpublished source with name, date, and/or page; to mention something as an example, especially one that supports, proves, or explains an idea or situation; to give the exact words or ideas of something that has been written; direct quotation, summarizing, paraphrasing, mentioning the source briefly, or using the ideas from a source
- claim**—saying that something is true; the main idea or thesis statement in argumentative writing and is supported by evidence
- closure**—when an event or problem is brought to an end, or the feeling that something has been completely dealt with; a feeling that something is finished
- cohesion**—when the ideas or parts of a written piece are connected in a reasonable way and form a united whole
- completeness**—a sense that all parts, details, facts, etc. are included and nothing is missing; brought to an end
- conclusion**—the end portion of an essay where the writer supplies a good sense of closure; a creative re-statement of the thesis statement, controlling idea, or theme; a brief review of the main points of the essay
- content**—the subject or topic covered in a piece of writing (also see ideas)

controlling idea—the main idea or thesis that a writer develops, expressing a definite opinion or attitude about a topic

context— the situation, events, or information that are related to something and help you to understand it; the social or cultural situation in which a written message occurs

conventions—the agreed upon ways to use punctuation, spelling, grammar, and other things that make writing consistent and easy to read

counter claim—the opposite view of an issue or topic; a contradicting idea or opinion

credible sources—relevant journals, books, articles, websites, newspapers, and other places of information that are reliable and trustworthy

detail—a single feature, fact, or piece of information about something

development—the specific details, examples, anecdotes, etc. that are added to a paragraph or essay to develop its main idea(s), reveal the writer’s depth of understanding, and offer insight to readers; common patterns of development include narration, description, definition, example, division, classification, comparison and contrast, analogy, cause and effect, and process

dialogue—written conversation between two or more persons; an exchange of ideas and opinions

domain-specific vocabulary—words and phrases specific to a particular field of study, such as the human body

drift in focus—moving away from the purpose or intent; to deviate or vary from the original statement of purpose

edit—to improve the clarity, organization, concision, and correctness of expression relative to task, purpose, and audience

elaborative techniques—using sensory details, facts and statistics, incidents, specific examples, quotations, and charts or graphs to prove the argument and make your writing more interesting

engages reader—attracting and keeping the attention of the audience; the audience is likely to think the writing is interesting; the audience becomes involved in order to better understand

even development—depth and balance in the exploration or examination of the topic (i.e., even development from beginning to middle to end, or even development between main idea and supporting details, or even development between supporting ideas with examples and details)

evidence—facts, figures, details, quotations, or other sources of data and information that provide support for claims or an analysis that can be evaluated by others; anything that makes you believe something is true

extraneous ideas—something that does not belong or is not proper; not pertinent; irrelevant

fact—a piece of information that can be proven true

figurative language—language enriched by word images and figures of speech

flaw—a mistake or a weakness that makes something imperfect

focus—relationship of supporting details to the main idea(s), theme, or unifying point

formatting—the aspects of the physical appearance of written work (i.e., font size, titles, headings, subheadings, citations)

formal style—objective and precise language used in scholarly books and articles, technical reports, and research papers

ideas—the interesting, important, and informative details the writer includes; the main message, the content of the piece, and the main theme, together with all the supporting details; the unusual, the unique, and the bits and pieces that a writer includes

imagery—the use of language to create sensory impressions

informative/explanatory writing—writing that conveys information accurately; this kind of writing serves to increase readers' knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept

insight—the capacity to discern the true nature of a situation; a grasping of the inward or hidden nature of things or of perceiving in an intuitive manner

integrated—combining, organizing, or structuring many ideas or parts that work well together

introduction—the beginning portion of an essay where the writer captures the readers' attention, provides background information about the topic, motivates readers to continue reading and, for more formal essays, contains the thesis statement

irrelevant—something that is not useful or not connected to the topic

logical progression—when the reader can follow the writer's ideas; ordering paragraphs so that there is a meaningful beginning, bridging one paragraph or idea to the next, and ending with a sense of closure

main idea (controlling idea)—the primary topic of a passage, whether explicitly expressed or implied

mode—types of writing generally centered on the writer's purpose, including opinion/argument, informative/descriptive, and narrative in the Common Core Standards

narrative techniques—procedures or methods an author uses to convey an experience (i.e., pacing, description, reflection, narration, dialogue, point of view, foreshadow, flashback)

narrative writing—conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure; can be used for many purposes (to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain)

obscure meaning—to make it difficult to know or understand; to prevent something from being understood clearly

opening—the beginning or first part (also see introduction)

opinion writing—a developing form of argument where the writer expresses ideas or states what is believed about a subject; providing examples, offering reasons, and explaining cause and effect to extend a belief, attitude, or judgment

opposing claim—the other side of an issue or topic; ideas or opinions that are completely different

organizational structure—a writing pattern that connects ideas, including comparison-contrast, deductive logic, point-by-point analysis, development of a central theme, chronological history of an event, or any of a dozen other identifiable patterns

organization—the way the writer moves from one idea to the next; information is given to the reader in the right amount and at the right time so that the reader does not lose interest

orients reader—introduce the subject to the audience

pacing—the rate at which main ideas and development are presented in a piece of writing

paraphrase—expressing what others have said or written in a different way; a restatement or rewording

persuasive strategies/techniques—writing methods that appeal to a reader’s emotions, ethics, or logics

plagiarism— to steal the ideas and words of another and pass them off as his/her own; using another person’s words, ideas, or work as his/her own; an idea, phrase, or story that has been copied from another person’s work without stating the source

plot—events that make up a story

precise language— using the right wording; avoiding too many words or unnecessary figurative language

purpose—the reason or reasons a person writes something (to express, to describe, to explore/learn, to entertain, to inform, to explain, to argue, to persuade, to evaluate, to problem solve, or to mediate)

quotation— a sentence or phrase from a book, speech, etc. that is repeated in a piece of writing; to repeat exactly what someone else has said or written

reasoning— a process of thinking carefully about something in order to make a judgment; the explanation for why a claim is made; the links between evidence and claim

reasons—the cause or explanation for something that happens; why someone decides to do something

relevant—directly relating to the subject

response—writing that is stimulated by a question, task, or prompt

sensory detail—specific details relative to sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste working together in harmony to create concrete images and strengthen writing

sentence formation—one of five basic patterns around which most English sentences are built (Subject-Verb, Subject-Verb-Object, Subject-Verb-Adjective, Subject-Verb-Adverb, Subject-Verb-Noun)

sequencing—the arrangement or ordering of ideas and content in a piece of writing, including chronological, hierarchical, developmental, easy to difficult, part to whole, simple to complex, thematic, and whole to part

stance—the attitude on a particular matter; point of view

source—a person, book, or document used largely for information, as in research

structure—the organization of ideas and content within a piece of writing at the sentence, paragraph, or essay level

support—the quality of details and examples either illustrating, explaining, or defending the central theme, idea, or thesis statement

sustained—keeping the controlling or main idea, theme, or focus going throughout the writing; not interrupting or weakening

syntactic variety—having different types of sentences

syntax—the rules of grammar which control the ways words are arranged to form sentences or phrases

thesis statement—a statement that clearly delineates the argument or central idea that will be explored in a piece of writing (also see controlling idea)

tone—the author's attitude toward a topic as reflected in his or her writing

topic—the subject matter with which a writer is working in a particular piece of writing

transitional strategies—methods of connecting sentences, paragraphs, and ideas; words, phrases, clauses, or full sentences that signal relationships; cues that help the reader see the logic of how ideas fit together

transitions—words, terms, phrases, and sentence variations used to arrange and signal movement of ideas (i.e., next, and then, in the end, another reason, after that we went, on the other hand)

uneven—not regular or constant; not uniform or varying in number or quality

unity—combining or ordering parts of writing so that it has an undivided effect; singleness of effect or symmetry and consistency of style

usage—the way words are used in a language (see also syntax)

word choice—the use of rich, colorful, precise language that communicates not just in a functional way, but in a way that moves and enlightens the reader; to use everyday words well

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About the Nevada Department of Education

The vision of the Nevada Department of Education is *Success through Learning*.

Mission

The Nevada Department of Education's mission is to elevate student performance by ensuring opportunity, facilitating learning, and promoting excellence.

The mission will be accomplished by focusing work on a set of key policy levers:

- Standards, data systems and accountability measures;
- Human capital;
- Responsible competition; and
- Managerial excellence and resource allocation.

State Educational Goals: 2020

1. Elevate student achievement results for all students
2. Improve the graduation rate including expanding the advanced diploma rate
3. Ensure college and career readiness when students graduate from high school
4. Ensure Nevada's students are educated by effective teachers and administrators
5. Support and expand innovative programs to improve learning
6. Increase productivity and return on investment

Strategies

The Nevada Department of Education, in cooperation with the Charter School Authority, will pursue its mission and achieve its goals with four major strategies:

1. Implement Standards and Assessments
2. Classify, Reward, and Support School, District and State Performance
3. Facilitate High Impact Instruction and Leadership
4. Achieve Management Integrity within the Education Department

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