

Seventh Grade Writing Across the Curriculum 2007-2008

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Writing Across the Curriculum is intended to promote student learning intellectually, emotionally, and socially. WAC is designed to provide students with a workshop atmosphere in order to help them write to discover about themselves and their world. One goal is to facilitate formulating, organizing, evaluating and expressing ideas.

Writing Across the Curriculum is also designed to assist students in enhancing their writing skills in every subject area. It is necessary for students to see the connection writing provides among the other disciplines. Writing for and about other disciplines assists students in learning how to synthesize information to come to a greater understanding of the material.

WAC will explore the many different forms of writing and purposes for writing. It will challenge the student writers to write for a variety of audiences and master the conventions of our language. The goal for Writing Across the Curriculum is to have students become self-motivated learners who can clearly communicate their ideas through the written word.

Building on 6th grade's processes, 7th grade will be both product and process driven. The focus of 7th grade instruction should be more on enhancing the mechanical and grammatical skills, developing a more detailed understanding of the writing process, and creating a work worthy of publication.

Grade 7 Core Curriculum Content Standards:

Standard 3.2 (Writing): All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

Cumulative Progress Indicators and strands:

Building upon knowledge and skills gained in preceding grades, by the end of **Grade 7**, students will:

A. Writing as a Process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, post-writing)

1. Write stories or scripts with well-developed characters, setting, dialogue, clear conflict and resolution, and sufficient descriptive detail.
2. Write multi-paragraph compositions that have clear topic development, logical organization, effective use of detail, and variety in sentence structure.
3. Generate and narrow topics by considering purpose, audience, and form with a variety of strategies (e.g., graphic organizers, brainstorming, or technology-assisted processes).

4. Revise and edit drafts by rereading for content and organization, usage, sentence construction, mechanics, and word choice.
5. Demonstrate understanding of a scoring rubric to improve and evaluate writing.
6. Compose, revise, edit, and publish writing using appropriate word processing software.
7. Reflect on own writing, noting strengths and setting goals for improvement.

B. Writing as a Product (resulting in a formal product or publication)

1. Extend knowledge of specific characteristics, structures, and appropriate voice and tone of selected genres and use this knowledge in creating written work, considering the purpose, audience, and context of the writing.
2. Write various types of prose, such as short stories, biographies, autobiographies, or memoirs that contain narrative elements.
3. Write reports and subject-appropriate nonfiction pieces across the curriculum based on research and including citations, quotations, and a works consulted page.
4. Write a range of essays, including persuasive, speculative (picture prompt), descriptive, personal, or issue-based.

C. Mechanics, Spelling, and Handwriting

1. Use Standard English conventions in all writing, such as sentence structure, grammar and usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
2. Use a variety of sentence types correctly, including combinations of independent and dependent clauses, prepositional and adverbial phrases, and varied sentence openings to develop a lively and effective personal style.
3. Understand and use parallelism, including similar grammatical forms, to present items in a series or to organize ideas for emphasis.
4. Experiment in using subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices to indicate relationships between ideas.
5. Use transition words to reinforce a logical progression of ideas.
6. Edit writing for correct grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
7. Use a variety of reference materials, such as a dictionary, thesaurus, grammar reference, and/or internet/software resources to edit written work.
8. Write legibly in manuscript or cursive to meet district standards.

D. Writing Forms, Audiences, and Purposes (exploring a variety of forms)

1. Gather, select, and organize information appropriate to a topic, task, and audience.
2. Apply knowledge and strategies for composing pieces in a variety of genres (e.g., narrative, expository, persuasive, poetic, and everyday/ workplace or technical writing).
3. Write responses to literature and develop insights into interpretations by connecting to personal experiences and referring to textual information.

4. Write personal narratives, short stories, memoirs, poetry and persuasive and expository text that relate clear, coherent events or situations through the use of specific details.
5. Use narrative and descriptive writing techniques that show compositional risks (e.g., dialogue, literary devices, sensory words and phrases, background information, thoughts and feelings of characters, and comparison and contrast of characters).
6. Use primary and secondary sources to understand the value of each when writing a research report.
7. Write reports based on research and include citations, quotations, and works consulted page.
8. Explore the central idea or theme of an informational reading and support analysis with details from the article and personal experiences.
9. Demonstrate writing clarity and supportive evidence when answering open-ended and essay questions across the curriculum.
10. State a position clearly in a persuasive essay by stating the issue, giving facts, examples, and details to support the position, and citing sources when appropriate.
11. Present evidence when writing persuasive essays, examples, and justification to support arguments.
12. Choose an appropriate organizing strategy, such as cause/effect, pro and con, or parody to effectively present a topic, point of view, or argument.
13. Develop the use of a personal style and voice effectively to support the purpose and engage the audience of a piece of writing.
14. Maintain a collection of writing (e.g., a literacy folder, or a literacy portfolio).
15. Review scoring criteria of relevant rubrics.

Standard 8.1 (Computer and information literacy): All students will use computer applications to gather and organize information and to solve problems.
Building upon knowledge and skills gained in preceding grades...

A. Basic Computer Skills and Tools

1. Use appropriate technology vocabulary.
2. Use common features of an operating system (e.g., creating and organizing files and folders).
3. Demonstrate effective input of text and data, using touch keyboarding with proper technique.
4. Input and access data and text efficiently and accurately through proficient use of other input devices, such as the mouse.
5. Create documents with advanced text-formatting and graphics using word processing.
6. Create a file containing customized information by merging documents.
7. Construct a simple spreadsheet, enter data, and interpret the information.
8. Design and produce a basic multimedia project.

9. Plan and create a simple database, define fields, input data, and produce a report using sort and query.
10. Use network resources for storing and retrieving data.
11. Choose appropriate electronic graphic organizers to create, construct, or design a document.
12. Create, organize and manipulate shortcuts.

B. Application of Productivity Tools

Social Aspects

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how changes in technology impact the workplace and society.
2. Exhibit legal and ethical behaviors when using information and technology, and discuss consequences of misuse.
3. Explain the purpose of an Acceptable Use Policy and the consequences of inappropriate use of technology.
4. Describe and practice safe Internet usage.
5. Describe and practice "etiquette" when using the Internet and electronic mail.

Information Access and Research

6. Choose appropriate tools and information resources to support research and solve real world problems, including but not limited to: a) On-line resources and databases and b) Search engines and subject directories.
7. Evaluate the accuracy, relevance, and appropriateness of print and non-print electronic information sources.

Problem Solving and Decision Making

8. Use computer applications to modify information independently and/or collaboratively to solve problems.
9. Identify basic hardware problems and demonstrate the ability to solve common problems.
10. Determine when technology tools are appropriate to solve a problem and make a decision.

Standard 8.2 (Technology Education): All students will develop an understanding of the nature and impact of technology, engineering, technological design, and the designed world as they relate to the individual, society, and the environment.

Building upon knowledge and skills gained in preceding grades

A. Nature and Impact of Technology

1. Describe the nature of technology and the consequences of technological activity.
2. Describe how components of a technological product, system, or environment interact.

3. Describe how one technological innovation can be applied to solve another human problem that enhances human life or extends human capability.
4. Describe how technological activity has an affect on economic development, political actions, and cultural change.
5. Explain the cultural and societal effects resulting from the dramatic increases of knowledge and information available today.

B. Design Process and Impact Assessment

1. Demonstrate and explain how the design process is not linear.
2. Use hands on activities to analyze products and systems to determine how the design process was applied to create the solution.
3. Identify a technological problem and use the design process to create an appropriate solution.
4. Describe how variations in resources can affect solutions to a technological problem.
5. Select and safely use appropriate tools and materials in analyzing, designing, modeling or making a technological product, system or environment.

C. Systems in the Designed World

1. Explain technological advances in medical, agricultural, energy and power, information and communication, transportation, manufacturing, and construction technologies.
2. Explain reasons why human-designed systems, products, and environments need to be monitored, maintained, and improved to ensure safety, quality, cost efficiency, and sustainability.
3. Explain the functions and interdependence of subsystems such as waste disposal, water purification, electrical, structural, safety, climatic control, and communication.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES THAT ADDRESS THESE STANDARDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

Teachers are reminded to utilize the workshop approach where students draft, self-edit, revise, peer edit, revise, rewrite, and repeat the process until the work is worthy of publication in both content and presentation.

Technology: Encourage students to electronically store all of their writing so it can be retrieved and used at a later date, for example as in a growth portfolio.

Technical writing:

Write pieces that contain technical, informational writing. Topics may include:

1. Testing a hypothesis
2. Classification

3. Possible outcomes
4. Problem solving

Write pieces that contain instructional writing. Topics may include:

1. “How-To” instructions
2. Travel itineraries
3. “Create a new” product, recipe, name

Narrative writing:

Write narrative pieces that use the elements of plot including dialogue.

Pieces can be personal narratives, narrative poems, short stories, group stories, interior monologues and speculative writing such as from pictures.

Dramatic writing:

Write dramatic pieces. Ideas include:

1. Fairy tales
2. Fractured fairy tales
3. Soliloquies
4. Monologues
5. Dialogues
6. Tall tales
7. Plays

Sociological writing:

Write pieces that assist students in evaluating and responding to themselves and their world.

1. Reflective journals
2. Metacognitive journals
3. Journal responses to “What if” questions
4. Letters to the editor
5. Letters to Congress
6. Letters to famous people (alive or not)
7. Interviews

Persuasive writing:

Write pieces intended for specific, varied audiences and for specific purposes. Activities can include, but are not limited to

1. Letters to the newspaper editor

2. Letters to Congress
3. Letters to town officials
4. Letters to the school principal
5. Running for an elected office, fictional or student council related
6. Position papers

Research writing:

Engage in teaching the process of producing a research paper. Write pieces that require researching a topic. One suggestion is to have the topic be directly related to another subject area. Another is to allow students to devise their own topics.

Use technology to research information, use common features of an operating system, input and access data and text efficiently and accurately through proficient use of other input devices, such as the mouse, create documents with advanced text-formatting and graphics using word processing and create a file containing customized information by merging documents.

Utilize a variety of resources, including the Internet, noted on a properly formatted works cited page. These cited works must also be within the body of the paper correctly. Avoid plagiarism. Evaluate websites.

Present research in varying formats. Presentations can include, but are not limited to:

1. Power Point
2. Group Presentation
3. Individual speech

Poetic writings:

Write poems in a variety of forms from traditional to free verse. In addition to free topic choice, using topics from other subject areas is suggested. Encourage students to publish poems in some fashion. Outlets for student publication can include, but are not limited to:

1. Sparta Poetry Contest
2. Merlin's Pen
3. school newspaper
4. literary magazines

Vocabulary Workshop:

Use the prescribed vocabulary program to enhance understanding of language and expand range of words. Encourage students to utilize the newly learned words in writing and conversation.

Grammar:

Building on what students have learned in the sixth grade, instruction will be given on a variety of topics in order to enhance writing. Topics should include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Review of parts of speech
2. Review of capitalization and punctuation
3. Review of subject and verb agreement
4. Review and continue dialogue
5. Begin pronoun antecedent agreement
6. Develop transitions
7. Develop dependent and independent clauses
8. Develop varying sentence structure

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:

Student/teacher writing conferences
Student/student writing conferences
Collaborative work
Journal writing
Peer and self-editing
Use of artifacts (photos, art, objects) to generate topics for writing.
Instruction on the elements of a story
Instruction on the elements of the varied types of writing
Instruction on writing for a variety of purposes
Instruction on writing for a variety of audiences
Grammar instruction
Vocabulary instruction and exercises
Note-taking strategies
PowerPoint Presentations
Independent Internet research
Review of citations
Instruction on plagiarism
Graphic organizers

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS:

Teacher observation
Teacher lead discussion
Student lead discussion
Student-to-student conferences
Student-to-teacher conferences
Metacognitive journals
Response journals
Writer's checklists

Self-editing/revising
Peer editing/revising
NJ DOE Holistic scoring rubric
Teacher made rubrics
Finished products
Writing portfolios
Tests and quizzes

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM:

This course of study will be evaluated/assessed by instructional staff during the first year of implementation for the purpose of necessary revision at the end of the first year. In addition, this course of study will be reviewed according to the Five-Year Curriculum Review schedule (see attached).

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