The Township of Union Public Schools

Evidence-Based Writing Curriculum and Teacher's Guide Grades 5 - 12

Adopted

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Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Overview
Academic integrity means that students produce work that is their own. Academic dishonesty is a student's attempt to claim someone else's academic work as their own, or to present academic knowledge that they do not possess as their own. Academic dishonesty can take many different forms and all are subject to disciplinary action. Examples of academic dishonesty accord may include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is using someone else's words, ideas, or materials without acknowledging the creator and presenting it as your own. Examples of plagiarism may include, but are not limited to:
- using the exact words or phrases used in the source without quotation marks and a citation for the author and location of the quotation (page or paragraph)
- using an important idea – even if you changed a few words – without a citation for the author and location of the idea (summarizing/paraphrasing)
- stating a fact that is not generally known by most people, without a citation for the author and location of the information (page or paragraph)
- citing the wrong sources
- turning in a purchased or free online paper, or paper that another student wrote
- using an online translation site for a world language writing assignment
- listing a source on the works cited page, but no information from that source is used in the essay
- citing a source in the essay, but did not list it on the works cited page

Cheating: Cheating is the unauthorized use of materials, information, technology, study-aids or notes. It is also the giving/receiving of assistance on assignments that are intended to be individual work. Examples of cheating may include, but are not limited to:
- Communicating with another student during an assessment
- Copying or assisting another student with copying material during an assessment or assignment
- Allowing or assisting another student with copying an assessment or assignment
- Using unauthorized notes or other forms of aids during an assessment
- Obtaining or assisting another student with obtaining a copy of or information about an assessment from another student
- Allowing another person to complete assignments such as parents or friends
- Submitting one assignment for multiple subjects/assignments without teacher approval

What do you do when a student plagiarizes?

The **first** time a student plagiarizes:

- If you have clearly taught plagiarism (not just citations!) and the student plagiarizes, you can give the student the lowest possible grade on the assignment. If you have not taught it or you feel as if the student is unsure, you can use the first incident as a learning opportunity, allowing the student to make up the assignment ONLY after attending an after school instructional session with either the teacher or a librarian.
- Always call home to inform the parent, regardless of which direction you choose to go in. You may also choose to contact a school counselor.

The **second** time a student plagiarizes:

- The student should receive the lowest possible grade for the assignment.
- Call home and inform the parents. You may also choose to contact a school counselor.
- Contact your department supervisor, who should meet with the student and make them aware of future consequences should plagiarism occur again.

REQUIREMENT: ALL teachers in any subject area in which students are participating in writing assignments, presentations, or other creative academic tasks that require research MUST discuss with their students the following topics prior to students completing the first task of the school year:

- Plagiarism (not just using citations)
- Examples of plagiarism (see above)
- Ways to avoid plagiarism

Resources
SmallSETools Plagiarism Checker
Bowdoin College (Maine) Academic Honest and Plagiarism
Centralia Types of Plagiarism PPT
SafeAssign Plagiarism Checker powered by Blackboard
Plagiarism.org Resources for Teaching Writing
Purdue University Activities for Contextualizing Plagiarism
Video: Plagiarism - Don't Do It!

Part 1: Documented Writing

Chapter 1: Introduction Writing

Overview

An engaging and well-written concise introductory paragraph leads the reader into the heart of an essay. It provides helpful and relevant background information and convinces the reader that the essay is worth reading. The Township of Union Public Schools has identified the funnel method of introductory writing to be the district standard.

Grade 5 Expectations

In grade 5, students begin to practice the FUNNEL METHOD.
The introduction should include, in this order:
1. A sentence introducing the general topic
2. An answer to the essay question (thesis)
3. Three sentences previewing the supporting reasons for the thesis.

Grades 6-8 Expectations

In grades 6-8, students should be trying to get out of formulaic writing in essays, including introductions. The introduction should include:
1. A few general, yet interesting and interest-catching, sentences about the topics that will be discussed in the essay
2. The thesis

Grades 9-10 Expectations

In grades 9-10, students should no longer use formulaic writing. Instead, the Funnel method will be utilized. The introduction should include:
1. A few general, yet interesting and interest-catching, sentences about the topics that will be discussed in the essay.
2. Relevant background information which includes an introduction of the sources being used as well as a brief summary of the topics being discussed.
3. Thesis

Grades 11-12 Expectations

Student will be utilizing the Funnel method.

The introduction should include:

1. A general, yet interesting and interest-catching, sentence about the topics that will be discussed in the essay.
2. Relevant background information which includes an introduction of the sources being used as well as a brief summary of the topics being discussed.
3. Thesis

Resources

The Funnel Method handout

Funnel Method Example

Formulating a Great Introduction by Monica Montanari

Chapter 2: Thesis Statements

Overview

The thesis is the main idea of an essay. The thesis statement is a one sentence statement that expresses this main idea. Also referred to as a claim, ir identifies the topic and the opinion a writer has about the topic. Because the thesis tells the reader what to expect, it should appear early on in an essay. In a FUNNEL METHOD introduction, the thesis appears as the last sentence.

Grade 5 Expectations

The thesis statement should be an answer to the essay question and may include "in this essay", but it should be encouraged that students just answer the question without extra wording. Location of the thesis should be based on the introduction structure.

Sample: In this essay, I will explain why summer is the best season.

Sample: In this essay, I will explain why summer is the best season including because it is hot, there is yummy food, and there is no school.

Grades 6-8 Expectations

The thesis statement is informing the reader on what the main idea of the essay will be. It is derived from the essay topic and may or may not include the reasons/claims that will be presented throughout the essay. Location of the thesis should be based on the introduction structure. By grade 8, students should be phasing out the usage of first person pronouns and redundant phrasing including "in my opinion", "in this essay", "I think", "I believe", etc.

Grades 6-7 Sample: Summer is the best season because it is hot, there is yummy food, and there is no school.

Grades 7-8 Sample: Summer is the best season.

Grades 9-12 Expectations

The thesis should be one sentence that identifies the writing's direction, emphasis, and scope. It should avoid first person pronouns and redundant phrasing including "in my opinion", "in this essay", "I think", "I believe", etc. Students should begin creating their own essay questions in grade 9.

Sample: Summer is the best season.

Resources
[Thesis Statements: Four Steps to a Great Essay | 60second Recap](#)
[Harvard College Writing Center - Developing a Thesis](#)
[Tips and Examples for Writing Thesis Statements](#)
[Thesis Statements](#)

Chapter 3: Informative/Explanatory Writing Structure

Overview
Informative writing, also known as expository or explanatory writing, is a genre of writing that covers close reading/analysis and presentation of text, information and thoughts. The goal is to provide an explanation in an objective, unbiased manner. Forms of informative writing include the following types of essays: process, analysis, classification, definition, cause/effect and comparison/contrast.

Grades 5 Expectations
Informational writing gives readers information about a specific topic or ideas. The writer uses facts, definitions, details, quotations, examples, and other information to tell about (inform) or explain the topic or idea.

Students need to:
1. Write a clear introductory paragraph that tells what the text will be about and captures readers' attention.
2. Construct a five paragraph essay. In each body paragraph, students are expected to develop topics with facts and details ideas. Students should be organized and include transitional words and phrases to show relationships between ideas. Each body paragraph must include evidence to support each supporting detail given.
3. The conclusion must be the final paragraph in the essay where the students summarize their main points and give the reader a final thought about the topic.

Grades 6-8 Expectations

In this style of essay, students will analyze evidence from texts to determine the main idea they want to convey in the essay.

Students need to:

1. Write an introductory paragraph that engages the reader while providing the reader with background information on the topic being discussed. The introduction must also include the thesis statement.
2. The number of body paragraphs depends upon the topics discussed in the essay. In each body paragraph, ideas should be organized and include transitional words and phrases to show relationships between ideas. Each body paragraph must include textual evidence to support each supporting detail given. Each quotation or paraphrase must include proper MLA citation by the end of grade 8.
3. The conclusion must be the final paragraph in the essay where the students summarize key points discussed in the essay while offering a fresh insight on the topic

Grades 9-12 Expectations

This essay is essential for communication purposes for success in college and in future careers.

Students need to:

1. Write an introduction leading to a thesis. Students are writing to inform a specific target audience about an object, event, person or phenomenon.
2. Include as many body paragraphs as necessary to convey facts/evidence supporting the thesis rather than convey personal opinion. Students must include a number of facts, quotations and resources to be able to clearly "inform" the target audience. These facts must be properly cited using MLA.
3. Write a conclusion of a few sentences that will close off the essay with a short recap of what has been discussed. The conclusion is the place where the writer can include his/her opinion about the topic.

Resources

[VIDEO: Types of Informative Writing](#)

MyPerspectives+ Interactive Lesson Resource: Informative / Explanatory Writing - Middle School

MyPerspectives+ Interactive Lesson Resource: Informative / Explanatory Writing - High School

Chapter 4: Argumentative Writing Structure

Overview
Argumentative writing is a genre of writing where students learn how to make, investigate and develop a claim from **both** sides of an issue. Students will look for evidence from text/media to support their claim/counterclaim and include reasoning behind how this evidence gives weight and relates to the student's actual position/

Grades 5 Expectations
Argumentative writing is writing that expresses the author's opinion about a topic. The author states an opinion, or what he or she thinks, feels, or believes, and provides reasons and evidence to support the opinion.

Students need to:
1. Write a strong, clear introduction that states their opinion and makes the reader want to read more.

2. Construct a five paragraph essay. In each body paragraph, students are expected to develop topics with facts and details ideas. Students should be organized and include transitional words and phrases to show relationships between ideas. Each body paragraph must include textual evidence to support each supporting detail given. Each body paragraph should be focused on one reason/idea that supports the author's thesis.

3. The conclusion must be the final paragraph in the essay where the students restate their opinion and tell why it matters. Students should end with a strong statement that leaves the reader with something to think about.

Grades 6-8 Expectations

The purpose of argumentative writing is to convince the reader to support the writer's opinion by arguing his/her side. The essay must include relevant claims to support the writer's view on the given topic. Each claim must be supported by relevant textual evidence written in proper MLA citation format by the end of grade 8.

Students need to:

1. Write an introductory paragraph stating the claim in an engaging persuasive way. The introduction must explain the argument presented in way that they reader comprehends the writer's stance and end with a thesis statement.
2. The number of body paragraphs depends upon the claims presented. Each claim should be the focus of it's own paragraph and must be supported by textual evidence written in proper MLA citation format by the end of grade 8.
3. Students must include at least one counterclaim/rebuttal paragraph in the essay by 8th grade. Students will be introduced to this concept in 6th grade and continue to practice incorporating this in 7th grade. Often, the counterclaim/rebuttal is the final body paragraph.
4. The last paragraph should be the conclusion where the claim is restated and the most powerful details are summarized.

Grades 9-12 Expectations

The purpose of argumentative writing is to declare a specific position on an issue and provide reasons supported by evidence and/or facts for why the target audience should change their positions or point of view on a topic.

Students need to:

1. Write a strong short introduction with a clear, argumentative thesis/claim at the end.
2. Include as many body paragraphs with sufficiently cited reasons/evidence to make an effective argument.
3. Include at least one paragraph presenting a counterclaim to thesis.
4. Write a strong conclusions to end the argument, leaving no questions or doubt and providing fresh insight into the topic. The conclusion may also include a call to action.

Resources

[Argumentative Paper Format - Odegaard Writing & Research Center](#)
[VIDEO: How to Write an Argumentative Essay by Shmoop](#)
[Argumentative Prewriting](#)

Chapter 5: The Literary Present

Overview
The action that takes place in works of fiction exists in a timeless world. Every time you open a book the events are **currently** happening. In describing characters, quoting or alluding to the events, telling what the author means or recapitulating the plots found in literature, *it is best to use the present tense.*

Grades 5-8 Expectations
Students in grades 5 through 8 are expected to write in one verb tense, whether that be past or present, and keep consistency of tense throughout. By the end of 8th grade, students should begin working on writing solely in present tense.

Grades 9-12 Expectations
Students in grades 9-12 need to utilize the literary present tense when writing about literature.

Resources
[VIDEO: Literary Present Tense](#)
[How (and Why) Do I Write in Literary Present Tense?](#)

Chapter 6: Pronoun Usage

Overview

Writing in third person point of view (narrative perspective) is crucial in all academic writing. The advantage of third person is that the author writes from a broader perspective, and this will make the content look more objective, less personal and more credible. Third person helps the reader remain focused on evidence, reasons, and facts rather than personal opinions.

Grades 5-12 Expectations

> By the end of grade 5, all students should be avoiding 1st and 2nd person pronouns and be writing solely in the 3rd person.

Resources

[Avoiding Second Person](#)
[University of Nevada - Reno - Avoiding the Use of the First and Second Person in Academic Writing](#)
[Illinois Valley Community College -Formal vs Informal Writing: What's the Difference and When to Use Them (Includes Video)](#)
[In Defense of Third Person by Adam O'Fallon Price](#)
[Grammarly - First, Second, and Third Person](#)

Chapter 7: Citations

Overview

When someone cites a source in the body of his/her text, it is because he/she borrowed words and/or ideas from another place. This includes paraphrasing and summarizing as well. By using in-text or parenthetical citations, it is a short method to identify the published work where he/she got the information. The number of citations required to be included in each grade level, the number of sources that should be included, the format of the citations, and the types of citations are all included below.

Grade 5 Expectations

Number of Citations: 1-2 citations
Number of Sources: 2 sources
Format of citations: some inclusion of information that identifies the title, author, or website that information was found
Types of citations: direct quotations

Grade 6 Expectations

Number of Citations: 2 citations
Number of Sources: 2 sources
Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation
Types of citations: direct quotations, introduction of cited paraphrasing and summarizing

Grade 7 Expectations

Number of Citations: 2-3 citations
Number of Sources: 3 sources
Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation
Types of citations: direct quotations, introduction of cited paraphrasing and summarizing

Grade 8 Expectations

    Number of Citations: 3-4 citations

    Number of Sources: 3 sources

    Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation

    Types of citations: direct quotations, paraphrasing, and summarizing

Grade 9 Expectations

    Number of Citations: 4 citations

    Number of Sources: 4 sources

    Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation

    Types of citations: direct quotations, paraphrasing, and summarizing

Grade 10 Expectations

    Number of Citations: 5 citations

    Number of Sources: 4-5 sources

    Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation

    Types of citations: direct quotations, paraphrasing, and summarizing

Grade 11 Expectations

    Number of Citations: 6 citations

    Number of Sources: 5-6 sources

    Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation

    Types of citations: direct quotations, paraphrasing, and summarizing

Grade 12 Expectations

    Number of Citations: 6+ citations

    Number of Sources: 6+ sources

    Format of citations: includes a sentence starter and an MLA formatted in-text or parenthetical citation

    Types of citations: direct quotations, paraphrasing, and summarizing

Resources

[Paraphrase](#)

[ICE Method for Direct Quotations](#)

[In-Text Citations of Sources](#)

[Quote Sandwich video (HS)](#)

[VIDEO: Quote Bomb and Incorporated Quotes](#)

[Parenthetical Citations](#)

[MLA Examples](#)

[Dixie State University - Citation Guide: Parenthetical Citations](#)

[IRSC - MLA Style Guide, 8th Edition: How to Paraphrase and Quote](#)

[Purdue University Online Writing Lab - MLA Citations-The Basics](#)

[Williams College - Tips on Paraphrasing](#)

Chapter 8: Works Cited Pages

Overview

A works cited page appears at the end of an essay. It is a list of works that has been referenced in the body of the paper. It allows the reader to track all sources used in a paper by properly citing them.

Grade 5 Expectations

Students will be shown models of work cited pages.
Students will know the purpose that the work cited page contribute to a writing piece
Students will be able to label different parts of a work cited page
Students should include a list of sources, without specific formatting, for all activities in which research was one (including presentations, posters, etc.)

Grade 6 Expectations

Students will be introduced and practice how to create an MLA formatted Works Cited Page.
They will be given examples of Works Cited Pages to model.
Students practice including an MLA formatted Works Cited page for all activities in which research was one (including presentations, posters, etc.) through fill-in-the-blank works cited pages or models.

Grades 7-12 Expectations

Students must include an MLA formatted works cited page for all activities in which research was one (including presentations, posters, writing assignments, etc.)

Resources

[Purdue University Online Writing Lab - MLA Works Cited Page Formatting](#)
[Official MLA Style Center - Includes Practice Form](#)

Chapter 9: Resources for Reflection, Revision, and Editing

Metacognition Letters
Peer/Self Editing Checklist

Part 2: Short Answer Writing

Overview

Short Answer writing describes any writing that is done in response to a prompt that consists of one paragraph and focuses on information from one source. The below outlines the expected format that will be used for all students. When writing 2+ paragraphs, students should focus instead of a modified essay format.

Grade 5 Expectations - RACE

    R - Restate the question.
    A - Answer all parts of the question.
    C - Cite an example (this may or may not include an actual citation)
    E - Explain the example and how it supports your answer.

Grades 6-12 Expectations

    R - Restate the question.
    A - Answer all parts of the question.
    C - Cite an example (this may or may not include an actual citation)
    E - Explain the example and how it supports your answer.
    S - Summarize the message by restating the question and providing a final thought.

Resources
[RACE Prezi](#)

Part 3: Rubrics

Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubrics and Score Models
Grade 5
Grades 6-8
Grades 9-10
Grades 11-12

Argumentative Writing Rubrics and Score Models
Grade 5
Grades 6-8
Grades 9-10
Grades 11-12

Suggested Rubric Grading Conversions
Total Points Earned ÷ Total Points Possible x 100 = % grade out of 100
Example: 16 points earned out of 20 possible points x 100 = 80%

97 - 100	A +
93 - 96	A
90 - 92	A -
87 - 90	B +
83 - 86	B
80 - 82	B -
77 - 80	C +
73 - 76	C
70 - 72	C -
65 - 69	D

Grades 5-8

60-64	D-
Below 60	F

Grades 9-12

Below a 65	F

Part 4: Grade Level NJSLS in Writing

New Jersey Student Learning Standards
Progress Indicators in Writing, Grades 5-12

Standard Code	Skill	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grades 9-10	Grades 11-12
W.1	Write an opinion piece supporting a point of view with reasons						
W.2	Write an informative/explanatory piece supporting a point of view with reasons						
W.1.A; W.2.A	Write an introduction that: introduces the topic and states an opinion						
W.1.B; W.2.B	Provide reasons that are supported by facts/details from texts, quoted directly						
W.1.C; W.2.C	Using transitional words and phrases within the paragraph, not just at the start of the paragraph						
W.1.D; W.2.E	Provide a conclusion						
W.1.A; W.2.A	Choose an organizational structure appropriate to the topic and/or supporting evidence						
W.2.A	Include text features (headings, illustrations, multimedia) to clarify information						
W.2.D	Use domain-specific langauge (Science, SS, etc.)						
W.5	With a teacher, participate in planning, revising, editing, rewriting						
W.5	With a peer, participate in planning, revising, editing, rewriting						
W.6	Use technology to produce and publish writing						
W.6	Use techology to collaborate with others on planning, writing, revising, editing, rewriting						
W.6	Type at length in a single setting	two pages	three pages	three pages	three pages	three pages	three pages
W.7	Conduct research projects that use several sources						
W.8	Provide a list of sources	basic	introductory MLA	MLA	MLA	MLA	MLA
W.1.B; W.8	Selecting credible sources						
W.1.D; W.2.E	Maintain a formal and academic style						
W.8	Paraphrase and summarize as evidence						
W.1.A	Acknowledge opposing claims						
W.8	Use Boolean search terms effectively						
W.7	Conduct research to answer self-generated research questions						

= Expected to learn by the end of the grade level

= Expected to continue to practice and build on, increasing in skill and complexity

Part 5: Student Portfolio Requirements

All students are required to maintain a reflective portfolio of work that includes, at a minimum, all of the performance-based assessments completed during the school year. Students in grade 5 may keep this portfolio on paper or digitally; students in grades 6-12 must keep this portfolio digitally.

Sample portfolios may be requested at any time by district administration. At the start of a school year, teachers may request that students share with them their portfolios from the previous year.

[Grade 5 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 6 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 7 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 8 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 9 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 10 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 11 Student Portfolio Form](#)
[Grade 12 Student Portfolio Form](#)