

# ELA REPORTER



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YOUR PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY

## Understanding the Role of Standards-Based Writing

The use of written language has become a critical component of the daily lives of millions of Americans. This is in part because, as technology continues to alter societies and cultures, it has fostered and supported an unprecedented expansion of human communication. In 2005, 172,000 new books were published in the United States alone. One hundred million websites existed worldwide. One hundred and seventy-one billion e-mail messages were sent daily. To write in this world is to engage in a millennia-old act that is reinventing and regenerating itself in the modern age.

The impact of communications technologies has changed the way people write and the kinds of writing they do. Writing in the 21st century is defined by its frequency and efficiency, and modern writers must express ideas in ways that enable them to communicate effectively to many audiences. **It is clear that the ability to use written language to communicate with others—and the corresponding need for effective writing instruction and assessment—is more relevant than ever.** (emphasis added)

The purposes for writing are found throughout the core curriculum in K-12 education—in English language arts, in science, in social studies, and in mathematics—and take many forms, including short stories, personal narratives, essays, reports, summaries, research papers, letters, proposals, newspaper articles, and so on. The three communicative purposes for writing:

- **To Persuade**, in order to change the reader's point of view or affect the reader's action
- **To Explain**, in order to expand the reader's understanding
- **To Convey Experience**, real or imagined, in order to communicate individual and imagined experience to others



### A Sampling of Writing Examples from NAEP

#### Grade 4 Examples



Tigers



Rising Stars



Dolphins



Rockets

#### ARGUMENT

Imagine that students at your school are going to select a new school mascot. A mascot is an animal or object used to represent a group. For example, many sports teams have mascots.

Four choices are being considered as your school's mascot: Tigers, Rising Stars, Dolphins, and Rockets.

You have been asked to choose one of the four mascots and to support your choice in a letter to the school principal.

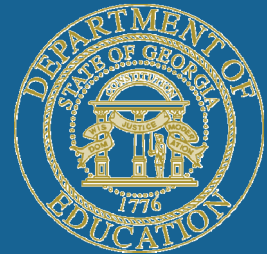
Write a letter to your principal convincing him or her that your choice should be the school mascot. Be sure to include reasons and examples in your letter.

#### EXPOSITORY

Imagine your teacher has chosen you to help a new student who will soon be attending your school. To prepare the new student, your teacher has asked you to write a letter to the new student explaining what your school is like so that he will know what to expect on his first day.

Write a letter to your future classmate explaining what your school is like. Be sure to include details and examples in your letter that will help him learn about your school.

Georgia  
Department of  
Education



Dr. John D. Barge,  
State School  
Superintendent

*"Making Education  
Work for All Georgians"*

#### Inside this issue:

Understanding the Role of Standards-Based Writing	1
Understanding the Role of Standards-Based Writing, continued ...	2
Understanding the Role of Standards-Based Writing, continued....	3
ELA Summer Academy	3
2013-2014 Professional Learning Resources Update	4
Contact Information	4

## Understanding the Role of Standards-Based Writing, *continued...*

### **NARRATIVE**

Your school would like to help students think about how a person's actions can make a difference to others. The school newspaper is planning to publish stories about times when students helped someone or when someone else helped them.

Write a story for the school newspaper about a time when you helped someone or a time when someone helped you. Be sure to include details in your story that convey your experience to your readers.

### **Grade 8 Examples**

#### **ARGUMENT**

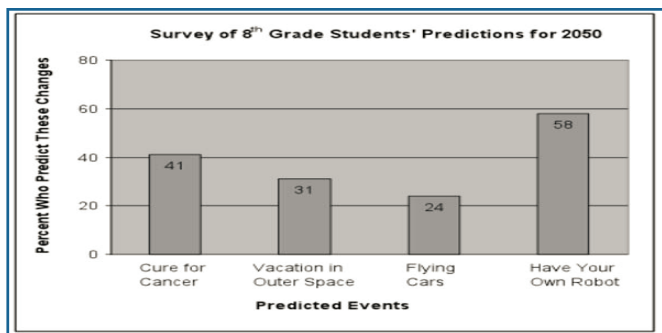
Your school wants to persuade new eighth grade students to participate in school or community activities, sports, or clubs by publishing a brochure about the school's extracurricular offerings. Current students have been asked to write about a particular sport, club, or activity they participate in or about some other activity they think new eighth students should get involved in. Compose a piece of writing to persuade new eighth grade students to participate in the sport, club, or activity you have chosen. Be sure to include reasons and examples that will persuade new eighth grade students to participate in the activity you have chosen to write about.

#### **EXPOSITORY**

Your school is creating a "time capsule," a box containing objects and writings from the current year that will be opened by eighth graders in the year 2050. All current eighth graders have been asked to add to the time capsule by writing about what they think life in the United States might be like in 2050..

Compose a piece of writing for the time capsule explaining to future students what you think life in the United States will be like in 2050. Be sure to explain your ideas by using details and examples. The information below shows predictions about the future that you may consider using in your writing.

*A magazine for young adults published the following survey results:*



*The following chart appeared in the Careers section of your local newspaper:*

<b>Predicted Job Trends</b>	
<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
• Teacher	• Farmer
• Computer Technician	• Salesperson
• Scientist	• Lawyer

### **NARRATIVE**

*Teen Life*, a magazine for young adults, has announced a writing contest for middle school students. The theme of the contest is "Achieving Goals." The magazine has published the following contest instructions:

*Teen Life wants to hear about the experiences of young people who have achieved goals. To enter, write about a memorable moment in your life when you achieved a goal you set for yourself. All successful responses will need to clearly convey the experience of achieving a goal so that the reader can fully understand the experience and its importance. The staff of Teen Life will select a winner, which will be published in next month's issue.*

Write a response for the contest, describing an experience of achieving a goal and the importance of that experience to your life. Be sure to include details in your response that help readers understand your experience and its importance.

### **Grade 12 Examples**

#### **ARGUMENT**

Scientists recently announced that a state park in your state contains large amounts of oil—a substance that can be converted into gasoline for cars or used to heat homes. Your state legislature is now debating whether to allow energy companies access to the protected land in this park in order to drill for the oil. In a speech to residents of the state, one of the state legislators identifies two sides of the debate:

"The debate over whether the state should allow energy companies to drill for petroleum on protected land is important to this state's future. Some in the state legislature believe that allowing access to lands currently protected would benefit our economy, creating thousands of jobs and lowering the costs of goods and services. Others, however, believe it is more important to protect our natural environment and support a high quality of life for citizens of this state."

## Understanding the Role of Standards-Based Writing, continued...

The state legislature has called on citizens of the state to express their opinions about this issue. Take a position and write a response persuading members of your state legislature to support your position on whether or not protected land in your state should be opened to energy companies for drilling.

### EXPOSITORY

Members of your community, including local leaders and the mayor, are concerned about civic awareness and town pride. In order to open a dialogue with area residents, your local newspaper is inviting residents to respond to a question civic leaders have debated: "What makes a good community?" The newspaper wants those who respond to define a good community and to explain what elements are needed to create a good community.

Responses to this question will be read by members of the city council, including the mayor, and used to support their efforts to improve civic awareness and town pride.

Write a response for the newspaper in which you define a good community and explain what elements make a good community. Be sure to use specific examples and details to explain your ideas.

### NARRATIVE

As part of an application for a job or college, you have been asked to consider how the following quotation is related to your high school experience.

"Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you." —Aldous Huxley

Write a response to this quotation in which you relate a high school experience that shows how you have grown as a student since starting high school. Be sure to use details that convey the experience to readers of your application.

**Source:** "Writing Framework for the 2011 National Assessment for Education Progress." (National Assessment Governing Board. U.S. Department of Education. 2010.)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The subheadings in this document have been changed to align with our state standards.

Retrieved from <http://www.nagb.org/content/nagb/assets/documents/publications/frameworks/writing-2011.pdf> February 2014.

## 2014 ELA Summer Academy



### Call for Presenters

We are currently seeking Georgia educators who are engaging and informed presenters to share their successful instructional practices with implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. If you are or you know of an exemplary classroom teacher, please plan to submit a proposal for presenting at the Academies. Honorarium for services is \$1,200 (\$1,000 plus \$200 for travel).

Presenters are encouraged to present at more than one of the geographic locations:

June 3-4: Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw

June 11-12: Coastal Georgia Center, Savannah

June 16-17: Middle Georgia State College, Macon

June 23-24: Darton State College, Albany

July 14-15: UGA Conference Center, Athens

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: March 14, 2014**


Submit your proposal at the following link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/14zalz0Sczu53-Fazb2ftbPGqqGfd-VJ9LvcYEIP\\_Mk/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/14zalz0Sczu53-Fazb2ftbPGqqGfd-VJ9LvcYEIP_Mk/viewform)



## 2013-2014 Professional Learning Resource Reminder

Through funding provided by Georgia's Race to the Top initiative and in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education, self-paced common core professional development courses are available for English Language Arts and Mathematics teachers. These two flexible, ready-to-use courses support the understanding and effective implementation of the CCGPS. The courses may be used by individual educators, professional learning communities, or districts. Each course contains hands-on activities, related readings and research, recommended topics for discussion, web and video resources, and self-assessments. Please visit <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core/Pages/Common-Core-Professional-Development.aspx> for more information. Click on "View CCGPS Professional Learning" then choose the modules located under the heading "ELA CCGPS Online Course".

BRUWSC CCGPS



Browse CCGPS

- English Language Arts
- Literacy in Social Studies, Science, & CTAE
- Mathematics
- CCGPS GPB Professional Learning Sessions
- CCGPS Large Print

### CCGPS Professional Development NOW AVAILABLE



Through funding provided by Georgia's Race to the Top initiative and in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education, new self-paced common core professional development courses are available for English Language Arts and Mathematics teachers.

The Georgia Department of Education has developed two flexible, ready-to-use courses intended to support Georgia educators in the understanding and effective implementation of the CCGPS.

The courses may be used by individual educators, professional learning communities, or by districts or schools. The time required for the courses may be customized for a variety of applications by expanding the amount of time spent on the activities and in discussion.

Each course contains hands-on activities, related readings and research, recommended topics for discussion, web and video resources, and self-assessments.

The content of the courses was developed under a grant from the U. S. Department of Education. However, the content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U. S. Department of Education, and endorsement by the Federal Government should not be assumed.



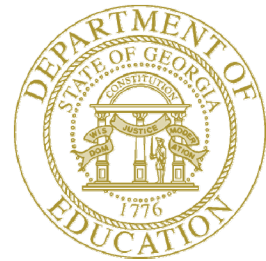
>> [View CCGPS Professional Courses](#)

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**DOE ELA Home Page:**

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**GeorgiaStandards.Org ELA Page:**

[https://www.georgiastandards.org/  
Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx](https://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx)