An Exploration in *Illinois Writing Matters*

[www.ilwritingmatters.org/](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/)

Welcome to the *Illinois Writing Matters* Website. This site provides a comprehensive view of Writing and Language as well as the attributes of Speaking and Listening Illinois Learning Standards in one convenient location. All words and phrases that are **bolded are hyperlinked** and are active if you are viewing this Exploration online with internet connectivity. This Exploration was created by Laura Beltchenko and Gail Bohnenstiehl ELA Area Coordinators, Foundational Services, Illinois State Board of Education.

(Updated by Laura Beltchenko, 2016/17 based on revised Illinois Writing Matters Website.)

Your first navigation on the site will be to notice the left side and the three ELA areas addressed: [**Writing**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/), [**Speaking and Listening**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/speaking-and-listening.html) and [**Language**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/language.html). Start your investigation with Writing site. Let’s start the exploration. You will return to the other two attributes latter in the exploration.

1. Scroll down main page of the Illinois Writing Matters website past the *Grade Specific Resources* to a section entitled “*Writing Best Practices*”. The first bullet is the ELA Writing Standardsdocument. Click on the [**Writing Standards**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/elaselection.pdf) link. What are the titles of the four areas or grouped Writing Standards?

**Briefly Summarize the Range and Content of Writing**

**“Titles of Grouped Writing Standards”**

1.

2.

3.

4.

1. Continue your investigation of “Writing Best Practices” links: [**Writing to Read**](https://www.carnegie.org/media/filer_public/9d/e2/9de20604-a055-42da-bc00-77da949b29d7/ccny_report_2010_writing.pdf), [**What Works**](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/practiceguide/writing_pg_062612.pdf)…, [**Writing Next**](http://all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/writing-next-effective-strategies-to-improve-writing-of-adolescents-in-middle-and-high-schools/)… and [**Writing Now**](http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/PolicyResearch/WrtgResearchBrief.pdf)…etc. These are research foundations that support best practice in writing instruction. Open each bullet and briefly skim the contents. What resonated with you? Provide a brief summary of one or more of the links. If you are working as a team, use a jigsaw method and divide and conquer the bullets. Summarize one or more of the links you explored in the box:

Summary:

1. Before you investigate your grade level tab. Please review the “[**Glossary of Writing Terms**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/glossary_for_writing.pdf)**”** located below “Writing Best Practice”. List at least two ways in which you will utilize these terms in your instructional practices.
2. There are two grade span strategy tabs:

* [**Strategies for K-5**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/k-5_strategies_v3.pdf)
* [**Strategies for 6-12**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/6-12_strategies_v3.pdf)

Using what you discovered in the 1st activity of the Exploration, find one strategy for each *writing focus* category in your grade span and list them on the lines below:

Text Types and Purposes, *What to Write*: (Standards 1-3)

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Production and Distribution of Writing, *How to Write*: (Standards 4-6)

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Research to Build and Present Knowledge, *Evidence/Inquiry in Writing* (Standards 7-9)

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Range of Writing, Tasks, *Purposes and Audiences* (Standard 10)

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1. The next tab is **Graphic Organizers**. (Word Document) Open and scroll to locate your grade or selected grade level. Each organizer contains links. Investigate the links and document three that you may choose to use with your writing process instruction.
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   * \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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2. The final tab to explore before you investigate *your* grade level is the [**Writing Progression** **Charts**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/completeaboutsv2.pdf)**.** What is the purpose of the underlined text in the Progressions and how will this help you develop writing in a horizontally articulated manner for your writing program?

Comments and questions?

1. *Now go to your grade or a grade level of your choice*. Directly below the picture of students there is *Writing Guidance for Scope and Sequence Development*. Take time to explore the grade specific links and see how it may benefit your grade level team as well as the school as whole. As you scroll down, please note that this link contains valuable information on the PARCC writing types. The box below is a place you can comment on how the provided information will benefit you and your colleagues at your school? (Be on the lookout within the Writing Matters site for other valuable PARCC Resources!)

Comments:

1. Continue to investigate the grade level you selected. Note that the documents are arranged by Standards: W.1 Opinion, (K-5), W.1 Argument, (6-12), W.2 Informational Explanatory, & W.3 Narrative, are the first three standards and explored in depth through Presentations, *Graphic Organizers, Rubrics and ISBE Strategies*. Explore the many links. List three areas of interest that you would like to share out to the group or your school colleagues that you found to be valuable.
2. Take some time to visit the [**Administrator**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/administrators.html)tab on the main page of the *Illinois Writing Matters Website*. If you are an Administrator, what will you share with your staff about the links on this page? If you are an educator in the building, what links in the Administrator page would you like your principal to be cognizant of that will benefit the school?



1. Visit the [**Parent**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/parents.html) tab on the main page of the Illinois Writing Matters Website. Based on your grade level or assignment how will this tab be utilized to benefit you as an educator and the parent community?



1. *Mentor Texts* are a researched instructional practice that supports modeled teaching with quality texts, articles and media. Click on the *Mentor Texts* link in your grade level. Find one text for each of the following writing types:

Opinion/Argument \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Informative/ Explanatory \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. The [**Writing Achievement Partners**](http://achievethecore.org/category/330/student-writing-samples) provides writing samples and some annotated prompts. Take some time to explore the three writing types and the prompt samples.

How might you use these in not just your classroom but with colleagues?

1. What are some types of information you can find on **http://**[**achievethecore.org** that a](http://achievethecore.org/)re highlighted on the writing matters website? Hint found below. <http://achievethecore.org/category/330/student-writing-samples>

Comments:

1. Navigate to this PARCC website: <http://www.parcconline.org/assessments/test-design/ela-literacy/test-specifications-documents> Investigate the *Writing Evidence Tables*for your grade level. As you scroll down you will also find the *Writing Rubrics* for your grade level or grade span. Now that you have administered PARCC, consider this information and how it did or will affect your instructional practices. Summarize your findings in the Comment box above.

Comments:

1. Navigate to [the **PARCC Resource Center**](https://prc.parcconline.org/) (hyperlink) Website: <https://prc.parcconline.org/assessments/parcc-released-items>. This site will provide you with released items from the PARCC assessment. Of special interest are the released writing items with connected with the “writing task models”: *Literary Analysis*, *Research Stimulation* *and Narrative* tasks. Select a grade from the pull down menu and view the scoring and annotations for some of the released items.
2. The final exploration will be to investigate the [**Speaking and Listening**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/speaking-and-listening.html) and [**Language**](http://www.ilwritingmatters.org/language.html)links on the left side of the Writing Matters website **.**

Please know that the resources found in the *Illinois Writing Matters* are a means for you, the educator, to have at your disposal materials and a framework for the teaching of writing. These resources are compiled for you by the English Language Arts Contents Specials, ISBE. Also visit Illinois Classrooms in Action website: [**www.ilclassroomsinaction.org**](http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org)