ASSESSMENTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Educate | Empower | Elevate

AASA ELA:

How the Standards and Assessment Go Together

AASA ARIZONA'S ACADEMIC STANDARDS ASSESSMENT

Assessments Friday Focus Webinars 2026-2027

Friday, November 13, 2026

Who We Are

- Our **mission** is to empower all educators and stakeholders across the birth to post-secondary continuum to increase achievement and opportunity for all students.
- Our **vision** is to promote educator expertise to impact student success.

Academic Standards



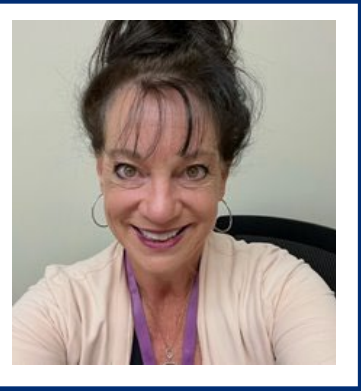
Lauren Spenceley
Secondary ELA Specialist

AI Announcement

AI notetakers will not be admitted into the Friday Focus webinars. A recording and PowerPoint presentation will be posted at Statewide Assessments Webinars | Department of Education following each webinar. Please email Testing@azed.gov with any questions.

Statewide Assessments Webinars | Department ...
Friday Focus Webinars 2026-2027 The Arizona Department of Education's Assessments section will host a series of...
www.azed.gov

Achievement Assessments



Karen Noel
Achievement Assessment Developer
ELA and Science

Today's Webinar Focus:

- We will review the **AASA Reading Assessment** and explore tools and strategies to help students feel successful.
- We will review the **AASA Writing Assessment** and explore tools and strategies to help students feel successful.
- We will review how the **Arizona Academic Standards** are assessed on the **AASA Reading and Writing Assessments**.



Opening Reflection:

In the chat, share your thoughts about the following statement:

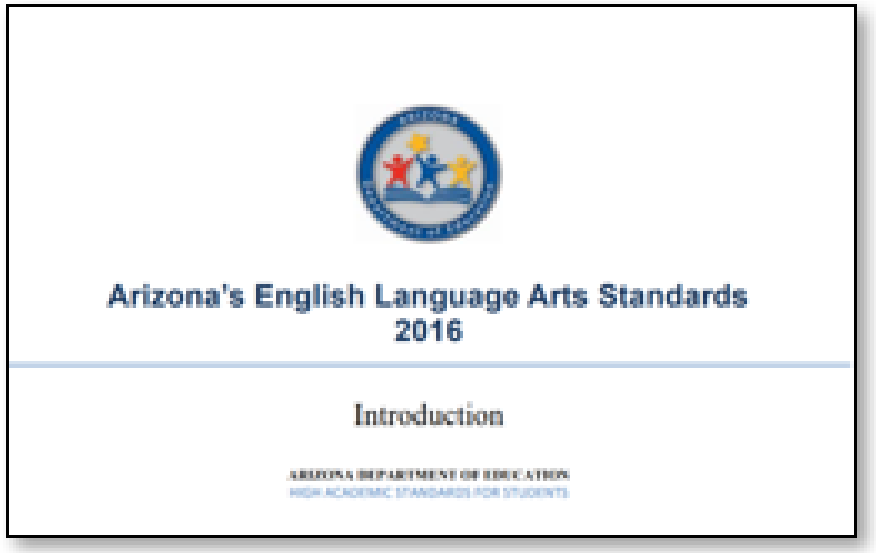
If we teach the standards well, the test takes care of itself.



AASA and Arizona ELA Standards



Arizona State Standards

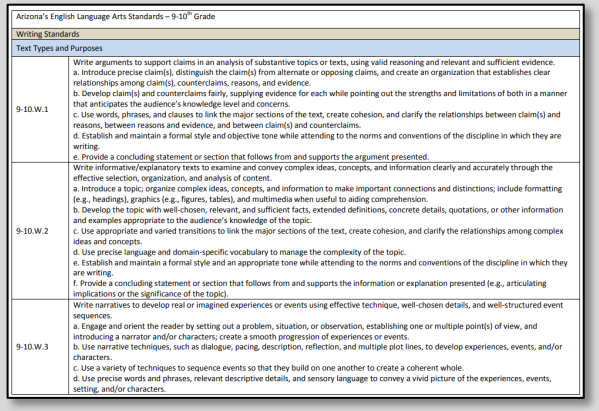


All instruction and assessment begins with the state STANDARDS

Academic Standards

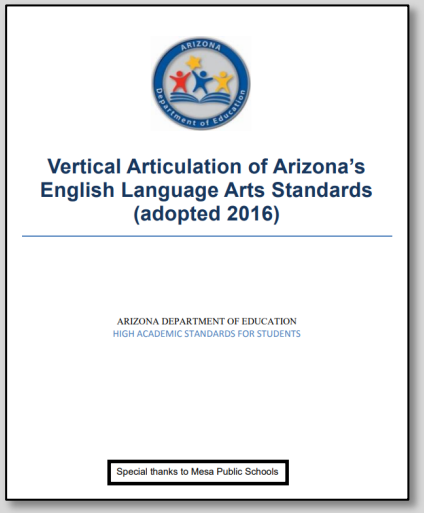
ELA Standards Resources

Standards Documents



Arizona's English Language Arts Standards – 9-10th Grade	
Writing Standards	
Text Types and Purposes	
9-10.W.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
9-10.W.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and an appropriate tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
9-10.W.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

Vertical Articulation

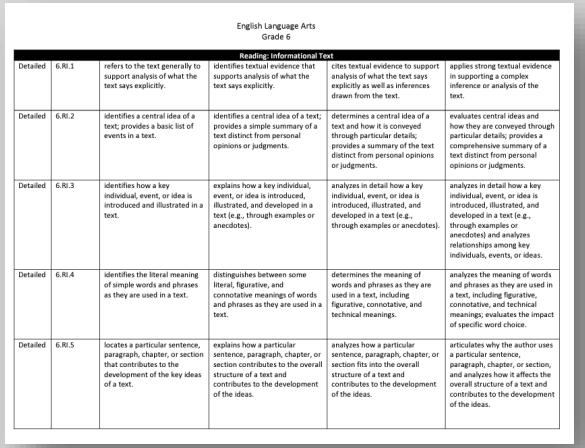


Vertical Articulation of Arizona's English Language Arts Standards (adopted 2016)

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS

Special thanks to Mesa Public Schools

PLDs



English Language Arts
Grade 6

Reading: Informational Text					
Detailed	6.RI.1	refers to the text generally to support analysis of what the text says explicitly.	identifies textual evidence that supports analysis of what the text says explicitly.	cites textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	applies strong textual evidence in supporting a complex inference or analysis of the text.
Detailed	6.RI.2	identifies a central idea of a text; provides a basic list of events in a text.	identifies a central idea of a text; provides a simple summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	determines a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provides a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	evaluates central ideas and how they are conveyed through particular details; provides a comprehensive summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
Detailed	6.RI.3	identifies how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced and illustrated in a text.	explains how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).	analyzes in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).	analyzes in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes) and analyzes relationships among key individuals, events, or ideas.
Detailed	6.RI.4	identifies the literal meaning of simple words and phrases as they are used in a text.	distinguishes between some literal, figurative, and connotative meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text.	determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	analyzes the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; evaluates the impact of specific word choice.
Detailed	6.RI.5	locates a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section that contributes to the development of the key ideas of a text.	explains how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section contributes to the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.	analyzes how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.	articulates why the author uses a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section, and analyzes how it affects the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

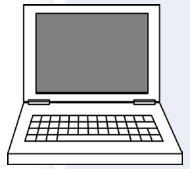
ADEL

ADEL
Arizona Digital Educators Library

Standards
Curated Resources
AI-Powered Lesson Planning

What do your students need?

Minimal impact



What **technical skills** do students need to become proficient? (computer skills, test-taking strategies, etc.)



What **content knowledge and skills** do students need to become proficient? (DOK, levels of understanding, etc.)

Maximum impact

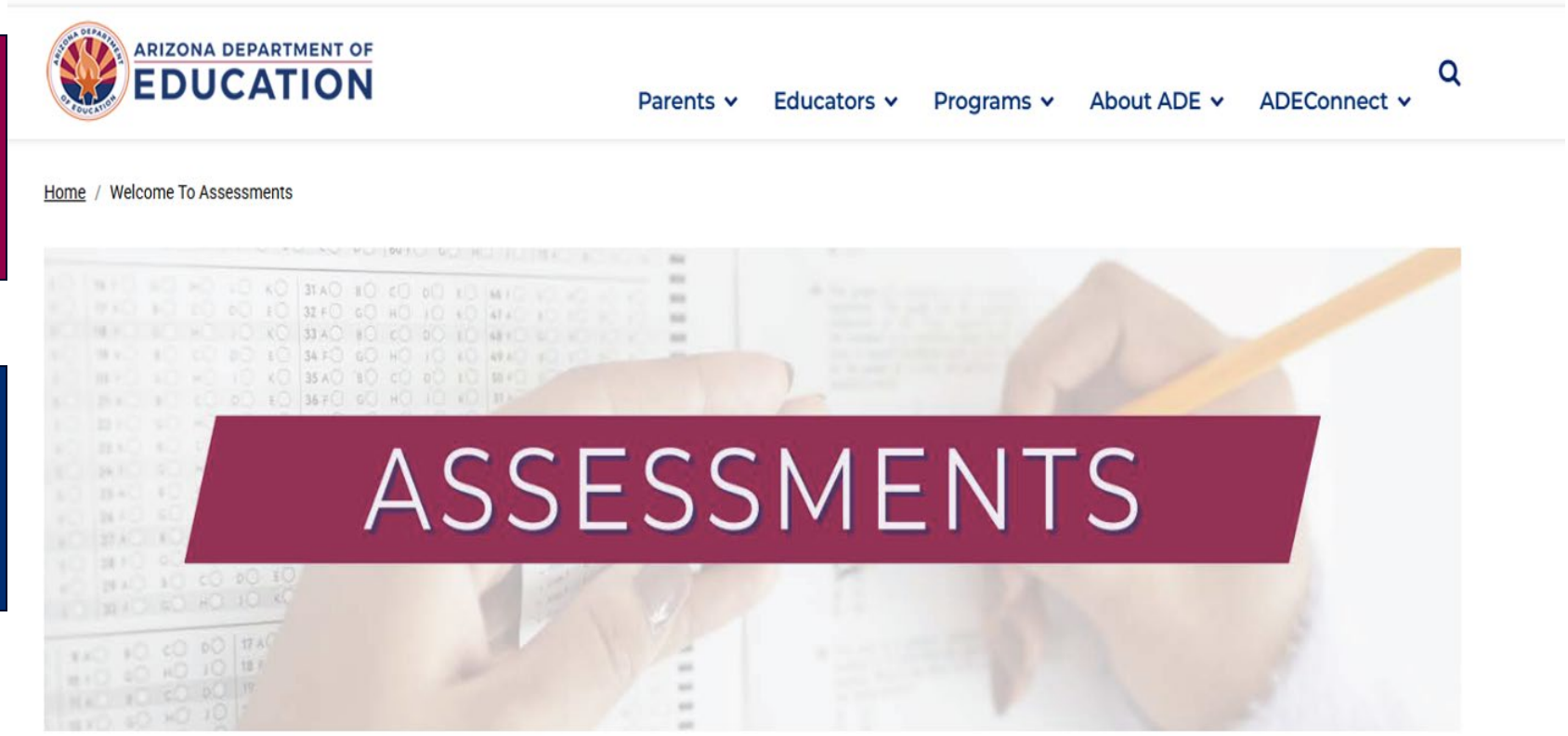
AASA Reading



The state achievement assessments are how progress is measured. Let's look at the resources that can help your students to find the greatest success:

Where to find us:

azed.gov/assessment



Our tools for ALL to use:

Assessments

AASA

AzSCI

ACT Aspire

ACT

AZELLA

MSAA

Alt ELPA

NAEP

International Assessments

AASA

Calendars for Statewide Testing

Assessments Overview 2026-2027 (Revised 8/21/26)

Detailed Testing Calendar 2026-2027

District Test Coordinators

Achievement District Test Coordinators

Alternate Assessment District Test Coordinators

AZELLA District Test Coordinators

District Test Coordinators

Assessments Portal Test Security Agreement User Guide

Assessments Portal Test Security Agreement Tutorial (Video)

Assessments Portal Test Security Agreement Tutorial (PPT)

Resources

Accessibility

Assessments Bulletin

Assessments Infographics

Assessments Overview 2026-2027 (Revised 8/21/26)

Detailed Testing Calendar 2026-2027

Educator Resources

Parents and Students

Statewide Assessments Webinars

Technical and Legal Resources

Connected Programs

Academic Standards

Accountability

Exceptional Student Services

English Language Arts and Math Essential Standards

Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Move on When Reading

Navvy

Office of English Language Acquisition Services

Contact Us

Phone: (602) 542-5031

AASA Inbox: AASA@azed.gov

Alternate Assessments Inbox: AlternateAssessment@azed.gov

AZELLA Inbox: AZELLA@azed.gov

AzSCI Inbox: AzSCI@azed.gov

Testing Inbox: Testing@azed.gov

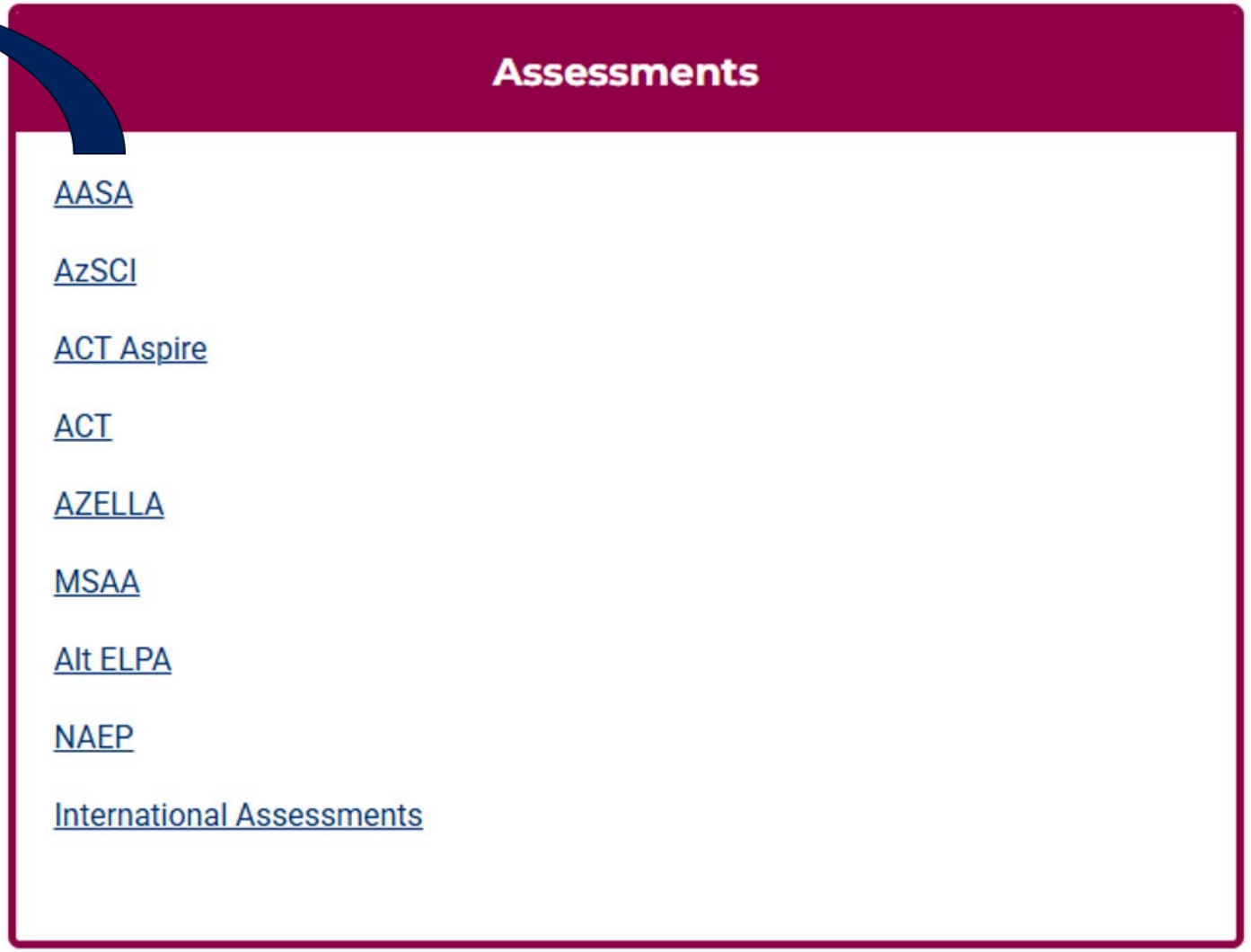
NAEP Inbox: NAEP@azed.gov

Contact the Arizona Department of Education

AASA Resources

Just a sampling of what you can find here:

- Test Dates
- Test Accommodations
- Student Readiness Tools
- Item Specifications
- Performance Level Descriptors
- ELA Resources
- Writing Resources



Using The Item Specifications

Reading Informational Texts

AZ.ELA.6.RI.1

Content Standard	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask for text-based evidence to support what is directly stated in the text. Items may ask the student to find evidence to support an inference made by the item writer, or by the student.

Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Identify support for a statement in the text where both the statement and support are explicit. Provide text-based support for an inference drawn from the text. The item writer may or may not provide the inference for the student.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text

Standard

Task Demands

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Refers to the text generally to support analysis of what the text says explicitly.	Identifies textual evidence that supports analysis of what the text says explicitly.
Proficient	**Highly Proficient**
Cites textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Applies strong textual evidence in supporting a complex inference or analysis of the text.

PLDs: Use these to ensure students are ***proficient***!

How can you use the Item Specifications in YOUR classroom or school? *Place in the chat.*

Item Types

Item Type	Description
Multiple Choice (MC)	The student is directed to select one correct answer from among 4 options.
Multiple-Select (MS)	The student is directed to select all of the correct answers from among a number of options. These items are different from multiple-choice items, which allow the student to select only one correct answer. These items appear in the online and paper-based assessments.
Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR)	**Multiple Choice/Multiple Select Format:** The student is directed to answer a "Part A" multiple-choice item based on a passage and is then asked to provide evidence in support of that answer by completing another "Part B" Multiple Choice item or a "Part B" Multi-Select item (see below). **Multiple Choice/TE Format:** The student is directed to answer a "Part A" multiple-choice item based on a passage and is then asked to provide evidence in support of that answer by completing a "Part B" TEI (see below).

What types of items do you tend to use <u>MOST FREQUENTLY</u> with your students? (ALL CAPS)
What item type do you think your students <u>need to practice more</u>? (lower case)
Place in the chat.

Inline Choice (IC)	The student clicks a box which reveals a drop-down menu containing options. The student then selects the correct word or phrase from the drop-down menu. For paper-based assessments, the item is modified so that it can be scanned and scored electronically. The student fills in a circle to indicate the correct word or phrase.
Gap Match / Gap Match Table (GM/GMT)	**Gap Match:** Certain numbers, words, phrases, or sentences may be designated "draggable" in this item type. The student can then click on the option, hold down the mouse button, and drag it to a graphic or other format. **Gap Match Table:** Same as above except the drop zone is in a table format. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.
Match – Table Grid (MTG)	The student checks a box to indicate if information from a column header matches information from a row. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.
Hot Text (HT)	Excerpted sentences from the text are presented in this item type. Certain words, phrases, or sentences are highlighted. This indicates that the text is selectable ("hot"). The student can then click on an option to select it. For paper-based assessments, a "selectable" hot text item is modified so that it can be scanned and scored electronically. In this version, the student fills in a circle to indicate a selection.
Short Constructed Response (SCR)	The student uses the keyboard to enter a response into a text field. These items can usually be answered in a sentence or two. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.
Writing Prompt (WP)	These items may require the student to use features of an online word processor. The student can perform various tasks within the online word processor such as bold text, use bullet points, underline, etc.

SAMPLE TEST

Purpose:

- To help students, teachers, and parents become familiar with the content, item types, and the tools in online test administration.
- Help students become comfortable with TestNav and reduce any anxiety they might have while taking a high-stakes test online.

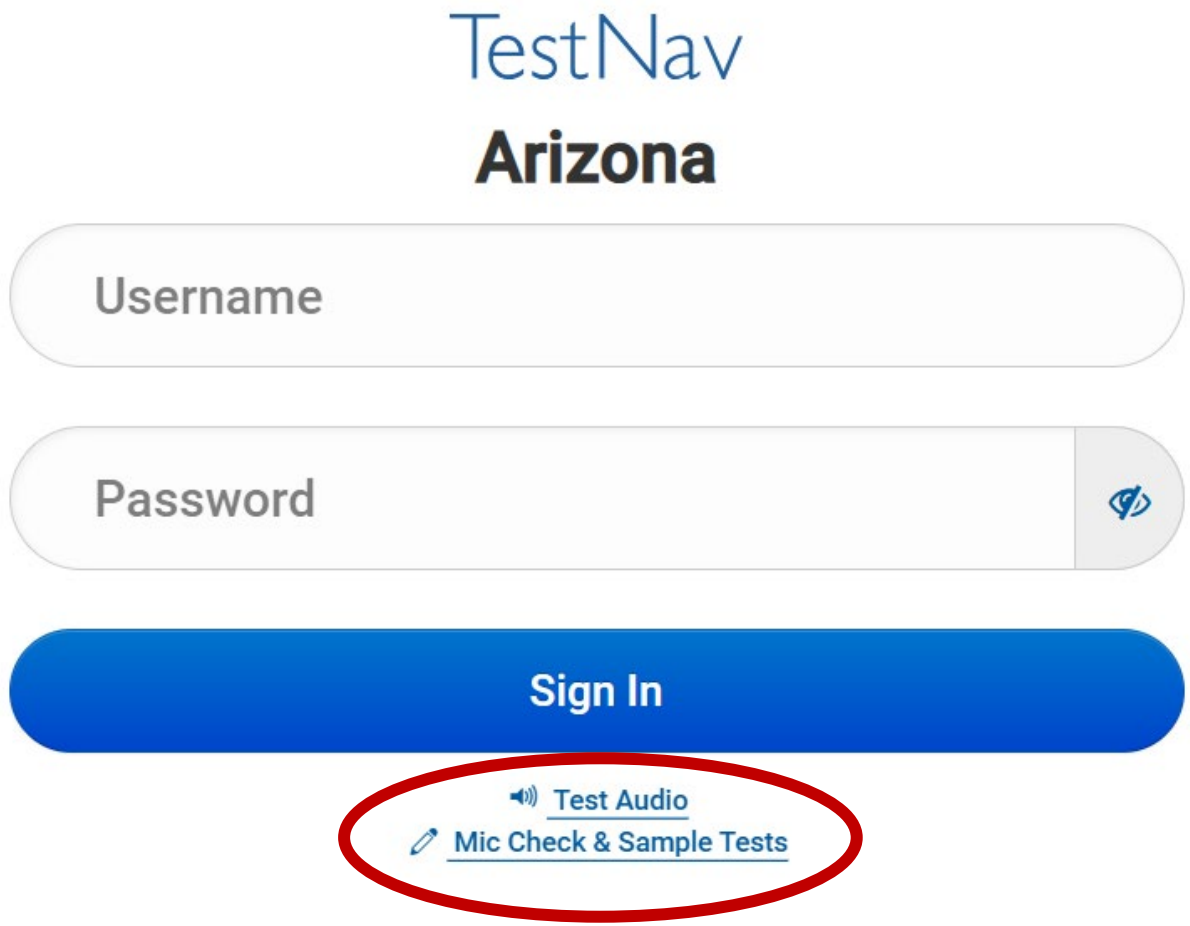
What is it not used for?

- They DO NOT include an item for each of the aligned Arizona Academic Standards and DO NOT provide scores for students.
- They should NOT be used to evaluate a student's proficiency level.

When?

- Students should take the TestNav Tutorial and Sample Test prior to taking the Spring 2027 AASA tests.

Sample Test:
az.testnav.com



Sample Tests and Readiness Tool

AASA Sample Tests and Student Readiness Tool

AASA Sample Tests and Student Readiness Tool

Directions: Select **Arizona**, then click on **Mic Check and Sample Tests**.
A username and password are not needed to access the Sample Tests and Student Readiness Tool.

AASA SAMPLE TEST SCORING GUIDES - ELA

- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Grade 3
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Grade 4
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Grade 5
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Grade 6
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Grade 7
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Grade 8
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Oral Reading Fluency Grade 3
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Writing Grade 3
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Writing Grade 4
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Writing Grade 5
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Writing Grade 6
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Writing Grade 7
- AASA Scoring Guide - ELA Writing Grade 8

- Achievement assessments should not “live in a box” that is only opened once a year.

- Allow your students time to practice – often.

- Allow your students to explore multiple practice tests (the grade below and above)

- The more time that the students are able to explore and experience the platform, the more comfortable and proficient they tend to be at the time of official testing.

ASSESSMENTS

Detailed Testing Calendar for the 2026-2027 School Year

ACHIEVEMENT ASSESSMENTS

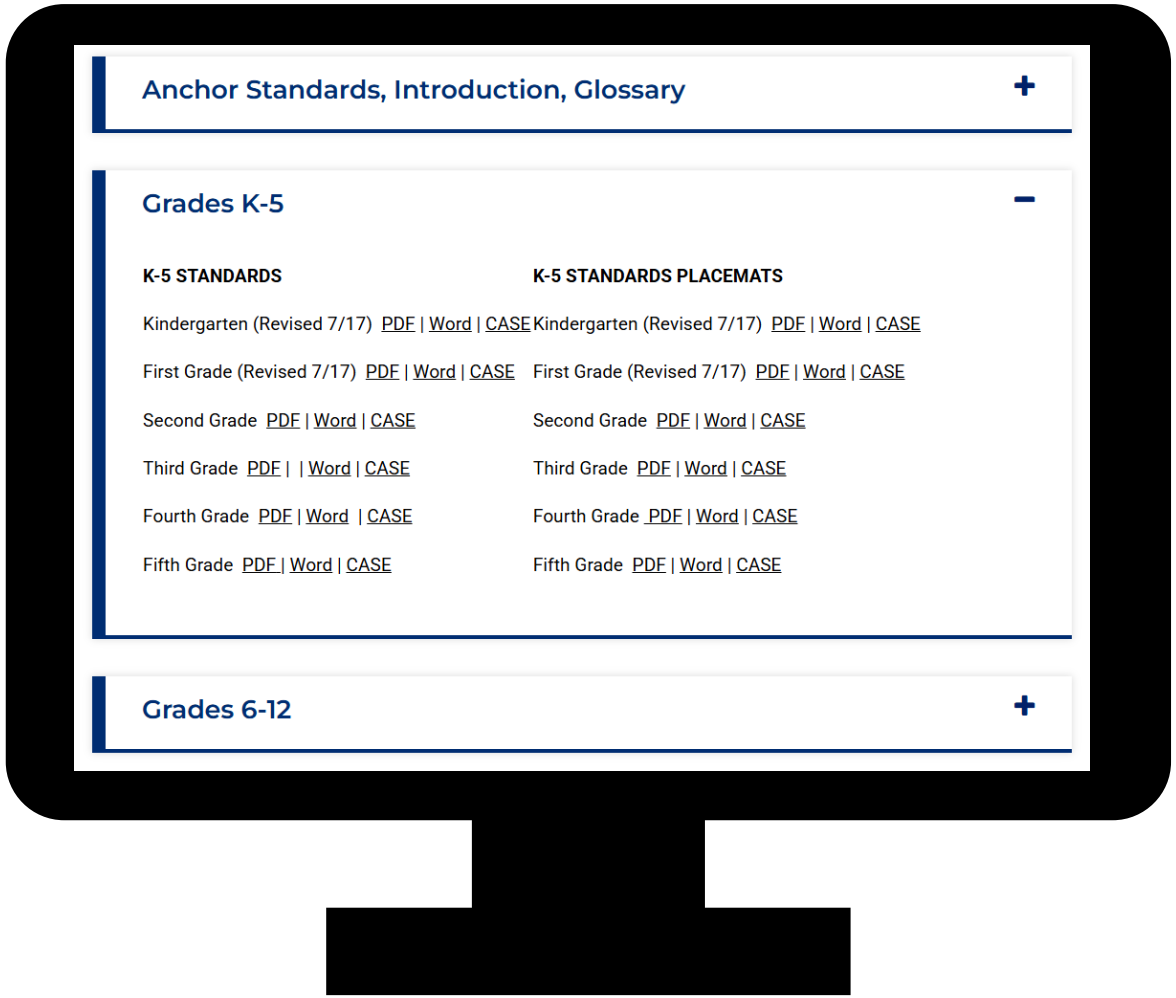
AASA (Arizona's Academic Standards Assessment)
Statewide Assessment for ELA and Math, Grades 3-8

AASA – Computer-Based Testing and Paper-Based Testing Windows (including Special Paper Version tests)					
Content Area	**Grade(s)**	**Number of Test Units**	**Estimated Times**	**Computer-Based Testing Schools**	**Paper-Based Testing Schools**
ELA Writing	Grades 3-8	1	60-90 minutes	April 12-23, 2027	April 12-23, 2027
ELA Oral Reading Fluency	Grade 3	1	30 minutes	April 12-23, 2027	April 12-23, 2027
ELA Reading	Grades 3-8	2	45-75 minutes each	April 12-May 7, 2027	April 12-23, 2027
Math	Grades 3-8	2	60-85 minutes each	April 12-May 7, 2027	April 12-23, 2027

AASA Writing



Instructing with Standards



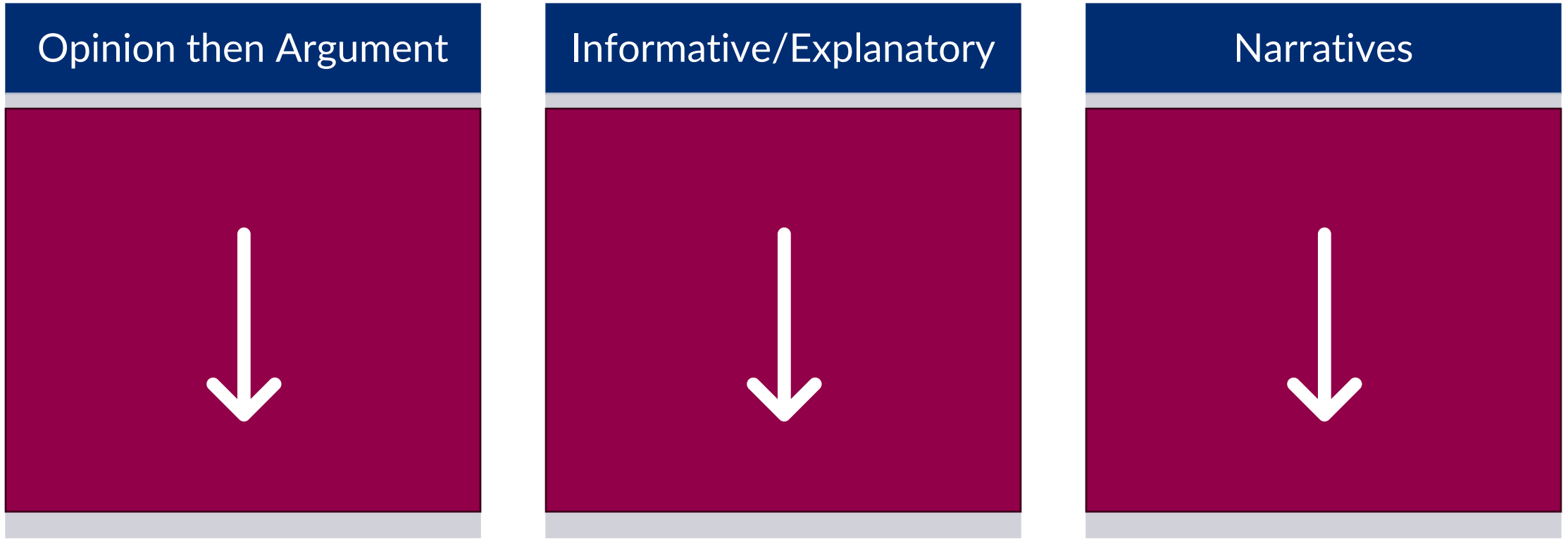
Arizona Standards include Informational Writing, Argumentative Writing, and Narrative Writing.

Instruction should include all writing purposes.

Classroom and benchmark assessments should also include all purposes of writing.

Academic Standards

Text Types and Purposes

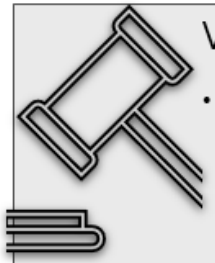


Writing Standards Assessed on AASA

W.1	W.2
Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (**a single sitting** or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Writing Standards 6-12 – Writing Purposes



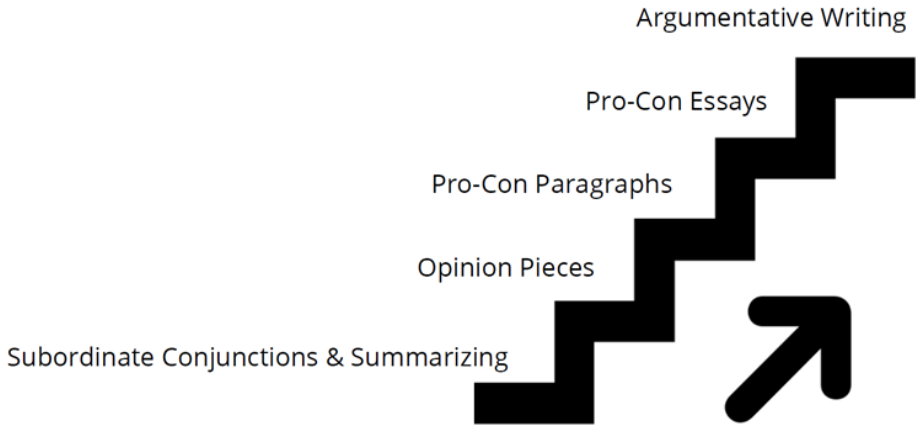
W.1

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Argument

Crucial difference from opinion writing:	Students first need to consider the evidence on both sides and decide which is more convincing and why
	(instead of starting with an opinion and finding reasons to back it up)
Should include:	Claim, reasons, evidence
	emphasis, illustration, and conclusion transitions
	integrate quotations with appropriate introductions and explanations
	Counterclaim and rebuttal (not in 6th)

Don't skip steps. Prerequisite skills are key.



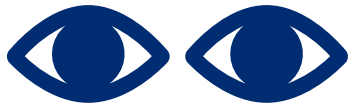
Writing Standards 6-12 – Writing Purposes

W.2

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- literary analyses
- scientific and historical reports
- summaries
- précis writing (gist statements)
- workplace and functional writing; such as, instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and résumés

Types of Evidence



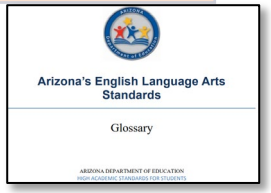
Firsthand Research

- Interviews
- Surveys
- Observations
- Experiments
- Personal experience



Secondhand Research

- Facts and figures
- Interpretations of experiments or events
- Library sources
- Online sources
- Statistics
- Other sources of data



Types of Evidence

Informational Writing

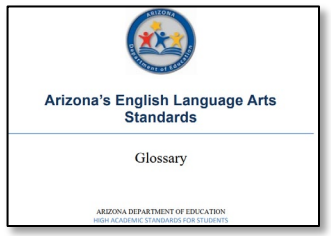
- Provides support for building knowledge of the topic

Argument Writing

- Provides support for debatable claims

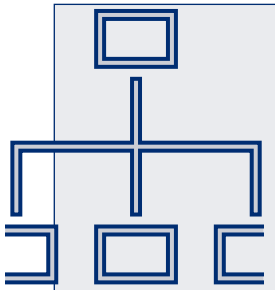
The types of evidence used will be decided by the task, purpose, and audience of the text.

Different disciplines use and value different types of evidence.



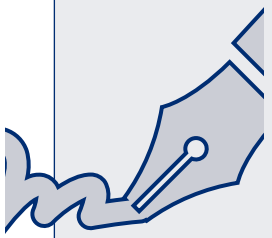
Academic Standards

Writing Standards 6-12 – Production and Distribution of Writing



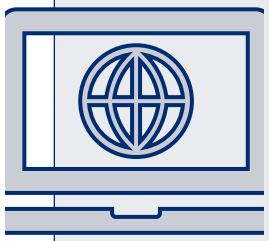
W.4

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.



W.5

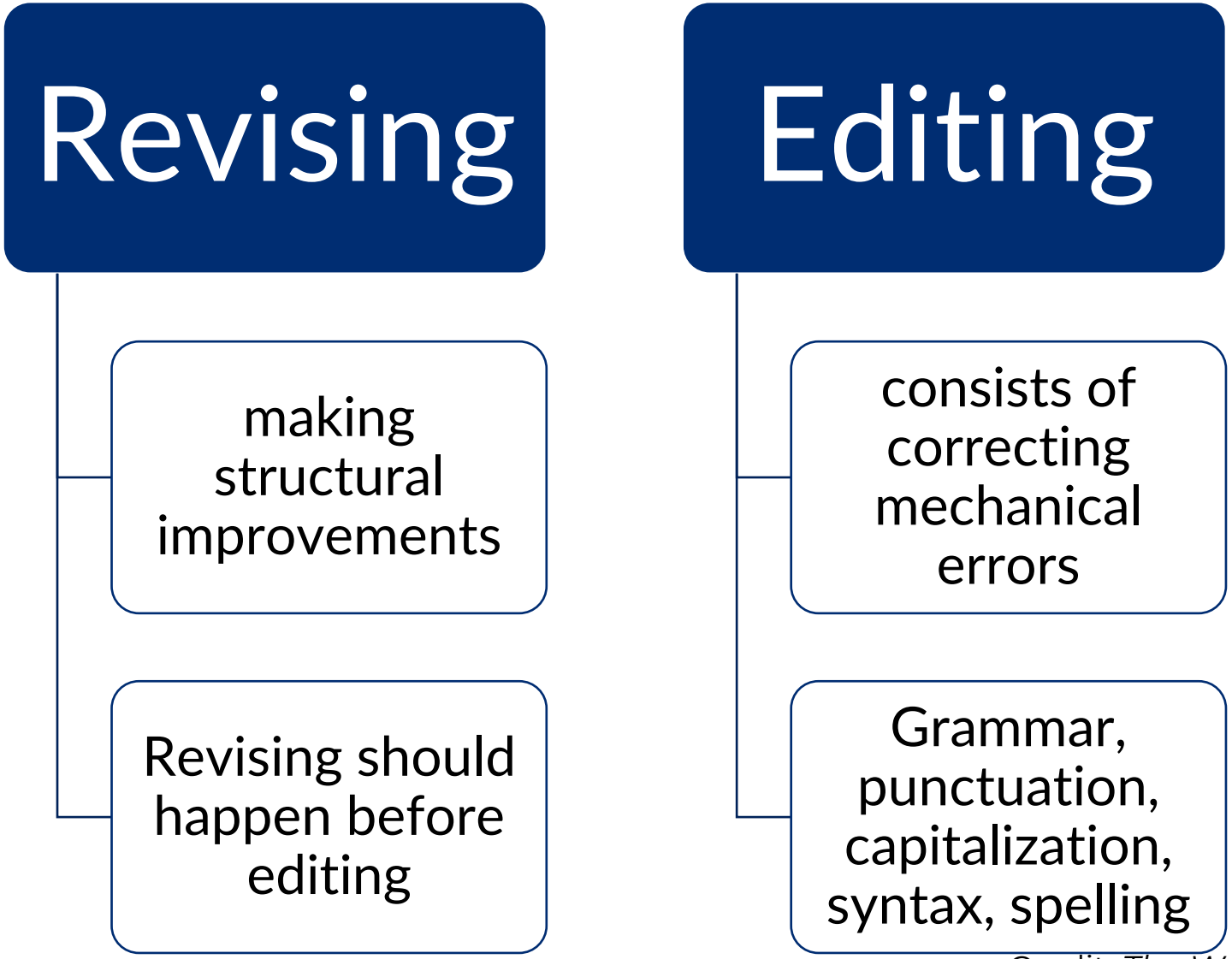
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.



W.6

- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Revising vs. Editing



Academic Standards

Credit: *The Writing Revolution* Chapter 5

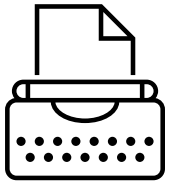
Increasing Writing Opportunities

"Increase how much students write – the more they write, the better they get at writing." (Sedita)



Writing to Learn

- Writing to learn activities can be based on information from classroom instructional practices such as group discussions, teacher presentations, or use of media as video.
- Writing tasks can be general (summarizing, notetaking, personal reflection, compare and contrast) as well as subject specific.



Learning to Write

- Learning to write includes learning two sets of skills:
  - composing skills using the writing process (prewriting, planning, drafting, and revising)
  - Transcription skills (punctuation, capitalization, spelling and handwriting/keyboarding)



Write Write Write

- Writing as much as possible in every class
- Quickwrites

Managing Time for Classroom Assignments and State Assessment

Identify the Writing Purpose and Read and/or Listen to Passages Closely	Highlight or Take Notes of Key Ideas	30-40 minutes
Plan A Response	Organize the Information Gather Evidence Graphic Organizer	20-40 minutes
Write/Type Response	Proofread	20-30 minutes

AASA Writing Resources

AASA Writing Resources - Descriptions

WRITING RUBRICS

- Grades 3-5 Informative-Explanatory Rubric
- Grades 3-5 Opinion Rubric
- Grades 6-8 Informative-Explanatory Rubric
- Grades 6-8 Argumentative Rubric

WRITING GUIDES

- Grades 3-5 Informative-Explanatory
- Grades 3-5 Opinion
- Grades 6 Argumentative
- Grades 6-8 Informative-Explanatory
- Grades 7-8 Argumentative

Achievement Assessments

WRITING RUBRIC GUIDES

- Grades 3-5 Informative
- Grades 3-5 Opinion
- Grades 6-8 Informative
- Grades 6-8 Argumentative

ANNOTATED WRITING SAMPLE GUIDES

- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Grade 5
- Grade 6
- Grade 7
- Grade 8

WRITING PROMPT TEMPLATES

Grade-level prompt templates can be found in the Item Specifications documents for each grade level.

AASA Writing Rubric – Key Elements

Purpose, Focus, and Organization (up to 4 points)

- The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear controlling idea and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness.

Evidence and Elaboration (up to 4 points)

- The response provides thorough and convincing support, citing evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details.

Conventions (up to 2 points)

- The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions.

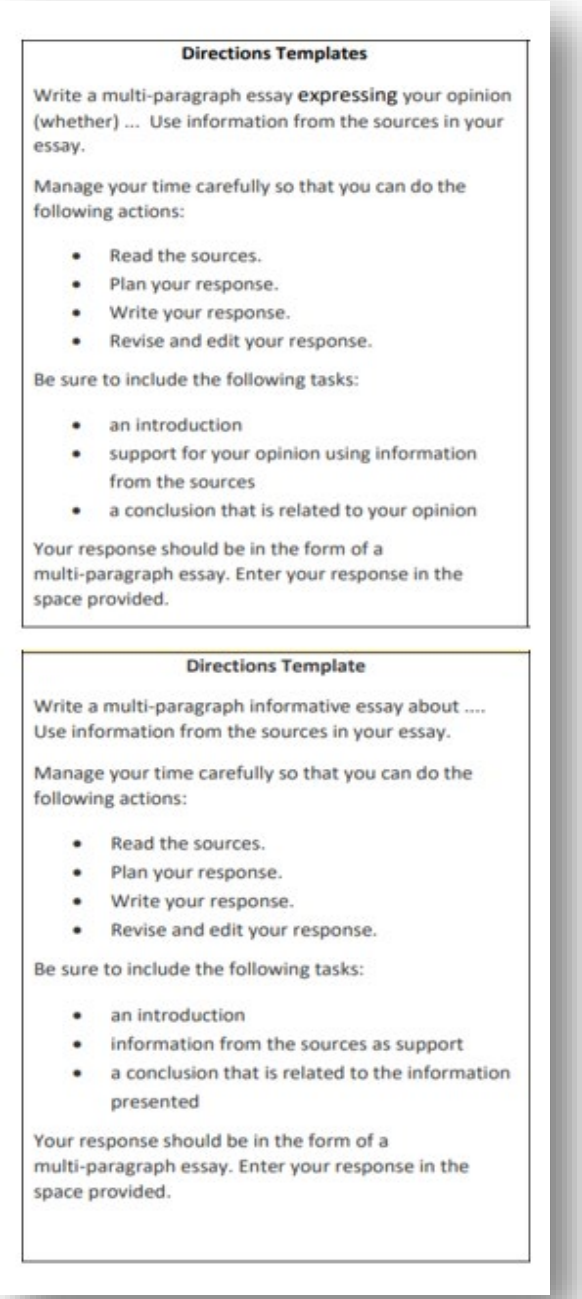
In the Writing Rubric Guide, you will find the Key Elements that are used for scoring.

Use the Writing rubrics and guides to help students understand how they can maximize their points for the Writing portion of the assessment.

AASA Writing Prompt

How to best help your students score points in writing:

- Students read and/or listen to the passages.
- Planning a response can include student-generated graphic organizers, highlighting text, note-taking, etc. A rough draft is not a requirement.
- Time management is required for this writing type, so we recommend that teachers set a time limit for Evidence-Based Writing assignments in the classroom.
- Writing is an on-demand quick write meant to mimic a classroom assignment.



Directions Templates

Write a multi-paragraph essay **expressing** your opinion (whether) ... Use information from the sources in your essay.

Manage your time carefully so that you can do the following actions:

- Read the sources.
- Plan your response.
- Write your response.
- Revise and edit your response.

Be sure to include the following tasks:

- an introduction
- support for your opinion using information from the sources
- a conclusion that is related to your opinion

Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Enter your response in the space provided.

Directions Template

Write a multi-paragraph informative essay about .... Use information from the sources in your essay.

Manage your time carefully so that you can do the following actions:

- Read the sources.
- Plan your response.
- Write your response.
- Revise and edit your response.

Be sure to include the following tasks:

- an introduction
- information from the sources as support
- a conclusion that is related to the information presented

Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Enter your response in the space provided.

Frequently Asked Questions

Citations

- Since the format of the citations are not mentioned in the standards, AASA does not require a specific format.
- Students may use any format such as APA, MLA, Chicago, or informal citations such as referencing the passage and paragraph number.

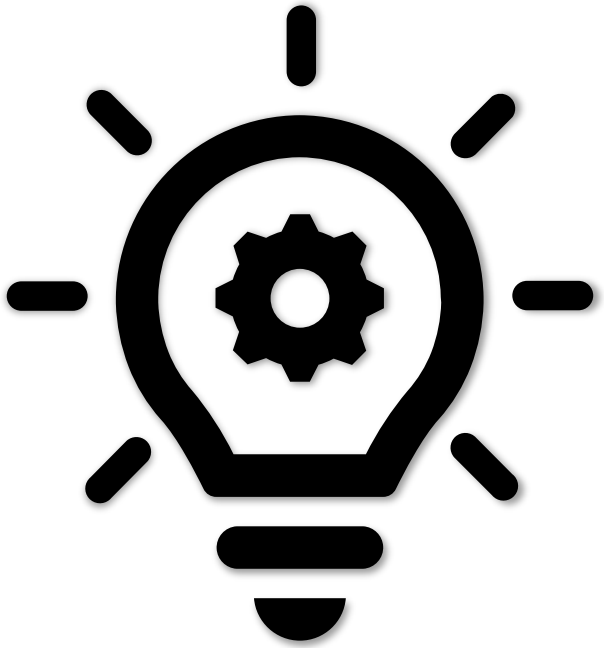
Showing Evidence

- Students may show evidence in their response by using any format such as:
  - Quotes
  - Paraphrasing
  - Textual evidence

Copy Match (CM)

- Students who receive a CM rating did not include enough of their own thoughts for the response to be scored.
- At least **30%** of the response should be the student's own words.
- Students need to synthesize and elaborate on their ideas.

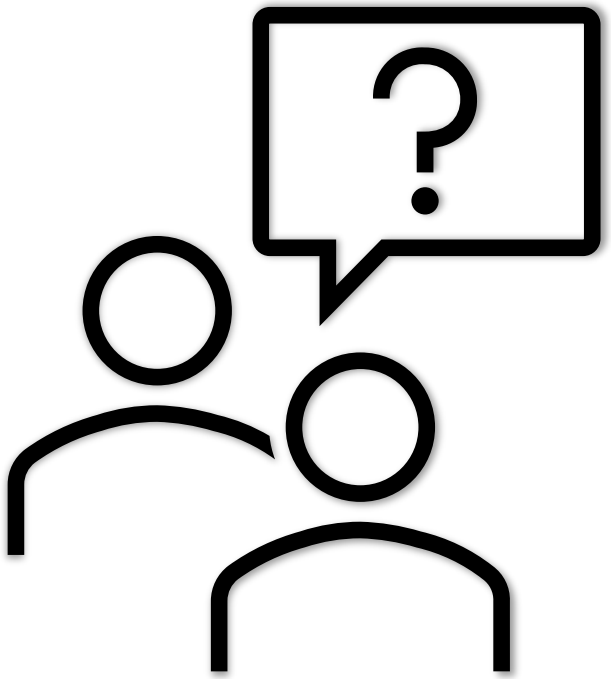
Closing Reflection



SHARE in CHAT - Reflect on your own practice:

- How will you support 3-8 grade students throughout the school year with the ELA standards?

Questions?



Thank you so much for learning with us today!

Please let us know if you have lingering questions or concerns.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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