# Building a Culture of Writing
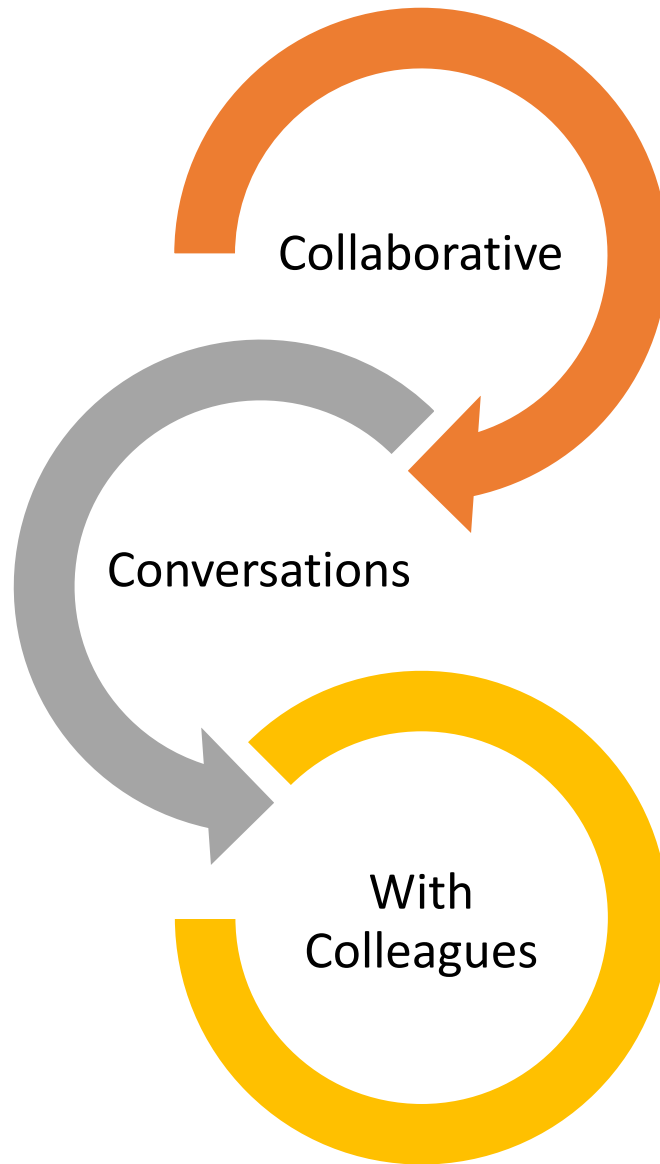
Collaborative

Conversations

With Colleagues

## Professional Learning Guide (K-5)
## Assessing Writing

**How to Use this Guide**

This guide is designed to support facilitators with planning for the webinar and conducting the 90-minute follow-up session after the webinar. The guide is also designed to support Tier I participants who are self-directed and participating in the series at their own pace. Included in this guide are the following:

- descriptions of each session outlining the content
- guiding questions for participants to think about as they view the webinar
- references for the research-based practices shared by presenters
- activities to deepen participants' understanding of webinar content
- resource materials to support participants with developing plans for classroom implementation

Following the webinar, facilitators will then guide participants through a series of discussions and activities designed to deepen their understanding of webinar content. Participants will also work to create next steps for individual classroom implementation. Upon returning to their building and implementing the high-quality instructional strategies shared in the webinar, participants are encouraged to further collaborate with colleagues in their schools through Professional Learning Communities and/or peer observations. It is suggested that participants share practices with colleagues across *all* content areas.

**The outline for the 90-minute, face-to-face session is as follows:**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Discussion of Webinar Content* | Suggested time: 10 minutes |
| *Small Group Work* | Suggested time: 15 minutes |
| *Break* | Suggested time: 5 minutes |
| *Plan for Implementation* | Suggested time: 40 minutes |
| *Share plan* | Suggested time: 10 minutes |
| *Reflection* | Suggested time: 10 minutes |
| | |
| | Total time: 90 minutes |

**Things to Consider for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Facilitators**

Each session opens with an **Activator** that includes questions for participants to consider

prior to viewing the webinar.  Facilitators can have participants share their responses orally,

complete a written response or "hold" their thinking.  Following the webinar is **Opening Moves**.

This is a Think-Pair-Share activity that engages participants in collaborative conversations as

they reflect on the webinar content and debrief the concepts and ideas shared by Presenters

and Co-Presenters.  Facilitators will then guide participants through the **Work Period** where

they will participate in a small group activity to deepen their understanding of the instructional

practices highlighted during the webinar, create a plan for classroom implementation, and

share their plan with the group.  The session ends with **Closing Moves** where participants will

engage in a reflection activity.

**Before viewing:**

The **Activator** should be done prior to viewing the webinar and take no more than 10

minutes.  The activator questions are designed for participants to ponder as they prepare to

engage in the webinar.  Facilitators can also choose to have participants write a response using

the following:

*Carousel Brainstorming*

Post activator questions or on poster paper.
Divide your group into smaller teams to match the number of questions you have.
Give a different color marker to each team, and have each team start at a particular
question.
At each question, participants should brainstorm responses or points they want to make
about the posted question.
After 2-3 of minutes with each question, signal the teams to move to the next question,
until all teams have responded to all questions.

*View with a Question in Mind*

Before viewing the webinar, have participants review the session overview and objective(s). From these, ask them to develop a question that comes to mind. After developing the question, encourage them to view the webinar with their question in mind and note new learning, important information, connections, and questions they may have.

Harvey, S., & Daniels, H. (2009). Comprehension and collaboration: Inquiry circles in action. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

**After viewing:**

**"Opening Moves"** is a post-webinar activity that engages participants in collaborative conversations as they reflect on the webinar content. It is designed as a Think-Pair-Share activity but again facilitators can utilize alternative methods for a collaborative reflection. Here are a few suggestions:

***The National School Reform Faculty's 4 "A"s Protocol***

- What **Assumptions** do the presenters in the webinar hold?
- What do you **Agree** with in the presentation?
- What do you want to **Argue** with in the presentation?
- What parts of the presentation do you want to **Aspire** to?

Resource:

http://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/4_a_text_0.pdf

***Visible Thinking Protocol***

I used to think_____, but now I think_____ **or**

I used to think _____ and I still think_____

Have participants share and explain their shifts in thinking.

Resource:
*http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/VisibleThinking_html_files/03_ThinkingRoutines/03c_Core_routines/UsedToThink/UsedToThink_Routine.htm*

**<u>Things to Consider for Tier I Participants</u>**

Each session opens with an **Activator** that includes questions for participants to consider

prior to viewing the webinar.  Participants can complete a written response or "hold" their

thinking as they prepare to view the webinar.  While Tier I is self-paced, it is suggested that

participants view the entire webinar in one session and make note of key ideas. Following the

webinar is **Opening Moves**.  This is an activity designed to debrief the concepts and ideas

shared by Presenters and Co-Presenters.  Tier I participants will complete a written response to

the questions in this section.   Following **Opening Moves** is the **Work Period**.  Tier I participants

will notice that the **Work Period** engages participants in a *small group* activity to deepen their

understanding of the instructional practices highlighted during the webinar and allows time for

participants to create a plan for classroom implementation.  **Although Tier I participants will**

**likely work through the series independently, they are still encouraged to work through the**

**activity.**  After creating a plan for implementation, participants are further encouraged to share

their new learning and plan with a colleague. The session ends with **Closing Moves** where

participants will complete a written reflection.
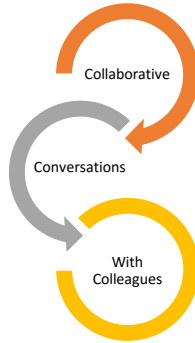
## Session 2:  Assessing Writing

*Lead Presenter: Dr. Roberta Gardner*                    *Co-Presenter Julie Owens*

Session Overview: During this 90-minute session, we will delve into the wealth of knowledge a teacher can gain through assessing student's writing and how this information can be effectively used to guide further instruction.

 The presenters will discuss and review multiple assessments used in evaluating student's writing such as conferring, rubrics, and writer's notebooks.  We will examine a portion of rubrics that teachers commonly use to assess writing in the classroom: analytic, holistic, and teacher made rubrics.  After discussing the types, we will then evaluate the pros and cons of each type of rubric.  The presenter will model how to effectively assess writing using rubrics, while also emphasizing the importance of giving meaningful feedback to students.

 The presenters will then discuss a valuable area of writing assessment that is often dismissed due to time constraints: Conferring.  We will discuss the many ways to conduct writing conferences and share examples of writing notebooks used to collect data from the conferences.

 Finally, we will explore how these assessments can be used to better understand our students, help to create authentic assignments, and guide us to create more engaging, effective instruction.

**Objective(s):** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- employ authentic assessments that are connected to specific outcomes
- effectively use assessment data to guide instruction

- How do you currently assess student writing?
- How do you use writing assessments to guide instruction?
- What are some of the barriers you have experienced when it comes to assessing student writing?

**Guide for Follow-up Session**

**Materials:** Writing standards    Writing samples   Writing rubrics   Conference form

**Opening Moves**

*Discussion of Webinar Content (Think-Pair-Share)*          *Suggested time: 10 minutes*

- What challenges have you experienced when it comes to assessing student writing? Share what have you done to overcome those challenges.
- What has been your experience with some of the writing assessments shared in the webinar?  What value can you glean from other assessments shared that you are unfamiliar with using?
- What is one take-way from today's session that you feel can be implemented immediately into your practice to support you with evaluating student writing and planning future instruction?

*Break*                                                                                   *Suggested time: 5 minutes*

**Work Period**

*Step 1. Small Group Work*                                            *Suggested time: 25 minutes*

a. Say, "It is imperative to assess students' writing along the way to ensure the students are grasping the concepts being taught. These formative assessments allow you to guide your instruction, differentiate based on individual writer's needs, and re-teach common misconceptions in instruction and standards that have previously been taught. Choosing the correct rubric to assess the information that the student has learned is essential.  Keep in mind that a rubric rarely remains the same throughout the entire school year because we continue to learn new skills throughout the year so the rubric will continue to evolve."
b. Have participants get into groups of 2-3.  They need to determine who will be the recorder.

c. Provide each participant with copies of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade writing standards, student writing sample, and both persuasive writing rubrics. Give each recorder one copy of the conference form.

d. Explain they will examine both rubrics to determine which one their group would use to assess the writing if it was written in November after only these writing sessions below have been taught on persuasive writing. **(Be sure to post the sessions for context)**
   ▪ Writer's study mentor texts to understand the genre of persuasive texts.
   ▪ Writer's use mentor texts to identify effective arguments and evidence.
   ▪ Writer's experiment with the different sides of an issue.
   ▪ Writer's plan using a persuasive graphic organizer (which includes): 1 opinion, 3 reasons, at least 1 piece of evidence for each, concluding statement.
   ▪ Teacher models drafting an essay from the graphic organizer.
   ▪ Writer's choose one topic and state an opinion and begin formulating their arguments with evidence, and begin drafting a persuasive essay from their plans.
   ▪ Writer's gather information from various sources to support their persuasive essay.

e. Explain to participants they will use the formative rubric to assess where the student is currently based on the lessons that have been taught.

f. Say, "While your group is assessing, make notes on the conference sheet about the strengths and weaknesses of this writer that can be addressed at your next writing conference."

g. Ask, "What are some writing mini-lessons that may need to be retaught? What lessons would logically be next steps for this student and/or class?"

h. Allow time for groups to assess the writing piece then have the recorder from each group share their scores along with feedback from the conference form and next steps for writing instruction.


*Step 2. Create a Plan for Implementation*                                    *Suggested time: 30 Minutes*


Say, "Think about your existing approach to evaluating student writing. What are some additional strategies you learned today that could support you with effectively determining student needs and designing instruction to address their needs? Consider the writing genre that you are currently studying. Create a writing prompt in response to a piece of literature students have recently read then design a rubric to assess their writing. Use some of the sample rubrics shared during the webinar as well as the rubrics used during the work period as a guide.

*Step 3. Share plan*                                        *Suggested time: 10 minutes*

Have participants group themselves into groups of 3-4.  Allow time for them to share their writing task and rubric with group members.

<span style="color:orange">**Closing Moves**</span>

*Reflect on what we have learned*                            *Suggested time: 10 minutes*

Use the 3-2-1 Activity as a framework for reflecting on today's session

**3-2-1 Activity**

| 3 | *List 3 new things you learned* |
|---|---|
| 2 | *List 2 things you found MOST interesting* |
| 1 | *List 1 question that you still have about assessing writing* |

**Writing Standards**

**ELAGSE5W1:** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.

b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.

c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., *consequently*, *specifically*).

d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

**ELAGSE5W4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in Standards 1–3 above.)

**ELAGSE5W5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Standards 1–3 up to and including grade 5.)

**ELAGSE5W6:** With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.

**ELAGSE5W8:** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

**ELAGSE5W9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Writing Prompt:** Some students want to have drink and snack machines at your school. Many parents, however, think those foods are not healthy for students.

What do you think about having drink and snack machines in school? Write a letter to convince the principal that drink and snack machines should or should not be allowed at your school.

## Paper 6

Honestly I think the adults are correct that the juicy mouth watering drinks and delightful snacks, but sometimes the children will need a delicouse snack incuse the parents accidently forgot to pack the perfect snack. I would advise the adults to not let the mind blowing children abuse the candy bars, Possibly the adults at the school should put water bottles in the drink bars and nutri grain bars in the snack bars. I will say it again, I want the snack bars and drink bars, because children might starve or no food at all, If the parents doont want snack or drinks then they should put some snacks with hardly any calories, That is all I have to say about how I feel if you took away the snack bars and sweet and sour drinks.

(Georgia Department of Education, 2013)

## Persuasive Essay Rubric #1

| Rating →<br><br>Indicator ↓ | Exceeds Standard<br>3 | Meets Standards<br>2 | Does Not Meet Standards<br>1 | Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **States Opinion** | Well defined statement presents specific issue and writer's opinion clearly in the introduction paragraph. | The writer presents an opinion and point of view, but it is somewhat vague or confusing to the reader. | The writer hints at an issue but the opinion is unclear and does not have a clear point of view. | |
| **Defends Opinion with reasons** | Has 3 clearly defined reasons that defend the writer's opinion in a logical manner. | Has 2 clearly defined reasons that defend the writer's opinion. | Has 1 clearly defined reason that defends the writer's opinion OR has no clearly defined reasons that defend the writer's opinion. | |
| **Provides Evidence** | Each of the 3 reasons has at least 2 pieces of evidence that logically support the reason and reflects a consistent point of view. | Each of the defined reasons have at least 1 piece of evidence to support the reason. | The reasons do not have clearly relevant evidence to support the reasons or the evidence does not reflect the writer's point of view. | |
| Organization | The essay has a clear introduction paragraph, 3 body paragraphs organized by reasons, and a conclusion paragraph | The writer did not organize the introduction and reasons into paragraphs, yet the reader was able to follow the point of view. | The writer had no organizational structure and this caused confusion on the writer's point of view. | |
| **Conclusion**<br><br>(1 pt.) | *A conclusion paragraph exists that restates the writer's opinion and summarizes the reasons.* | | | |
| **Style**<br><br>**(1 pt.)** | The writer used rich language that would affect the reader.  Transition words were used, but were not formulaic. | | | |

## Total:          /12

**Comments/Feedback:**

# Persuasive Essay Rubric # 2

|  | Exceeds Expectations 4 | Meets Expectations 3 | Approaching Expectations 2 | Expectations Not Met 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ideas** | Clearly establishes a position that appeals to logic and emotion<br><br>Extensively develops the writer's position with specific details, statistics, and examples.<br><br>Aggressively anticipates and counters the audience's arguments in regards to the writer's position | Clearly establishes a position that appeals to logic and emotion.<br><br>Develops the writer's position with specific details, statistics, and examples.<br><br>Anticipates and counters the audience's arguments in regards to the writer's position | Attempts to establish a position that appeals to logic and emotion.<br><br>Minimally develops the writer's position with specific details, statistics, and examples.<br><br>Attempts to anticipate and counters the audience's arguments in regards to the writer's position. | No attempt to establish a position that appeals to logic and emotion.<br><br>No development of the writer's position with specific details, statistics, and examples.<br><br>No attempt to anticipate and counters the audience's arguments in regards to the writer's position |
| **Organization** | Closure convinces reader to take action upon stated position.<br><br>Sustained focus.<br><br>Appropriate and logical progression for the purpose of persuasion.<br><br>Related ideas support a specific side of an issue.<br><br>Varied transitional elements effectively link ideas and parts of the paper. | Closure convinces reader toward a stated position.<br><br>Sustained focus.<br><br>Logical progress of ideas for the purpose of persuasion.<br><br>Frequent use of related ideas support a specific side of an issue.<br><br>Transitions are evident. | Closure makes an attempt to convince reader toward a stated position.<br><br>Attempt to focus.<br><br>Limited logical progression of ideas for the purpose of persuasion.<br><br>Limited use of related ideas support a specific side of an issue.<br><br>May lack transitions between ideas. | No evidence of closure.<br><br>Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus<br><br>Inappropriate or illogical progression of ideas for the purpose of persuasion. Related ideas do not support a specific side of an issue.<br><br>Few, if any, transitions between ideas. |
| **Style** | Effective use of appropriate persuasive word choices.<br><br>Uses a lively writing voice to engage the reader.<br><br>Effective variety of sentence beginnings, structures, and lengths. | Uses appropriate persuasive word choices.<br><br>Attempts to use lively writing voice to engage the reader.<br><br>Attempts to vary sentence beginnings, structures, and lengths. | Limited evidence of appropriate persuasive word choices.<br><br>Writing voice is bland and does not engage the reader.<br><br>Little variety in sentence beginnings, structures, and lengths | No evidence of appropriate persuasive word choices.<br><br>Writing voice is not noticeable.<br><br>Lacks evidence of variety in sentence beginnings, structures, and lengths. |
| **Conventions** | Contains correct sentences, usage, grammar, and spelling that make the writer's ideas understandable. | Some errors are present, but they do interfere with meaning | Errors interrupt the flow of communication and may interfere with meaning. | Errors prevent the reader from understanding the writer's meaning. |

# Writing Conference Form

| Date | Strengths | Areas of Growth | Next Steps | Notes from Conference |
|------|-----------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------|
|      |           |                 |            |                       |

# Writing Lesson Ideas

| Lessons to Reteach | Next Steps for Student/Class |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
|                    |                              |

**3-2-1 Reflection Activity**

| 3 | List 3 NEW things you learned |
|---|---|
| 2 | List 2 things you found MOST interesting |
| 1 | List 1 QUESTION that you still have about assessing writing |

Thompson, M. (2009). *Learning focused solutions.* Boone, NC: Learning Focused.

References

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