

Continuum for Information Writing

(updated 11/ 12/12)

	Pre-K	K	1	2
	Structure	Structure	Structure	Structure
Overall	I told and drew pictures about a topic I know about.	I told, drew and wrote about a topic.	I taught my readers about a topic.	I taught readers some important points about a subject.
Lead	I started by drawing or saying something.	I told what my topic was.	In the beginning, I named my topic and got my reader's attention.	In the beginning, I tried to interest readers and to tell them what my piece is about.
Transitions	I kept on working.	I put different things I know about the topic on my pages.	I told different parts about my topic on different pages.	I let used words like <i>and</i> , <i>also</i> to show I had more to say
Ending	After I said, drew, and "wrote" all I could about my topic, I ended it.	I have a last part or page.	I wrote an ending.	I wrote some sentences or a section at the end to wrap up my piece.
Organization	On my paper, there is a place for the drawing and a place where I tried to write words.	I told, drew and wrote information across pages.	I told about my topic, part by part.	My writing has different parts. Each part tells different information about the topic.
	Development	Development	Development	Development
Elaboration	I put more and then more on the page.	I drew and wrote important things about the topic.	I put facts in my writing to teach people about my topic.	I used different kinds of information like facts, definitions, details, steps, tips.

	Pre-K	K	1	2
Description	I said, drew, and “wrote” things I know about the topic.	I told, drew, and wrote some details about the topic.	I used labels and words to give facts.	I tried to include the words that show I’m an expert on the topic.
	Language Conventions	Language Conventions	Language Conventions	Language Conventions
Spelling	I can read my pictures and some of my words. I tried to make words.	I can read my writing. I wrote a letter for the sounds I hear. I used the Word Wall to help me spell.	I used all I know about words and chunks (“at,” “op,” “it”...) to help me spell. I spelled the Word Wall Words right and used the Word Wall to help me spell other words.	To spell a word, I used what I know about spelling patterns (“tion,” “er,” “ly”, etc.) I spelled all of the Word Wall words correctly and used the Word Wall to help me figure out how to spell other words.
Punctuation	I can label pictures. I can write my name.	I put spaces between words. I used lower case letters unless capitals were needed. I wrote capital letters to start every sentence.	I ended sentences with punctuation. I used a capital letter for names. I used commas in dates and lists	I used quotation marks to show what people said. When I used words like <i>can’t</i> and <i>don’t</i> , I put in the apostrophe.

	3	4	5
	Structure	Structure	Structure
Overall	I taught readers information about a subject. I put in ideas, observations, and questions.	My writing teaches readers different things about a subject. I put facts, details, quotes, and ideas into each part.	I used different kinds of information to teach about aspects of the subject. Sometimes I include little essays, stories, or “how-to” sections in my writing.
Lead	My beginning gets readers ready to learn a lot of information about the subject.	I hooked my reader by explaining why the subject matters, telling a surprising fact, or giving a big picture. I let readers know that I will teach them different things about the subject.	I wrote an introduction that helps the reader get interested in and understand the subject. I let the reader know the subtopics that I’ll be developing later, and the sequence.
Transitions	I used words to show sequence like <i>before, after, then, later</i> . I also used words to show what didn’t fit like <i>however</i> and <i>but</i> .	I used words in each section that help the reader understand how one piece of information connects with others. If the section is written in sequence, I used words such as <i>before, later, next, then, after</i> . If the section is organized in kinds or parts, I used words such as <i>another, also, for example</i> .	When I wrote about results, I used words and phrases like <i>consequently, as a result, because of this</i> . When I compared information, I used phrases such as <i>in contrast, by comparison, especially</i> . In narrative parts, I used phrases that go with stories such as <i>a little later, three hours later</i> . In the sections that state an opinion, I used words such as <i>but the most important reason, for example, consequently</i> .
Ending	I wrote an ending that draws conclusions, asks questions, or suggests ways readers might respond.	My ending reminds readers of my subject and may suggest a follow-up action, or leave them with a final insight. I added my thoughts, feelings, ideas or questions about the subject at the end.	In my conclusion I restated the main points and may have offered a final thought or question for readers to consider.

	3	4	5
	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)
Organization	I grouped my information into parts. Each part of is mostly about one thing that connects to my big topic.	I grouped information into sections and used paragraphs and sometimes chapters to separate sections. Each section has information that is mostly about the same thing. I may have used headings and subheadings.	I organized my writing into a sequence of separate sections. I may have used headings and subheadings to highlight the separate sections. I wrote each section according to an organizational plan shaped partly by the genre of the section.
	Development	Development	Development
Elaboration	I wrote facts, definitions, details, observations about my topic and explained some of them.	I taught my reader different things about the subject. I chose these subtopics because they important and interesting. I included different kinds of facts and details like numbers, names, and examples. I got my information from talking to people, reading books and from my own knowledge and observations.	I explained different aspects of a subject. I included a variety of information like examples, details, dates, and quotes. I used trusted sources and gave credit when appropriate. I made sure to research any details that would add to my writing. I worked to make my information understandable to readers. To do this, I may have referred to earlier parts of my text, summarized background information. I let readers know when I was discussing facts and when I was offering my own thinking.

	3	4	5
	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)
Elaboration (cont'd)		I made choices about <i>organization</i> . I might have used compare/contrast, cause/effect or pro/con. I may have used diagrams, charts, headings, bold words, and definition boxes to help me teach my readers.	I might have used different organizational structures within my piece including stories, essays, and how-to sections.
Description	I chose expert words to teach readers a lot about the subject. I taught information in a way to interest readers. I may have used drawings, captions or diagrams.	<p>I made deliberate word choices to teach my reader. I may have done this by using and repeating key words about my topic.</p> <p>When it felt right to do so, I chose interesting comparisons and used figurative language to clarify my points.</p> <p>I made choices about which information was best to include/not include.</p> <p>I used a teaching tone. To do so, I may have used phrases like <i>that means...</i>, <i>what that really means is...</i>, <i>let me explain...</i></p>	<p>I made deliberate word choices to have an effect on my reader. I used the vocabulary of experts and explained key terms.</p> <p>I worked to include the exact phrase, comparison or image that would explain information and concepts.</p> <p>Not only did I make choices about which details and facts to include, I also made choices about how to convey my information so it would make sense to my readers. I blended storytelling, summary and other genres as needed and used text features.</p> <p>I used a consistent, inviting teaching tone, and varied my sentences to help my reader take in and understand the information.</p>

	3	4	5
	Language Conventions	Language Conventions	Language Conventions
Spelling	<p>I used what I know about spelling patterns to help me spell and edit before I wrote my final draft.</p> <p>I got help from others to check my spelling and punctuation before I wrote my final draft.</p>	<p>I used what I know about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit. I used the word wall and dictionaries to help me when needed.</p>	<p>I used what I know about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit. I used the word wall and dictionaries to help me when needed.</p>
Punctuation	<p>I punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks.</p> <p>While writing, I put punctuation at the end of every sentence.</p> <p>I wrote in ways that helped readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another.</p>	<p>When writing long, complex sentences, I used commas to make them clear and correct.</p>	<p>I used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences. (<i>As you might know, ...</i>)</p> <p>I used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. I used punctuation to cite my sources.</p>

	6	7	8	9-10
	Structure	Structure	Structure	Structure
Overall	I conveyed ideas and information about a subject. Sometimes I incorporated essays, explanations, stories, or procedural passages into my writing.	I conveyed ideas and information about a subject and convey its significance. I incorporated a variety of text structures as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages.	I taught explicit concepts and made it clear why these concepts are important and when information functions as important examples. I incorporated a variety of text structures and formatting as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages as well as hyperlinks or digital technology to make concepts and information compelling and accessible.	I matched my publishing mode to my purpose and audience. Within my chosen format and genre, I adapted text structures to convey concepts and link information to these as examples.
Lead	I wrote an introduction that interests readers, perhaps with a quote or significant fact. I may have included my own ideas about the topic. I let the reader know the subtopics that I'll be developing later and how my text will unfold.	I interested the reader in the topic by explaining its significance, or providing a compelling fact, statistic, or anecdote. I made it clear what parts of this topic this text will tackle, and how the text will unfold.	I interested the reader immediately in the topic by making its significance clear, or by introducing a provocative stance. I let the reader know the audience the text is intended for and how the text will unfold.	I established the significance of the topic by explaining its social, cultural, scientific, or political relevance, or by introducing a provocative stance. I spoke directly to the question of audience, making it clear if this text is an introductory text or one for more expert readers, and laying out an organizational structure for the reader.

	6	7	8	9-10
	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)
Transitions	<p>I used transition words to help my readers understand how different bits of information and different parts of my writing fit together.</p> <p>I used transitions to help connect ideas, information, and examples, and to compare and contrast and imply relationships such as <i>for instance, in addition, therefore, such as, because of, as a result, in contrast to, unlike, despite, on the other hand.</i></p>	<p>I used transitions to link information with concepts. The transitions help the reader follow from part to part and make it clear when information is an example of a bigger idea, is linked to another part, or introduces something new. These transitions might include <i>specifically, for instance, related to, just as, on the other hand, turning to.</i></p>	<p>I used transitions to lead the reader across parts of the text and to help the reader return to earlier parts, using phrases such as <i>just as, returning to, similar to, unlike, in a departure from.</i></p> <p>If I provide hyperlinks or digital text, I provide clear links back to the original text.</p>	<p>My transitions make clear the relationship between parts of the text, and also between cited information and original ideas. These transitions might include <i>adapted from, excerpted from, according to, building from, revealed in, suggested by, illustrated by, demonstrated in</i></p>
Ending	<p>In my conclusion I restated the important ideas and offered a final insight or implication for readers to consider.</p>	<p>In my conclusion, I suggested clear implications to and strengthen the potential significance of the topic.</p>	<p>In my conclusion, I suggested implications, built up the significance and alluded to potential challenges.</p>	<p>In my conclusion, I strengthened implications, suggested applications, and alluded to multiple perspectives or potential challenges.</p>

	6	7	8	9-10
	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)	Structure (cont'd)
Organization	<p>I used subheadings and/or clear introductory transitions to separate my sections.</p> <p>I made deliberate choices about how to order sections and information within sections. I chose structures and text features to help me emphasize key points. I used transitions, introductions, and topic sentences to pop out my main points. I wrote multiple paragraphs in some sections.</p>	<p>The parts of my piece are arranged purposefully to best suit my purpose. I used various organizational structures, formatting, graphics and multimedia (when appropriate) in order to clarify information and explain concepts. I made it clear how information related to concepts.</p>	<p>I made choices about when and how to use formatting, graphics, multimedia as well as transitions to organize information into broader categories and clarify how sections are ordered and connected.</p> <p>The ordering of sections and information builds on each other and introduces concepts in a logical fashion.</p>	<p>My organizational structure introduces and layers concepts and information and my publishing platform is appropriate for the discipline and intended audience.</p> <p>The sections build upon each other so that the reader builds knowledge and is led to more sophisticated understandings.</p>

	6	7	8	9-10
	Development	Development	Development	Development
Elaboration	<p>I chose a focused subject, included a variety of information and organized my points to best inform my readers.</p> <p>I used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic and gave the sources credit for important excerpts in the text and in a bibliography.</p>	<p>I developed a few key concepts, supported these with examples and relevant information gathered through a variety of sources (e.g. qualitative and/or quantitative information gathered through research such as surveys, interviews, observation, experiments, and/or textual research) and taught my reader what he or she needed to know to understand my points.</p> <p>I incorporated sources and cited them, including visual information and/or data and/or historical anecdotes.</p>	<p>I introduced and developed some key concepts, showing how they are related and explaining with examples and significant information. I showed an awareness of my audience's expertise in choosing what to explain.</p> <p>I incorporated trustworthy and significant sources, citing information, quotes, and charts and diagrams, as well as anecdotes. I explained when a source seems problematic.</p>	<p>I introduced and developed some key concepts, giving some context and background and making it clear why these concepts are important. I used examples to clarify, explain, and interest. I chose examples that would be relevant to and accessible to my audience.</p> <p>I made choices about what kind of data to include and when (e.g. qualitative v. quantitative), according to my knowledge of my audience, my purpose, and the potential application of my topic. I provided citations and also digital links to helpful sources when appropriate.</p>

	6	7	8	9-10
	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)
Elaboration (cont'd)	<p>I worked to make my information understandable and interesting. To do this, I may have referred to earlier parts of my text, summarized background information, raised questions, considered possible implications.</p> <p>I might have used different organizational structures within my piece including stories, essays, and how-to sections.</p>	<p>I related information back to the major concepts I wanted to develop and analyzed what the information showed.</p> <p>I worked to make my topic compelling as well as understandable. I focused on why it mattered and why the audience should care about it</p>	<p>I analyzed the relevance of my information as well as how the information supported the development of major concepts.</p> <p>I considered my audience and worked to make them care about the topic as well as understand it. I focused on parts of the topic that were most significant to my audience.</p>	<p>I analyzed the relevance and significance of each source and, if appropriate, its connection to the development of understandings in the topic.</p> <p>I considered how to help my reader gain a thorough understanding of the significance, complexity, and implications of the topic.</p>
Description	<p>I chose my words carefully to explain my information and ideas and have an effect on my reader. I incorporated domain-specific vocabulary and explained these terms to readers.</p>	<p>I matched my vocabulary and word choice to the expertise of my audience, choosing precise words and using analogies or comparisons to explain what I mean and to achieve an intended effect. I defined domain specific, technical vocabulary. I cut any words that do not help me to get my meaning across exactly.</p>	<p>I do have intended effects on the reader and these are accomplished through the way I present and analyze information. I employed comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, and historical anecdotes or allusions to explain concepts and defined vocabulary and concepts for my audience, using language appropriate to the expertise of my audience.</p>	<p>Not only did I use comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, historical anecdotes, multimedia links, and/or allusions to give information and develop concepts as well as consider how word choice and the content of my piece will have an effect on my reader, I also considered how the way my piece reads will affect the reader. I used words and syntax to make my work more powerful.</p>

	6	7	8	9-10
	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)	Development (cont'd)
Description (cont'd)	<p>I worked to include exact phrases, comparisons, analogies and/or images to explain information and concepts and keep my reader engaged.</p> <p>I chose <i>how</i> to present my information to clearly convey why and how the information supported my points.</p> <p>I supported readers' learning by shifting within a consistent teaching tone as appropriate, and I used language and sentence structure that matches with my teaching purpose throughout my piece.</p>	<p>I considered different meanings of words, including technical and figurative and thought about the impact of specific words on the mood and tone of my piece.</p> <p>Not only did I make choices about how to present my information, I also made choices about the way I analyze that information to make it understandable and engaging.</p> <p>Not only have I matched my tone to the purpose of the text and my knowledge of the audience, I have used a consistently formal tone.</p>	<p>I considered multiple meanings and nuances of words in order to use them for different purposes, including figuratively.</p> <p>I angled my presentation of information to develop complex concepts.</p> <p>I shifted my tone across parts of the text to engage my audience and match the concepts and format of the text.</p>	<p>I used words precisely, and/or figuratively, and/or symbolically, to strengthen a particular tone or meaning. I angled the presentation of my information.</p> <p>I angled my presentation of information to not only develop complex concepts but also to give the reader a thorough understanding of the topic.</p> <p>My tone and media platform is appropriate for the purposes of each part of my piece and in keeping with the discipline within which I am writing.</p>

	6	7	8	9-10
	Language Conventions	Language Conventions	Language Conventions	Language Conventions
Spelling	I used resources to be sure the words in my writing are spelled correctly, including technical vocabulary.	I checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling of citations.	I checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling and details of citations, excerpts, quotations, statistics.	Citations, vocabulary, statistics, allusions and quotations are accurately spelled.
Punctuation	I used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semi-colons to help me include extra information and explanation in some of my sentences.	I used punctuation to convey meaning and relationships, to include information, and to cite sources.	Punctuation enhances meaning and style in my text.	Punctuation enhances meaning and marks shifts in style, tone, or sections of my text.