

Current CDE Writing Standards (1997)

Plus



and
Anchor Papers

Sixth Grade

Current CDE Writing Standards Sixth Grade 1997

Strategies	
Organization	<p>Choose the form of writing that best suits the intended purpose (e.g., personal letter, letter to the editor, review, poem, report, narrative).</p> <p>Create multi-paragraph expository compositions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) Engage the interest of the reader and state a clear purpose. b.) Develop the topic with supporting details and precise verbs, nouns, and adjectives to paint a visual image in the mind of the reader. c. Conclude with a detailed summary linked to the purpose of the composition.
Evaluation and Revision	Revise writing to improve the organization and consistency of ideas within and between paragraphs .
Use Reference Materials/ Research and Technology	Use organizational features of electronic text (e.g., bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, e-mail addresses) to locate information .
Focus	Use a variety of effective and coherent organizational patterns , including comparison, contrast, organization by categories, arrangement by spatial order, order of importance, or climactic order.
Format/ Penmanship	Compose documents with appropriate formatting by using word-processing skills and principles of design (e.g., margins, tabs, spacing, columns, page orientation).
Applications	
Narrative	<p>Write narratives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) Establish and develop a plot and setting and present a point of view that is appropriate to the stories. b.) Include sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character. 3.) Use a range of narrative devices (e.g., dialogue, suspense).
Expository	<p>(See also Organization for Expository Compositions.)</p> <p>Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) State the thesis or purpose. b.) Explain the situation. c.) Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the style of composition. d. Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed. <p>Write research reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) Pose relevant questions with a scope narrow enough to e thoroughly covered. b.) Support the main idea or ideas with facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple authoritative sources (e.g., speakers, periodicals, online information searches). c.) Include a bibliography.
Response to Literature	<p>Write responses to literature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) Develop an interpretation exhibiting careful reading, understanding, and insight. b.) Organize the interpretation around several clear ideas, premises, or images. c.) Develop and justify the interpretation through sustained use of examples and textual evidence.
Letter	None
Persuasive	<p>Write persuasive compositions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) State a clear position on a proposition or proposal. b.) Support the position with organized and relevant evidence. c.) Anticipate and address reader concerns and counterarguments.

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Conventions	
Punctuation	Use colons after the salutation in business letters, semicolons to connect independent clauses, and commas when linking two clauses with a conjunction in compound sentences.
Capitalization	Use correct capitalization.
Spelling	Spell frequently misspelled words correctly (e.g., their, they're, there).
Grammar	Use simple, compound, and compound-complex sentences; use effective coordination and subordination of ideas to express complete thoughts. Identify and properly use indefinite pronouns and present perfect, and future perfect verb tenses; ensure that verbs agree with compound subjects.

Grade 6 Writing Standards – New California Common Core Standards

Source: www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/suptsupmatreview.asp

Text Types and Purposes		
6. W 1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	
6. W 1a.	Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.	
6. W 1b.	Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.	
6. W 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.	
6. W 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style.	
6. W 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.	
6. W 2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.	
6. W 2a.	Introduce a topic or thesis statement ; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.	
6. W 2b.	Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.	
6. W 2c.	Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.	
6. W 2d.	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.	
6. W 2e.	Establish and maintain a formal style.	
6. W 2f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.	
6. W 3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.	
6. W 3a.	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	
6. W 3b.	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.	
6. W 3c.	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.	
6. W 3d.	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.	
6. W 3e.	Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.	
Production and Distribution of Writing		
6. W 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	
6. W 5.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	
6. W 6.	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 three pages in a single sitting.	

These are the California Common Core writing and language standards from the CDE website reformatted and coded with checkbox by Knox Education . They are available on our website at knoxeducation.com inside the Standards Toolkit/Common Core Standards in each grade level, grades K-8.

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Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
6. W 7.	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.	
6. W 8.	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.	
6. W 9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	
6. W 9a.	Apply <i>grade 6 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).	
6. W 9b.	Apply <i>grade 6 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).	
Range of Writing		
6. W 10.	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.	
Language: Conventions of Standard English		
6. L 1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	
6. L 1a.	Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).	
6. L 1b.	Use all pronouns, including intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself, ourselves</i>), correctly .	
6. L 1c.	Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*	
6. L 1d.	Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*	
6. L 1e.	Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*	
6. L 2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	
6. L 2a.	Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.*	
6. L 2b.	Spell correctly.	

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Language: Knowledge of Language		
6. L 3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.	
6. L 3a.	Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.*	
6. L 3b.	Maintain consistency in style and tone.*	
Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use		
6. L 4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 6 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.	
6. L 4a.	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.	
6. L 4b.	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>audience, auditory, audible</i>).	
6. L 4c.	Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	
6. L 4d.	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).	
6. L 5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	
6. L 5a.	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.	
6. L 5b.	Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.	
6. L 5c.	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty</i>).	
6. L 6.	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	

Samples of Student Writing

Following are writing samples that have been annotated to illustrate the criteria required to meet the Common Core State Standards for particular types of writing—argument, informative/explanatory text, and narrative—in a given grade. Each of the samples exhibits at least the level of quality required to meet the Writing standards for that grade.

The range of accomplishment within each grade reflects differences in individual development as well as in the conditions under which the student writers were expected to work. Some of the samples were written in class or as homework; others were written for on-demand assessments; still others were the result of sustained research projects. Where possible, each sample includes information about the circumstances under which it was produced. The samples come from students in kindergarten through grade 12. The students attended school in a number of states and districts across the country.

At the lower grades, the samples include “opinion” writing, an elementary type of argument in which students give reasons for their opinions and preferences. Because reasons are required, such writing helps prepare students for drafting the arguments they will be expected to create beginning in grade 6.

Acknowledgment

The Standards work group would like to express its appreciation to teachers and students at Monte Vista High School in California and the Randolph Technical Career Center in Vermont; other colleagues in California, Massachusetts, and Washington state; and ACT, Inc., and the *Concord Review*, who helped find and obtain permission for several of the samples included in the set. The group also would like to express its appreciation to the New Standards Project and to the International Reading Association, which allowed the use of several samples from their publications, and to the other student writers who granted permission to reproduce their work here.

Permissions

The following student writing samples have been reprinted for the Common Core State Standards Initiative with the express permission of the following organizations and individuals.

ACT, Inc.:

Untitled essay on dress codes

California Department of Education:

“Football”; “Miss Sadie”

The *Concord Review*:

“In the Wake of the Spanish Lady: American Economic Resilience in the Aftermath of the Influenza Epidemic of 1918” by Brooke Granowski, *Concord Review*, 20(1), 203–216 (©2009 Concord Review, Inc.)

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

“Dear Mr. Sandler”; “A Pet Story About My Cat . . . Gus”; “Animal Farm”

Monte Vista High School in California:

“The True Meaning of Friendship”; “Lives on Mango, Rides the Whale”; untitled essay on civil disobedience in India; “Marching to His Own Beat”; “Summary of Key Points”

The National Center on Education and the Economy, on behalf of New Standards:

“My fabit Book is do you Want to be my FRIEND”; “Fraggs (Frogs)”; “I Went to Disnand”; “My Big Book About Spain”; “I bot a little cotton ball”; “Owl Moon”; “My first tooth is gone”; “Horses”; “When my Puppys Ranaway”; “Zoo Field Trip”; “Author Response: Roald Dahl”; “Getting Shot and Living Through It”; “A Geographical Report”; “The Old Man and the Sea”; “_____ School Bond Levy”

Randolph Technical Career Center in Vermont:

“Wood Joints”; “TIG/GTAW Welding”

Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:

“Glowing Shoes”; “Video Cameras in Classrooms”

Permission to reprint each of the following samples was granted by its author:

“Freedom From Structure”; “Fact vs. Fiction and All the Grey Space in Between”; “The Making of a Human Voice and How to Use It”

Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument

This argument (incorrectly labeled a story) is a process piece produced in class.

A Pet Story About My Cat . . . Gus

People get pets so that they will never be lonely, and they will always have a friend to be there for them. Ask your heart, what makes the best pet??? Some people think a best pet is picky, energetic, and sneaky, but I think my pet is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me! Gus was about eight weeks old when we got him, now he is 4 1/2 months old, and he is about as big as a size eight sneaker. He is a little gray and white kitten. If you look closely he has a gray tail, but there are darker gray rings around it. He has a little white on his face, and some on his tummy and paws. He has a little stripe on his leg but it is his back left leg only. He's very cute, and he purrs a lot! He also has a cute little gray nose.

One of the reasons why my cat Gus is the best pet is because he is a cuddle bug. When Gus was a baby, he had to be kept in a cage because he wasn't allowed to interact with the other pets until he was older. He couldn't interact with the other pets because when Twister was a baby, the ferrets bit her ear and dragged her under the bed, and bit her in the back of the neck and we didn't want the same thing to happen to Gus. Also because Twister had to be kept in a cage when she was little, too. His cage was in my room so when he meowed, as if to say, "Get me out!" I would have to take him out and sleep with him. All he would do is thank me for doing that by snuggling against my chin! Another example to prove that Gus is a cuddle bug, is that when I'm feeding Gus, I put his and Twister's bowl up on the counter when I do so, and Twister sits there patiently while Gus is snuggling against my legs to show affection toward me. He snuggles my leg even when I'm walking around! Well, at least he tries to, because he follows me, and when I stop walking, he starts to cuddle. Eventually I pick him up and cuddle him back!!! Finally, when I have nothing to do and I'm just sitting on my bed reading, Gus jumps up with me and then he pushes away the covers to get under them, and he sleeps on my chest to keep my company when I'm board. After he slept on my tummy many times, he finally got the nickname _____ Cuddle Buddy. Now I always snuggle with my favorite cuddle buddy . . . Gus!!!

A second reason why Gus is the best pet is because he's playful. Most of the time when Gus is lying on the couch minding his own business, I'll reach out to pet him then he'll start biting my hand and attacking it!!! He does this to be playful, not to hurt anyone but he just wants to have fun. It kind of tickles when he does it, actually. Gus also has a little toy mouse that is attached to a string that I drag around the house so that Gus will follow it. The mouse has a leopard skin pattern on it with balls of fur as hands and feet. The mouse is about the size of the pencil sharpeners in Mrs. _____ classroom. He goes after that mouse so fast that it's hard to see him running by to catch it. When Gus was a baby, I would put him in my bed to sleep with, but before we went to sleep, I would move my feet around underneath the covers, while Gus was on top chasing them around. Eventually, he got tired and lied down near my feet, but before he was completely asleep, I would pick him up and put him near my pillow and we slept together. Gus loves doing that all the time. I love how Gus is so playful!!!

The last reason why Gus is the best pet is because he loves me! He always misses me whenever I'm not there. When I come home from school and I open the door, Gus comes flying around the corner, and starts to climb my pants! When he gets high enough, I grab him in my arms and we start cuddling each other while Gus is happily purring. He does this a lot. Most of the time I'm in my room watching TV, while Gus and Twister are fighting and killing each other, they come dashing around the corner and into my room. I, of course, have to break up the fight. After that, I put them on my bed and hold them down, but they keep squirming. Soon, they get tired and sleep with me, silently, watching TV. Gus is with me as much as possible. Sometimes he's busy playing with Twister, sleeping, or eating. Otherwise, he's playing or sleeping with me. We do so many things together and I'm glad I got him, but technically, he chose me. It was a homeless cat shelter. They were able to catch the kittens, but not there mommy. His brothers and sisters were all playing, but he was sleeping under the table. Soon, he walked out from under the table and slept with me while we cuddled on the couch. That's how I met Gus.

People have feelings for their pets that show that they love them very much. When I had to decide what makes the best pet, I would say that Gus is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me. When you think about the examples that I gave you, like when I told you about how Gus snuggles against my chin, you saw that Gus **IS** the best pet and if you don't believe me, you have a problem with deciding who the best pet is.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a claim and organizes the reasons and evidence clearly.**
 - . . . *I think my pet is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me!*
- **supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.**
 - *One of the reasons why my cat Gus is the best pet is because he is a cuddle bug.* The writer elaborates this point by providing three examples of his cat's affectionate nature: freed from his cage, the cat snuggles against the narrator's chin; the cat rubs against the narrator's legs; and the cat sleeps on the narrator.
 - *A second reason why Gus is the best pet is because he's playful.* The writer elaborates this point with three examples of the cat's playful nature: Gus attacks the narrator's hand; Gus plays with a toy mouse; and Gus attacks the narrator's feet when they are under the covers.
 - *The last reason why Gus is the best pet is because he loves me!* The writer elaborates this point with three examples: Gus runs to greet the narrator when he returns home from school; Gus and the other cat, Twister, scuffle with one another until the narrator separates them, and then they sleep with the narrator as he watches television; and Gus spends as much time as possible in the narrator's company.
- **uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among the claim and reasons.**
 - *One of my reasons . . . A second reason . . . The last reason . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style (except for the last sentence).**
 - The style throughout the document is appropriate for convincing readers about the writer's claim although the last sentence in the three-page-long paper (*. . . if you don't believe me, you have a problem with deciding who the best pet is*) seems inappropriate because it lapses into *ad hominem*.
- **provides a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented.**
 - *When I had to decide what makes the best pet, I would say that Gus is the best pet . . . When you think about the examples that I gave you, like when I told you about how Gus snuggles against my chin, you saw that Gus **IS** the best pet . . .*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**

Student Sample: Grade 7, Argument

This argument was produced for an on-demand assessment. Students were asked to write a letter to their principal about a plan to install video cameras in the classroom for safety reasons. The abbreviated time frame of the assessment (and the consequent lack of opportunity to perform research and revise) explains the absence of information from sources and possibly also the occasional errors.

Video Cameras in Classrooms

You are seated in class as your teacher explains and points things out on the whiteboard. You twitch your hand, accidentally nudging your pencil, which rolls off your desk and clatters to the floor. As you lean over to pick up your pencil, your cell phone falls out of your coat pocket! Luckily you catch it without your teacher seeing, but it is in plain view of the video camera's shiny lens that points straight at you. The classroom phone rings, and after a brief conversation, your teacher walks over to your desk and kneels down beside you. "About that cell phone of yours . . ." How did that get you in trouble? How could it possibly be a good idea to put cameras in classrooms?

When students are in their classrooms, teachers are in the classroom too, usually. But when a teacher goes out of the classroom, what usually happens is either everything goes on as usual, or the students get a little more talkative. Cameras aren't there because people talk a lot. It is the teacher's job to keep people quiet. If something horrible happened, somebody in class would usually report it, or it would just be obvious to the teacher when he came back that something had happened.

If we already have cameras in the halls, why spend the money to get thirty more cameras for all the different classrooms? Our school district already has a low budget, so we would be spending money on something completely unnecessary. There hasn't been camera-worthy trouble in classrooms. Camera-worthy trouble would be bad behavior every time a teacher left the room. There is no reason to install cameras that might just cause trouble, both for the students and for the budget.

Different students react differently when there is a camera in the room. Some students get nervous and flustered, trying hard to stay focused on their work with a camera focused on them. 90% of students claim that they do better work when they are calmer, and cameras are not going to help. Other students look at cameras as a source of entertainment. These students will do things such as wave at the camera, make faces, or say hi to the people watching through the camera. This could be a big distraction for others who are trying to learn and participate in class. Still other students will try to trick the camera. They will find a way to block the lens or do something that the camera will not be likely to catch. All of these different students will be distracted by the cameras in their classrooms.

Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems. That is why I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a claim (stated late in the essay).**
 - *. . . I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.*
- **acknowledges alternate or opposing claims.**
 - *Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems.*
- **supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.**
 - *[Cameras are not necessary because] [i]f something horrible happened, somebody in class would usually report it, or it would just be obvious to the teacher when he came back that something had happened.*
 - *. . . we already have cameras in the halls . . .*

- *Our school district already has a low budget . . .*
- **uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claim, reasons, and evidence.**
 - *If . . . already . . . why . . . so . . . Some students . . . Other students . . . These students . . . All of these different students . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style.**
 - *When students are in their classrooms, teachers are in the classroom too, usually. But when a teacher goes out of the classroom, what usually happens is either everything goes on as usual, or the students get a little more talkative.*
 - *Different students react differently when there is a camera in the room.*
- **provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented.**
 - *Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems. That is why I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**