

Nebraska State Accountability-Writing (NeSA-W) Performance Level Descriptors

Grade 8

Below the Standards

Overall the student's writing reflects an unsatisfactory performance of the standards and an insufficient understanding of the traits of writing. The student's writing is still under development. Extensive revision and/or editing is necessary.

The student's writing is below the standards if the . . .

- Picture of what is being described is limited or unclear.
- Content has some digressions from the topic.
- Sensory details are limited, unrelated, or lacking.
- Structural development of an introduction, body, and conclusion is limited or lacking.
- Pacing is inconsistent or awkward.
- Transitions are repetitious, weak, unclear, or missing.
- Paragraphing is irregular, ineffective, or missing.
- Wording is inexpressive and lifeless, conveying a limited sense of the writer.
- Voice is sometimes inappropriate for the purpose and audience.
- Language is seldom specific, precise or varied.
- Writing lacks vivid words and phrases
- Sentences seldom vary in length or structure.
- Phrasing sounds awkward and unnatural.
- Writing has fragments or run-ons that confuse the reader.
- Grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling errors distract the reader.

Meets the Standards

Overall the student's writing reflects a satisfactory performance of the standards and a sufficient understanding of the traits of writing. The student's writing demonstrates more strengths than weaknesses. Some revision and/or editing is necessary.

The student's writing meets the standards if the . . .

- Picture of what is being described is clear.
- Content is generally focused on the topic.
- Sensory details are adequate and related.
- Structural development of an introduction, body, and conclusion is functional.
- Pacing is generally controlled.
- Transitions are functional.
- Paragraphing is generally successful.
- Wording is generally expressive, conveying a sense of the writer.
- Voice is generally appropriate for the purpose and audience.
- Language is generally specific, precise, and varied.
- Writing has adequate vivid words and phrases.
- Sentences generally vary in length or structure.
- Phrasing generally sounds natural.
- Fragments and run-ons do not generally confuse the reader.
- Grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling are usually correct and rarely distract the reader.

Exceeds the Standards

Overall the student's writing reflects an advanced performance of the standards and a thorough understanding of the traits of writing. The student's writing demonstrates numerous strengths. Only minor revision and/or editing is necessary.

The student's writing exceeds the standards if the . . .

- Picture of what is being described is clear and vivid.
- Content is well-focused on the topic.
- Sensory details are numerous and relevant.
- Structural development of an introduction, body, and conclusion is effective.
- Pacing is well-controlled.
- Transitions effectively show how ideas connect.
- Paragraphing is sound.
- Wording is expressive and engaging, conveying a strong sense of the writer throughout.
- Voice is well-suited for the purpose and audience throughout.
- Language is specific, precise, and varied throughout.
- Numerous vivid words and phrases are used effectively.
- Sentences vary in length and structure throughout.
- Phrasing consistently sounds natural and conveys meaning.
- Fragments and run-ons, if present, are intended for stylistic effect.
- Grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling are consistently correct and may be manipulated for stylistic effect.