

New England Common Assessment Program

WRITING – Maine Version for Grades 4 and 7

Introduction

The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) writing standards called Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) have been developed as a means to identify the writing content knowledge and skills expected of all students, for large-scale assessment of writing in two grade levels, 4th grade and 7th grade, tested in grades 5 and 8. The NECAP writing GLE's are meant to capture the “big ideas” of writing that can be assessed in the large-scale, on-demand assessment, without narrowing the curriculum locally. They are not intended to represent the full curriculum for instruction and assessment locally. Grade Level Expectations – at any grade – represent writing content knowledge and skills *introduced instructionally at least one to two years before* students are expected to demonstrate confidence in applying them independently in an on-demand assessment.

The GLEs in this document can be interpreted as describing the expectations for the end of the grade identified, or the beginning of the next grade. For example, grade 7 GLEs identify grade level expectations in writing for both the end of grade 7 and the beginning of grade 8, for large-scale assessment purposes.

Overview of NECAP GLEs for Writing:

- W-1** Structures of Language: Applying Understanding of Sentences, Paragraphs, Text Structures
- W-2** Reading-Writing Connection: Writing in Response to Literary or Informational Text- Showing Understanding of Ideas in Text
- W-3** Reading-Writing Connection: Writing in Response to Literary or Informational Text- Making Analytical Judgments about Text
- W-4** Expressive Writing: Narratives- Creating a Story Line
- W-5** Expressive Writing: Narratives- Applying Narrative Strategies
- W-6** Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing- Organizing Information
- W-7** Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing- Conveying Information
- W-8** Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing- Using Elaboration Strategies
- W-9** Writing Conventions: Applying Rules of Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

When using NECAP Writing Grade Level Expectations, the following are important to understand:

1. **Writing Dimensions: Purpose, Organization, Details, Voice/Tone** are addressed throughout the set of Writing GLE's using descriptions appropriate to the related writing genres. GLE's #W-2 through #W-8 assess writing dimensions as they are applied to different types of writing. Writing Dimensions are not addressed, nor intended to be assessed with a single GLE.
2. All of the concepts and skills identified at a given grade level are "fair game" for large-scale assessment purposes. Conjunctions used throughout this document have specific meaning. The use of the conjunction "or" means that a student can be assessed on all or just some of the elements of the GLE in a given year. The use of "and" between elements of a GLE means that the *intent* is to assess each element every year. In some situations, "or" is used when students have choices about how they will provide supporting evidence for their response (e.g., when writing in response to text, a student might choose to support an opinion or judgment about text with appropriate examples, OR quotations, OR citations).
3. Each GLE includes three parts.
 - a. **A statement in bold**, called the "stem," is at the beginning of each GLE. Each "stem" is the same or similar across the grades for a given GLE, and is meant to communicate the main curriculum and instructional focus of the GLE across the grades.
 - b. The non-bold text within a GLE indicates how the GLE is specified at a given grade level or grade span. There are often several indicators for each GLE stem.
4. Each GLE is coded for the content area, the grade level, the GLE "stem" number, and the specific indicator for that GLE stem. [E.g., "W-7-6.2" means W (Writing) – 7 (grade 7) - 6 (6th GLE "stem") – 2 (the second specific indicator for the 6th GLE stem).]

**New England Common Assessment Program
Writing Grade Level Expectations**

	End of Grade 4 Tested in Grade 5	End of Grade 7 Tested in Grade 8
W-1 Structures of Language: Applying Understanding of Sentences, Paragraphs, Text Structures	W-4-1 Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by...	W-7-1 Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by...
	W-4-1.1 Writing a variety of complete simple and compound sentences	W-7-1.1 Using varied sentence length and structure to enhance meaning (e.g., including phrases and clauses)
	W-4-1.2 Using the paragraph form: indenting, main idea, supporting details	W-7-1.2 Using the paragraph form: indenting, main idea, supporting details
	N/A	W-7-1.3. Recognizing organizational structures within paragraphs or within texts <i>EXAMPLES (of text structures): description, sequence, chronology, proposition/support, compare/contrast, problem/solution</i> <i>EXAMPLE: When given a paragraph or text and a description of text structures, students identify structure used or their purpose</i>
	N/A	W-7-1.4 Applying a format and text structure appropriate to the purpose of the writing

<p>W-2 Reading-Writing Connection: Writing in Response to Literary or Informational Text- Showing Understanding of Ideas in Text</p>	<p>W-4-2 In response to literary or informational text, students show understanding of plot/ideas/concepts by...</p>	<p>W-7-2 In response to literary or informational text, students show understanding of plot/ideas/concepts by...</p>
	<p>W-4-2.1 Selecting appropriate information to set context/background</p>	<p>W-7-2.1 Selecting and summarizing key ideas to set context</p>
	<p>W-4-2.3 Connecting what has been read (plot/ideas/concepts) to prior knowledge, which might include other texts</p>	<p>W-7-2.3 Connecting what has been read (plot/ideas/concepts) to prior knowledge, other texts, or the broader world of ideas, by referring to and explaining relevant ideas</p>
<p>W-3 Reading-Writing Connection: Writing in Response to Literary or Informational Text- Making Analytical Judgments about Text</p>	<p>W-4-3 In response to literary or informational text, students make and support analytical judgments about text by . . .</p>	<p>W-7-3 In response to literary or informational text, students make and support analytical judgments about text by . . .</p>
	<p>W-4-3.1 Stating and maintaining a focus (purpose) when responding to a given question</p>	<p>W-7-3.1 Stating and maintaining a focus (purpose), a firm judgment, or point of view when responding to a given question</p>
	<p>W-4-3.2 Making inferences about content, events, characters, setting, or common themes</p> <p><i>EXAMPLE (of theme): honesty isn't always easy</i></p>	<p>W-7-3.2 Making inferences about the relationship(s) among content, events, characters, setting, theme, or author's craft</p> <p><i>EXAMPLE: making links between characterization and author's choice of words; making links to characteristics of literary forms or genres</i></p>
	<p>W-4-3.3 Using specific details and references to text to support focus</p>	<p>W-7-3.3 Using specific details and references to text or relevant citations to support focus or judgment</p>
	<p>W-4-3.4 Organizing ideas, using transition words/phrases and writing a conclusion</p>	<p>W-7-3.4 Organizing ideas, using transitional words/phrases and writing a conclusion that provides closure</p>

W-4 Expressive Writing: Narratives- Creating a Story Line	W-4-4 In written narratives, students organize and relate a story line/plot/series of events by...	W-7-4 In written narratives, students organize and relate a story line/plot/series of events by...
	W-4-4.1 Creating a clear, understandable story line with a beginning, middle, and end	W-7-4.1 Creating a clear and coherent (logically consistent) story line
	W-4-4.2 Establishing a problem and solution	W-7-4.2 Establishing context, character motivation, problem/conflict/challenge, and resolution and maintaining point of view
	N/A	W-7-4.3 Using a variety of effective transitional devices (e.g., ellipses, time transitions, white space, or words/phrases) to enhance meaning
W-5 Expressive Writing: Narratives- Applying Narrative Strategies	W-4-5 Students demonstrate use of narrative strategies by...	W-7-5 Students demonstrate use of narrative strategies by...
	W-4-5.1 Using relevant and descriptive details	W-7-5.1 Using relevant and descriptive details and sensory language to advance the plot/story line
	N/A	W-7-5.2 Using dialogue to advance plot/story line
	W-4-5.3a Identifying characters	W-7-5.3 Developing characters through description, dialogue, and actions
	N/A	W-7-5.4 Using voice appropriate to purpose
	N/A	W-7-5.5 Maintaining focus

W-6 Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing-Organizing Information	W-4-6 In informational writing (reports or procedures), students organize ideas/concepts by ...	W-7-6 In informational writing, students organize ideas/concepts by ...
	W-4-6.1 Grouping ideas logically (e.g., predictable categories, steps of a procedure, reasons/arguments)	W-7-6.1 Using an organizational text structure appropriate to focus/controlling idea EXAMPLES (of text structures): description, sequence, chronology, proposition/support, compare/contrast, problem/solution
	W-4-6.2a Writing an introduction that sets the context (including materials list in procedures)	W-7-6.2 Selecting appropriate information to set context, which may include a lead/hook
	W-4-6.3a. Using transition words or phrases	W-7-6.3 Using transitional words or phrases appropriate to organizational text structure
	W-4-6.4 Writing a conclusion	W-7-6.4 Writing a conclusion that provides closure
W-7 Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing-Conveying Information	W-4-7 In informational writing (reports or procedures only), students effectively convey purpose by...	W-7-7 In informational writing, students effectively convey purpose by ...
	W-4-7.1 Establishing a topic	W-7-7.1 Establishing a topic
	W-4-7.2 Stating and maintaining a focus/controlling idea on a topic	W-7-7.2 Stating and maintaining a focus/controlling idea
	N/A	W-7-7.3 Writing with a sense of audience, when appropriate
W-8 Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing-Using Elaboration Strategies	W-4-8 In informational writing (reports and procedures only), students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by ...	W-7-8 In informational writing, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by ...
	W-4-8.1 Including facts and details relevant to focus/controlling idea	W-7-8.1 Including facts and details relevant to focus/controlling idea, and excluding extraneous information
	W-4-8.2 Including sufficient details or facts for appropriate depth of information: naming,	W-7-8.2 Including sufficient details or facts for appropriate depth of information: naming,

	describing, explaining, comparing, use of visual images	describing, explaining, comparing, use of visual images
	N/A	W-7-8.3 Addressing readers' concerns (including counterarguments – in persuasive writing; addressing potential problems – in procedures; providing context – in reports)
	N/A	W-7-8.4 Commenting on the significance of information, when appropriate
W-9 Writing Conventions: Applying Rules of Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics	W-4-9 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by...	W-7-9 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by...
	W-4-9.1 Identifying grammatical errors, when given examples <i>EXAMPLES: he don't; Him and me went</i>	W-7-9.1 Applying rules of standard English usage to correct grammatical errors EXAMPLES: Clear pronoun referent, subject-verb agreement, consistency of verb tense, irregular forms of verbs and nouns
	W-4-9.2 Applying basic capitalization rules <i>EXAMPLES: names, beginning sentences, proper nouns, titles</i>	W-7-9.2 Applying capitalization rules
	W-4-9.3 Using commas correctly in dates and in a series (Note: either form is correct – x, y, and z or x, y and z)	W-7-9.3 Subsumed in W-7-9.4
	W-4-9.4 Using <i>end</i> punctuation correctly in a variety of sentence structures	W-7-9.4 Applying appropriate punctuation to various sentence patterns to enhance meaning <i>EXAMPLES: colons, semicolons</i>
	W-4-9.5 Correctly spelling grade-appropriate, high-frequency words and recognizing syllables and affix patterns/rules that are characteristic of the English spelling system <i>EXAMPLES: consonant doubling, change y to i, drop silent e, spelling rules for affixes</i>	W-7-9.5 Correctly spelling grade-appropriate, high-frequency words and applying conventional spelling patterns/rules (State) <i>EXAMPLES: consonant doubling, consonant patterns, units of meaning – common roots, base words, pre/suffixes</i>

**Appendix A: GLOSSARY of Terms
Used in WRITING Instruction and Assessment**

NECAP States have grouped the Writing GLEs into six writing content clusters:

Habit of Writing: Writing Process and Writing Extensively (Applies to all Genres of Writing)

Structures of Language (Applies to all Genres of Writing)

Reading-Writing Connection: Writing in Response to Literary or Informational Text

Expressive Writing: Narratives, Poetry, Reflective Writing

Informational Writing: Reports, Procedures, Persuasive Writing

Writing Conventions (Applies to all Genres of Writing)

Writing Genres Defined

NARRATIVE – Writing that tells a story or recounts an event.

REFLECTIVE ESSAY – A form of writing in which an author explores and shares the meaning of a personal experience, belief, or idea.

PERSUASIVE – Persuasive writing is writing that aims at convincing people to accept a point of view, to change their minds about something or to act in a certain way. A persuasive essay is a form of writing in which a writer supports an opinion and tries to persuade an audience.

PROCEDURE - Writing a procedure is writing to explain a process or to inform an audience of how to do something. A procedure piece presents the steps of the process in a clear, logical, easy-to-follow manner; includes all necessary steps; and defines any terms the audience may not know.

REPORT – Writing that results from gathering, investigating, and organizing facts and thoughts on a focused topic.

RESPONSE TO LITERARY OR INFORMATIONAL TEXT – Writing in which the writer analyzes plot/ideas/concepts, making inferences about content, characters, philosophy, theme, author’s craft, or other elements within a piece of literature or informational text.

Source: Adapted from Vermont Writing GLE Development, Kurzman, Gephart, Hawkins, 2003

Glossary of Writing Terms

Analysis – A separating of a whole into its parts with an examination of these parts to find out their nature and function

Antithesis - A contrast or opposition of thought, the opposite. In persuasive writing, it is the idea that every argument generates a counter argument. In effective persuasive writing, opposing arguments should be addressed and rebutted.

Audience – Those who read or hear what is written. Many qualities of writing must be appropriate to the audience: voice and tone, language, etc.

Author’s Craft – The techniques the author chooses to enhance writing. Examples: style, bias, point of view, flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, figurative language, sensory details, soliloquy, stream of consciousness, etc.

Citation – A direct quote from the text; acknowledgment and documentation of sources of information.

Coherence – The quality achieved when all the ideas are clearly arranged and connected. The arrangement of ideas, within and among paragraphs, should be organized in such a way that the reader can easily move from one point to another. When all ideas are arranged and connected, a piece of writing has coherence.

Context - The background information a reader needs to know. It may be a set of facts or circumstances surrounding an event or a situation, explanation of characters, or definition of important terms.

Concrete or Specific Details – Details are concrete when they can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched. The use of factual details to create a picture (e.g., ten antique, light brown wooden desks, each with a built-in ink well, were lined in two straight rows.)

Controlling Idea – This is the main idea/focus that runs throughout the paper.

Conventions - Features of standard written English that usually include sentence formation, grammar, spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization.

Counter Argument – See antithesis.

Diction – The writer’s choice of words based on their effectiveness.

Elaboration – Words used to explain and in some way support the central idea; the development and expansion of ideas and arguments. Elaboration varies with the type of writing. (For example, a report may have statistics, examples, anecdotes, and facts, while a narrative would have description, dialogue, show-not-tell, etc.)

Embedded Phrases and Clauses – Grammatical structures which are placed in simple sentences to enhance sentence variety (e.g., The bird sat on the fence...chirping loudly in the early morning mist; the bird with the colorful feathers sat on the fence which divided the pasture from the yard, while the cat looked longingly from the window.)

Figurative Language – Techniques used in writing (particularly expressive writing) to create images (e.g., similes, metaphors, alliteration, assonance, personification, onomatopoeia).

Focus – The specific idea(s) within the topic that the writer is addressing. (For example, if the topic is “horses,” the focus might be: Horses are very expensive to own.)

Inference - A deduction or conclusion made from facts that are suggested or implied rather than overtly stated (Example: Mom said that I should study more and watch television less. I inferred that I should get better grades or the television would be taken out of my room.)

Occasion – The happening or event that makes the response possible.

Organization – The **clear** evidence of a plan or foundation on which writing is built; includes intentional introduction, conclusion, and internal/external transitions to connect ideas.

Pacing – The rate of movement and action of a narrative. (Examples of a problem with pacing: The story may take a long time to build to the climax, it may have only one or two sentences about the climax, or it may end abruptly.)

Pedestrian – Commonplace, usual; when applied to vocabulary, over-used (“good things,” “nice stuff”).

Purpose – The specific reason for writing; the goal of the writing (to entertain, express, inform, explain, persuade, etc.). Purpose has to do with the topic and the focus the writer is addressing, its central idea, theme, or message.

Reference to Text – Mentioning or alluding to something in the text without directly quoting the text (For example: Pip was frightened when he met the convict in the graveyard.)

Resolution - The portion of a play or story in which the problem is resolved. It comes after the climax and falling action, and is intended to bring the story to a satisfying end.

Retelling - A restatement of the events in the story.

Sensory Description – Elaboration on a key part or character of the story that includes the five senses: sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound. All five senses do not have to be used, just the ones that naturally fit into the description. Feelings and thoughts, as well as dialogue, may be embedded.

Stance – The attitude or position the author has adopted; literally, how an author stands on the topic.

Stereotype – A pattern or form that does not change. A character is “stereotyped” if she or he has no individuality and fits a mold.

Summary – Writing that presents the main points of a larger work in condensed form.

Text Structures – The organizational structures used within paragraphs or within texts, appropriate to writing genre and purpose. Examples of text structures include: description, sequential chronology, proposition/support, compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect, and investigation.

Theme – The central idea, message, concern, or purpose in a literary work, which may be stated directly or indirectly.

Thesis – The controlling idea about a topic that the writer is attempting to prove; a sentence that announces the writer’s main, unifying, controlling idea about a topic. A thesis statement usually contains two main elements: a limited subject (Internet), a strong verb, and the reason for it - the “why”- (The Internet provides information of varying depth and quality).

Tone – The overall feeling or effect created by a writer’s attitude, use of words, and sentence structure. This feeling may be serious, mock-serious, humorous, sarcastic, solemn, objective, etc.

Topic – The general subject matter covered in a piece of writing.

Transitions – Words or phrases that help tie ideas together (e.g., however, on the other hand, since, first, etc.); **Transitional devices** also include numbering, use of such things as space, ellipses to enhance meaning.

Voice – The style and quality of the writing, which includes word choice, a variety of sentence structures, and evidence of investment. Voice portrays the author’s personality or the personality of a chosen persona. A distinctive voice establishes personal expression and enhances the writing.