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

Grade 11

**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 . . .

- Writer conveys limited or no opinion or position about the topic.
- Content has some digressions from the topic.
- Reasoning is limited or unclear.
- Supporting examples or reasons are limited 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.
- Writer demonstrates limited or no commitment to the topic.
- Voice is sometimes inappropriate for the purpose and audience.
- Language is seldom specific, precise, or varied.
- Writer often fails to anticipate the reader’s questions.
- Sentences seldom vary in length or structure.
- Phrasing sounds awkward and unnatural.
- Writing includes 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 . . .

- Writer conveys a general opinion or position about the topic.
- Content is generally focused on the topic.
- Reasoning is usually logical and convincing.
- Supporting examples or reasons are adequate and relevant.
- Structural development of an introduction, body, and conclusion is functional.
- Pacing is generally controlled.
- Transitions are functional.
- Paragraphing is generally successful.
- Writer demonstrates a general commitment to the topic.
- Voice is generally appropriate for the purpose and audience.
- Language is generally specific, precise, varied, and engaging.
- Writer generally anticipates the reader’s questions.
- Sentences generally vary in length or structure.
- Phrasing generally sounds natural.
- Fragments and run-ons, if present, generally do not confuse the reader.
- Grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling are usually correct and errors 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 . . .

- Writer conveys a clear opinion or position about the topic.
- Content is well-focused on the topic.
- Reasoning is logical and compelling.
- Supporting examples or reasons 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.
- Writer demonstrates a strong commitment to the topic.
- Voice is well-suited for the purpose and audience.
- Language is specific, precise, varied, and engaging throughout.
- Writer consistently anticipates reader’s questions.
- Sentences vary in length and structure throughout.
- Phrasing consistently anticipates reader’s questions.
- Sentences generally vary in length or structure.
- Phrasing generally sounds natural.
- 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.