

Integrating Writing into Classroom Instruction

Section 2: *Integrating Writing Portfolios into Classroom*

Instruction focuses on how teachers assist students with generating writing that may be included in writing portfolios.

- **Chapter 7: *Guidelines for the Generation of Student Work*** explains the “Philosophical Guidelines” (the goals of a writing portfolio assessment), and the importance of student ownership and authenticity in writing appropriate for the portfolio.
- **Chapter 8: *Practices in Compliance for the Writing Portfolio*** details practices in writing instruction that are in compliance with the *Regulation 703 KAR 5:010 Writing Portfolio Procedures*.
- **Chapter 9: *The Writing Process*** provides information about the fundamentals of the steps writers use in the process of writing.
- **Chapter 10: *Using Resources Effectively*** helps teachers understand why students should be using resources and how they can use resources effectively. This chapter includes a section on plagiarism which can occur if students do not use resources correctly and effectively.
- **Chapter 11: *Categories and Forms in the Writing Portfolio*** discusses the writing portfolio contents, the four categories included in the *Program of Studies* (reflective, personal expressive, literary, and transactive), content piece requirements, and what constitutes complete and incomplete portfolios.
- **Chapter 12: *Grade Level Requirements*** details the specific portfolio requirements for grades 4, 7 and 12. Teachers may find it helpful to remove these pages for photocopying and distribution to students.

Guidelines for the Generation of Student Work for Writing Portfolios

Through quality assessment, it is possible to accurately identify the learning needs of individual students and student groups, to review the appropriateness of curriculum goals and content, and to evaluate the quality of teaching. In effective learning environments, assessment and instruction are closely linked. Work for the writing assessment portfolio should emerge from instruction, and assessment results should be used with other information to improve instruction.

By definition, a **portfolio** is a purposeful selection of student work that exhibits a student's efforts and achievement. An "assessment portfolio" is one that is submitted as part of the state's assessment system.

Kentucky Learner Goal 1: Students will apply communication and math skills for purposes and situations like those they will encounter in life.

I. The Writing Portfolio Assessment will serve important educational goals.

The goals of a writing portfolio assessment are to

- provide students with the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to become independent thinkers and writers.
- provide information upon which to base ongoing development of a curriculum that is responsive to students' needs.
- promote each student's ability to communicate to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes in a variety of forms, thus preparing students to use their communication skills in various settings: for example, workplace, academic, professional, technical, personal life, military, and service as a citizen.
- document student performance on various kinds of writing which have been developed over time.
- integrate performance assessment with classroom instruction.

2. Writing for Publication will be done at all grade levels.

Though the assessment writing portfolio is submitted at specified grades (4, 7 and 12), writing is part of the curriculum at **all** grade levels. Writing should be integrated into instruction so that writing is relevant to students' learning and their lives. Schools and districts should develop curriculum so that each year students have experience in different categories of writing: Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning to the Teacher, and Writing for Publication (authentic purposes and readers in real-world forms). Some of the writing for publication will be submitted for the assessment writing portfolio.

703 KAR 5:010 Writing Portfolio Procedures

Section 2. School and District Writing Programs. (1) *A school shall provide writing instruction and authentic writing opportunities at all grade levels and shall develop a procedure to collect working folders that include writing pieces at non-accountability levels for possible inclusion in the accountability portfolio. This writing shall align to all portfolio categories and the content areas being studied. A school shall not wait until the accountability year to instruct the types of writing appropriate for inclusion in the writing portfolio.*

3. Writing for Publication will be relevant to students' learning and their lives.

Writing for Publication that is appropriate for the Writing Assessment Portfolio is not intended as an add-on. Such writing should be an integral part of a unit of study aimed at helping students address Kentucky's standards. Writing is an important way to help students think and communicate about their lives. Writing is also an important way to foster learning in all study areas, a way of helping students develop as readers, thinkers, researchers, etc. Portfolio-appropriate writing, thus, is appropriate in all study areas, and such writing should be relevant to learning in the study area.

4. Writing for Publication should allow students to maintain *ownership* of writing.

The Writing Portfolio Assessment is part of the state's assessment system. Students' ownership must be preserved during the generation of samples submitted for the Writing Portfolio Assessment. Any intervention from teachers, peers, and/or others should enhance rather than remove or diminish that ownership and should be offered in the spirit of helping students reassess and make decisions about their own work. At no time should students' ideas, revisions, or editing be characterized as teacher-, peer-, or parent-authored. The Kentucky Writing Portfolio Assessment acknowledges the students as sole creators, authors, and owners of their work. Teachers serve as colleagues, coaches, mentors, and critics. Parents, friends, and other students assume the roles of listeners, responders, and encouragers.

Characteristics of ownership in Writing for Publication include the following:

- ❑ The writing is the student’s own; it is not a work done by someone else.
- ❑ Ownership means that the writing is not merely a transcription or recitation of class discussion or a mere record of some class activity. The writing is not merely a “canned response,” which simply repeats what the teacher has said to do.
- ❑ The writing in some way shows originality, individuality. The writer reveals an effort to communicate genuinely with awareness of authentic readers.
- ❑ Though others may offer questions and other response for the writer to consider, the writer is responsible for making decisions about his/her writing.
- ❑ Though teachers certainly may set requirements for writing and may present students with topics, questions, issues, problems, etc., to address, ownership means that, in some way, the student writer determines or defines his or her own writing task.
- ❑ Ownership may be revealed in a variety of ways:
 - specific purpose, thesis, angle, approach, etc.
 - anticipating readers’ needs, interests, questions, views, responsibilities, etc.
 - ideas, thinking, reasoning, interpretations, conclusions, etc.
 - forms of support and methods of development
 - application of information, concepts, principles, research, learning
 - references to personal experience
 - methods of organizing the writing; adaptations of conventional structures
 - use of language: word choice, sentence construction, stylistic devices, tone
 - format design
 - application of characteristics of the selected genre

5. Portfolio-appropriate writing will be “authentic.”

Work done for the Writing Portfolio Assessment serves Kentucky’s Learner Goals in helping students write for a variety of realistic purposes and situations. Not all of the writing done in schools must be “authentic,” but some must be. In general, when we think of *authentic*, words like *original*, *realistic*, *genuine* come to mind. Applied to writing, authentic means that the work is the student’s own, done for a realistic purpose and readership and in a realistic form that logically fits the purpose and audience or situation. The writing reveals a genuine effort to communicate with others in order to accomplish a realistic purpose, not merely to complete a school exercise to demonstrate learning to the teacher.

Characteristics of “authentic” writing include the following:

The purpose for writing is *authentic*, meaning that

- ❑ the purpose reflects the student’s ownership, individuality, decisions, choices, interests, thinking about a topic, issue, question, etc.

- the purpose is realistic, one students actually have or logically could have in their lives in various settings, for example: academic, workplace, technical/professional, military, personal life, and activity as a citizen.
- the purpose is specific (It's not realistic to write generally about a topic, with no specific purpose.)
- the purpose shows awareness of readers' interests, needs, concerns, etc. (The purpose reveals a genuine effort to communicate with realistic readers.)
- the purpose for writing is justified, meaning that the writer seeks to provide something that genuinely is needed by or likely will interest readers; the reason for writing makes sense.
- the purpose is not merely to complete an exercise or test question for the teacher and is not merely to complete a form of writing (The writer is genuinely trying to convey ideas to readers for a meaningful, realistic purpose.)

The writer will seek to communicate with authentic audiences, meaning that

- the purpose in writing reveals an effort to accomplish something with realistic readers and to write for audiences in realistic situations (It is not merely a school exercise.)
- the writer chooses a realistic readership for whom the writing is logically appropriate or likely will be important.
- the writing is developed throughout with an awareness of readers (It is not merely a transcription or a summary of information or activities.)
- the writer does not merely write about a topic but seeks to be effective with readers, including efforts to address alternate views, a reader's critical questions, a reader's interests or concerns.
- the writer shows awareness of the interests, needs, and general expectations of readers of a particular kind of writing and strives to develop the writing in ways to be effective with readers.

The writer will choose a form that is authentic for his or her purpose and audience, meaning that

- the form is one that logically fits the purpose and audience.
- the writer applies characteristics of "real-world" forms to accomplish his or her purposes.
- the form is realistic, like one done in "real-world" situations.
- Writing for Publication will provide appropriate references to sources used (See Chapter 10).

Practices in Compliance for the Writing Portfolio

Portfolios are a unique assessment component. They are the only portion of the statewide assessment developed under the direction of, and evaluated by, classroom teachers. Teachers and students are provided with the definition and examples of successful work. Although portfolio contents may vary, each entry is to be developed using the same set of practices listed below. Writing pieces produced using practices that are inconsistent with this Administration Code shall not be included in a student portfolio.

Writing Portfolio Development
OK
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Teachers provide, in the course of daily instruction, opportunities for writing appropriate for inclusion in the portfolio.2. Teachers allow ample time for preparation of portfolio entries in the classroom and may allow some student work outside of class.3. Teachers ask questions to clarify the student’s purpose, approach, meaning, content, ideas, organization, strategy, sentences, words, and mechanics.4. Teachers may indicate the position of errors (e.g., circle errors, highlight mistakes, put checks in margins of lines where errors occur) and ask students questions about errors.5. Teachers share and discuss with students the portfolio scoring criteria and samples of student work that exemplify those criteria.6. Teachers discuss best pieces and possible choices for inclusion in the portfolio with students.7. Teachers assist students in identifying a variety of tasks that address the required categories and types of portfolio entries.8. Students shall write, type, or word process portfolio pieces by themselves, unless otherwise allowed as accommodations by 703 KAR 5: 070.9. Teachers may assign peer tutors and others to assist students with portfolio development. All persons who provide assistance to students in portfolio development shall receive written information and training regarding how assistance may be appropriately provided.

Writing Portfolio Development

Not OK

1. Any assistance or intervention from teachers, peers, or others that diminish personal ownership of the portfolio.
2. Altering documentation attesting that portfolio contents were produced by the student.
3. While it is permissible for teachers and others to mark on students' papers asking questions, making comments, and/or indicating the position of errors, no one other than the student shall make direct corrections or revisions on a student's work that is to be included in the student's writing portfolio.
4. Adding, subtracting, revising, or working on portfolio entries after the completion date. Minor changes to the Table of Contents by the students are permitted.
5. Peer tutors and others shall not provide assistance beyond that which can be provided by the teacher.

Practices in Compliance: Responding to Student Writing

An important goal of the writing portfolio is to provide students with the skills necessary to become independent thinkers and writers. All responders must consider student ownership and the response necessary to help students become better communicators and more independent editors. Responders diminish student ownership when the intention of the response is to fix the student's writing rather than to foster the growth of the writer.

In a process approach to writing, students deserve appropriate and effective response to their drafts for the purpose of revising content first (by adding, deleting, or rearranging information) and then editing their pieces. Though this response may come from peers and/or trained adults, including parents, **teachers must play a part.** They may do so through whole class revision and editing instruction (mini-lessons); small group or on-on-one conferences; and making comments or asking questions written on students' drafts.

NOTE: In a successful writing program, students have many opportunities to use Writing to Learn (journal entries, observation logs, reading responses) and Writing to Demonstrate Learning to their Teachers (essay/open-response questions, discussion questions, topic-driven research papers). The *Code of Ethics for Writing Portfolios* applies only to the Writing for Publication (writing that is portfolio-appropriate), not to exercises or practices. On learning exercises and practices, teachers can make specific changes and direct corrections to teach students about writing.

REMEMBER: Any response to student writing should always begin with a positive comment.

Responding to Content

The purpose of revision is to teach the writer to internalize the concepts of audience awareness, focused purpose, idea development, and/or organization. It is not simply to improve the quality of pieces for the writing portfolio assessment.

Teachers, other trained adults, or trained peers **MAY**

Use in conferencing or write on students' papers questions or comments , such as

- “What are some specific suggestions you can give the reader?”
- “How are these references to movie stars related to your focused purpose: how the movie industry got started?”
- “You seem to have two purposes in your piece: to praise the current dress code and to suggest a plan for addressing non-compliance and rewarding compliance. Your piece would be stronger if you pick one as your focus.”
- “How much will the hamster and equipment cost? Where will you get the money?”
- “How do these details connect to your feeling of sadness?”
- “What were you thinking after the accident?”
- “This would be a good place for a graph of your information. The reader needs a visual.”
- “You lose focus on the eagle here.”
- “Is this the best way to begin your letter to the restaurant owner? What if he is a smoker?”
- “Where would be a better place for this paragraph in your article?”
- “The lead in your letter doesn't make me want to read on. How could you make it more engaging?”
- “Your first paragraph sounds like a conclusion. What could you do to make it sound like a lead instead?”
- “This would be a great place for dialogue—let your characters speak!”
- “The highlighted information in your piece is not accurate. Please check your facts.”

Teachers, other trained adults, or trained peers **MAY NOT**

- Mark through, cross out, or otherwise delete any content (words, phrases, sentences, whole paragraphs) or tell students do so.
- Add content to students' pieces or dictate content for students to add.
- Rearrange content for students or draw arrows or otherwise specifically indicate where content should be placed.

Points To Consider About Revision

Revision should not be optional (unless developmentally inappropriate for the student, such as may be the case with some early primary students). **However, excessive revision (multiple conferencing sessions about the same piece and/or many required rewrites to improve the quality of a student’s draft for state assessment purposes) does not address teaching the writer and is a violation of the state’s *Writing Portfolios Procedures* regulation [See Chapter 1]).**

- ❑ Revision should be aligned to instruction and focus on one or two major concerns at a time, ones that will have the greatest impact on improving the student’s writing skills and the quality of the piece (e.g., focus on leads).
- ❑ Written comments or questions assist students in identifying specific places in their pieces where the reader is confused, needs more information, or becomes disengaged.
- ❑ Students benefit from questions that encourage them to consider the needs of a reader, the characteristics of the genre they are developing, and/or the criteria for effective writing.
- ❑ Some teachers prefer to write directly on students’ papers (usually in the margin and/or at the end), avoiding the use of a red pen so often associated with mistakes or corrections. Other teachers prefer to put their comments/questions on post-it notes stuck to the draft.
- ❑ A list of criteria for effective writing posted in classrooms will guide teachers and students in revision considerations.
- ❑ Students need to have a reason to revise; otherwise response is a wasted effort. (An authentic publishing plan gives students that reason).
- ❑ Students need to know that revision means **ADD, DELETE, or REARRANGE CONTENT**. It does not mean to correct grammatical errors.
- ❑ Teachers should model appropriate revision strategies for students.
- ❑ If students who hand write their drafts write on every other line on one side of the paper, they will have room to add content between the lines. They can also cut and paste to add more paper for rearranging paragraphs or for adding content.
- ❑ If students word process their first drafts and revise by hand, they can print double-spaced or triple-spaced copies so that they can make revisions on the first draft.
- ❑ If students make revisions in different color ink, teachers can see evidence of revision.
- ❑ If students revise on the computer, teachers can ask them to print a first and second draft; students can then highlight on the second draft what is different. (They might also use the “Track Changes” feature on Word.)

- ❑ If teachers read through students' drafts quickly noting TRENDS or PATTERNS, they can use mini-lessons to direct whole group revision activities focused on targeted needs.
- ❑ Teachers need to teach peer response skills and expect students to be good peer response partners. Students need to put on their “reader hats” and consider how they react to the piece as “readers” or “listeners,” using a list of revision questions and following ethical guidelines.
- ❑ Students must maintain ownership of their pieces—no one else should alter the content of their drafts.
- ❑ The time teachers spend responding to student writing and the time students spend revising will be greatly reduced if instruction addresses audience awareness, focused purpose, idea development strategies, and organization during prewriting activities.

Responding to Editing Concerns

The purpose of editing is to teach the writer to recognize and correct grammatical errors that interfere with communication. To do so, teachers should address patterns of errors rather than focusing the writer on correcting every mistake.

Teachers, other trained adults, or peers **MAY**

- ◆ Indicate sentences that are run-on's or fragments in ways such as
 - highlighting, underlining, or circling the group of words **OR**
 - placing a mark in the margin such as SF or RO.
- ◆ Suggest that two short, choppy sentences be combined.
- ◆ Indicate the position of agreement errors (subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent) in ways such as
 - placing an “S-V or P-A” in the margin of the sentence where the error occurs **OR**
 - underlining the subject once and the verb twice **OR**
 - underlining the pronoun and its antecedent
- ◆ Suggest that choice of verbs or nouns could be improved
- ◆ Indicate the position of a spelling error in ways such as
 - placing a mark such as a check or “sp” in the margin of the sentence where the error occurs **OR**
 - circling the misspelled word
- ◆ Indicate the position of a punctuation error in ways such as
 - placing a check mark or “P” in the margin on the line where the error occurs **OR**
 - placing a circle where a mark of punctuation belongs
- ◆ Indicate the position of a capitalization error in ways such as
 - writing comma in the margin of the line where the error occurs **OR**
 - circling the error

- ◆ Indicate information that needs appropriate documentation
- ◆ Writing specific comments such as
 - “Try breaking this passage into two sentences.”
 - “To make your sentence structure more interesting for the reader, combine these two short, choppy sentences.”
 - “You have shifted tense at this point in your piece. The circled words need to be in past tense, just like the other verbs in your story.”
 - “Try writing your poem in present tense.”
 - “How might you eliminate unnecessary words in these lines?”
 - “Review the class handout on transitional elements, especially the words that indicate cause and effect relationships to the reader. Where would some of these words fit in your article?”
 - “Your paragraphs are very long. Where could you add more paragraphing to give the reader additional ‘rest stops’?”

Teachers can meet the needs of individual students by differentiating their response to editing concerns. For example, some students need misspelled words circled; whereas, others need the challenge of finding the misspelled word on a line where an “sp” has been placed in the margin.

Teachers, other trained adults, or trained peers MAY NOT

- Combine sentences for the student by deleting words, adding words, and/or adding punctuation.
- Correct sentence fragments or run-on sentences on the student’s paper.
- Insert better language on the student’s paper.
- Correct agreement errors on the student’s paper.
- Write the correct spelling of a misspelled word on the student’s paper.
- Insert appropriate punctuation on the student’s paper.
- Correct capitalization errors on a student’s paper.
- Cross out words.
- Insert appropriate documentation for the student.

Editing Tips for Students with Special Needs

- Students can highlight words on their drafts that they think may be misspelled. Doing this before running spell check or asking for assistance from a teacher, aide, or peer encourages students to make some decisions about spelling and to take some initial responsibility for editing.
- Struggling spellers who have a draft on the computer can first print a copy and then run spell check. Each time the program stops on a word, they can highlight the word on their hardcopy and then click “Ignore.” (This procedure avoids students making an inappropriate choice from the suggested spellings given and avoids the problem of no suggested spellings.) Later, the teacher can work with the student to address some of the highlighted words, focusing on patterns of errors and teaching spelling concepts.
- Students can create a personal spelling helper: a small spiral notebook with pages for different alphabet letters. They write their misspelled words on appropriate pages and beside each they write the correct spelling (which the teacher may have to supply.) As they

continue to work on additional pieces of writing, they can check their spelling against their personal spelling helper and continue to add words.

- Students who have problems with run-on sentences can number the sentences in their draft. Then they count the number of words in each sentence and place that number beside the number of the sentence. When sentences have a larger number of words than is typical, a run-on sentence may be the cause.
- Students can read their papers to an editing partner who reads along silently as they read aloud. Students often will spot their own mistakes in this way, especially words they have left out and run-on sentences.

Common Questions about Marking Students' Writing for Publication

(Text in this section adapted from an article, "Recent Questions about Marking on Student Papers," by Starr Lewis.)

What is and isn't appropriate when marking students' papers that may become part of writing portfolios?

The Code of Ethics for Writing Portfolios indicates that "teachers ask questions to clarify the student's purpose, approach, meaning, content, ideas, organization, strategy, sentences, words, and mechanics" and "teachers may indicate the position of errors (e.g., circle errors, highlight mistakes, put checks in margins of lines where errors occur) and ask students questions about errors."

Consider the following example and the questions that follow.

*When we arived Lindsey and I wanted to ride the Vortex first. As I
stod in line
I never expected it to be what it was.*

How can I help my students be better writers and not diminish student ownership?

The following responses to the above passage preserve student ownership:

- A responder could write at the bottom of the paper, "You seem to be having a problem with commas after introductory elements. I have placed a check in the margin on the lines where you have a comma error. You also need to make sure you use spell check."
- A responder could put a circle after *arived* in the first sentence and after *line* in the second sentence to indicate an error. The responder could also circle *arived* and *stod* and write "sp" over the circles.
- A responder could write a note to the student on her paper that says, "You need to look in your student handbook to review how to use commas after introductory adverb clauses. Also, you have some spelling errors to correct. Proofread carefully."

These are only a few approaches; there are other ethical approaches that could be offered to this student.

What practices diminish student ownership? What can I not do?

The following approaches diminish student ownership, and therefore, are violations for portfolio-appropriate writing.

- The responder draws a line through *arived* and *stod* and writes *arrived* and *stood*.
- The responder places a comma after *arived* and after *line*.
- The responder adds language to the student writing such as adding, “*because we had heard so much about how exciting and scary the ride was*” at the end of the first sentence.

May teachers or responders circle spelling errors or write “sp” next to spelling errors?

Yes. *The Code of Ethics* states that “teachers may indicate the position of errors.” Responders may indicate spelling errors by circling, underlining, highlighting, or other means such as putting a check mark in the margin on the line where the error appears.

May responders identify run-ons and fragments for students?

Yes. There are a number of ways a teacher might indicate these errors for students.

- The responder may choose to highlight the sentence and write “run-on” or “fragment” next to the sentence. Some teachers prefer abbreviations such as “R-O” or “SF.”
- The responder may choose to put a check in the margin and write a note to the student on the paper such as “Each place you find a check in the margin indicates a run-on or sentence fragment.”
- The responder may choose to write a note on the paper such as “You have a number of fragments and run-ons to correct.”

May responders point out subject-verb agreement errors, pronoun-antecedent errors, overuse of passive verbs, or verb tense problems?

Yes. Responders may circle or otherwise mark the error and identify the type of error for the student by writing “subject-verb agreement” or “verb tense problem,” etc.

May responders delete unrelated information from student papers?

No. However, responders may ask for clarification concerning the importance of information. For instance, the responder may write on the paper, “How does this relate to the point you’re making?” or “As a reader, I don’t see how this fits. Can you think of more explanation to help your reader understand why this is important?”

May responders substitute more effective words for weak word choice on the part of students?

No. However, responders may underline or highlight weak words for students and suggest that the student replace them with more effective words.

Preparing to Be an Effective Responder

Teachers who wish to improve their response skills may consider these suggestions:

Primary

- Know your students and their developmental levels.
- Determine appropriate purposes for your response (early primary vs. upper primary).
- Know characteristics of effective writing at different developmental levels.

K-12

- Know characteristics of the genres students are developing.
- Identify texts for students to use as models of those genres.
- Read and pay attention to the strategies and techniques used by writers of those genres.
- Be a writer yourself—try responding to the assignments you give your students.
- Read professional literature and attend professional development sessions to learn instructional strategies that help students to improve their writing skills.

Suggested Resources

- *Kentucky Marker Papers* (K-12)
- *Kentucky Writing Handbook*
- KET videos (See Section 4 for detailed bibliographic information.)
- School cluster leader and/or literacy coach

- Professional literature (See Section 4 for detailed bibliographic information.)
 - **Elementary**
 - *Units of Study for Primary Writing, Grades K-2* Calkins
 - *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5* Calkins
 - *Conferring with Primary Writers (CD-ROM)* Calkins
 - *The Art of Teaching Writing*, Calkins
 - *Writer to Writer: How to Conference Young Writers*, Thomason
 - **K-12**
 - *How's it Going?* Anderson
 - *In the Middle: New Understanding about Writing, Reading, and Learning*, Atwell
 - *After the End. . .*, Lane
 - *Revision Toolbox*, Heard
 - *The Writing Workshop*, Ray
 - *Writing Workshop*, Fletcher and Portalupi
 - *Writing Essentials*, Routman

The Writing Process

Writing Process

To communicate effectively, students should engage in the various stages of the writing process including focusing, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and reflecting. The writing process is recursive; different writers engage in the process differently and proceed through the stages at different rates.

Program of Studies and Core Content for Assessment 4.1

Students should understand that

- the writing process is a helpful tool in constructing and demonstrating meaning of content through writing.
- the stages are sometimes recursive (e.g., in the process of revising, a writer sometimes returns to earlier stages of the process).
- writers work through the process at different rates. Often, the process is enhanced by conferencing with others.

Program of Studies

Conferencing

Conferencing is the process of a student communicating with another person about his or her work. The goal of conferencing is constructive feedback on the student's writing, not correction. Conferencing is perhaps one of the most important steps in the writing process, and it can—and should—occur throughout the writing process. There is no “right time” or “wrong time” to conference with students. **Conferencing partners should be available to help students at all stages of the writing process, whenever they may need it**—during the focusing stage, prewriting, drafting, etc.

It is essential that, during these conferences, the student writer retain ownership of his/her writing. While responders (teachers, peers, or others) may ask questions and offer suggestions, the writer will decide what to incorporate and into his or her writing, and what to reject.

Responders should assist students by

- questioning rather than dictating
- critiquing rather than criticizing
- coaching rather than correcting
- guiding rather than directing
- suggesting rather than imposing

Often, effective conferences are structured this way.

The conference partner begins by asking: “Where are you with the writing?” The student must indicate a conferencing point or a question or concern. The pattern of questions and response follows by the teacher offering suggestions which support writing growth. At the end of a conference, the teacher should make certain a student has a clear plan of action for revision of his/her work. Conferencing partners may ask, “What will you do with the writing now?” Too often, students do not know where to begin again in the revision process. However, if the student can articulate his goals, he has a place to begin in revision.

Though conferencing may occur at any point of the writing process, the writer will generally move through the process in fairly regular stages. It is important for teachers to understand that the process is recursive; that is, it may repeat itself at different times during the writing cycle given the needs of the individual students.

Focusing

Focusing is an important first step in the writing process that encompasses everything that happens before anything is put on paper. Students need to focus on and identify what they might be interested in writing to achieve an important level of ownership.

To focus, students will

- connect to content knowledge
- connect with prior learning and experience
- initiate an authentic reason to write
- think about a subject, an experience, a question, an issue or a problem to determine a meaningful reason to write

Teachers should assist students in focusing by

- creating opportunities in the classroom for students to inquire, learn, and think critically as they investigate topics
- providing a variety of activities for students to initiate a reason to write

Prewriting

In prewriting, a writer explores subjects and experiences, determines a focused purpose for writing, begins to consider the needs of an audience, selects ideas and support for the purpose, and begins to organize these ideas.

During prewriting, students will

- establish a purpose and central/controlling idea or focus
- identify and analyze the audience
- determine the most appropriate form to meet the needs of purpose and audience
- generate ideas (e.g., mapping, webbing, note taking, interviewing, researching and other writing-to-learn activities)
- organize ideas – examining other models of good writing and appropriate text structures to match purpose and organize information.

Teachers should assist students during prewriting by

- providing written models and instruction in analyzing writers' forms, purposes, audience awareness, idea development and organizational strategies.
- providing whole class instruction and practice in a variety of prewriting strategies and activities from which students can choose those that best suit their particular needs.
- guiding students as they determine their realistic purpose and audience and real-world form in order to develop their selected topics.
- allowing for some student choice and not depriving students of either ownership of their writing or opportunities to improve their writing abilities.

Drafting

During the drafting stage, a writer begins to compose the work by drafting sentences and paragraphs connecting one thought to another. Writers concentrate on creating their meaning, developing thoughts, providing relevant support, addressing their reader's needs, and organizing their work.

During drafting, students will

- write draft(s) for an intended audience.
- develop topic, elaborating, exploring sentence variety and language use.
- organize writing.

Teachers should assist students during drafting by:

- maintaining a supportive environment that allows for different learning styles, provides rich resources and gives ample drafting time in and out of class.
- respecting the writer's ability to make choices about purpose, audience, form, content and length.
- encouraging students to draw appropriately on their experience, learning, reading and inquiry to accomplish their authentic purposes as writers.

Revising

In revising, the writer begins to make appropriate changes to a draft. Revision is, in a sense, rethinking or "re-visioning" of ideas. During revision, the writer reshapes and reorders the text to match it as closely as possible with the new ideas in his or her head. The general guideline in revision is that the students will make decisions about what to add, delete or change. Teachers and others may respond, but they should ensure that authors have the final say in the revisions they make in their writing.

During the revision stage(s), students will revise for specific criteria:

Content

- reflect to determine where to add, delete, rearrange, define/redefine or elaborate content
- conference with teacher or peer(s) to help determine where to add, delete, rearrange, define/redefine or elaborate content
- check for accuracy of content
- consider voice, tone, style, intended audience, coherence, transitions, pacing
- compare with rubric criteria and anchor papers/models

- Consider effectiveness of language usage and sentences to communicate ideas

Idea Development

- narrow topic for selected writing
- compose a topic sentence of a paragraph that is purposefully placed to enhance reader awareness
- select appropriate supporting details relevant to a specific writing category (e.g., dialogue, predictions, findings from research, needed definitions, causes and effects, comparisons, contrasts, reference to concepts)
- delete extraneous/irrelevant materials

Organization

- correct sentences that are out of chronological/sequential order or insert new sentences in the correct chronological/sequential position
- compose effective and subtle transitions
- develop effective introductions and closures for writing
- apply appropriate usage of parallelism (e.g., word forms, lists, phrases, clauses, sentences, organization, idea development)

Word Choice

- eliminate redundant words and phrases
- apply the most specific word for use in a sentence

Teachers may use a variety of strategies to promote revision by

- raising questions to clarify the student's purpose, audience, meaning, content, ideas and organization.
- modeling and discussing revision while preserving author's ownership.
- teaching students how to review their writing with each other and to talk about possible changes.
- providing class time for revision.
- allowing peers to read each other's writing and offer suggestions for the author to consider.
- encouraging students to read/reread examples of writing to help make decisions about their own writing.
- designing revision checklists for students to use with their own writing and when conferencing with peers.
- allowing students to talk and write about their revisions and the rationale behind them, reflecting upon their work and progress as writers.
- encouraging students to inquire and learn more about their selected topic, drawing on this learning to accomplish their purposes.

Editing

During editing, the writer strives to create a correct piece of writing. The writer's goal in editing is to produce the best possible paper according to his/her developmental level. Arranging for a specific time for editing can help students spot errors and correct them. Teachers should emphasize the role of students as owners of their work in making final decisions.

During editing, students will

- Check for correctness with self, teacher or peer(s) regarding language, sentence structure, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, abbreviation and documentation of sources
- Use resources to support editing (e.g., spell check, dictionaries, thesauri, handbooks)
- Edit for correctness regarding verb tenses, agreement concerns and usage problems

Teachers can use a variety of strategies to promote editing, including

- monitoring students' writing development to discover patterns of error and to determine students' critical needs and developmental level in order to plan instruction designed to address specific grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage needs.
- supporting students in self-assessing and making final editing decisions.
- providing mini-lessons and encouraging students to apply lessons to their own writing.
- encouraging students to use appropriate resources such as handbooks, dictionaries, thesauri (print and electronic), spell checkers, or computer writing programs.

Teachers should not at any time actually compose writing for the student or make direct corrections for the student on student work, unless indicated in the student's IEP/504 Plan. (703 KAR 5:070)

Following are some appropriate strategies to use with students when you focus on the editing process:

- **Mini-Lessons:** Brief lessons on common editing problems can be of immediate benefit to students when they are taught as part of an editing workshop. After a short lesson at the beginning of an editing session, students can immediately apply the lessons to their own writing, reinforcing new information about correctness through meaningful use rather than isolated exercises. Mini-lessons can be used with smaller groups of students experiencing similar, specific problems.
- **Peer Editing:** Students pair off and edit one another's drafts, pointing out the positions of any errors they see. **Each student makes his/her own corrections, preserving author's ownership.**
- **Class Experts:** Students skilled in a specific editing area check the drafts of peers for errors, but do not make direct corrections. Often, a student can explain a point in terms that a classmate can understand.
- **Transparency Editing:** Make a transparency of an anonymous student draft from a **previous year** and ask the class to identify editing needs. As students identify and correct errors, the teacher corrects each on the transparency and then asks students to apply these same editing strategies to their own pieces of writing. If this model is followed regularly, students receive numerous short lessons focusing on mechanics and usage and have many opportunities to apply new strategies.
- **Minimal Mark:** During an editing conference, the teacher places a dot or check mark in the margin of a line containing an editing error. Students must find and correct the error. Teachers should be careful not to mark all errors during a conference, but instead focus on one or two specific skills during the session.

- **Modeling:** Teachers should be sure that every piece of their own writing that they share with students is as accurately edited as possible. When errors do occur in teacher models, these errors should be used to facilitate a mini-lesson focusing on the specific skill.

Publishing

In publishing, students make their writing public for others. For assessment purposes, 4th and 7th grade students will publish three pieces for their writing portfolios, and 12th grade students will publish four pieces for their writing portfolios. Students determine the point at which their writing is ready to be published. Following are some guidelines for the publishing stage:

- Many forms of publishing are acceptable (bound books, pamphlets, illustrated works, regular manuscripts), but the work should be a size that will fit the standard writing assessment portfolio.
- The writing should be neat and legible. Students may use many methods to produce published pieces (pen or pencil, printing or cursive, word processors or typewriters). Regardless of the method selected, the students must write, type or word process by themselves unless otherwise noted in an IEP/504 Plan.

Student authors must first give their permission before any writing can be published for any purpose outside that of portfolio assessment.

Reflecting

During the reflection stage, students think about their writing and their growth as writers. Reflection should occur throughout the writing process and at all grade levels.

Students should reflect in many ways upon many learning experiences including

- progress, growth, and goals as a writer.
- literacy skills.
- who or what has influenced progress and growth.
- approaches used when composing (e.g., free-writing, mental composing, researching, drawing, webbing, outlining).

Teachers may use a variety of strategies to promote reflection, including

- providing class time for reflection.
- offering multiple opportunities for student reflection on a variety of learning experiences.
- creating opportunities in the classroom for writers to identify and explain their writing skills, strategies, and processes (i.e., entries in writers' notebooks, letters, check lists, oral presentations).
- allowing students to talk and write about the decisions they make as writers.
- designing open-ended questions that require students to reflect on their writing.
- encouraging students to assess their strengths and areas for potential growth.
- providing written models and instruction on analyzing how writers use reflection.

Using Resources Effectively

The effective use of resources is important to a student's critical thinking, critical reading and critical writing development. Sources provide students information, validation of their ideas and support for their arguments. Research that utilizes the effective use of resources results in quality pieces of writing that may be suitable for publication.

Teachers may assign students to use resources for many reasons. Teachers may assign projects which involve use of resource material to help the students:

- ❑ learn research skills
- ❑ locate information efficiently
- ❑ research information about a subject the teacher has assigned or to see how much they have read about a topic or subject
- ❑ locate more information on a topic or subject that interests them
- ❑ inquire and ask their own questions about the content
- ❑ inquire to find out what the current conversation is about a topic or subject
- ❑ inquire to support theories or ideas the student has about the topic or subject
- ❑ inquire to find information that will support their controlling idea in their writing.

The further down this list of purposes for doing research, the more likely the students are engaging in authentic inquiry and using resources for authentic purposes.

If the purpose of a classroom task is to simply learn a research skill—for example, a teacher assigns students to complete an annotated bibliography to teach them how to find various kinds of information and how to format information on a page—the piece that results is most likely not a piece for publication. These activities have value, but it important for teachers to understand why they are having students use resources to begin with and what they want students to be able to do with the information once they find it.

The most useful kind of research occurs when the student is **looking for answers to his own questions**. In this situation, the student is looking for a way to enter into the conversation about his subject or topic. Then, he can decide what he thinks about the current thinking, and ultimately, what he wants to say about it in his writing.

Consider these scenarios:

Scenario #1

A student is assigned a research topic by the teacher. He goes to the library to locate books, magazine articles, and online information about the subject. He takes notes from the sources and then organizes the information. From his notes, the student writes and reorganizes the information from his research to report what he has found. He puts quotes from the sources into his paper.

In most cases this scenario depicts a Writing-to-Demonstrate-Learning activity that is strictly for the teacher. While this is a valuable way for students to learn research skills, they will, most likely, learn very little from the writing itself. Unless the controlling idea was set up to purposely accomplish a task, the piece will most likely function to inform, and it will lack the authenticity and ownership of a publishable researched piece.

Scenario #2

A student is studying certain content in a unit in one of her classes. Considering the information she has learned, she begins to wonder how something she has noticed about her life fits into that content area. Since she is wondering about this idea, she begins reading to find out more about this subject in order to find answers to the questions she has about it.

During the research process, the student finds out what others are saying about her topic of interest, and she determines to what degree she agrees with the current argument. In order to communicate her thinking about the subject, she writes to other learners in that content area (most likely classmates and the teacher) to communicate her views about the subject and widen the understanding of the other learners.

In this case, the student is questioning authentically, researching authentically, and organizing and writing authentically for an authentic purpose and audience. The teacher, most often, has to set students up to begin the inquiry and questioning. However, the type of writing that comes out of this learning experience would most likely be a publishable researched piece because the student asked the question, found the information, responded to it in writing, and designed it to meet the needs of readers interested in the same subject.

Documentation of sources

In a classroom context, teachers should instruct students to document where they found information they are using in their writing. Though no particular style is recommended, teachers may elect to instruct students in the various methods of documentation that fit the needs of the class. What is important is that students understand that they must give credit.

Three common methods of documentation include signal phrases, parenthetical documentation, and citations at the end of the work.

1. Signal phrases indicate the source inside the text itself.

For example, **According to Tom Romano in his book *Writing with Passion*, “writing that renders experience can be analytical and logical.”**

2. Parenthetical documentation includes source information placed directly after that information which is quoted, summarized or paraphrased.

For example, **“On more occasions than we might admit, students can use story to deepen and communicate their learning,” and therefore, teachers will want to help students use their experiences effectively in their writing (Romano 8).**

Usually, the parenthetical documentation refers the reader to a list at the end of the work that references resources. In articles, for example, there may be a list of resources, but a reader will not generally find a specific “Works Cited” section.

3. Citations come at the end of a piece of writing and identify the publishing information of the source.

Though many formats of documentation exist, no one particular style is the definitive form. Teachers may have students learn various forms of documentation. Students in the lower grade levels may not be required to follow a specific style of documentation, though these students may begin to approximate different styles. Older students may find that they need to use different styles of documentation for different courses in which they may research and write.

Regardless of which style is chosen, students need to be aware of two important concepts. First, students should understand the importance in recognizing and documenting the source of the information they may use when quoting, summarizing or paraphrasing. Secondly, students should be aware that citing sources not only allows the student to give credit to his/her sources, but also, it allows readers interested in the field of study to find further information they may need or want.

Most importantly, students must understand that they need to be able to follow whatever method of documentation is expected of them.

Often, citing information at the end of a piece of writing is called a “Works Cited” page or a bibliography.

Sample documentation for students K-12

The goal of documentation is to help students across all grade levels give credit to their sources. **Students must be taught that if they paraphrase, summarize or quote unique ideas or thoughts** (information that is not “common knowledge,”) they must give appropriate credit to the sources. Common knowledge refers to information that would be the same in many sources (e.g., the date of the beginning of the Civil War).

Given that learning to document must occur on the developmental continuum, it is likely that students at different grade levels will cite information differently. For example, elementary students might simply identify the title and type of the source. As students become more advanced in their writing and learning, they should be providing more source information approximating correctness with various documentation styles they may encounter in high school and in the workplace.

The following examples offer teachers ideas about what documentation might look like on the developmental continuum. Please note that these are simply **examples**, and teachers may decide to have students identify more or less source information as class and student needs dictate.

Elementary (K-5)

The World Book. M. (encyclopedia)

The World of Science. "The Earth," page 77. (textbook)

Ranger Rick article by Linda Smathers. (magazine article)

Ranger Rick article. "Kids and Sports" by Linda Smathers (magazine article)

Middle School (6-8)

Current Health magazine article. "Getting Enough Exercise: Young People Take Note" by Mark Hodges. Page 23.

"How Your Computer Works." Website. <http://www.computertech.com>

Smith, Sam. "Being Creative in the Art Classroom." Art Today. March 2004. Page. 34.

High School (9-12)

Generally, students should be starting to use the various styles of documentation early in high school, so that they understand the concept of format by the end of the senior year. However, what is most important is that students learn to follow whatever guidelines they are given and they understand the importance of crediting sources. Teachers may choose to stress one style of documentation in their classes and expect students to use that style. However, for portfolio scoring, no particular style of documentation is required.

Romano, Tom. *Writing with Passion*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1995. (MLA)

Romano, Tom. (1995). *Writing with Passion*. Portsmouth: Heinemann. (APA)

Writing with Passion by Tom Romano. Pages 54-55.

What happens when resources are not used effectively?

Documenting Sources as an Instructional Issue

Using research materials correctly is an **instructional issue**. **Classroom teachers are responsible for making certain that the information that students use in their writing is documented appropriately.**

Instances of plagiarism (use of the exact words, unique ideas or intellectual property of another and the attempt to pass it off as one's own) **should be caught by the teacher who assigned the writing.**

If the plagiarized writing is mistakenly included in the working folder, it should be recognized by the teacher who is helping the student with portfolio development.

If plagiarized writing is included in a student's Writing Assessment Portfolio, it may be considered as plagiarized if, indeed, **the writer has used the exact words, unique ideas, or intellectual property of another person and represents it as his or her own, AND the source of the plagiarism is located.**

Documenting Sources as a Scoring Issue

What is important is that students understand that they must give credit to their sources and that they have attempted to document information. If information is not documented (or improperly documented) and the original source is not located, **the lack of documentation is considered a correctness issue for scoring purposes.**

Information that is considered "common knowledge" does not need to be documented.

While plagiarism is an important consideration, other considerations about how students are using researched information (which may or may not lead directly to instances of plagiarism) should be kept in mind.

Teachers may ask themselves these questions about a student's writing to determine how well the student is using the material he or she has researched.

To what degree

- does the sample of writing show the student's ability to compose (versus the ability of the writer from the original source)?
- does the sample of writing show the student's ability to integrate researched material into his own writing (versus the student simply including researched information)?
- does the sample of writing show the student using the researched material to support his own ideas (versus the researched information actually *being* the main ideas)?

The more a student is able to use researched information to integrate into and support his or her own ideas in the writing, the less likely the student will be to plagiarize the information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a writer uses the exact words, unique ideas, or the intellectual property (e.g., charts, graphics, designs, etc.) of another's work **and** represents it as his or her own original work.

Plagiarism

A portfolio should be scored incomplete due to plagiarism only if:

- the writer uses the exact words, unique ideas or intellectual property of another writer and represents it as his or her own original work; **and**
- the source of the plagiarism is located.

- submitting a piece of writing written entirely by another person as one's own work
- submitting a piece of writing in which another writer's words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs are included without proper documentation
- submitting a piece of writing in which another writer's words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs are summarized or paraphrased without an attempt at proper documentation
- retelling someone else's work and representing it as one's own
- retelling someone else's work for the same purpose with the same details but from a different point of view
- failing to document a source
- utilizing a story starter without documenting the source

Not Plagiarism

Note: Though the following instances are not considered examples of plagiarism, they are not necessarily recommended as methods of portfolio development over more authentic methods of developing writing.

- retelling a story from a different point of view to create an original work.
- utilizing the organizational pattern of a published work while developing one's own ideas and purposes
- including allusions to other literature as a technique of idea development
- submitting parodies that demonstrate student ownership through the development of purpose and idea development
- submitting sequels that demonstrate authentic purpose, student ownership, and idea development while not relying upon the original text
- failing to document information that could be considered common knowledge (i.e., dates, famous quotations, historical/geographical facts, statistics relevant to a field of study, facts that can be located in multiple reference books)
- utilizing a story starter *with proper documentation*
- changing the genre of a literary work in order to accomplish one's own purposes, modifying the work to fulfill the needs of the new genre, and giving credit to the original author (An improperly-documented source is not plagiarism). See documentation examples.

Categories and Forms in the Writing Portfolio

Categories of Writing

Four categories of writing are referenced in the *Program of Students* and should be included in all Kentucky students' writing working folders: *Reflective*, *Personal Expressive*, *Literary* and *Transactive*. The categories that must be included in a student's portfolio follow:

- Reflective Writing
- Personal Expressive **OR** Literary Writing
- Transactive Writing
- Transactive Writing w/analytical or technical focus (**12th grade only**)

Additionally, all portfolios must include a Student Signature Sheet, a Table of Contents, and at least one content piece at the 7th and 12th grade levels.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents for the writing portfolio is **required** to be completed by the student for the assessment (unless otherwise allowed in an IEP or 504 Plan) and has two main purposes:

- assisting the student and teacher in organizing the portfolio entries
- ensuring that scorers can accurately assess the contents of the portfolio

The Table of Contents includes the following:

- the **Title or Descriptor** and **Category** for each piece
- the **Study/Content Area** for which **each** piece was written (4th-grade students are not required to identify a content area requirement on the Table of Contents)
- the **Page Number** that identifies the page on which each piece of the portfolio begins

By including the title and category of each piece, students can be assured that they have compiled the entries they wish to include. The scorer can also accurately identify each piece if, during the scoring, pieces are removed from the portfolio folder. Inclusion of the page numbers of pieces in the portfolio serves the same purpose.

By including the content area for which each piece was written, the writer does not put the scorer in the position of having to guess whether the student has fulfilled the content requirements for the 7th and 12th grade portfolios. The scorer knows immediately if a portfolio is complete or not.

Grade-specific sample Table of Contents forms can be found in Appendix H, *Forms for Photocopying*. It is recommended that teachers use the sample Table of Contents forms from the development handbook to avoid accidentally leaving out required information.

Reflective Writing

Students will analyze and communicate reflectively about literacy goals.

Program of Studies

In Reflective Writing, students will

- evaluate personal progress toward meeting goals in literacy skills
- develop the connection between literacy skills (reading and writing) and understanding of content knowledge
- describe their own literacy skills, strategies, processes or areas of growth
- analyze own decisions about literacy goals
- evaluate own strengths and areas for growth
- support claims about self

Core Content for Assessment 4.1

Reflection: An Overview

Webster's New World Dictionary defines reflection as “serious thought” or “contemplation.” The process of reflection involves careful thought and serious consideration of past events. True reflection requires analysis and higher level thinking. Teachers should ask students to think reflectively about their learning often and in many situations. The more students are expected to reflect upon their learning, the more distinctions they make, and the more successfully they will internalize what they have learned. Using writing as a method of reflection allows this to happen.

To write well reflectively, students must carefully consider an event or events from the past—an accomplishment, a learning experience, a meaningful lesson, etc.—and then they must show the significance of that event through their writing; they must give serious thought or contemplation to the subject of their writing.

What is the purpose of reflective writing for the Writing Assessment Portfolio?

The process of reflection is a powerful tool in a student's education. Reflection requires thinking, serious contemplation and analysis about something (in the case of the Writing Portfolio—about their growth in writing and literacy development).

Reflective writing should be practiced consistently in all content areas and grade levels. Reflection can happen in writing to learn, writing to demonstrate learning, and writing for publication. Reflection involves critical thinking, and thus, must be practiced regularly.

Reflective Writing is meant to be a self-assessment. Self-assessment should become a natural part of any writer's process. **This kind of thinking and writing should occur not only during final portfolio development but also at regular intervals during the year. Students need regular practice in reflective writing to become better at analyzing their growth in literacy.** A student needs this type of reflective writing in his/her folder in order to produce the most comprehensive, thoughtful portrait of himself/herself as a writer and learner.

While reflection might be found in any category of writing, for the Writing Portfolio Assessment, one piece must be reflective to serve the transactive purpose of informing the reader. It might be based on experience, but **the student is using the narration of that experience to meet the purpose of analyzing writing growth through literacy.**

For the Writing Portfolio Assessment, the reflective piece must have as its central focus growth in writing through the lens of literacy. However, the piece may be written for a variety of audiences in a variety of forms.

Given that purpose, students may focus the piece many ways.

Examples

- ❑ A student writer might analyze his growth as a writer by focusing on a particular learning experience that improved his literacy. For example, he might analyze the inquiry process he went through to write the analytical lab report he included in his portfolio. The piece would be very individual and unique to the student.
- ❑ A student might, instead, talk about how she developed in writing through reading. Perhaps as a child she read every Nancy Drew mystery available. She noticed that as she grew older, the reading experiences influenced her writing as she liked to write stories that were mysterious. This sparked her interest in writing (and thus reinforced the interest in reading), and, as she grew, her writing growth is evident in the mystery story she included in her portfolio.
- ❑ As a third example—same purpose, to analyze growth as a writer through literacy—a student might recognize the importance a particular teacher played in his growth. He writes a personal essay showing how this happened—how the learning experiences he had while in that teacher’s class helped make him the writer he is today. Or, he might write a letter to that teacher, discussing particular learning experiences that really made an impression on him.

In any of these examples, the purpose is the same. The focus is different and provides a way for the writer to achieve his/her purpose.

To accomplish the purpose of reflecting on literacy growth, a student may describe himself/herself as a reader, writer and learner and examine the significance of the related experiences. **The reflective piece should be as individual as the students.** Teachers should **not** use a checklist of “things to include” in a reflective piece as this practice decreases ownership and authenticity in students’ writing.

Characteristics of the Reflective Piece in the Writing Assessment Portfolio

- ❑ This piece may come from a language arts class, but it might also be developed in a content area class.
- ❑ In the reflective piece for the portfolio, a student might refer to a piece as an example to support his reflection, but there is no need to refer to all pieces.
- ❑ Students may achieve this purpose by making connections between literacy skills and their understanding of content knowledge.
- ❑ To accomplish this purpose, students may choose an audience who would be the most interested in that student's learning experiences, perhaps a teacher (past or present), a parent or grandparent (who may have had an impact on that child's literacy development), a scholarship committee member who is making a judgment, a general reader who may identify with him/her in that literacy development.
- ❑ The student may also choose the form in which he wants to write. A letter could certainly be appropriate, but a personal essay may work equally well. In every circumstance, students should consider the purpose and audience when choosing the most appropriate and authentic form.
- ❑ Students may still choose to write letters to the reviewer as they have for many years in Kentucky; however, they may also make other logical choices given their purpose in writing.
- ❑ If students' reflective pieces are as individual as other pieces (e.g., the personal piece) they may write, the students are probably on target if they are reflecting on writing and literacy growth. If all of the reflective entries seem to sound alike, students are not doing the proper kind of thinking and analysis the reflective piece calls for.

Teachers wishing to help students improve their reflection on literacy may consider the following characteristics that help students build toward strong reflection.



Weaker

Stronger

Weaker reflective writing:	Stronger reflective writing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may simply list writing and reading experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates specific literacy experiences that show impact/growth in writing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may show little reflection, analysis or insight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates significance of literacy experiences through insightful analysis of learning events.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may demonstrate little awareness of writing for a selected audience. Often, the only connection to the audience is included at the top of a letter—Dear _____, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> targets a specific audience and shows careful consideration of audience’s needs to clearly communicate the purpose of the piece.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates little idea development; writing may simply list pieces in the portfolio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates careful idea development and makes connections to literacy growth experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may demonstrate listings that are organized randomly (e.g., I learned this. . . I learned this. . .) with few or no connections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates clear organization with insightful connections through analysis and reflection.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may narrate an experience for no other purpose than to narrate an experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates narration of experience for the transactive purpose of analyzing growth in literacy to show impact on writing and learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may be developed in a simple or illogical form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrates careful choice of form given purpose and audience.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> may be “cookie cutter.” Writing may seem “generic.” All pieces in a class may sound similar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is individual to the student and his/her learning experiences.

Reflection—the careful consideration and serious contemplation of past events for the purpose of evaluating or making sense of those past events.

Literacy--In a narrow sense, **literacy is the ability of a student to use and understand language through reading and writing.** However, the concept of literacy may also be defined very broadly. **Literacy is the ability of a student to use language to communicate with others—through reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing and through the use of the combination of these skills.**

Instructional Issues Q & A: Reflective Writing for the Kentucky Writing Portfolio

Q: What is the purpose of the reflective entry in the portfolio?

A: The purpose of the reflective entry is for students to **analyze their growth as writers through the lens of literacy.** In a narrow sense, literacy is the ability of a student to use and understand language through reading and writing. However, the concept of literacy may also be defined very broadly. It is the ability of a student to use language to communicate with others—through reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, inquiring, etc. as per the diagram on page 11 of the *Kentucky Writing Handbook*. Students who are able to make connections between writing development and literacy experiences are more likely to meet the “authentic (and insightful) focused purpose” called for in the writing criteria from the *Kentucky Writing Scoring Rubric*.

A piece of writing that does not make strong literacy connections would not (for that reason alone) render the portfolio incomplete. However, such a piece, most likely, does not meet the writing criteria under purpose, audience and idea development as strongly as a piece in which the student has made those connections.

Q: If a student’s reflective entry does not refer to reading, will the portfolio be considered “incomplete”?

A: The portfolio would not be considered incomplete for that reason alone. The better literacy connection(s) a student makes, however, the more likely he or she is to approach the “authentic (and insightful) focused purpose” called for on the rubric. Literacy may be defined more broadly than reading and writing if the student so chooses. See first question above.

Q: Is it appropriate in the reflective entry for a student to refer to all the pieces in his/her portfolio?

A: While referencing all the portfolio entries would not make a portfolio incomplete for that reason alone, it is **unlikely** that a student needs to reference each piece in his/her portfolio to analyze growth in writing through literacy. It may be more appropriate for students to reference a very limited number of entries (perhaps one if the focus in writing and literacy development has to do with that piece). It is also possible that students do not reference *any* particular piece in the portfolio at all. See *Kentucky Writing Handbook*, Chapter 11, Reflective Writing.

Q: Can a poem be included as the reflective piece?

A: No. A poem would not be an appropriate piece to include in this reflective category. While good poetry is certainly reflective, poetry is considered a literary genre, fulfills a literary purpose, and fits into the literary category.

The reflective entry in the portfolio is intended to be a transactive entry. It asks that students analyze growth in writing through literacy for **the transactive purpose** of informing an audience.

Examples may be found on page 81 of the *Kentucky Writing Handbook*, Part 1: Writing Development.

Q: How can I help students improve their reflective thinking and writing?

A: The key to good reflection is critical thinking. Therefore, regular practice helping students consider the literacy connection is necessary to build those reflective skills.

An excellent way for teachers to assist students with reflective thinking and writing is to **incorporate the use of the working folder into instruction**. The working folders are not intended to be stored away for the student to never see it. Students who are able to see their growth in writing over time through the pieces included in the working folder are much more likely to be able to reflect on their growth as writers. Regular practice reflecting on learning will help students to be able to think more analytically and reflectively (in any content area). Therefore, students who regularly work at reflection will be better able to show those skills in the writing assessment portfolio.

Q: I've had a problem with the reflective pieces from the past being "cookie cutter"—all of the pieces sound alike. How can I help the students develop reflective writing that is not "cookie cutter"?

A: First, no two reflective pieces should sound alike if the student is actually analyzing his/her **individual** growth in writing through literacy. Teachers may consider the reflective entry to be very much like other entries in the portfolio—students may all have the same or similar purposes in writing (analyze growth in writing through literacy); however, each student may focus the piece in a unique way. Consider the personal piece included in the portfolio. All students are analyzing the significance of an event or relationship, etc. However, they may all focus on something completely different. It is the difference in focus that makes the piece unique to the writer.

To help avoid "cookie cutter" pieces, teachers should help students brainstorm their own literacy experiences and help them focus the piece given the audience the student selects. Teachers should **avoid** having students list and refer to each piece in the portfolio. Likewise, teachers should avoid using a "checklist" of items to include in a reflective entry. Teachers should avoid having students all write in the same form, the same way. There is little ownership in that. We wouldn't expect the personal entries of two students to be alike; similarly, we would not expect two reflective entries to be alike. Each student's literacy experience is different.

Personal Expressive Writing

In Personal Expressive writing, students will

- analyze and communicate the significance of a relationship, one's own experiences and/or the experiences of others.

Program of Studies

The personal expressive category includes several types of writing, each of which focuses on the life experiences of the writer.

Personal Narratives are focused on a **single** significant incident from the writer's life. The writer not only tells about what happened in the incident but also presents ideas about the incident, showing the writer's thinking about the experience and conveying why the incident was significant. The audience of this writing is a reader interested in reading about the life experiences of others and developing a better understanding and appreciation of human experience.

The writer should attempt to create a narrative that will engage readers and strive to meet the reader's needs and interests. While a personal narrative may focus on any experience the writer feels is significant, the success of the narrative lies in the writer's ability to provide the reader with an understanding of the events and the writer's feelings and ideas about it. A focused, meaningful purpose; specific details; careful and effective organization; awareness of the needs and interests of readers; idea development concerning the incident, as well as the writer's feelings about it; and an interesting, authentic voice/tone—are all important in writing a successful personal narrative.

Memoirs are focused on *the significance of a relationship* in the writer's life and are supported by one or more memories that reveal the writer's thinking about his or her relationship with an individual person, place, animal or thing. The reader of a memoir is interested not only in what happened in the writer's experience but in the writer's analysis of and reflection about the relationship. In developing the memoir, the writer should show awareness of audience and should strive to engage the reader and meet the reader's needs, for example, with details and explanations. The writer will help the reader understand the event or events in the relationship and will convey feelings and ideas appropriate to the purpose in writing.

Through the memoir, the writer strives to create a connection with the reader that shares the critical value of the relationship between the writer and another person or a place, animal, or thing in the writer's life. In memoirs, as well as in personal narratives, important features include a focused, meaningful purpose; specific details; careful and effective organization; awareness of the needs and interests of readers; idea development concerning the incident, as well as the writer's feelings about it; and an interesting, authentic voice/tone.

Personal Essays are focused on a **central idea** about the writer or the writer's life and are supported by a variety of incidents from the writer's personal experience. Examples include the satisfaction of working with the elderly, the role of the oldest sibling in the family, the pain of loss, the importance of accepting responsibility, the value of hard work, etc. The writer provides a central idea about his or her experience and then builds a framework of support and idea development to help readers understand and appreciate the writer's central idea. Relevant details about the writer's experience, along with explanations, analysis, and reflection are

offered to develop the essay. The writer strives to convey insightful thinking about his or her life in relation to the central idea. The writer also strives to develop the piece in ways to engage readers and help them understand and appreciate the writer's thoughts about human experience. Since the writer of a personal essay focuses on a central idea about his or her life, readers will expect engaging, thorough, and specific support for the writer's idea.

Effective personal essays will be characterized also by careful, even subtle, organization, appropriate tone or voice, effective sentences and word choice, and control of editing conventions.

Following are some examples of ways that teachers use to help students focus on personal/expressive writing in their classrooms:

The writing emerges from

- reading (literature and other materials)
- reading and discussion of a theme (for example, maturing, good relationships, turning points, discoveries, changes, managing disappointment or success)
- regular work in a writer's notebook, personal journal, or learning journal
- focusing on a problem (for example, problems in communicating)
- viewing and discussing media relevant to the unit of study
- brainstorming to focus on influential events, people, places, things in students' lives
- engaging in inquiry that offers an opportunity for student reflection on their experience

Literary writing

In literary writing, students will

- analyze and communicate through authentic literary forms to make meaning of the human condition (e.g., short stories, poetry, plays/scripts).

Program of Studies

The literary writing category includes several genres of writing, each of which evolves from the imagination and experience of the writer. **The success of literary writing is accomplished through the writer's thoughtful expression about human experience, specific and rich use of language, management of literary techniques, and effective organizational strategies to communicate ideas and feelings to the reader.** Literary writing includes poems, short stories, and scripts/plays.

A variety of options are available for literary writing that may be included in the writing portfolio. This work will reveal a writer's use of characteristics of a selected literary genre to convey his or her thoughts about human experience. Though form and literary techniques will be important in this writing, writers also should reveal thoughtful expression, an effort to create meaning and effect that will engage readers. The same criteria that apply to other pieces of writing in the portfolio will apply to literary writing.

Poems are compositions in verse that focus imaginatively and creatively on some aspect of human experience. Through use of poetic techniques, the writer develops and supports ideas, engaging the reader, creating interesting effects, and conveying meaning.

Short Stories are pieces of fiction that contain some, but perhaps not all, of the following elements that are characteristic of the genre: plot (conflict, crisis, resolution), setting, character development, theme, and point of view. Short stories may range in length depending on the writer's purpose and choices about how to communicate with readers. As with other literary writing, short stories offer writers a means of creating meaning and effect concerning something in human experience.

Scripts/Plays are pieces of literary writing called drama. The script or play may be "acted out" in a dramatic performance, but it also may be read for its meaning and entertainment. Drama contains many elements of fiction: characters, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, setting, theme, etc. Drama also includes elements more specific to the genre: stage directions, dialogue, cast lists, etc. As with other literary writing, the writer draws on the characteristics of the genre to create meaning and effect, reflecting his or her thinking and feeling about human experience. Plays may range in length depending on the writer's purpose and decisions about how to communicate with readers. **Some non-literary scripts, such as dramatic advertisements, news broadcasts, and documentaries and other informative/persuasive forms of writing, belong in the transactive category of the writing portfolio.**

Following are a variety of ways teachers help students focus and write literary pieces from which they may choose samples to include in the writing portfolio:

The writing emerges from

- reading (literature especially, but other materials as well)
- engaging in reading, viewing, and discussion focusing on a theme
- using a writer's notebook to complete a variety of entries of literary expression and then choosing a sample to polish for the writing portfolio
- viewing and reflecting on other art forms (photographs, sculpture, visual art, music)
- focusing on a variety of samples of the genre as a basis for the student writer's
- choice of techniques to use in developing his or her own poem, short story, or play
- focusing on a variety of artifacts about a culture and developing literary expressions that convey the writer's thoughts and feelings about human experience
- viewing, reading about, and discussing a problem as a basis for creating literary expressions relevant to the problem and revealing the writer's thoughts and feelings about human experience

Transactive Writing

In transactive writing, students will

- analyze and communicate through authentic transactive purposes for writing (e.g., explaining, persuading, informing, analyzing).

Program of Studies

Transactive writing, which is written from the perspective of an informed writer to a less informed reader, is functional writing intended to present information. Transactive writing is writing for a variety of realistic purposes that is intended to “get things accomplished” or to help the audience understand something better. Using this category of writing, students often draw a conclusion, advocate a position, and/or solve a problem. Much of the writing completed in academic contexts and in the workplace is transactive writing. In fact, academic writing and technical writing are examples of transactive writing that can be potentially publishable and portfolio-appropriate.

In order to present authentic purposes to real-world critical readers, students may choose from a variety of forms such as: a letter for the local newspaper, an editorial published in the school newspaper, an article for a class or team magazine, or a speech or proposal for the school-based council.

Transactive writing should

- have a focused purpose – an authentic reason for being written besides completing an assignment.
- take the form of writing seen in the world beyond the classroom (e.g., article, letter, editorial, speech, proposal, manual).
- address a targeted audience besides the teacher as an assessor.
- engage the reader with an interesting beginning – one which gives some context/reason for the information which follows.
- develop ideas with specific, relevant details.
- move the reader(s) through the piece with logical, appropriate transitional strategies.

Note: While transactive writing occurs for many purposes and in many forms, not all “real-world” forms work well in the writing portfolio. For example, though a brochure is “real-world” and the assigning of such a task may have value in the classroom, by definition of the genre, the brochure is intended to be a brief sketch of information that may not be sufficiently developed. Since the writing portfolio calls for writing that provides depth of idea development, a brochure is not likely to be the best choice for inclusion in the portfolio.

Teachers should always consider using the various types of writing to support the teaching of content. However, when helping students make selections for inclusion in the portfolio, teachers should be aware of the writing criteria to help students make the best selections.

Transactive Writing with an Analytical or Technical Focus

While any kind of writing may use analysis as a means of idea development (e.g., reflective writing asks the student to *analyze* literacy growth; personal writing assumes writers *analyze* the significance of an experience or relationship; literary writing often indirectly *analyzes* something about the human condition), the Kentucky Writing Portfolio for Grade 12 requires that one (1) transactive piece have an analytical or technical focus.

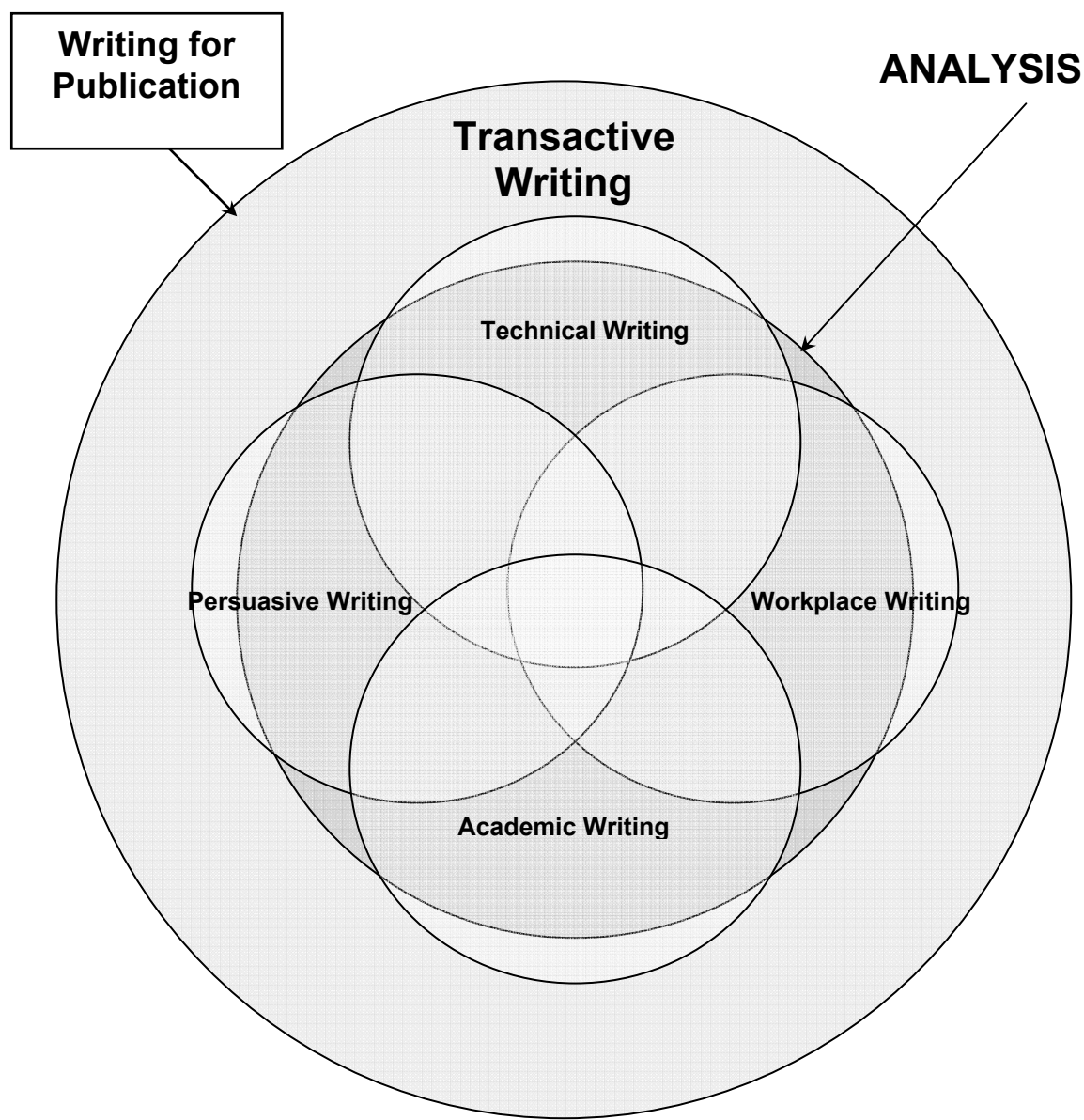
Though this piece is not required of grades 4 and 7, it is critical that teachers of all grade levels understand that teaching analytical thinking and writing is developmental and does not occur only during high school. Teachers at all grade levels should be expecting students to think, read and write analytically.

In this type of transactive writing, students will write in the variety of forms acceptable for the category. However, to fulfill the requirement for an “analytical or technical focus,” students must create a piece which has as its focus a controlling idea that calls for analysis as a major form of idea development. Students may also choose to write technical pieces that would be appropriate to certain fields of study. Often, when students choose to write technical pieces, they will utilize analysis as a strategy to help develop that technical piece. It is likely, then, that the student may have a transactive piece with an analytical AND technical focus.

While one piece in the Grade 12 Portfolio *must* have an analytical or technical focus, both transactive pieces *could* be developed this way.

Analysis as a Foundation of Idea Development in Writing

The following diagram illustrates how analysis forms the foundation of many kinds of transactive writing typically found in the classroom. Since analysis is the process by which students develop their ideas, it is important for teachers to understand that many categories of writing may contain analysis. The diagram below references some common categories of writing that may serve transactive purposes: technical, workplace, persuasive, academic. (Please note: this is not a comprehensive diagram of all categories of writing that may be considered analytical and/or technical in nature). While teachers may view these categories as separate kinds of writing, it is also important to understand that the categories may overlap, and that a piece of writing could be, for example, academic and persuasive at the same time. The many transactive forms that serve transactive purposes for publication may also work to serve the requirement of the transactive with an analytical or technical focus.



Analytical Writing

People write analytically to accomplish a variety of purposes, but in general, analytical writing is that which examines a subject closely, isolating fundamental components of the whole and explaining their relationship to the whole or to each other to reach new conclusions about the whole or the parts.

Sometimes analytical writing makes connections or applications in order to help readers understand something, do something, or accept a viewpoint. Analytical writing will likely present information and other forms of support for its purposes, but it also will present the writer's ideas. It will show the writer's thinking about the subject. To be "authentic" for Kentucky's writing assessment, transactive analytical writing is not merely a school exercise; in analyzing, the writer seeks to accomplish a realistic purpose with readers who genuinely would need or be interested in such a writing.

Following is a sampling of approaches often taken in analytical writing. The list is not intended to be prescriptive or comprehensive; other options certainly are available. Whatever analytical approach is taken, it is important to emphasize that writers establish a justifiable reason for conducting the analysis—a purpose, need, a "So What?" for the writing. Doing so establishes an authentic, focused purpose and reveals awareness of authentic readers.

In forming assignments and leading students through a writing cycle, teachers should be aware of the need for analytical writing to be justified, authentic in purpose. Selecting an appropriate audience is also important; the readership should be those who genuinely would need or benefit from the writing, those whom the writer seeks to influence through the analysis.

Common approaches taken in analytical writing:

Students may

- raise and address a significant or unanswered question about a subject.
- evaluate how well something works or will work for a particular purpose.
- compare/contrast to accomplish a justifiable purpose.
- identify and discuss cause and effects or influences.
- form and support predictions for an authentic, realistic purpose.
- explain relationships—how one thing contributes to another or to the whole.
- interpret the importance of a set of events or an action or of the features of something.
- examine techniques used in a product or performance, presenting ideas about their importance.
- investigate a problem, helping readers understand the nature of the problem and sometimes presenting ideas about ways to solve it. Identify and discuss forces influencing a problem, issue, condition, etc.
- present and interpret particular evidence to support a conclusion, thesis, position, idea, etc.
- explain reasons for an outcome, problem, condition, etc.

This following list of attributes of analytical writing is based on a list generated in January, 2004, at the Kentucky Department of Education by high school teachers, university/college professors, representatives from groups interested in education, and representatives from the KDE.

Attributes of Analytical Writing

In transactive analytical writing appropriate for the portfolio, the writer

- focuses specifically on an identified problem, topic, issue, condition, need, text, product, performance, situation, set of events, research results, etc. Though appropriate reference to personal experience may be included, analytical writing that is **transactive** in nature usually focuses on something external to the writer; the writing is not personal/expressive in nature.
- establishes a justifiable purpose for writing, an authentic need for the analysis, a meaningful situation, problem, issue, or context that leads to and justifies the writing. The reason for writing is not merely to engage in a mental exercise, such as comparison and contrast, but to use analysis **to accomplish a justifiable purpose**.
- reveals a genuine interest in communicating with authentic readers, not merely summarizing, transcribing information or reciting to the teacher what has been learned.
- investigates the subject to bring about a better understanding of it or to accomplish some realistic purpose; in some cases, persuades readers to take some action or accept some position/thesis, interpretation, conclusion, or recommendation.
- engages in analytical thinking, meaning that the writer develops ideas by examining closely selected features, parts, components, elements, influences, relationships, connections, evidence, data, actions, etc., that have a bearing on the subject; and, through this investigation, the writer draws conclusions, develops a thesis or controlling idea, shapes an interpretation, forms a recommendation, or presents ideas to help readers in accomplishing a goal or understanding the subject better.
- shows ownership, even though the writing well might include reference to ideas and information offered by others.
- reveals audience awareness, for example, by acknowledging differing viewpoints, addressing reasonable questions, providing needed information and support for ideas, reasoning logically, thinking critically, explaining and elaborating to help readers, interpreting the significance of the writer's ideas, conclusions, findings, crediting sources, etc.
- strives to think in depth about the subject and to sustain a logical discussion or examination of it.
- includes/selects specific, relevant, logical, creditable, thorough, and knowledgeable support for ideas, claims, conclusions, interpretations, recommendations, plans, etc.; selected support shows close attention to the subject or information concerning it and, as appropriate, a broad range of reading.
- integrates sources, if used, to support the writer's own ideas.

- ❑ explains connections, relationships; elaborates to help readers understand the writer's ideas about the subject; offers an interpretative commentary; develops a reasoned argument or interpretation.
- ❑ develops the writing through a logical organization or well-unified structure, providing transitions to assist readers; shows awareness of the patterns or structures often used in different forms (e.g., reports, technical articles, proposals, etc.).
- ❑ selects words carefully for meaning; writes concisely, clearly.
- ❑ constructs grammatical, effective sentences.
- ❑ uses standard grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.
- ❑ identifies sources using an appropriate form of documentation.

Technical Writing

Technical writing is transactive writing that focuses on a technical (specialized) subject or brings technical knowledge and understanding to a subject in order to accomplish one or more realistic, functional purposes.

Technical writing is done by people in a variety of areas of society, for example, scientists, researchers, educators, people serving in the workplace or military, etc. Technical writers present ideas, information and other support to accomplish their purposes. They seek to inform readers and also convey their ideas efficiently and effectively. For example, a writer may have been requested to conduct a study of water quality, and his or her report presents information, analysis and recommendations for readers to consider. Sometimes this kind of writing is persuasive and argumentative. For example, a proposal might seek to persuade others to agree with ideas for changes to improve a process.

Technical writing appears in a variety of contexts and is intended for a variety of readers. Usually the readers are knowledgeable in the subject, or they seek the ideas and information of someone with technical knowledge. Of course, there are degrees of technicality and though students may not have the degree of expertise of a professional in a particular field, they may write works that **approximate** the technical writing done by experts. They also may write in the same forms and use approaches, organizational patterns, methods of development and styles used by experienced writers. There are many forms of technical writing: a variety of kinds of reports, journal articles, papers, proposals, scientific studies, books, manuals, etc.

Technical writing has different purposes and characteristics from literary writing or academic writing; **however, the basic criteria for good technical writing are the same as for any kind of writing.** Good technical writing is potentially publishable (has the potential to be put before its intended audience). Therefore, it can be a piece of writing that students might ultimately use in their portfolios. It is a good option for teachers and students because it promotes student learning.

It is important to remember that writing for publication should be authentic in purpose, have awareness of authentic readers, and reveal idea development relevant to the writer's purpose and the readers' needs.

Some common forms of technical writing

- proposals
- reports
- scientific studies
- manuals (in an authentic context)
- letters

Realize that it is **NOT** the form that matters most when students are doing technical writing (or any other type of writing). **It is what the students DO with the writing that matters—how they identify and target an authentic purpose and audience, develop and organize ideas, etc. It is about the context and authenticity of the writing. Each of the forms listed still must maintain that authenticity if a student is to use it in the portfolio.**

The most common difficulties with technical (and other transactive writing) are the lack of an authentic context/situation for the writing and the lack of a real audience and purpose. Idea development must be suitable for the purpose and type of writing; however, a teacher should keep in mind the criteria of the writing portfolio when deciding if a form of writing is suitable or not.

Academic Writing

Academic writing is transactive writing that focuses on something particularly relevant to the learning in a field of study, discipline or content area. It is done by people serving in education, in research, and in a variety of professions—by people seeking to promote learning in a particular field.

Readers of this form of transactive writing often are other people involved in learning in the field or people who seek the knowledge or insight of those who are learners and practitioners in the field. In our classrooms, students may write “academically” for other learners in that study area.

As transactive writing, academic writing presents ideas and information to accomplish a variety of purposes, especially to help readers gain an insight or understand something better in a field of study, like history, biology or literary studies. Like other transactive writing, academic writing also may be persuasive or argumentative in nature; that is, the writer may seek to convince readers to accept an idea the writer offers, recognizing that others may have different views or positions. Academic writing also often is analytical, for example, examining the nature of a subject or seeking to identify components or to explain connections, causes and effects, or relationships. Some academic writing is theoretical, and some is philosophical, seeking to present ideas and reasoning about abstract matters.

Some might say that academic writing is not always practical in its purposes, though many practical outcomes result from academic writing, and it certainly is a form of “real-world writing” available to teachers and students in our schools. The forms used in academic writing vary, but among them are articles for magazines and journals, papers to present at meetings, reviews, etc. Academic writing certainly can be an appropriate choice for the Kentucky Writing Portfolio. Writers of academic writing intended for the portfolio should have in mind the important criteria expected of such work.

Content Area Writing

Content area writing is writing that is produced in a class other than English/Language Arts classes, or, in self-contained elementary classroom, it is writing relevant to study of content area subject matter. In high school, any class for which a student receives English credit for high school graduation is **not** a content area class, and conversely any class for which a student does not receive English credit for high school graduation **is** a content area class. In middle any class a language arts course (e.g., reading, writing, communication, spelling, and speech) is not considered a content area class.

The Writing Assessment Portfolio requires that samples of writing done in content areas other than English/Language Arts be included at grades 7 and 12, and such pieces may also be included at grade 4. To meet the assessment requirement, schools and districts should develop curriculum to ensure that students have both experience and instruction in writing at all grade levels and in content areas as well as in English/language arts classes. The following information is intended to help teachers and students meet the requirement for writing in content areas.

Key Expectations for Content Area Writing:

1. In Kentucky’s public schools, writing should take place across the grade levels and content areas. Kentucky Learner Goal 1 applies to all teachers, and it calls for students “to apply communication skills to situations and purposes they will encounter throughout their lives.”
2. As noted in the *Core Content for Assessment 4.1* and the *Program of Studies*, teachers should include different kinds of writing, including Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning to the Teacher, and Writing for Publication (for authentic purposes and audiences in real-world forms). Teachers in content areas other than English/language arts should use these kinds of writing both to help students develop writing skills and to help students learn.
3. According to Administration Regulation 703 KAR 5:010, writing that may be available for students to submit in the Writing Assessment Portfolio “shall **relate to the content being studied** in the class.” Not only does this practice save time in generating portfolio-appropriate work, it helps students learn through writing and develop as readers and as thinkers by focusing on matters relevant to their study. The same regulation states that each school and district “shall provide support for **teachers across the curriculum and across grade levels** to attend professional development focused on the types of writing assessed in the portfolio.” Clearly, in Kentucky’s public schools, K – 12, writing is expected across the curriculum.

Guidelines for Writing for Publication in the Content Areas

Writing for Publication suggests that the writing the student is completing is potentially publishable (deliverable to the intended audience whether in print or otherwise). Writing for Publication is the only type of writing appropriate for inclusion in the portfolio. While content area teachers should certainly consider the kinds of writing they are assigning to help students with portfolio development, it is critical that teachers utilize all three types of writing for classroom purposes (See Chapter 3).

The following guidelines apply to writing that is potentially publishable and appropriate for inclusion in the portfolio.

Make sure the writing fits a category of writing called for in the portfolio.

The writing should fit one of the categories for writing called for in the Writing Assessment Portfolio: reflective, personal expressive, literary, transactive. The content area sample may be any of these kinds of writing.

Help your students write in your classroom.

Content area writing intended to be available for the portfolio should be assigned in the content area classroom, developed for content in that classroom, and **revised for content correctness and writing correctness in that classroom and for clear communication with a reader for a specific purpose**. Following this work, other teachers also may arrange for students to develop, revise, and edit their writing.

Create opportunities for writing relevant to study in your classroom.

Content area writing should relate to the content being studied. Designing effective standards-based units of study that include a variety of kinds of writing can help teachers promote learning and nurture students' development as writers.

Help students write for realistic purposes, situations, and settings.

Though teachers will include a variety of kinds of writing appropriate for their instructional goals, at least some of that writing should be authentic in purpose and audience, as well as in realistic forms, especially forms students may use in their lives. Portfolio-appropriate writing may **approximate** the kind of writing done in many "real-world" settings: business, industry, trades, professions, military, academic settings, civic and personal life. Teachers should prepare assignments that lead students to writing, reading, thinking and learning relevant to the study area and to students' use of that learning in their lives.

Engage students in reading and talking about writing relevant to your content area, materials written and read by people drawing on their learning in your content area.

The textbook is not the only reading material that can help students, especially those who are preparing to write for realistic purposes and readers in realistic forms, as is called for in the Writing Assessment Portfolio. Not all real-world forms lend themselves to be used for portfolio writing because they do not have the idea development or do not meet other important criteria for portfolio-appropriate writing. However, many "real-world" reading materials and forms can help students write appropriate pieces. Including such reading materials relevant to students' study is an effective teaching practice to help students learn and develop as readers and writers.

For Portfolio-appropriate writing, ensure that the students write with authentic purposes.

Portfolio-appropriate content area writing (Writing for Publication) should be authentic in purpose. This means that the writing is not merely a writing to demonstrate learning to the teacher; it is writing done to accomplish a realistic purpose like students may experience in their lives. It is important to recognize that writing for authentic purposes may engage students in applying as well as extending and deepening their learning. The purpose for writing can, at the same time, be authentic and relevant to students' learning. Content area teachers, as well as teachers in all study areas, should apply key criteria for good portfolio-appropriate writing tasks to help their students.

Allow for and encourage student ownership in Writing for Publication.

Content area writing intended to be available for the portfolio should reveal student ownership—in process and in product. This means that the portfolio-appropriate writing is not merely a summary of what the student has read or a transcription of what the student has learned. Though students certainly may use what they have read and learned to accomplish their purposes in writing, they also must reveal ownership of their writing: ideas, opinions, ways of developing their work, use of research and experience, methods of organizing, language, voice, etc. One way teachers encourage such ownership is to provide assignments that allow for student choice and decision making, especially about purposes, ideas, forms of support. Such choice can be available even if all students are asked to write about the same issue, problem, need, topic, questions, etc.

Allow for and encourage student idea development in Portfolio-appropriate writing.

Content area writing intended for the portfolio should reveal students' thinking. The writing may include information gained from study and research, but it also must reveal the writer's idea development. Assignments offered by content area teachers should encourage students to develop their own ideas about matter relevant to study in the class and relevant to students' lives beyond the class. Though information and other forms of support may be included in the writing, students also should be required to think and explain. **Thinking—**analyzing, evaluating, drawing conclusions, interpreting, defending an opinion or thesis, persuading, reasoning, proposing, forming plans and recommendations—should be evident in the writing.

Answers to Frequently-asked Questions

Can content area writing intended for the portfolio originate in English/Language Arts classes?

No. The writing must be assigned in the content area class and must be developed and revised for content correctness and writing correctness in that classroom and for clear communication with a reader for a specific purpose. After this work in the content area class, students may continue to revise and edit their work in other classes.

Does content area writing submitted for the writing portfolio have to be transactive?

No. Content area teachers may engage students in literary, personal/expressive, and reflective writing also, and students may select such pieces to include in their Writing Assessment Portfolios. Transactive writing often is the choice because it might lead students to apply their learning in more detail, and many occupations relevant to learning in content areas require students to write and read transactive materials. Also, typically, literary, personal, and reflective pieces are completed in English/Language Arts classes. It is important to emphasize, however, that any of the writing called for in the portfolio can be relevant to students' learning in the content area. For example, a short story, poem, or play concerning a person or event in history, though fictional, may require students to apply in depth their knowledge of history in developing a literary piece. Similarly, a science fiction story may require research in science and application of science knowledge in the development of the story.

Can students draw on their research for Writing for Publication in the content area?

Yes. In developing pieces for publication, students may include ideas and information from a variety of sources, including reading materials, independent research, observations, surveys, interviews, etc. The *Program of Studies* emphasizes **that inquiry will be embedded in all content areas**, and writing may emerge from such inquiry. Especially in transactive writing, reference to sources may be included as a method of accomplishing the writer's purpose. Reference to sources should, however, be a means of supporting the student writer's own purposes and ideas. Writing for Publication must demonstrate student ownership and student idea development. It should not be merely a summary of an activity, lesson or reading; and it should not be merely a collection of information presented to demonstrate learning to the teacher. The writer should use sources as a means of supporting authentic purposes in writing. Of course, if sources are used, the student writer should use an appropriate form of documentation.

Can content area writing have an academic or technical focus?

Yes. Content area writing in our schools may approximate writing done in a variety of settings: academic, workplace, professional, military, careers in government, civic and personal life. Content area writing intended to be available for the Portfolio can focus on academic or technical subjects; however, such writing must reveal a student's ownership and idea development, as well as awareness of communicating with authentic readers, not merely writing to demonstrate learning to the teacher. Teachers certainly may provide assignments that lead students to write, for example, articles like those published in academic journals or papers like those delivered at meetings, conferences, and seminars. In fact, some teachers and students create a class journal in which the students publish their writing. Such writing is for publication. It is essential that this writing reveal student ownership and independent idea development, and it is essential that students establish a need or angle for such writing—as is evident in writing done in academic and technical settings.

Can writing with an academic or technical focus have an “authentic” readership?

Yes. A variety of “authentic readers” are available for writing with an academic or technical focus. One such reader is a fellow learner in the discipline. This is a person who will come to the student's writing with some knowledge and will seek to learn even more through reading what the student offers. Another such reader is one who seeks the “expertise” of someone with academic or technical knowledge of a subject, for example, a person who seeks a way to solve a problem and needs the ideas and information of one who has knowledge and insight that might benefit the reader. Still another way to think of “authentic reader” is for students to write with awareness of critical readers, those who will bring to any writing hard questions and high expectations. Imagining such a critical reader is essential in good writing and is one way to demonstrate the reader awareness we wish students to develop as writers. Some examples of “authentic readers” for writing with an academic or technical focus include the following:

- readers of a class journal
- an individual or group for whom the writer provides a report with information and ideas the reader has requested or needs
- readers of a hobby, trade, or special interest magazine
- an audience at a seminar, conference, meeting

Can a report or academic paper or essay be an example of Writing for Publication?

Yes. These are forms of transactive writing, which is called for in the portfolio. It is important to recognize, however, that use of any realistic form is not the only criterion for portfolio-appropriate writing. Such writing needs an authentic purpose, evidence of efforts to communicate with awareness of authentic readers, independent idea development, ownership, etc.—all of these must be evident in a report, academic paper, or essay. The key is for teachers to provide assignments which will lead to portfolio-appropriate writing, not just assignments that call for a particular form of writing.

Can content area teachers evaluate Writing for Publication for content learning?

Yes. Some people say that content area writing SHOULD be evaluated for content learning, and teachers may also count grades for such writing in students' course grades. However, writing for publication **should not be considered as a TEST in which the student is responsible for reciting learning from the class.** In Writing for Publication, students should apply their learning selectively to accomplish an authentic purpose, one beyond merely showing the teacher that they have knowledge about a subject or ability to use a skill or procedure taught in class. Certainly, the student writer should reveal knowledge, skills, understanding of concepts, etc.—but they should do so to accomplish an authentic purpose and with awareness of authentic readers. For classroom use, teachers may create scoring tools which indicate both the criteria for good writing and for learning relevant to the student's study AND the student's purpose in writing. In evaluating the writing, teachers will help their students if they consider criteria for writing and for learning.

Are content area teachers supposed to teach writing?

Yes. Helping students develop as writers is every teacher's responsibility, as is helping students develop as readers. This expectation is established in Kentucky's Learner Goal 1 and the *Kentucky Program of Studies*. Content area teachers might not go into as much depth or take as much time in helping students develop as writers as will English/language arts teachers, but they can focus on some of the key criteria for good writing, especially writing like that students will read and write in applying their learning in their lives beyond the classroom. They also may employ effective well-recognized instructional practices in teaching writing. Such instruction is not really an "add-on" when the writing is relevant to students' learning and when the writing is like that students may read and write in using their content learning in post-secondary education, careers, and personal and civic life.

It is true that content area teachers should focus on the content standards set for their students, and it is true that some content area teachers may not have the experience and education in teaching writing that English/language arts teachers have. Nevertheless, content area teachers can employ a selected number of key instructional practices, and they can understand and help students understand and apply key criteria for good writing. The schoolwide writing program should provide ALL teachers with professional development, resources, and assistance to help students develop as writers. Such provision is clearly indicated in administrative regulation 703 KAR 5:010. A final thought: If the writing task leads to students' learning, as well as to their development as writers and readers and thinkers, then the work devoted to writing is directly relevant to the teacher's instruction, regardless of content area.

Sample Approaches to Writing for Publication in Content Areas:

Of course, a variety of approaches are available, but seeing some options may help teachers make decisions about an approach through which they not only can help students develop as writers but also can help students learn in the content area.

1. ***Write to address a significant question relevant to learning.***
Example: How can we better protect our environment? How is local geography influencing our community in positive and negative ways? How can we be wiser consumers?

Sample forms for transactive writing: article, text for speech, editorial, proposal, letter

2. **Write to analyze a problem or to alert readers to a problem.**
Example: Poor nutrition; global warming; voter apathy; bad weather; credit card debt
Sample forms: letter, article, text for speech, editorial, report for authentic readership, academic paper
3. **Write to advocate, propose, or recommend a needed change.**
Example: Better conservation of energy; changes in law or procedure; improvement in a school or community program
Sample forms: letter, memo proposal, formal proposal, article, editorial, speech
4. **Write to help readers gain a better understanding of a selected subject, event, process, system, condition, text, artistic performance, culture, phenomenon, etc.**
Example: Genetic factors and health; Islamic culture; a historical event; a character in a novel; global warming; immigration procedures and rules
Sample forms: feature article for a magazine, academic article or paper to deliver at a conference or meeting
5. **Write to persuade others to accept a position on a controversial issue.**
Example: Separation of church and state; issues relevant to civil liberties; stem-cell research; private gain from use of public lands; issues relevant to school or community rules
Sample forms: text for speech, editorial, feature article, academic article, letter
6. **Write to persuade others to take a particular action.**
Example: Act to improve the school, community, or an organization; pass needed laws; purchase needed equipment or resources; change a policy; follow a certain exercise plan
Sample forms: letter, memo, proposal, editorial text for speech, paper for meeting
7. **Write to analyze or evaluate a product, service, law, procedure, decision, condition, event, text, performance, common practice, etc.**
Example: A new computer program; a form of music or musical performance; a recent decision by the court or a school or community leader; an historical event, etc.
Sample forms: feature article, academic article, editorial, review for magazine, paper
8. **Write to help readers accomplish a goal.**
Example: Improved relationships among cultures, groups; protection of habitat; improved skills in ceramics; better conditions for the handicapped; better equipment for a school program; better nutrition; better service at a restaurant or store
Sample forms: feature article, academic article or paper, letter, manual, proposal
9. **Write to help readers gain a better understanding of an academic subject.**
Example: A character or technique in a novel; an historical event; a natural phenomenon; a scientific principle or concept; a philosophy
Sample forms: academic article, paper for conference or seminar, review for magazine
10. **Write to help readers accomplish a task or accomplish a task better.**
Example: Solve a problem in using computers; improve skills in a particular art form; influence legislators; address a consumer problem; create a budget; prepare better lunches

Grade –Level Requirements

This chapter contains single-page forms which provide detailed information about specific grade-level portfolio requirements. Educators may wish to remove the following pages for photocopying and distribution to students.

Kentucky Writing Portfolio Assessment Contents of the Grade 4 Portfolio

The Grade 4 writing portfolio must include a **total of three (3) writing entries**. Any of the entries may come from study/content areas. No content area piece is required, though, often elementary writing entries develop from interdisciplinary course work.

The Grade 4 Writing Portfolio must contain the following:

Table of Contents

Includes the title, category of each portfolio entry, and the page number(s) in the portfolio. No content area is required.

Student Signature Sheet

Includes the signature of the student stating the student's ownership over the contents of the portfolio (required), acknowledgment of any Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 Plan or ELL adaptations (with teacher signature), and a student signature giving permission to use the portfolio for training purposes (optional).

Reflective Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece.

One piece should be included that focuses on the writer's growth through literacy development.

Personal Expressive Writing/Literary Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece in either of these categories in the form of

- Personal Narrative** – focuses on one event in the life of the writer
- Memoir** – focuses on the relationship of the writer with a particular person, place, animal, or thing, supported by memories of specific experiences
- Short Story, Poem, or Script**

Transactive Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece from this category.

Transactive writing is produced “to get something done” in the real world (e.g., to provide ideas and information for a variety of purposes, to persuade readers to support a point of view). Transactive pieces are written for a variety of authentic audiences and purposes in real-world forms.

See Chapter 11, *Categories and Forms in the Writing Portfolio*, for appropriate forms to include in this category.

Configuration of a complete grade 4 writing portfolio

Categories of Writing	Portfolio Design
Reflective Writing	1
Personal Expressive Writing/Literary Writing	1
Transactive Writing	1
Total pieces for portfolio	3

Kentucky Writing Portfolio Assessment Contents of the Grade 7 Portfolio

The Grade 7 writing portfolio must include a **total of three (3) writing entries**. Any of the entries may come from study/content areas, but a **minimum of one (1) piece of writing must come from another study/content area other than English/language arts**.

The Grade 7 Writing Portfolio must contain the following:

Table of Contents

Includes the title **and** category of each portfolio entry, the study/content area for which the piece was written, and the page number(s) in the portfolio.

Student Signature Sheet

Includes the signature of the student stating the student's ownership over the contents of the portfolio (required), acknowledgment of any Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 Plan or ELL adaptations (with teacher signature), and a student signature giving permission to use the portfolio for training purposes (optional).

Reflective Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece.

One piece should be included that focuses on the writer's growth through literacy development.

Personal Expressive Writing/Literary Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece in either of these categories in the form of

- Personal Narrative** – focuses on one event in the life of the writer
- Memoir** – focuses on the relationship of the writer with a particular person, place, animal, or thing, supported by memories of specific experiences
- Personal Essay**—focuses on an idea central in the writer's life
- Short Story, Poem, or Script**

Transactive Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece from this category.

Transactive writing is produced “to get something done” in the real world (e.g., to provide ideas and information for a variety of purposes, to persuade readers to support a point of view). Transactive pieces are written for a variety of authentic audiences and purposes in real-world forms.

See Chapter 11, *Categories and Forms in the Writing Portfolio*, for appropriate forms to include in each category.

Configuration of a complete grade 7 writing portfolio

Categories of Writing	Portfolio Design
Reflective Writing	1
Personal Expressive Writing/Literary Writing	1
Transactive Writing	1
Total pieces for portfolio	3

Kentucky Writing Portfolio Assessment Contents of the Grade 12 Portfolio

The Grade 12 Writing Portfolio must include a **total of four (4) writing entries**. Any of the entries may come from study/content areas other than English/language arts, but a **minimum of one (1) piece of writing must come from another study/content area**.

The Grade 12 Writing Portfolio must contain the following:

Table of Contents

Includes the title **and** category of each portfolio entry, the study/content area for which the piece was written, and the page number(s) in the portfolio.

Student Signature Sheet

Includes the signature of the student stating the student’s ownership over the contents of the portfolio (required), acknowledgment of any Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 Plan or ELL adaptations (with teacher signature), and a student signature giving permission to use the portfolio for training purposes (optional).

Reflective Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece.

One piece should be included that focuses on the writer’s growth through literacy development.

Personal Expressive Writing/Literary Writing—Student must include **one (1)** piece in either of these categories in the form of

- Personal Narrative** – focuses on one event in the life of the writer
- Memoir** – focuses on the relationship of the writer with a particular person, place, animal, or thing, supported by memories of specific experiences
- Personal Essay**—focuses on an idea central in the writer’s life
- Short Story, Poem, or Script**

Transactive Writing—Students must include **one (1)** piece from this category.

Transactive Writing with an analytical or technical focus—Students must include one (1) piece to meet this requirement

Transactive writing is produced “to get something done” in the real world (e.g., to provide ideas and information for a variety of purposes, to persuade readers to support a point of view). Transactive pieces are written for a variety of authentic audiences and purposes in real-world forms.

See Chapter 11, *Categories and Forms in the Writing Portfolio*, for appropriate forms to include in each category.

Configuration for a complete grade 12 writing portfolio

Categories of Writing	Portfolio Design
Reflective Writing	1
Personal Expressive Writing/Literary Writing	1
Transactive Writing	2
Total pieces for portfolio	4