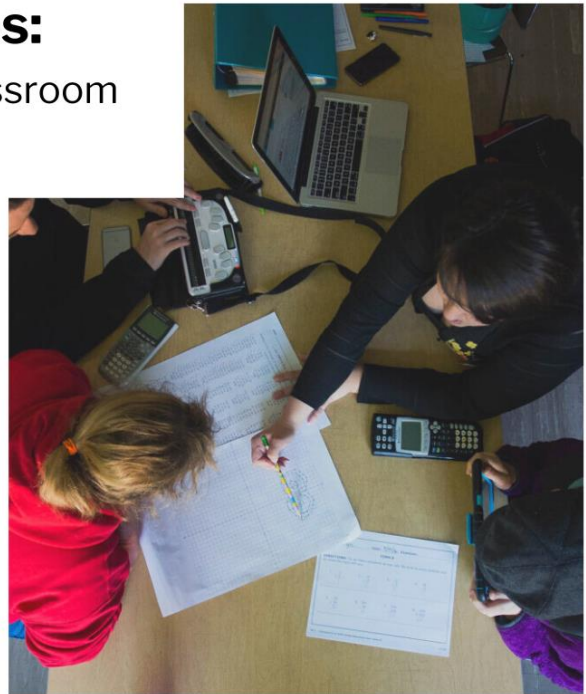




**Writing Across Disciplines:**  
An Expansion of Composition in the Classroom  
*Fall 2023*



# What is Writing Across Disciplines?

## What does “Writing Across Disciplines” mean?

Defining “Writing Across Disciplines” requires clarity around the terms “Writing” and “Across Disciplines.” Most simply, writing is communicating. Student writers communicate with themselves, peers, teachers and others. Writing in the classroom can have many purposes and audiences and may be formal or informal. In the academic setting, writing can serve as a tool to promote student learning, to allow students to demonstrate their thinking and understanding of the content and/or concepts taught, and/or to share with others in a real-world setting. These types of writing are called Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication. “Across Disciplines” refers to using the types of writing—as defined here—in English/language arts as well as other disciplines, such as social studies, science, math and visual and performing arts.

## What is Writing Across Disciplines, and what is its purpose?

*Writing Across Disciplines* is an expansion of [Composition in the Classroom](#), a resource developed by reading and writing teachers to help Kentucky educators provide students with opportunities to develop into confident, independent and proficient writers. *Composition in the Classroom* and its expansions support teachers implementing existing [High-Quality Instructional Resources](#) (HQIRs) adopted by school districts as well as educators teaching in districts that have not yet adopted a primary HQIR in reading and writing. The tips, suggestions and tasks in *Composition in the Classroom* and its expansions should not replace adopted HQIR but should serve to supplement instruction towards the full depth and rigor of the *Kentucky Academic Standards*. For more information regarding high-quality literacy curricula, districts and school leaders may access [The Reading and Writing Instructional Resources Consumer Guide](#), a tool for evaluating and selecting instructional resources for alignment to the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing*.

*Composition in the Classroom* is organized around three modes of writing in the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing*, including information regarding standards instruction through Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication. *Writing Across Disciplines*, however, contains sample discipline-specific writing tasks, organized by each of the three types of writing mentioned above. This resource is grounded in the *KAS for Reading and Writing*, which includes the Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices as well as each discipline’s content specific standards. The ten Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices are part of the *KAS for Reading and Writing*, appearing on every page of the standards document but **should not be confused as additional standards**. They should guide teachers in providing intentional opportunities for students to engage in deeper learning by practicing the behaviors of a literate citizen. The student practices serve as the overarching goals for literacy instruction for each student across the state. These practices are further clarified by [possible teacher and student actions](#). These actions do not define curriculum, but rather they demonstrate how teachers can provide opportunities for students to experience the literacy practices and how students will apply these practices, so they may become an innate part of life across the disciplines and beyond school. This resource aims to bring more clarity around what these practices look like in action.

While *Composition in the Classroom* primarily serves English/language arts teachers and their students, *Writing Across Disciplines* attends to the needs of all teachers and their students. Because of its widespread classroom use already, the developers chose to begin the expansion

with a focus on Writing to Learn, a professional learning space that will hopefully both affirm and stretch educators' practices. The second release added Writing to Demonstrate Learning and the final release will include Writing for Publication.

Writing Across Disciplines is created to provide what *Composition in the Classroom*, alone, does not. While *Composition in the Classroom* provides general characteristics of each type of writing (Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication) and examples of strategies teachers can implement to engage students in each of the types of writing, this expansion includes a more disciplinary, or specialized, look at writing. *Writing Across Disciplines* intends to show more precisely how to ensure opportunities for students to engage in discipline-specific literacies or learning that uses reading and writing skills specific to each field to teach or demonstrate content knowledge and for publication purposes as well. The sample tasks in *Writing Across Disciplines* represent some of the types of reading and writing experts in each field (e.g., economists, biologists, literary scholars, mathematicians, etc.) might authentically engage in to deepen their own expertise.

## **Writing TO DEMONSTRATE LEARNING Across Disciplines**

[Writing to Demonstrate Learning](#), as previously described, is necessary in every classroom for teachers to ascertain how well students are understanding the content, skills or concepts taught. Teachers use this type of writing to provide students opportunities for applying and demonstrating the skills they have learned in class and for assessing students' understanding of the subjects they are studying.

Regularly asking students to think and write about text at the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (i.e., analysis, synthesis, evaluation) can help students not only think through the content but also reveal the depth of their knowledge. Though this kind of writing certainly can promote learning, it is especially used to help teachers understand how well students are learning. Typically, Writing to Demonstrate Learning takes the form of an academic exercise with the teacher as the primary audience and, thus, would not be suitable for publication. When students Write to Demonstrate Learning, their responses will be graded, marked or scored with a rubric to provide feedback to both the teacher and the student on their progress towards mastery. While feedback may focus on compositional or technical skills as a writer, teacher feedback usually focuses on content and conceptual understandings. Most simply stated, Writing to Demonstrate Learning is any composition intended to serve as a measurement of the student's depth of learning.

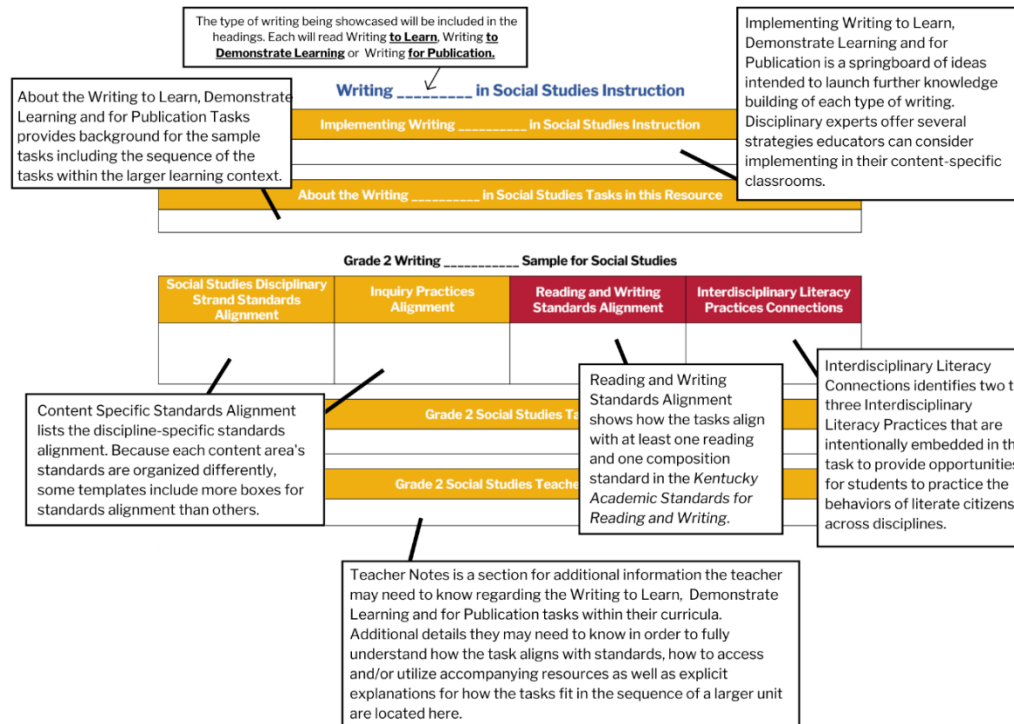
While students may demonstrate their learning through paragraphs or essays, at all ages, student composition should not be limited to traditional formats or restricted to writing on paper or drafting in a word processing document. Instead, students should have numerous opportunities to use digital resources to create, publish, research and update individual or shared products and to take advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically. This may even require students to incorporate a variety of communication methods into one Writing to Demonstrate Learning composition.

Like Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning Across Disciplines refers to using Writing to Demonstrate Learning in English/language arts as well as other disciplines such as math, science, social studies, and visual and performing arts. The first section of this expansion, Writing to Learn Across Disciplines, provides samples of Writing to Learn tasks for each discipline. The Writing to Demonstrate Learning section is the second of three sections that will make up the complete expansion and provides samples of Writing to Demonstrate Learning. Explicit reading-writing connections are intentionally present throughout the sample tasks, requiring students to read and think deeply about text, or "anything that communicates a message," as defined by the *KAS for Reading and Writing*. Throughout the sample tasks,

readers engage in passages, videos, graphs, data sets, experiments or other forms of communication while processing and documenting their learning through Writing to Demonstrate Learning.

## How to Read the Writing Across Disciplines Templates

Each content area template begins broadly with a compilation of possible Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication strategies that experts in the field deem especially applicable to learning that discipline's content. The remainder of each template provides authentic content-specific sample tasks, organized into elementary and secondary levels. These sample tasks can help educators recognize the presence or absence of Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning or Writing for Publication instructional strategies within their adopted high-quality instructional resource (HQIR), equipping them with the knowledge to identify when the curriculum does not include adequate opportunities for students to engage in both types of writing. Because the types of texts involved in reading and writing vary across disciplines, each sample contains discipline-specific approaches each type of writing.



# Writing to Demonstrate Learning in Visual and Performing Arts Instruction

## Implementing Writing to Demonstrate Learning in Visual and Performing Arts Instruction

The [Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) for Visual and Performing Arts](#) emphasizes four arts processes universal across all five disciplines: Creating, Performing/Producing/Presenting, Responding and Connecting.

**Creating** is a continuous process when students conceive and develop artistic ideas and work, which may require space for thinking and reflecting throughout the artistic process. Writing to Demonstrate Learning when Creating may include:

- Generating artistic ideas based on prior knowledge
- Organizing a plan for production
- Refining an artistic work

The arts process of **Performing** is specific to the performing arts of music, dance and theatre. **Producing** is the process of sharing work in the area of media arts and will often utilize “product” as its final form. **Presenting** is often associated with sharing in more formal settings such as exhibitions in the visual arts. Writing to Demonstrate Learning allows students to reflect on previous learning and plan their next steps in Performing, Producing or Presenting. Using Writing to Demonstrate Learning as a vehicle to drive these processes may mean students are regularly:

- Maintaining reflection journals
- Providing peer reviews

Writing to Demonstrate Learning happens most often in the arts process of **Responding**, as students reflect on their learning as artists and audience members. Due to the cyclical nature of the arts processes, students can demonstrate their learning throughout the artistic process. Writing to Demonstrate Learning for this purpose may look like:

- Engaging in performance reflections
- Creating exhibition texts

Writing to Demonstrate Learning is an effective strategy for engaging Visual and Performing Arts students in **Connecting** or relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context. Some Writing to Demonstrate Learning ideas for Connecting include, but are not limited to:

- Comparing and contrasting two or more arts disciplines
- Engaging in a quick write about how an artistic piece relates to the student

The essence of Visual and Performing Arts is for the artist to communicate ideas and experiences to the audience. Similarly, writers also communicate ideas and experiences to the reader. When student artists likewise engage in writing, they can strengthen their understanding of what they learned throughout the artistic process. Just as artists demonstrate their learning through the four arts processes, arts teachers can create opportunities for student artists to demonstrate their learning through the written word.

## Implementing Writing to Demonstrate Learning in Visual and Performing Arts Instruction

Writers in the arts contribute to the field professionally in various forms. The examples that follow represent Writing to Demonstrate Learning and may be used by educators to assess student artists' understanding of content and skills; however, in professional settings, these forms of writing are more representative of Writing for Publication as professional artists are not likely to write very often for the sole sake of demonstrating their learning. Writing for Publication will be addressed in the third section (coming soon) of this resource.

- Artist Statements
- Peer Critiques
- Exhibition reviews
- Artist interviews
- Blogs
- Gallery handouts

## About the Writing to Demonstrate Learning in Visual and Performing Arts Tasks in this Resource

The [\*Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) for Visual and Performing Arts\*](#) include five contrasting arts disciplines connected through Anchor Standards. The elementary and secondary sample Writing to Demonstrate Learning tasks below both work towards mastery of Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Students also interact with Performing, Responding and Connecting (relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context) in these tasks, allowing for connection to multiple areas outside of the discipline presented. Educators may make connections to other disciplines and contexts when possible.

## Middle School Visual Art Writing to Demonstrate Learning Sample

Visual and Performing Arts Standards Alignment	Artistic Process Alignment	Additional Standards Connections	Reading and Writing Standards Alignment	Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices Connections
<p><b>DA:Cr2.2.1</b> Choose movements that express an idea or emotion, or follow a musical phrase.</p> <p><b>Extension of Learning</b> DA:Pr5.1.1 (Perform) DA.Re9.1.1 (Respond) Da: Cn10.1.1 (Connecting)</p>	<p><b>Artistic Processes Connection:</b> Creating</p> <p><b>Process Component:</b> Plan</p> <p><b>Anchor Standard 2:</b> Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.</p>	<p><b>Standard 1:</b> Demonstrate competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.</p> <p><b>Locomotor: 1.1.L1.</b> Perform a variety of locomotor movements using different body parts.</p> <p><b>Non-Locomotor: 1.1.NL1.</b> Perform a variety of non-locomotor skills, using different body parts at different levels.</p> <p><b>Body Management: 1.1.BM1.</b> Perform a variety of balances using different body parts.</p>	<p><b>RL.1.3</b> Describe characters, settings and major events in a story, using key details in order to make meaning of the story development.</p> <p><b>C.1.6</b> With guidance and support, collect information from real-world experiences or provided sources to answer or generate questions.</p>	<p><b>ILP 1:</b> Recognize that text is anything that communicates a message.</p> <p><b>ILP 4:</b> Utilize receptive and expressive language arts to better understand self, others and the world.</p> <p><b>ILP 6:</b> Collaborate with others to create new meaning.</p>

## Middle School Visual Art Task

In preparation for students to respond to a whole-class read aloud, students will be divided into two groups: "Character 1" note-takers and "Character 2" note-takers. The teacher will read the text at least one time without interruptions to ensure comprehension of the overall story prior to a deeper analysis of the characters. On subsequent reads, each group will be told to focus on key details that will help them make sense of their assigned character's feelings. The teacher will pause at predetermined points to allow time for students to identify Character 1 and Character 2's feelings as the story develops and to Write to Learn, or record their character's feelings on a [graphic organizer](#).

More Writing to Learn takes place when the teacher allows time for students to also think about and **record what is happening in the story when the character experiences that feeling**. After recording the character's feelings and **documenting how they know the character is feeling that way**, Character 1 and Character 2 note-takers will be paired up to choreograph, or translate, their character's feelings into movements. They will use their graphic organizer to help them plan the order of the choreography they design and later perform. After choreographing and rehearsing their movements, students will perform the dance for each contrasting character, allowing the audience of classmates to compare the movements of each character. Audience members should be able to recognize the feelings, experiences or adventures of the characters in the text from the choreography presented.

## Middle School Visual Art Teacher Notes

In preparation for students to respond to a whole-class read aloud, students will be divided into two groups: "Character 1" note-takers and "Character 2" note-takers. The teacher will read the text at least one time without interruptions to ensure comprehension of the overall story prior to a deeper analysis of the characters. On subsequent reads, each group will be told to focus on key details that will help them make sense of their assigned character's feelings. The teacher will pause at predetermined points to allow time for students to identify Character 1 and Character 2's feelings as the story develops and to Write to Learn, or record their character's feelings on a [graphic organizer](#).

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## High School Music Writing to Demonstrate Learning Sample

Visual and Performing Arts Standards Alignment	Artistic Process Alignment	Additional Standards Alignment: Theatre	Reading and Writing Standards Alignment	Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices Connections
<p><b>MA:Cr2.1</b>  <b>HS Proficient: MA:Cr2.1.I</b>            Apply aesthetic criteria in developing, proposing, and refining artistic ideas, plans, prototypes, and production processes for media arts productions, considering original inspirations, goals, and presentation context.</p> <p><b>HS Accomplished MA:Cr2.1.II</b>            Apply a personal aesthetic in designing, testing, and refining original artistic ideas, prototypes, and production strategies for media arts productions, considering artistic intentions, constraints of resources, and presentation context.</p> <p><b>HS Advanced MA:Cr2.1.III</b>            Integrate a sophisticated personal aesthetic and knowledge of systems processes in forming, testing, and proposing original artistic ideas, prototypes, and production frameworks, considering complex constraints of goals, time, resources, and personal limitations.</p>	<p><b>Artistic Processes Connection:</b> Creating</p> <p><b>Process Component:</b> Develop</p> <p><b>Anchor Standard 2:</b> Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.</p>	<p><b>Anchor Standard 4:</b> Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation</p> <p><b>Artistic Process:</b> performing</p> <p><b>TH:Pr4.1.I.</b> - b. Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.</p> <p><b>TH:Pr4.1.II.</b> - b. Identify essential text information, research from various sources, and the director’s concept that influence character choices in a drama/theatre work.</p> <p><b>TH:Pr4.1.III.</b> - b. Apply a variety of researched acting techniques as an approach to character choices in a drama/theatre work.</p>	<p><b>RL.9-10.3</b> Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters and advance the plot or develop themes.</p> <p><b>C.9-10.4</b> Use digital resources to create, publish and update individual or shared products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically. Use a variety of formats to cite sources.</p>	<p><b>ILP 1:</b> Recognize that text is anything that communicates a message.</p> <p><b>ILP 4:</b> Utilize receptive and expressive language arts to better understand self, others and the world.</p> <p><b>ILP 7:</b> Utilize digital resources to learn and share with others.</p>

## High School Music Task

While reading an excerpt from a drama or dialogue students will make [notes](#) about the characters' changing emotions or moods throughout the text on a T-chart. Students should identify at least 3 moods from the scene and cite page numbers to support their ideas.

Using their notes, students will develop voicing for each character to match their personalities and changing moods throughout the story.

Students will then record the voice over for the scene and share the final product as an opportunity to Respond to the arts.

## High School Music Teacher Notes

For Grades 9-12, the *KAS for Visual and Performing Arts* includes high school proficiency levels—Proficient, Accomplished and Advanced—to illustrate what mastery might look like for students at various stages of learning. These proficiency levels address the reality that secondary VPA courses often have students of varying grade levels within one class. Additionally, within those mixed-grade level courses, students may have a variety of ability levels or experiences with the arts inside or outside of their school arts programs. The expectation for the proficiency level obtained by each student is dependent upon their current mastery of each standard.

For this task, the teacher will choose a text that contains dialogue between multiple characters. Teachers can select a scene from a play, a narrative poem or fiction that includes dialogue. Teachers may also choose to partner with an elementary school requesting recordings of books read aloud and select a children's book with substantial dialogue. While students are developing their character voice, circulate the room and allow students to brainstorm openly, listening to the voice they are trying for their character. Give feedback on their voicing and encourage students to continue developing their artistic ideas based on their story notes.

### **Questioning Opportunities:**

- 1) What does vocal inflection communicate about your character?
- 2) How does the vocal inflection you're using point to the excerpt's theme that you wrote down?
- 3) When you add that emphasis to the text, what are you hoping the audience will understand about your character?
- 4) When you record your lines, how can you use cadence to convey character?

**Potential Classroom Settings for This Task:** Media Arts, Theatre, Visual and Performing Arts (Survey Course), English/language arts