



**State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR™)
Performance Level Descriptors
English I Writing**

Performance Level Descriptors

When writing essays in response to increasingly complex writing tasks,* students achieving Level III: Advanced Academic Performance can

- Write thoughtful and engaging stories that demonstrate a thorough understanding of the literary task, choosing vivid and expressive language that strengthens the unity and cohesiveness of the story
- Write skillfully crafted expository essays with sustained focus, a logical organizing structure, and development that lends substance to the essay
- Choose sentences that are purposeful and well controlled

When writing essays in response to increasingly complex writing tasks,* students achieving Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance can

- Write literary pieces that are focused on a specific character, event, or idea; use narrative strategies or literary devices to structure the story; include specific details that contribute to key literary elements; choose words that reflect an understanding of the literary purpose; and demonstrate an adequate command of written conventions
- Write expository essays that contain a clear thesis statement, use an appropriate organizing structure, sufficiently develop ideas with specific details and examples, choose words that reflect an understanding of the explanatory purpose, and demonstrate an adequate command of written conventions
- Use a variety of sentence structures
- Revise drafts to strengthen the introductory and concluding paragraphs, add information that enhances the supporting details, strengthen transitions within and between paragraphs, improve the effectiveness of sentences, and recognize appropriate style and word choice
- Edit drafts to correct errors in grammar, sentence structure, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

English I Writing—Continued

Performance Level Descriptors

When writing essays in response to increasingly complex writing tasks,* students achieving Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance can

- Write basic or limited stories that demonstrate a minimal understanding of the literary task
- Write basic or limited essays that are only marginally suited to the expository task and minimally developed, with a partial command of conventions
- Demonstrate a minimal control of sentence structures
- Demonstrate basic skills in revision and editing

* For English I writing, “increasingly complex writing tasks” refers specifically to literary and expository writing. The literary writing task requires students to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas rather than simply write about their own personal experiences. The expository task requires students to clearly explain what they think about a specific topic. The rigor of the expository writing task increases from grade 7 to English I in that the prompts are more demanding in English I, specifically with regard to the cognitive complexity of the stimulus (the synopsis or quotation students use in developing the essay) and the sophistication of the topic.