Standardized Assessment Tasks for STAAR Alternate

Grade 7 Writing
The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 7 writing assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3 and 2: page 4

A **formal letter** is used for business purposes and is written to convey a message to people the writer does not know personally. A **formal letter** follows a specific format and includes:
- Sender’s address and date
- Recipients name and address
- Formal salutation (To Whom it May Concern: if the recipient is unknown, Dear Sir:)
- Subject line
- Body of the letter-2 or 3 short, concise paragraphs
- Complimentary closing (Respectfully yours, Sincerely yours)
- Signature

Examples of formal letters include:
- Requests for information
- Letters of recommendations
- Complaints about a product or a service

A **friendly letter** or **informal letter** is a way for communicating between two people who usually know each other.

The format for a **friendly** or **informal letter** includes:
- Sender’s address and date
- Salutation (Usually starts with Dear . . . or Hi . . . and has a comma following the recipient’s name)
- Body of the letter-2 or 3 paragraphs on a personal topic
- Closing (Sincerely, Thank you, Yours truly,)
- Signature
- P.S. – if the writer wants to add something to the message

Examples of a friendly or informal letter include:
- Thank you letters
- Welcome letters
- Personal communications between friends
### STAAR Reporting Category 1—Composition: The student will demonstrate an ability to compose a variety of written texts with a clear, controlling idea; coherent organization; sufficient development; and effective use of language and conventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectation</th>
<th>Essence of TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(7.17) Writing/Expository [and Procedural] Texts.</strong> Students write expository [and procedural or work-related] texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. The student is expected to</td>
<td><strong>Essence Statement A:</strong> Creates an expository text for a specific purpose and audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(A) write a multi-paragraph essay to convey information about a topic Readiness Standard that (i) presents effective introductions and concluding paragraphs; (ii) contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea; (iii) is logically organized with appropriate facts and details and includes no extraneous information or inconsistencies; (iv) accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources; and (v) uses a variety of sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and transitions to link paragraphs.</td>
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</table>
**Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** write letters whose language is tailored to the audience and purpose (e.g., a thank you note to a friend) and that use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing)

The student will generate a topic for which he or she would like to have more information. The student will determine to whom to write a letter requesting the information. The student will generate a correctly formatted formal letter requesting the desired information.

**Predetermined Criteria**
1. The student will generate a topic for which he or she would like to have more information.
2. The student will determine to whom to write a letter requesting the information.
3. The student will generate a correctly formatted formal letter requesting the desired information.

**Transition**

**Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** write short letters that put ideas in a chronological or logical sequence and use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing)

The student will be presented and read sentence strips in random order that can be arranged into the parts of a letter. Three sentences for the body of the letter will have a clear chronological order giving information about an event. The student will identify the salutation and closing. The student will arrange the body of the letter in chronological order. The student will complete the arrangement of the letter.

**Predetermined Criteria**
1. The student will identify the salutation and closing.
2. The student will arrange the body of the letter in chronological order.
3. The student will complete the arrangement of the letter.

**Transition**

Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 1 (7.17); Essence Statement: A
**Level 1**

**Prerequisite skill:** dictate or write information for lists, captions, or invitations

The student will be presented the purpose for making a specific list. The student will respond to the purpose of the list when it is presented by the teacher. The student will be presented objects or representations for items on the list. The student will explore the objects or representations. The student will participate in creating the list. The student will participate in using the list to accomplish its purpose.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will respond to the purpose of the list.
2. The student will participate in creating the list.
3. The student will participate in using the list to accomplish its purpose.

Transition
Definitions/Examples for STAAR Reporting Category 2 (7.17)
Essence Statement B

The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 7 writing assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3, 2, and 1: pages 8 and 9

**Informational text** includes expository, persuasive, and procedural text.

Levels 3 and 2: page 8

A **procedural text** explains to the reader how . . . Examples include:
- Recipes
- Directions for a building project
- Directions for an art activity

The student could select a product that has clear parts and steps such as a food item or an art project that when assembled becomes a completed product.

Level 1: Page 9

An **expository text** that clarifies or explains something is the appropriate type of informational text for this task since the students are asked to locate information and facts that answer questions. Examples of expository text include:
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Encyclopedias
- Textbooks

For this task, an expository text will be presented to the student that provides information about the animal, activity or object. Examples include:
- The bear is large.
- Riding a bicycle takes practice.
- A spatula is for lifting.
### STAAR Reporting Category 2—Revision: The student will demonstrate an ability to revise a variety of written texts.

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<td>(iv) accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources; Supporting Standard</td>
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<td>(v) uses a variety of sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and transitions to link paragraphs. Supporting Standard</td>
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<td><strong>Essence Statement B:</strong> Revises an expository text.</td>
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Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 2 (7.17); Essence Statement: B
**Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** create brief compositions that include supporting sentences with simple facts, details, and explanations

The student will generate a topic for a procedural text that produces a product. The student will generate sentences telling how to make or prepare the product. The student will be presented with a slight change in the product he or she is making. The student will revise the steps to reflect the change.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will generate a topic for a procedural text.
2. The student will generate sentences telling how to make or prepare the product.
3. The student will revise the steps to reflect the change.

Transition

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**Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** write brief comments on literary or informational texts

The student will be randomly presented sentence strips for at least three steps explaining how to make a product. Each step will be written on a sentence strip. The student will arrange the sentence strips in the order necessary to complete the product. The student will be presented with a slight change in the product he or she will be making. The student will revise the appropriate step to reflect the change. Using the steps, the student will assist in making the product. The student will choose a comment that reflects his or her opinion of the change that was made.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will arrange the sentence strips in the order necessary to complete the product.
2. The student will revise the appropriate step to reflect the change.
3. The student will choose a comment that reflects his or her opinion of the change that was made.

Transition

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Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 2 (7.17); Essence Statement: B
Level 1

Prerequisite skill: use pictures in conjunction with writing when documenting research

A factual sentence will be written that describes an animal, activity, or object familiar to the student. The sentence will be read. The student will participate in pairing a picture or representation of the animal, activity, or object to the sentence. A section of an informational text about the animal, activity, or object will be read. The teacher will present a new piece of written information about the animal, activity, or object paired with a representation. The student will participate in adding the new information to the sentence to further describe the animal, activity, or object. The student will participate in pairing the representation for the new information to the sentence.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will participate in pairing a picture or representation of the animal, activity, or object to the sentence.
2. The student will participate in adding the new information to the sentence to further describe the animal, activity, or object.
3. The student will participate in pairing the representation for the new information to the sentence.

Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 2 (7.17); Essence Statement: B
The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 7 writing assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3, 2, and 1: pages 11 and 12

**Informational text** includes expository, persuasive, and procedural text.

A **persuasive text** is a type of informational text written with the intent to persuade or convince the reader of something or to rally support for a cause of a belief. Examples of persuade text include:

- Essays
- Speeches
- Editorials in newspapers
- Opinion articles in magazines

Levels 3 and 2: pages 11 and 12

The writer is trying to persuade the reader about a majority opinion based on data.

Level 1: Page 12

The student is exposed to text used to persuade the reader to engage in an activity the student is interested in.
STAAR Reporting Category 2—Revision: The student will demonstrate an ability to revise a variety of written texts.

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<td>(7.18) Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Students are expected to write a persuasive essay to the appropriate audience that (A) establishes a clear thesis or position; Supporting Standard (C) includes evidence that is logically organized to support the author's viewpoint and that differentiates between fact and opinion. Supporting Standard</td>
<td>Essence Statement C: Revises persuasive text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** take simple notes and sort evidence into provided categories or an organizer

The student will be presented a statement involving a campus issue regarding a change in rules. The student will generate a polling question using the issue statement. The student will conduct a poll to gather students’ opinions about the issue. The student will organize the results of the poll to determine if the students’ opinions support the issue statement. The student will determine if the original statement needs to be revised to reflect the outcome of the poll.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will generate a polling question using the issue statement.
2. The student will organize the results of the poll to determine if the students’ opinions support the issue statement.
3. The student will determine if the original statement needs to be revised to reflect the outcome of the poll.

Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 2 (7.18); Essence Statement: C
**Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** decide what sources of information might be relevant to answer open-ended questions about one or two topics of class-wide interest

The student will be presented a statement involving a campus issue regarding a change in rules. The student will identify a question to ask about the issue. The student will identify which group on campus would be the best to poll about the issue. After the poll is conducted, the student will identify a revised statement that best summarizes the results regarding the majority opinion about the issue.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will identify a question to ask about the issue statement.
2. The student will identify which group on campus would be the best to poll about the issue.
3. The student will identify a revised statement that best summarizes the results regarding the majority opinion about the issue.

**Level 1**

**Prerequisite skill:** decide what sources or people in the classroom, school, library, or home can answer questions about topics of class-wide interest

The student will be presented a representation for a preferred activity he or she wants to do with a specific person. The student will explore the representation paired with a written sentence asking the person to participate in the activity. The student will participate in taking the representation and the sentence to the person to persuade him or her to join in the activity. The activity will occur. A representation for a new activity will be presented to the student. The student will participate in revising the sentence with the new activity and presenting it to the person. The new activity will occur.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will explore the representation paired with a written sentence asking the person to participate in the activity.
2. The student will participate in taking the representation to the person to persuade him or her to join in the activity.
3. The student will participate in revising the sentence with the new activity and presenting it to the person.
The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 7 writing assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3: page 16

There are seven short, simple conjunctions called **coordinating conjunctions**: and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so

In this task, students will be combining two sentences to make one. For example:

- I like cake.
  Sally likes ice cream.
  I like cake, **and** Sally likes ice cream.

- John drinks tea.
  Amy drinks coffee.
  John drinks tea, **but** Amy drinks coffee.

- Bill wants to be a banker.
  Bill is studying accounting in school.
  Bill wants to be a banker, **so** he is studying accounting in school.

- Do you want to wear the blue dress?
  Do you want to go shop for a new dress?
  Do you want to wear the blue dress or do you want to shop for a new dress?

Level 2: page 16

A **preposition** is a word that links nouns, pronouns, and phrases in a sentence. Examples of prepositions that facilitate a change in position include:

- Over
- Under
- Above
- Below
- Outside
- Beneath
- On

Nonexamples of positional prepositions that would not be appropriate for the Level 2 task include:

- During
- For
- Of
- To
- After
- Among
An **adjective** is a word that describes a noun or a pronoun. Examples of adjectives easily felt, seen, or heard that should be used for a Level 1 task include:

- Soft
- Loud
- Colorful
- Warm

Nonexamples of adjectives easily felt, seen, or heard that would not be appropriate for a Level 1 task include:

- Good
- Easy
- Nice
- Happy
### TEKS Knowledge & Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectations

(7.19) **[Oral and] Written Conventions/Conventions.** Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. The student is expected to

(A) identify, use, and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking: Readiness Standard

(i) verbs (perfect and progressive tenses) and participles; Supporting Standard

(ii) appositive phrases; Supporting Standard

(iii) adverbial and adjectival phrases and clauses; Supporting Standard

(iv) conjunctive adverbs (e.g., consequently, furthermore, indeed); Supporting Standard

(v) prepositions and prepositional phrases and their influence on subject-verb agreement; Supporting Standard

(vi) relative pronouns (e.g., whose, that, which); Supporting Standard

(vii) subordinating conjunctions (e.g., because, since); Supporting Standard

(viii) transitions for sentence to sentence or paragraph to paragraph coherence; Supporting Standard

(B) write complex sentences and differentiate between main versus subordinate clauses; Supporting Standard

### Essence of TEKS Knowledge & Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectations

Essence Statement D: Edits text for correct word usage and variance in sentence patterns.
Level 3

Prerequisite skill: use and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking: coordinating conjunctions (e.g., and, or, but)

The student will generate two sentences about a topic. The student will determine how to combine the sentences using different coordinating conjunctions. The student will analyze the difference in the meanings of the sentences when combined with the different coordinating conjunctions. The student will select the combined sentence that best reflects his or her intended meaning.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will determine how to combine the sentences using different coordinating conjunctions.
2. The student will analyze the difference in the meanings of the sentences.
3. The student will select the combined sentence that best reflects his or her intended meaning.

Level 2

Prerequisite skill: understand and use the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking: prepositions and prepositional phrases

The student will be presented a complete sentence describing the position of an object. The teacher will illustrate or demonstrate the position of the object as the sentence is read. The student will assist in reading a list of prepositions. The student will identify the preposition in the sentence. The teacher will illustrate or demonstrate a change in the position of the object. The student will edit the sentence using another preposition to reflect the new position of the object.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will assist in reading a list of prepositions.
2. The student will identify the preposition in the sentence.
3. The student will edit the sentence using another preposition to reflect the new position of the object.

Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 3 (7.19); Essence Statement: D
Level 1

Prerequisite skill: use a wide variety of words to label and describe people, places, things, and actions

The student will be presented a phrase about an object that uses an adjective to describe the object. As the phrase is read, the student will experience the characteristic of the object described in the phrase. The student will participate in changing the description of the object in some way. The student will participate in editing the phrase with a new adjective describing the modified object.

Predetermined Criteria
1. The student will experience the characteristic of the object described in the phrase.
2. The student will participate in changing the description of the object in some way.
3. The student will participate in editing the phrase with a new adjective describing the modified object.

Writing Grade 7; Reporting Category 3 (7.19); Essence Statement: D