

# ELA–Writing: Access Skills

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## Writing to Communicate

- Students at a pre-symbolic communication level participate in the creation of written products that reflect the use of access skills (e.g., “Choose from an array of errorless choices related to the creation of a written product”)
- For a student working on access skills, the writing sample must be a tangible (i.e., permanent) product created by the teacher, paraprofessional, related service provider, or peer(s) that documents the student’s responses (and percent of independence) during the creation of the writing sample.

# Writing to Communicate

Student Name: Maeby Date: Oct 4, 2023

**Trip to the Farm**

				Latency / Independence	
I want to see the _____.	Hens (feather)	Sheep (wool ball)	No Response	4	I
I want to listen to the _____.	Hens (feather)	Sheep (wool ball)	No Response	12	I
I want to smell the _____.	Hens (feather)	Sheep (wool ball)	No Response	20	I
I want to see the _____.	Tractor (miniature)	Hens (feather)	No Response	20	P

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## MCAS-Alt ELA–Writing Strand

- **Develops** students' expressive communication skills.
- A writing sample **documents** the exact context of the student's response given an expressive communication opportunity.
- ELA-Writing does **not** assess:
  - the physical act of writing; e.g., physically grasping a pen/pencil, making a mark on paper
  - keyboarding skills
  - tracing or copying letters or words

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## Use one of the following text types:

Select the text type that reflects the expressive communication opportunity being assessed:

- **Opinion** (grades 3–5)/**Argument** (grades 6–8 and 10): preference  
(e.g., All about me: my favorite food is \_\_\_\_\_)
- **Informative/Explanatory text**: facts  
(e.g., Halloween Facts: the pumpkin is \_\_\_\_\_, )
- **Narrative**: personal experience  
(e.g., Dear Mom, today I \_\_\_\_\_ )
  - Also including poetry imagery (sounds of words, rhyme, meter, and/or repetition to express emotion)

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## ELA–Writing Requirements

- Access skills are found in the “**Text Types and Purposes**” cluster heading
- Students should use their **primary mode of communication** to participate in the creation of work samples.
- Required: One **baseline** writing sample and three different **final** writing samples (topics/pictures)
- Teachers will **pre-score** the 3 final samples, using the state-provided rubrics. All rubric scores for students using access skills will automatically generate a “1” in the *Demonstration of Skills and Knowledge* (see samples)
- **No data charts** are required.

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## Work Description Label for the Writing Sample

- Includes a description of what the student was asked to do and how the student participated and contributed to the final product
- Describes the materials/context of the activity
- Indicates the student's responses (percent independence) to each item/trial using his/her mode of communication
- Includes name, date, independence, and self-evaluation

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education



## Opinion: Work Description Label

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS | WRITING (FINAL) WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

*(Complete and attach one label to each Writing work sample, or write this information directly on each piece.)*

Name: **Carlton Student**

INDEPENDENCE: **25%**

Text Type: **Opinion/Argument**

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do:

**After watching a video clip, phrases to complete a music review were presented two at a time, in an auditory /scanning format which the student activated to make a choice.**

Date (m/d/y): **12/14/23**

Measurable Outcome:

**Carlton will choose from an array of errorless choices within 30 seconds related to the creation of a written product with 80% independence.**

Self-Evaluation

**Asked if student wanted to preview "Glee" or "Lion King" video, they eye-gazed to "Glee"**

# Opinion: Final Writing Sample

Data was collected on the student's participation, during the creation of the written product.

## Miss Baker's Class

12/4/23

"Glee" Music Review

Class Question: What did you think of Rachel's song?

Carlton: Rachel's song is great! (P)

Class Question: What did you think of the dancing?

Carlton: The dancing was exciting! (I)

Class Question: What did you think of the costumes?

Carlton: The costumes are lame. (P)

Class Question: Should we watch the clips again?

Carlton: Shut them off (P)

¾ prompted = 25% independent

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## Pre-Scored Final Work Sample: Opinion

		M	1	2	3	4
Level of Complexity			Writing sample not submitted or unmatched to requirement	Student addressed Writing through "access skills"	Student addressed Writing through "entry points."	Student addressed Writing at "grade-level."
Demonstration of Skills and Concepts	Expression of Ideas and Content	Writing sample not submitted; or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	No main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), event sequence (narrative), or focus (poetry), or was unclear or off-topic; or used single word, picture, or symbol to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher	Writing sample related to assignment only minimally, included no or only one detail or description, or used picture sequence to express ideas; or used no figurative language or poetry form (poetry)	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was evident, limited use of facts, details, and/or descriptions, sometimes repetitive and/or off-topic; limited use of figurative language (poetry).	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was clearly expressed, three or more accurate and relevant facts, details, or descriptions included, used vivid imagery and figurative language appropriately (poetry)
	Knowledge of Conventions		Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or punctuation	General meaning could be understood, though use of grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences, or lacked poetry form (poetry)	Complete sentences with some errors; grammar was effective; correct noun-verb agreement, some evidence of poetry form (poetry)	Meaning was clear, with rare or no errors in grammar and overall usage; poetry form used appropriately (poetry)
	Text Structure		Used single words, pictures, symbols without text; or all text provided by teacher	Sentence fragments (phrases) or one complete sentence used to express ideas; produced two related lines (poetry)	At least two complete sentences were used to express ideas; produced up to four related lines (poetry)	A paragraph of at least three related, well-constructed sentences was used to express ideas; more than four related lines (poetry)
	Use of Vocabulary		Vocabulary was unrelated to assignment, or all text was provided by teacher	Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate	Vocabulary was functional and relevant, used basic common words, with some descriptive language	Vocabulary was clear and precise, used descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words and/or phrases
In 25% nce		Writing sample not submitted or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing sample (25% dependent)	Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment (26-50% independent)	Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment (51-75% independent)	Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment (76-100% independent)

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## Narrative: Work Description Label

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS | WRITING (FINAL) WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

(Complete and attach one label to each Writing work sample, or write this information directly on each piece.)

Name: **Ralph Student**

Date (m/d/y): **9/12/23**

INDEPENDENCE: **100%**

Measurable Outcome:

**Ralph will orient or manipulate material related to the creation of a written product with 100% independence.**

Text Type: **Narrative**

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do:

**Student was given Mayer-Johnson (MJ) pictures related to the field trip to the shelter. He oriented the MJ pictures to illustrate the story.**

Self-Evaluation

**Student was asked if he wanted to illustrate a story about the field trip or his day at school. Student chose picture of field trip.**

## Narrative: Final Work Sample "We are Going to the Shelter"

We will take our  
van to the shelter



+/I

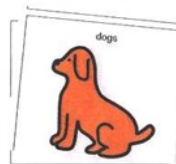
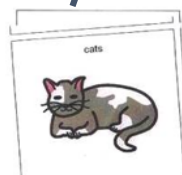
The animals may  
be loud,



+/I

We will see <sup>9/12/23</sup>

+/I



We made treats  
for them



+/I

## Pre-Scored Final Sample: Narrative

Level of Complexity		M	1	2	3	4
			Writing sample not submitted or unmatched to requirement	Student addressed Writing through "access skills."	Student addressed Writing through "entry points."	Student addressed Writing at "grade-level."
Demonstration of Skills and Concepts	Expression of Ideas and Content	Writing sample not submitted; or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	No main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), event sequence (narrative), or focus (poetry); or was unclear or off-topic; or used single word, picture, or symbol to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher	Writing sample related to assignment only minimally; included no or only one detail or description; or used picture sequence to express ideas; or used no figurative language or poetry form (poetry)	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was evident; limited use of facts, details, and/or descriptions; sometimes repetitive and/or off-topic; limited use of figurative language (poetry);	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was clearly expressed; three or more accurate and relevant facts, details, or descriptions included; used vivid imagery and figurative language appropriately (poetry)
	Knowledge of Conventions		Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage	General meaning could be understood, though use of grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences; or lacked poetry form (poetry)	Complete sentences with some errors; grammar was effective; correct noun-verb agreement; some evidence of poetry form (poetry)	Meaning was clear, with rare or no errors in grammar and overall usage; poetry form used appropriately (poetry)
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	Use of Vocabulary		Vocabulary was unrelated to assignment; or all text was provided by teacher	Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate	Vocabulary was functional and relevant; used basic common words, with some descriptive language	Vocabulary was clear and precise; used descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words and/or phrases
Independence		Writing sample not submitted; or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing sample (0-25% independent) _____%	Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment (26-50% independent) _____%	Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment (51-75% independent) _____%	Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment (76-100% independent) 100%

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## Narrative: Work Description

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS | WRITING (FINAL) WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

(Complete and attach one label to each Writing work sample, or write this information directly on each piece.)

Name: **Jorge Student**

INDEPENDENCE: **80%**

Date (m/d/y): **9/22/23**

Measurable Outcome:

**Jorge will release materials related to the creation of a written product within 15 seconds with 100% independence.**

Text Type: **Narrative**

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do:

**Objects representing the Fall were gathered on the playground to be used in the creation of a class poem on fall. Classmates created each line which was written on poster board. Student released the tactile object representing the line into the finished bin as the line was read within 15 seconds**

Self-Evaluation

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# Narrative: Final Work Sample

Shows student's participation in the creation of a poem.

SEPTEMBER

9/22/23

Written by Room 190

LINE 1: LEAVES FALL SOFTLY ON THE GROUND

Material: **Leaves** – Does not release even with prompting

LINE 2: SQUIRELS RUN AND PLAY

Material: **Fur Swatch** – Releases 11 seconds independently

LINE 3: ACORNS FALL

Material: **Acorns** – Releases 10 seconds independently

LINE 4: ACORNS ROLL

Material: **Acorns** – Releases 14 seconds independently

LINE 5: THE SQUIREL RUNS AWAY

Material: **Fur Swatch** – Releases 11 seconds independently

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## Pre-Scored Final Sample: Narrative (Poem)

	M	1	2	3	4
Level of Complexity		Writing sample not submitted or unmatched to requirement	Student addressed Writing through "access skills."	Student addressed Writing through "entry points."	Student addressed Writing at "grade-level."
Demonstration of Skills and Concepts	Expression of Ideas and Content	No main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), event sequence (narrative), or focus (poetry); or was unclear or off-topic; or used single word, picture, or symbol to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher	Writing sample related to assignment only minimally; included no or only one detail or description; or used picture sequence to express ideas; or used no figurative language or poetry form (poetry)	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was evident; limited use of facts, details, and/or descriptions; sometimes repetitive and/or off-topic; limited use of figurative language (poetry);	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was clearly expressed, three or more accurate and relevant facts, details, or descriptions included; used vivid imagery and figurative language appropriately (poetry)
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	Use of Vocabulary	Vocabulary was unrelated to assignment; or all text was provided by teacher	Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate	Vocabulary was functional and relevant; used basic common words, with some descriptive language	Vocabulary was clear and precise; used descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words and/or phrases
Independence 80%	Writing sample not submitted; or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing sample (0-25% independent) _____%	Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment (26-50% independent) _____%	Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment (51-75% independent) _____%	Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment (76-100% independent) 80% _____%

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# Required Elements for Writing

ELA-Writing skills survey

+

Work Description for Baseline

+

Baseline Writing Sample

3 Work Sample Descriptions  
(one for each  
Final Writing Sample)

+

3 Distinct Writing Samples

+

3 Pre-Scored Rubrics (scored)

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## Thinking about Self-Evaluation

- Student choice-making and evaluation of one's own work are essential components of the concept of self-determination, which is an important predictor of successful post-school outcomes (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1998).

Kleinert, H.L. & Kearns, J.F. (2010). Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

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## ***Self Evaluation: Students Making Choices***

- Choices of materials, response format, order of events
- Choice of partner
- Choice of continuing or terminating the activity
- Do you see evidence of the “student’s voice” in the self-evaluation? Is it authentic?

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## **Contact Information**

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Student Assessment Office –781-338-3625**

### **DESE:**

**Website:** [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/)

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# THANK YOU

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