

# ELA-Writing for MCAS-Alt

Fall 2024

# Presenters

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# What does ELA-Writing assess?

ELA-Writing does not assess a student's ability to:

**ELA–Writing assesses expressive communication by the student:**

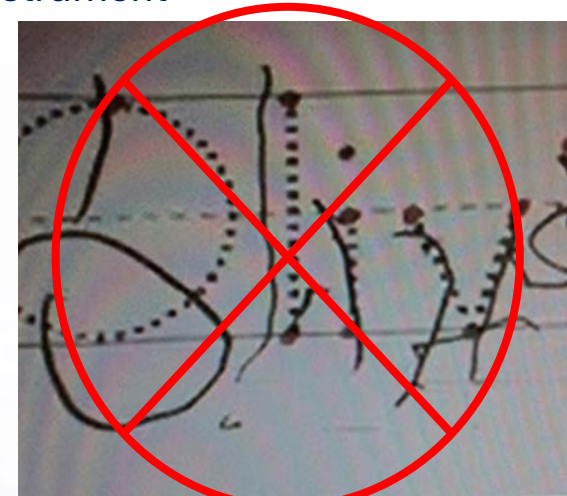
- sharing experiences,
- opinions, preferences,
- ideas, and/or facts
- discussing books, articles, stories, videos
- poetry, imagery,
- sharing knowledge with an audience



hold a writing instrument



copy letters or words



trace letters or words



# Student's Primary Mode of Communication



# How does *your* student communicate?

- **Oral language**
- **Hand-writing**
- **Sounds**
- **Symbols (photos, icons)**
- **Objects**
- **Gestures**
- **Sign language**
- **Eye gaze**
- **High-tech device (e.g., Dynavox)**
- **Low-tech device (e.g., communication book)**
- **Other**

# ELA–Writing: Requirements

- **One completed ELA-Writing skills survey**
- **One baseline writing sample**
  - The baseline should be the student's first attempt at the writing process *and* dated prior to the final samples.
  - Baseline *can* be a brainstorming activity, graphic organizer, outline, or draft
- **Three *different* final writing samples**, different topics or pictures
- **Three pre-scored** state-provided rubrics (1 for *each* final sample)
- **Final Writing Samples** must include student's name, valid date, and percentage of independence (based on word or sentence).
  - Final samples for students using access skills will include a **written product** produced by the teacher or peers, noting student participation.

# ELA-Writing Skills Survey

## Writing (Text Type and Purposes)

Does the student use a communication system* to express ideas, requests, and responses? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No If YES, student can use their communication system to:		A 0% (unable)	B Up to 25% (rarely)	C Up to 50% (occasionally)	D Up to 75% (more often than not)	E Up to 100% (almost always)
1.	Initiate expressive communication using a single word or symbol.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
2.	Respond to questions or writing prompts with single words.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
3.	Respond to questions or writing prompts with sentence fragments (i.e., phrases).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4.	Respond to questions or writing prompts with one complete sentence.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
5.	Respond to questions or writing prompts with at least one paragraph (three or more sentences).	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	Retell at least three events in chronological order.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	Express an opinion on a topic and gives at least one reason.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	Express at least two relevant facts or details based on a given topic or text.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	Respond to questions or writing prompts using descriptive language and connecting words or phrases.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* Communication systems may include verbal/gestural/symbolic/ or iconic expression using a keyboard, handwriting, dictation, symbol-based system, assistive technology, ASL or other sign system, Braille, etc.

# Required Elements for Writing

Does the student use a communication system* to express ideas, requests, and responses? Yes = No If YES, student can use their communication system to:	A 0% (unable)	B Up to 25% (rarely)	C Up to 50% (occasionally)	D Up to 75% (more often than not)	E Up to 100% (almost always)
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6. Retell at least three events in chronological order.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Express an opinion on a topic and gives at least one reason.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Express at least two relevant facts or details based on	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

ELA-Writing skills survey

2016 MCAS-Alt  
**WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION**  
**INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY TEXT (BASELINE)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: English Language Arts  
Date: 2/13/25 Strand: English Language Arts - Writing (Informative/Explanatory Text)  
Self-Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Learning Standard: W.5.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.  
Measurable Outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student was presented with a picture of an apple. Student was asked to tell about the topic (identify facts) dabbling facts from \_\_\_\_\_ will express facts on a given topic or text with 75% accuracy and 75% independence.

Work Description for Baseline

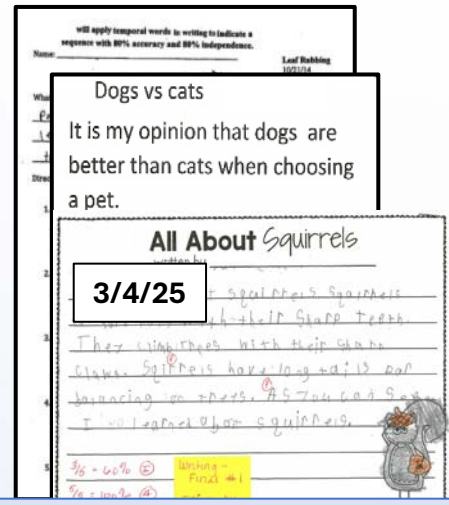


Baseline Writing Sample

**WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION**  
**OPINION/ARGUMENT (FINAL)**

Name: Ken Subject: English Language Arts  
Date (m/d/y): 3/4/25 Strand: English Language Arts - Writing (Opinion/Argument)  
INDEPENDENT Self-Evaluation: 3/4/25  
Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it: Ken was asked to provide reasons to support his opinion that it is better to travel on an airplane rather than a boat. He first completed an OREOS graphic organizer. He then typed his opinion essay in a word processor. He checked to make sure he  
Ken will provide reasons to support an opinion or point of view from a topic or text with 80% accuracy and 80% independence.

1 Work Description for each Final Writing Sample



3 Distinct Writing Samples

	M	1	2	3	4
Expression of Ideas and Content	Informative/explanatory text not submitted, or unmatched to requirement.	Student addressed writing through "access skills."	Student addressed writing through "entry points."	Student addressed writing at "grade level."	
Knowledge of Conventions	Lacked main idea, or main idea was unclear, unmatched to assignment, or off topic; or used text provided by the teacher.	Main idea related to the assignment normally; no facts, details, or descriptions included, or included a list of phrases; without text.	Main idea was mostly clear; details, and/or descriptions were limited, vague, and/or off topic.	Main idea was clear; minor errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage rarely or never interfered with understanding.	Main idea was clear, accurate; facts, details, and/or descriptions were clear, appropriate and on topic.
Text Structure	No connectors were evident (i.e., title or no text); or meaning could not be understood due to frequent errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage.	General meaning could be determined; frequent errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage sometimes interfered with understanding.	Meaning was mostly clear; minor errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage rarely or never interfered with understanding.	Meaning was clear; minor errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage rarely or never interfered with understanding.	Meaning was clear, minor errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage rarely or never interfered with understanding.
Use of Vocabulary	Single words or phrases were used to express ideas, with little or no sentence formation.	Sentence fragments (phrases), with occasional complete sentences, were used to express ideas.	One or two complete sentences were used to express ideas.	Vocabulary was functional and appropriate, with some repetition, and occasional use of connecting words and/or phrases.	Vocabulary expressed ideas clearly and included appropriate connecting words and/or phrases.
Independence	Informative/explanatory text was not submitted, complete insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English, or could not be read or understood.	Student required extensive, almost continuous, prompts to complete writing assignment (0-25%).	Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment (i.e., most responses or sentences were prompted) (25-50%).	Student required occasional prompts to complete writing assignment (i.e., most responses or sentences were unprompted) (51-75%).	Student required no, or very occasional, prompts to complete writing assignment (75-100%).

3 Pre-Scored Rubrics (scored)

Final Sample Date + Work Description + Pre-Scored Rubric = Same Date



# ELA—Writing: Requirements (cont'd)

- **Three *different final* writing samples, which may be any combination of the following text types:**
  - **Argument/opinion:** States a claim or preference, based on a text or topic
  - **Informative/explanatory text:** Conveys facts or ideas, based on a text or topic
  - **Narrative:** Prose that tells a story, based on real or imagined events; OR poetry that uses figurative language to express emotions or tell a story

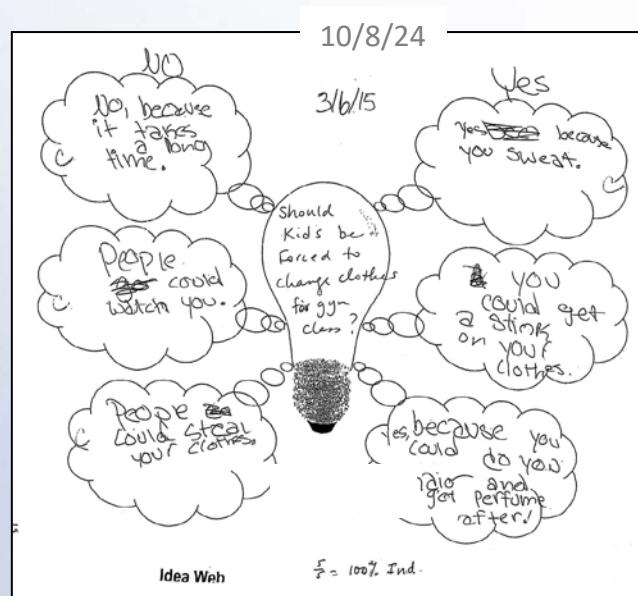
## **Example of Measurable Outcome:**

“(Student) will use his/her primary mode of communication to express or create a writing sample with 75% independence.”

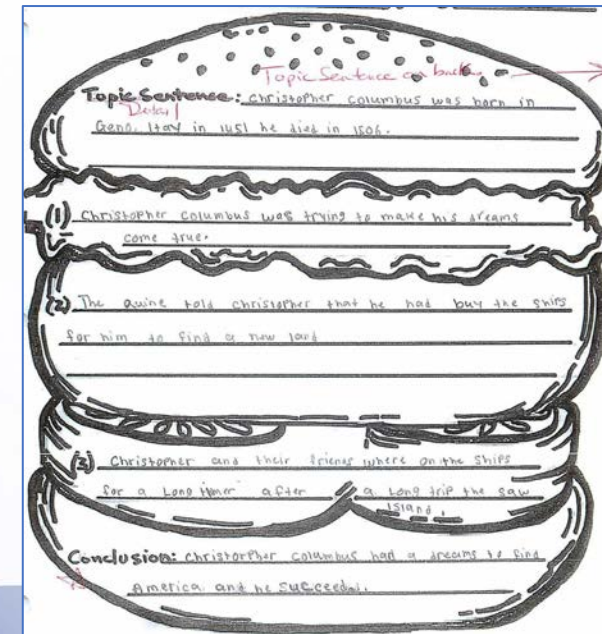
# Scoring ELA-Writing Samples

Teachers will **pre-score** each of their students' final writing samples, using standardized, state-provided scoring rubrics.

- Baseline samples do not need scoring (See samples below)
- Do include a completed scoring rubric for each final writing sample.
- Scorers will verify the teacher's scores.



Examples  
Graphic Organizers



# What Does the Scoring Rubric include?

Scoring rubric includes the following areas:

- Level of Complexity (access skills *or* entry points)
- Demonstration of Skills and Concepts
  - ◆ Expression of Ideas and Content
  - ◆ Use of Vocabulary
  - ◆ Text Structure (words, phrases, sentences)
  - ◆ Knowledge of Conventions
- Independence (frequency of prompts) by the word *or* sentence
- Self-Evaluation is separate from the rubric and included on the *Work Description*.

# ELA-Writing Rubric

		M	1	2	3	4
<b>Level of Complexity</b>			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."
<b>Demonstration of Skills and Concepts</b>	<b>Expression of Ideas and Content</b>	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)
	<b>Knowledge of Conventions</b>		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)
	<b>Text Structure</b>		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)
	<b>Use of Vocabulary</b>		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
<b>Independence</b>			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) _____%

# Using the Rubric to Score the Writing Samples

**Teachers will pre-score their students' final writing samples**, using the standardized scoring rubric.

- Carefully review the criteria on the rubric.
- Students working on access skills or if the teacher provides the text and uses a fill-in-the-blank worksheet or if the student uses a single word/picture or list of words, the score will score 1 in *Demonstration of Skills and Concepts*.
- Percent of independence is based on the number of prompts relative to the total number of words *or* sentences.
- Score should be based on the contribution of the student.
- Scorers will verify the teacher's scores and only change a score if it does not reflect the evidence.

# How would you score this final Writing sample?

2025 MCAS-Ait

## 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: **Lacy Sample**

Date (m/d/y): **11/13/24**

INDEPENDENCE: **100%**

Measurable Outcome:

**Lacy will use primary mode of communication to express or create a writing sample that is a narrative (including poetry) with 80% independence.**

Text Type: **Narrative**

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do:

**Lacy completed sample verbally with a teacher scribing. Lacy described the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.**

Self-Evaluation

11/13/24

100% ind

name: Lacy

Scribed

I eat potatoes.

Turkey, Appple pie.

# How would you score the previous Writing sample?

DATE: 11/14/24

		M	1	2	3	4
<b>Level of Complexity</b>			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."
<b>Demonstration of Skills and Concepts</b>	<b>Expression of Ideas and Content</b>	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)
	<b>Knowledge of Conventions</b>		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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	<b>Use of Vocabulary</b>		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

# POLL

Expression of Ideas and Content: 1 2 3 4

Knowledge of Conventions: 1 2 3 4

Text Structure: 1 2 3 4

Use of Vocabulary: 1 2 3 4



# ELA–Writing for Students at Access Skill Level

## Measurable

**Outcome:** Student will activate a device, within 15 seconds of the initial cue, in an activity related to the creation of a written product.

John

1/9/25

I=25%



I spent Christmas with my friends at Nelson. I



One of my favorite gifts that I got was some scented lotions and body wash. P



I also got lots of new clothes. They are so cute! P



On Wednesday night, I went on a trip to laSalette to see all of the Christmas lights. They were so pretty. P

## Brief Description:

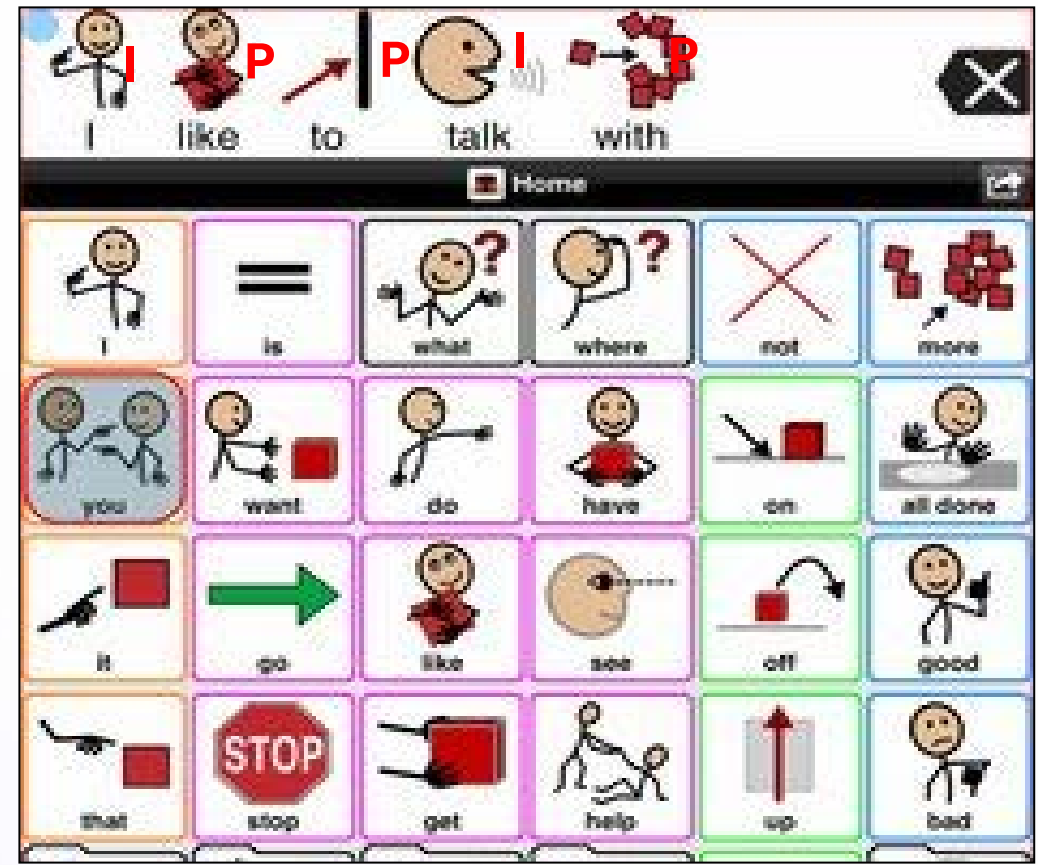
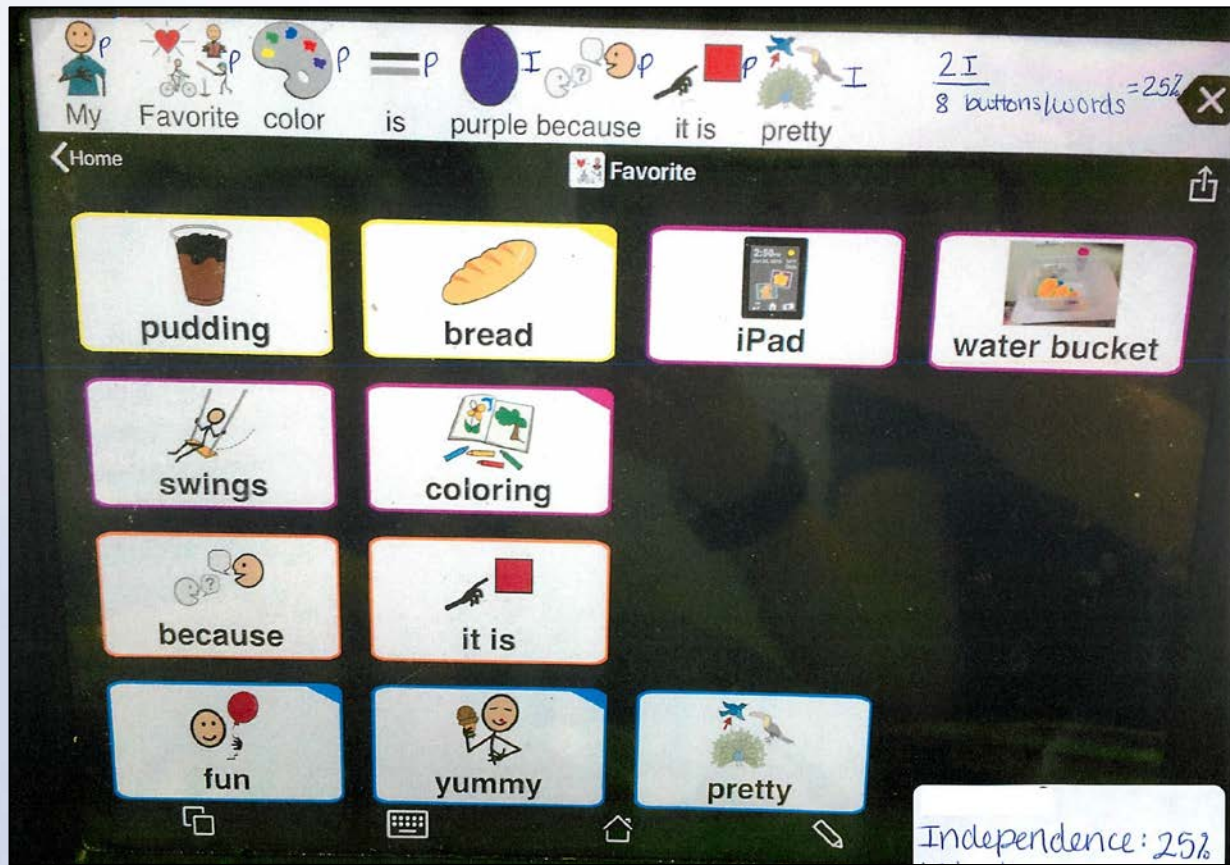
Within 15 seconds of the initial cue, the student activated a switch with pre-recorded sentences to compose a narrative on her winter vacation.

# Scoring the Previous Writing Sample for a Student Working at Access Skill Level

		M	1	2	3	4
<b>Level of Complexity</b>			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."
DATE: 1/9/25						
<b>Demonstration of Skills and Concepts</b>	<b>Expression of Ideas and Content</b>	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)
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	<b>Use of Vocabulary</b>		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

# Supporting Documentation

The dynamic display shows the student making choices to put words together. Teacher clearly marks “P” for Prompt “I” for Independence.

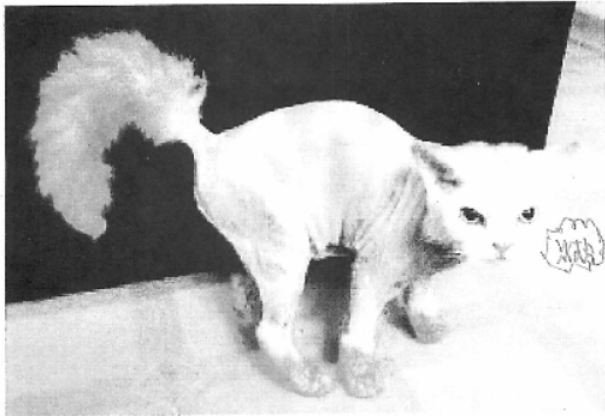


# ELA–Writing Reminders

- **No data chart** is required.
- Include the completed Work Sample Description label for each writing sample.
- Final samples should reflect communication generated **by the student**.
- Samples for students at access skill level *must include* a final written product representing how the student participated in the creation of the sample.
- Writing samples that include bathroom-related routines will *not* be scored nor will they be counted toward the minimum requirement.

# Some Writing Samples Shared with Us...

Directions: *Create a caption for each picture*

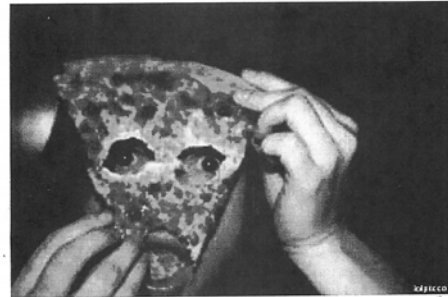


The cat is not happy with her suit.  
Her suit  
them back of her tail  
look like dem things you  
dust stuff with

The cat is not happy with her suit.  
The back of her tail looks like  
them things you dust stuff with.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Create a caption to the picture



Oh no the lunch lady!  
The kids are going to  
eat me and the students  
are so hungry. I am not  
like the other cafeteria  
food

Oh no the lunch lady! The kids  
are going to eat me. And the  
students are so hungry. I am not  
like the other cafeteria food.



Its when I first got  
potty trained. it didnt  
go as planned. I tried to  
hold myself up and I just  
literally fell in.

It's when I first got potty trained.  
It didn't go as planned. I tried to  
hold myself up and I just  
literally fell in.



## ELA-Writing

- Wednesday, October 9, 10:00-11:30 a.m.  
or
- Tuesday, October 22, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

## Science and Technology/Engineering

- Thursday, October 10, 9:30-11:00 a.m.  
or
- Wednesday, October 23, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

## Civics

- Thursday, October 10, 1:00-2:30 p.m.  
or
- Wednesday, October 23, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

# THANK YOU

For Questions Regarding MCAS-Alt

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