

2016-2017

Grade 7 and 8 Quarter 2 Informative/Explanatory Prompts

Purpose

The purpose of the on-demand prompt as an assessment of writing is to provide a snapshot of what a student can do with a particular prompt, limited time and space, and without teacher input (unless the standard recognizes support from the teacher is developmentally appropriate). This assessment does not encompass all the forms of assessment students should experience in writing. All of the standard-referenced writing rubrics can and should be used throughout the school year for instruction and assessment purposes.

Administration:

- The purpose of the prompt is as an assessment. Refrain from doing teaching, editing, or additional prewriting activities with students.
- Post and read the writing prompt.
- Reread the prompt as needed for individual or groups of students.
- Apply all modifications and accommodations as indicated in IEP, ELL, and 504 plans.
- Have the student complete one draft with no final copy.
- Writing assessment may be broken up into shorter sessions of prewriting and writing, but the writing portion should be confined to one session. For example, a teacher might choose to have students prepare their graphic organizer (20-minutes) and then write (70-minutes).
- Students should have access to any writing tools normally available to them during writing time (ie: word walls, word banks, writing folders, desk dictionaries, etc.).
- If students need more time to finish their paper at the end of the writing period, you may allow them a reasonable amount of time to finish their writing, provided they are making continual progress and it is all in one sitting. An example of an **appropriate** time extension could be at the end of the writing period two students are still actively writing their story. Allow them to move to a quiet location to independently finish their work before the end of class (10 minutes). An example of an **inappropriate** time extension could be a student becomes frustrated by the writing and they are allowed to pick up where they left off the next day.
- If a student had more that they wanted to write but were unable, either due to skill or time constraint, the teacher may record a dictation of anything else they wanted to add. The teacher may NOT prompt the student to say more.
- Use attached rubric to score the writing prompt.

The Day before Assessment Administration:

1) **Read the prompt to your students.**

Remember, a good informative essay:

- States the focus or topic clearly answering all parts of the prompt
- Uses specific evidence from the text to support and develop the topic
- Uses transitions
- Uses precise and authoritative language
- Uses formal style
- Concludes logically
- Uses correct conventions

The Day of Assessment Administration, read the following script to your students:

1) Before you begin the assessment, say to the students:

“We are about to begin our writing. The results of your writing will be used to help me teach you writing this year.”

2) **Read the prompt to your students.**

Grade 7:

Prompt 1: From a text read this quarter, write an essay in which you explain how the events are used to develop the theme or central idea. Make sure you state the central idea clearly.

Prompt 2: From a text read this quarter, write an essay in which you explain how the different points of view of two characters are used to develop the theme or central idea. Make sure to state the central idea clearly.

Grade 8:

Prompt 1: Using a text read this quarter, write an essay in which you explain how the setting, characters, and plot are used to develop the theme or central idea. Make sure you state the central idea clearly.

Prompt 2: Using a text read this quarter, write an essay in which you explain how the theme and different point of view of the characters and you the reader are used to develop suspense or humor.

Remember, a good informative essay:

- States the focus or topic clearly answering all parts of the prompt
- Uses specific evidence from the text to support and develop the topic
- Uses transitions
- Uses precise and authoritative language
- Uses formal style
- Concludes logically
- Uses correct conventions

3) Give student 5-minutes to discuss in pairs or small groups.

4) After 5 minutes, say:

“Our discussion time is finished. You have _____ minutes to write about the prompt (the amount of time varies based on class length but should not total more than 90 minutes). Remember to do your best work. You may use your tools as you go (i.e. word wall, writing folders, dictionaries). If you don’t know how to spell a word try your best. I want to see what you can do on your own.

In your writing, make sure you:

- States the focus or topic clearly answering all parts of the prompt
- Uses specific evidence from the text to support and develop the topic
- Uses transitions
- Uses precise and authoritative language
- Uses formal style
- Concludes logically
- Uses correct conventions
- Be sure to proof read your work

5) After you read the prompt, say:

“This session is scheduled to be ___ minutes long. If you work steadily, you should be able to complete your work during this amount of time. When you finish your draft, use your time wisely to review your work. Do you have any questions?”

**Teachers: At your discretion, students who are finished before the session is over should move to activities that are appropriate for your classroom (reading, extension activities, etc...) Students may continue writing if they are on task with their writing.*

6) Teachers can give students timed warning signals (adjust times accordingly):

- a. Half way through the writing session (depending on time allotments)
- b. 10 minutes before the end of the writing session is complete
- c. 5 minutes before the writing session is complete

7) When the assessment time is complete, say:

“This is the end of the time scheduled for this writing assessment. Please print out your essay and place all of your materials in a neat stack. I will pick up your materials.”

** At teacher discretion, students may continue writing if they are on task with their writing.*

