

Adult Basic Education

English Language Arts

English 2015 Writing: Essays Curriculum Guide

Suggested Resources: *Reading and Writing for Success*

Level II English Courses

English 2011

English 2012

English 2013

English 2014

English 2015

English 2016



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To the Instructor

ABE Level II English Program

ABE Level II is meant to be a transition program. ABE students who are assessed and placed in Level II will mainly be adults who completed ABE Level I, who did not progress to senior high school, who have very limited Senior High School credits in core subject areas, who have been out of formal schooling for a long time, and/or who need to refresh English, Mathematics and Science skills before entering ABE Level III.

ABE Level II students do not have to complete all six Level II English courses to move into ABE Level III English. The decision to do all or some of the six Level II English courses will be made based the instructor's assessment using all appropriate considerations (school report cards, high school transcripts, standardized test results, interviews, student's intended Level III graduation profile, student's employment history, student's intended post-secondary aspirations, student's employment goals, student's progress in Level II English courses, and/or any other relevant consideration).

The Level II English program is meant to provide adult learners with an education in English Language Arts that is approximately equivalent to that in grades 7 to 9 in the Newfoundland and Labrador school system. There are six strands of English Language Arts that are fundamental to the ABE Level II English curriculum; these are:

- Speaking and Listening
- Reading and Writing
- Viewing and Representing

English 2015 Writing: Essays

English 2015 is the fifth in a series of six Level II English courses. It is meant to provide ABE students with the opportunity to work through the writing process in order to write a five paragraph essay on a topic of their choice.

This course is divided into three units. *Unit 1: Essay Fundamentals* introduces students to a definition of an essay and the five common types of essays. It also provides them with an opportunity to select one topic on which to write an essay.

Unit 2: Essay Planning allows students to plan their essay topic further. Students will determine whether their topic is too broad and their intended audience and purpose. Students will also receive an introduction to research for essay planning and writing a thesis statement.

Unit 3: Essay Writing begins with having students create an outline for their essay. Students will then outline their introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs and concluding paragraph. Students will write a first draft, revise and then complete a final copy of their essay.

New Approach for ABE Level II English

The previous ABE Level II English program was developed in 1990 and then revised in 1995. The 1995 Level II English curriculum contained five courses. Learning outcomes were stated for these five courses, but Study Guides for students were not a part of the curriculum package. This 2011 Level II English curriculum is modeled after the 2006 Level III curriculum in that now both Curriculum and Study Guides are provided to instructors.

There are now six courses in the Level II English program. These are:

- English 2011 Speaking and Listening
- English 2012 Writing: Sentences and Paragraphs
- English 2013 Reading: Short Stories/Non-Fiction/Research
- English 2014 Reading: Poetry/Novel/Drama
- English 2015 Writing: Essays
- English 2016 Viewing and Representing

Study Guides

Each new ABE Level II English course has a Curriculum Guide for the instructor and a Study Guide for the student. The Study Guides are written so that all suggested **Required Work** is included to fulfill both the General Curriculum Outcomes for ABE Level II English and the specific learning outcomes for each course. The Study Guides allow students to work independently, and it also allows instructors to easily track the progress for each student.

Curriculum Guides

Each ABE Level II Curriculum Guide contains a list of stated **General Curriculum Outcomes** (GCO's) for each course. In order to assure that the ABE Level II English program remains approximately equivalent to grades 7-9 in the Newfoundland and Labrador school system, these GCO's are basically the same as in K-12. As the same GCO's are used throughout K-12 English Language Arts, and in ABE Level III English courses, students taking ABE Level II English courses are assured that they will be adequately prepared for future study in ABE Level III English courses.

The GCO's are broken down into **Learning Outcomes** for the specific courses and units. Both the GCO's and Learning Outcomes are met by the completion of the suggested **Required Work**.

It is important to note here that the **Learning Outcomes**, as well as the specific learning exercises in each Study Guide, are suggestions. Instructors can modify the learning exercises and/or choice of resources in order to meet the needs of adult learners. For example, if an instructor feels a suggested short story, poem, writing topic, etc does not meet the needs of a certain student (reading level unsuitable, student uninterested in selection, student feels selection is irrelevant to his/her life, etc), the instructor can select an alternative. The suggestions in the Study Guides should, however, be appropriate to

meet the needs of most ABE Level II English students. The GCO's for each ABE Level II English course are set by the Department of Education and are not to be modified.

All the ABE Level II English Curriculum Guides are organized in two sequential sets of columns, as follows:

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
This column lists the specific learning outcomes for each course.	This column contains a numbered list of the work required to be completed in order to meet the specific learning outcomes. Students are also given this list of Required Work in their Study Guides.

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning	Suggestions for Assessment
This column provides suggested explanations and information related to the required work and/or the resources. Instructors should find this column especially helpful in planning for instruction, assisting students with making selections, and making the best use of the available resources.	<p>This column provides suggested information related to the use of the resources for the assessment of learning outcomes. It also provides more general suggestions and guidelines for assessment.</p> <p>Effective assessment improves the quality of learning and instruction. It can help ABE students to become more self-reflective on their learning and to take greater ownership in their own education program. Additionally, assessment can help instructors to monitor the effectiveness of their own instructional methods. Assessment for Level II English courses should be at a degree of complexity less than expected for Level III English courses. A student who meets outcomes in the Study Guide in a more complex manner should be considered for transition from Level II to Level III.</p>

Instructors should note that all suggestions given related to Teaching/Learning/Assessment in this Curriculum Guide are just suggestions. Instructors both individually and collectively have significant experience in the delivery of ABE and are certainly free to exercise professional judgment when teaching and assessing students. Instructors and/or institutions are responsible for developing such things as unit tests, final exams, and supplemental assignments/learning exercises.

Resources

Anthologies, reference books, and instructor resources for each specific ABE Level II English course are identified on the cover page of the Curriculum Guide. The same is true for the Study Guides minus the Instructor resources. Instructors may, and are encouraged, to supplement these resources as they deem appropriate.

An overview of the resources used for English 2015 given below:

Course	Resources
English 2015 Writing: Essays	<i>Reading and Writing for Success</i> (www.nelsonschoolcentral.com)

Reading and Writing for Success is a reference resource also used in ABE Level III English. The content overlap between its use in English 2015 and Level III English courses is minimal and actual written work from the text is not duplicated. This text is listed as a recommended resource in one Senior High English course—English 1200. It is not a recommended resource in any of the Senior High Academic or General English courses.

English 1200 is an optional course aimed at addressing the needs of students entering senior high schools who: lack sufficient skills and strategies to handle the reading and writing demands of senior high school courses; have not developed the reading strategies that enable them to decode, interact with, retain, interpret, or reconstruct print; may have learning disabilities, mild cognitive delay or no causative disability but are disabled by a lack of literacy skills; may be characterized by a lack of motivation and interest, avoidance of print and reading tasks, very low self-esteem and dependence on external clues, classmates and teachers for any successful interpretation of print.

This text should be useful for ABE Level II English as many adults entering ABE Level II show some or all of the above characteristics. The text is designed in a manner that is easy to read and contains sufficient examples and exercises. Visuals that may be viewed as age inappropriate are minimal throughout this resource. As this resource is used in ABE Level III, use of it in Level II English will help ease the transition from Level II to Level III English courses.

Recommended Evaluation

Course Work	50%
Essay outlines/draft	20%
Essay Final Copy	<u>30%</u>
	100%

The overall pass mark for the course is 50%.

Note: The evaluation scheme recommended above is presented as a suggestion. Institutions may choose an alternate evaluation scheme in order to meet the individual needs of adult learners. The Department of Education has no requirement that a final exam must be given in this course. Instructors/institutions can decide if a final exam is necessary based on their own policies and procedures.

General Curriculum Outcomes for English 2015

Adult students will be expected to:

- Use writing to explore, clarify and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings; and to use their imaginations.
- Create writing using the writing process in an independent manner, using an appropriate form for intended audience and purpose.
- Use a strategy to develop an effective written product.
- Use the conventions of written language accurately and consistently in a final written product.

Unit 1: Essay Fundamentals--Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
<p>1.1 Define essay.</p> <p>1.2 Name and briefly describe five common types of essays.</p> <p>1.3 Identify three basic elements of an essay.</p> <p>1.4 Select one topic on which to write a five paragraph essay.</p>	<p>All responses in this Study Guide should be written in complete sentences with examples if appropriate.</p> <p>Read pages 150-151 in <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>, and then respond in writing to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is an essay?2. What are the five common types of essays? Write a brief description of each.3. What are the three basic elements of an essay?4. Brainstorm as many topics as you can that interest you sufficiently on which to write an essay.5. Select one topic from the above on which you will plan, develop and write an essay.

Unit 2: Essay Planning--Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
2.1 Narrow a selected essay topic in its focus.	1. Read the section entitled “What is the topic of my Essay?” on page 155 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i> . Pay special attention to how a broad topic is narrowed into a more manageable topic.
2.2 Understand the intended audience of an essay prior to writing.	Examine the topic you selected in Unit 1. Discuss your topic with your instructor, and then respond in writing to the following:
2.3 Understand the intended purpose of an essay prior to writing.	a) Do you think your topic might be too broad? Give reasons for your choice.
2.4 Identify resources that will be used in writing an essay.	b) If you feel your topic is too broad, then re-write your topic in order to narrow its scope.
2.5 Write a thesis statement that will be used in writing an essay.	2. Read the section entitled “Who is my audience” on page 155 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i> , and then think about the intended audience for your essay. Respond in writing to the following:
	a) Who is your intended audience?
	b) What will interest your audience about your topic?
	c) What does your audience already know about your topic?
	d) How would you talk to this audience? Would you speak formally or informally? How can you create that same feeling in your essay?

Unit 2: Essay Planning--Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
	<p>3. Read the section entitled “What is the purpose of my essay?” on pages 155-156 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. What is the purpose of your essay...?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it to inform your audience?• Is it to entertain your audience?• Is it to persuade audience?• Is it to explain something to your audience? <p>4. Read the section entitled “Research” on page 156 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. List resources that you will use to help you write your essay. Also, indicate where you will find these resources.</p> <p>5. Read the section entitled “What is my thesis?” on page 157 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Write the thesis of your essay.</p> <p>6. Read the section entitled “Checklist: Planning An Essay” on p. 157 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Through discussion with your instructor and self-checking, verify that all items are done.</p>

Unit 3: Essay Writing--Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
3.1 Develop an outline for the opening paragraph of an essay.	<p>All responses in this Study Guide should be written in complete sentences with examples if appropriate.</p> <p>Now that your topic is selected and narrowed, your intended audience is known, and your purpose is clear, the next step in writing your essay is to create an outline.</p> <p>1. Read the section entitled “The Opening Paragraph” on page 158 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Develop an outline for your opening paragraph like the sample on page 160 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Make sure your opening paragraph outline does the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• states your thesis• sets the tone or mood of your essay• captures the interest of your reader• briefly introduces the main ideas or arguments to support your thesis

Unit 3: Essay Writing--Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
<p>3.2 Develop an outline for each of the three body paragraphs of an essay.</p> <p>3.3 Develop an outline for the concluding paragraph of an essay.</p>	<p>2. Read the section entitled “The Body” on page 158 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Develop an outline for your three body paragraphs like the sample on page 160 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Make sure your three body paragraphs have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a topic sentence stating the main point of the paragraph• supporting details that explain or expand on the topic sentence• a closing sentence, which may lead into the next paragraph <p>3. Read the section entitled “The Concluding Paragraph” on page 158 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Develop an outline for your concluding paragraph like the sample on page 160 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Make sure your concluding paragraph does the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• restates your thesis• summarizes your arguments• draws a final conclusion about your topic• suggests any action you wish your reader to take

Unit 3: Essay Writing--Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes	Required Work
<p>3.4 Write a first draft for an essay using an outline for each paragraph.</p> <p>3.5 Revise and edit the first draft of an essay using a checklist and/or collaboration with another person.</p>	<p>4. Now it is time to use your outline and write a first draft for your essay. Follow the guidance in the section entitled “Writing Your Essay” on page 159 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. You are encouraged to type and save your first draft on a computer as it will make the revising process easier. Also, you will create a more professional looking final copy.</p> <p>5. With the help of another student or your instructor, revise your essay to complete a final copy. The Checklist on page 161 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i> can help you. You are encouraged to type your essay on a computer.</p>

Unit 1: Essay Fundamentals--Suggestions for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning	Suggestions for Assessment
<p>1. Students begin the study of essays in this unit by reading pages 150-151 in <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i>. Students are then asked to respond in writing to items related to the types of essays.</p> <p>2. Instructors should encourage students to brainstorm as many topics as possible. Instructors may want to ask leading questions about interests or issues on which students may have a point of view. Students should be guided to understand that the more knowledge they have about a topic the easier it will be to write an essay.</p> <p>3. Instructors may want to review and discuss the material related to the types of essay. Students should understand that each type of essay is written for a particular purpose and for a particular audience. It is also important to point out that no essay will be strictly one type; for example, a personal essay may have elements of both narration and description.</p>	<p>1. The main objective in this unit is for students to develop the confidence to generate topics on which to develop an essay.</p> <p>2. The assessment and evaluation for this course should be focused primarily on the writing process and the writing of a five paragraph essay.</p> <p>3. All responses to items related to the material in <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i> should be written in complete sentences with examples if appropriate. Work should be neat and legible.</p>

Unit 2: Essay Planning--Suggestions for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning	Suggestions for Assessment
<p>1. Instructors may offer direct instruction and positive feedback as required as students progress through this course as many students at this level will lack confidence in their ability to write an essay.</p> <p>2. Instructors should ensure that students understand the purpose of research in essay planning and writing. Research here is intended to help generate ideas and supporting details to include in the essay; for example, if a student is writing a narrative essay telling a story about a salmon fishing trip on the Terra Nova River, he/she may research some information on the Terra Nova River.</p> <p>3. Instructors may have students use the CD Making It Work: Interactive Software for Reading, Writing, Language, and Media included with the <i>Making It Work Teacher's Guide</i>.</p>	<p>1. Instructors may informally observe and monitor progress throughout this unit. Provide help and feedback as required.</p> <p>2. Instructors may wish to go through the checklist on page 157 of <i>Reading and Writing for Success</i> with students. Instructors can encourage students to reflect on their own work and self-assess their own understanding. Assist students to make any necessary changes to their topic or thesis statement.</p> <p>3. Instructors may wish to ensure that students have selected and narrowed a topic, that students understand who their intended audience is, and that students have established a clear writing purpose.</p>

Unit 3: Essay Writing--Suggestions for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning	Suggestions for Assessment
<p>1. Now that students have selected and narrowed their topics and have an understanding of audience and purpose, the Required Work in this unit will lead to the development of an outline, a draft, and a final copy.</p> <p>2. Instructors may want to ensure that writing resources (dictionaries, thesauri, editing checklists, computers, etc.) are readily available for students. Also, encourage students to utilize these resources to extent possible.</p> <p>3. Instructors may wish to provide students with sample essays to use as writing models. Such may be available in other texts or from online sources.</p> <p>4. Instructors may wish to discuss with students any assessment rubrics that will be used as part of the official evaluation scheme.</p> <p>5. Instructors may have students use the CD Making It Work: Interactive Software for Reading, Writing, Language, and Media included with the <i>Making It Work Teacher's Guide</i>.</p>	<p>1. Assessment of the Required Work in this unit should focus on the writing process. There should not be an overemphasis on the final copy only.</p> <p>2. Instructors have flexibility to exercise professional judgment in assigning weighted percentages to each component of the writing process in order to meet the needs of individual students.</p> <p>3. The assessment of both the outline and final copy should be at a level appropriate for ABE Level II. It follows that students are not expected to write an essay at the same level as expected in Level III.</p> <p>4. The following are some suggested criteria on which to assess the final copy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the student demonstrates an understanding that essays follow a specific pattern of development from topic selecting to outlining, to drafting, to revising, to producing a final copy. • The range and appropriateness of vocabulary used. • The depth of treatment of the essay's subject matter. • The accuracy of spelling. • The accuracy of grammar. • The accuracy and consistency of verb tenses. • The creative details including descriptions, figurative language, and original content.

Unit 3: Essay Writing--Suggestions for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning	Suggestions for Assessment
	<p>5. Instructors may use or adapt the assessment rubric included with this curriculum guide. Instructors and students are more familiar with a percentage in terms of evaluation as opposed to a level. The levels in the attached rubric can be compared to percents as follows: Level 5 (an A grade, 80-100), Level 4 (a B grade, 65-79), Level 3 (a C grade, 55-64), Level 2 (a D grade, 50-54), and Level 1 (an F grade, below 50). Instructors are free to use this rubric in a manner that improves and/or measures student writing.</p>

Appendix A

The Analytic Scoring Rubric (for process writing)

Writing Category: Content

Content describes how effectively the writer establishes a purpose; selects and integrates ideas (i.e., information, events, emotions, opinions and perspectives); includes details (i.e., evidence, anecdotes, examples, descriptions, and characteristics) to support, develop and/or illustrate ideas; and considers the reader.

Level 5: The writing is clear, strongly focussed, and highly interesting. Details are relevant, and enhance and support the central theme.

- The writing demonstrates a strong knowledge of the subject matter. All details and ideas have a purpose and are clearly related to the central idea.
- The writing includes important details which the reader would be unable to bring to the text, or which others might overlook.
- The writing is well-balanced in that the details used enhance and support the main ideas.
- The writing is able to control the content and develop the ideas in a way that appeals to and enlightens the reader. The writing carefully shapes and connects the ideas to enable the writer to share his or her thoughts on the subject with the reader.

Level 4: The writing is clear, focussed and interesting. Details are relevant and purposeful, and they clarify the ideas.

- The writing demonstrates fair knowledge of the subject matter. Most details and ideas have a purpose and are related to the central idea.
- The writer includes many important details that the reader may be unable to bring to the text.
- The writing is generally balanced in that supporting ideas tend not to overshadow the main ideas.
- The writing controls the content and develops the ideas in a way that appeals to most readers.
- The writing most often shapes and connects ideas to enable the writer to share his/her thoughts on the subject with the reader.

Level 3: The writing is clear and focussed but the overall result is not generally appealing. Support for the central theme is attempted but may be too general, not directly related to the main ideas, or too limited in scope.

- The writing demonstrates some knowledge of the subject, but reflects difficulty in using specific details to support general observations.
- Important details are considered, but mainly superficially, and in such a way that the main points may not always be clear to the reader.
- The content is not always well-balanced and sometimes the supporting details overshadow the main points. As well, there tends to be too few supporting details and these are often too general and too predictable.
- At times the writing seems not to be in control of the ideas. The writing is beginning to take shape, but the topic is still not clearly developed, and the reader tends to lose interest.
- Because the text is not carefully shaped and because the ideas are not always clearly connected, the writer has some difficulty in sharing his/her thoughts with the reader.

Level 2: The writing lacks clarity but has a discernable focus. Support for the central theme is sketchy, sometimes repetitive, and often superficially related resulting in writing that does not hold the reader's interest.

- The writing demonstrates little knowledge of the subject matter. Details are sketchy or repetitive, and often are unrelated to the central theme.
- Most details are superficial and lack clarity so that the central theme is not very clear to the reader.
- It is often difficult to distinguish the supporting details from the main points. The writing demonstrates a lack of control of the ideas. While the writing may have a semblance of a central theme, the reader quickly loses interest in pursuing it.
- The writing does not clearly define the writer's thoughts on the subject for the reader.

Level 1: The writing lacks a central idea or purpose, and this forces the reader to make inferences based on sketchy details.

- The writing demonstrates either very limited or unclear knowledge of the subject.
- The details are not convincing and are confusing for the reader so that the central theme is unclear. The reader quickly loses interest.
- Details are very sketchy and are indistinguishable from the main points.
- Attempts at control and development are minimal so that no central theme emerges.
- The writing has not begun to define the topic in any meaningful way.

Writing Category: Organization

Organization describes how effectively the writer creates an opening; establishes and maintains a focus; orders and arranges events, ideas, and/or details at the paragraph-level and within the work as a whole; establishes relationships between events, ideas, and/or details at the paragraph-level and within the work as a whole; and provides closure.

Level 5: The organization enhances the central idea or theme. The order, structure and presentation is compelling and moves the reader through the text.

- The opening is strong and sparks the reader's interest.
- Focus and coherence are maintained allowing the writing to flow so smoothly that the reader may not be conscious of organizational patterns or structure unless looking for them.
- The writing demonstrates a purposeful and effective order and arrangement of events, ideas, and/or details.
- Transitions are smooth and weave the separate threads of meaning into one cohesive whole.
- Effective closure reinforces unity and leaves the reader with a sense of resolution.

Level 4: The organization reinforces the central idea or theme. The order, structure and presentation, while not compelling, is purposeful and clear enough, so as not to interrupt the flow of writing.

- The opening is clear and directive.
- Focus and coherence are generally maintained.
- The writing demonstrates a clear order and arrangement of events, ideas and/or details.
- Transitions are effective and appropriately connect events, ideas, and/or details.
- Closure assists unity and is related to the focus.

Level 3: The organization may at times be ineffective or too obvious but does not seriously get in the way of the central idea or theme.

- The opening is generally directive but not as well connected to the central idea as the reader might wish.
- Focus and coherence are present but may not be maintained consistently thus interrupting the flow.
- The writing demonstrates clear and mechanical order and arrangement of events, ideas, and/or details.
- Transitions sometimes work well; at other times, the connections between ideas seem forced, inappropriate, or too predictable.
- Closure tends to be mechanical but contributes to unity.

Level 2: The organization may be weak or inconsistent resulting in continued interruptions in flow.

- The opening is not particularly clear or directive.
- Focus and coherence falter frequently.
- The writing demonstrates a discernible but weak and/or inconsistent order and arrangement of events, ideas, and/or details.
- Transitions are rarely used.
- Closure, although present, is either too weak to tie the piece together or only vaguely related to the opening.

Level 1: The organization is awkward and disjointed. With ideas, details, or events presented in random order, the writing lacks direction and flow.

- The opening, if present, does little more than repeat the task.
- Focus and coherence are generally lacking and the flow of the writing is lost.
- The writing demonstrates an unclear or haphazard order and arrangement of events, ideas, and/or details.
- Transitions are very weak, leaving connections between ideas fuzzy, incomplete, or perplexing.
- Closure is inappropriate, unconnected and/or missing.

Writing Category: Sentence Fluency

Sentence fluency describes how effectively the writer constructs sentences. It includes the writer's ability to control syntax and to create variety in sentence type and length.

Level 5: The writing has an easy flow and rhythm with strong and varied sentence construction which makes the reading enjoyable and easy.

- Sentence structure is logical and clear, and shows how ideas relate to each other.
- The writing sounds natural and fluent. With effective phrasing, one sentence flows easily into the next.
- Sentences vary in structure and length creating an interesting text.
- Fragments, when used, are deliberately chosen for effect.
- Dialogue, when used, always sounds natural.

Level 4: The writing has flow and rhythm with varied sentences. Use of sentence fragments or run-on sentences may interfere with fluency but do not impede meaning.

- The sentence structure is generally clear and logical, and helps to show how ideas relate to each other.
- The writing generally sounds natural and fluent, although occasionally, a sentence may not flow smoothly into the next.
- While there is variation in sentence structure and length, there are occasions when more attention might have been given to this.
- Fragments, when used, are most often chosen deliberately for effect although sometimes they appear almost as an oversight.
- Dialogue, when used, most often sounds natural.

Level 3: The writing still has some flow and rhythm, but tends to be mechanical. Sentence constructions are sometimes effective and varied, but there are occasional awkward constructions which interfere with clarity and precision.

- The sentence structure sometimes conveys relationships between ideas, and sometimes it does not.
- The writing may be less fluid than desired. The writing shows good control over simple sentence structure but variable control over more complex structures.
- Sentences sometimes vary in length or structure, but often show little variation in pattern.
- Fragments, if used, sometimes work and sometimes seem the result of an oversight.
- Dialogue, if used, sometimes seems natural, but occasionally seems a little forced or contrived.

Level 2: The writing lacks flow and rhythm. Attempts at complex sentence structures often impede clarity and precision.

- The sentence structure rarely shows connections and ideas, and is often illogical or unclear.
- Sentences rarely sound natural or fluent; instead, they often sound awkward or disjointed.
- Sentences rarely vary in length or structure.
- Fragments, when present, are most often the result of oversight.
- Dialogue, if used, rarely sounds natural and most often seems forced or contrived.

Level 1: The writing contains sentences which are choppy, incomplete, rambling, irregular, and awkward which makes the writing difficult to follow.

- The sentence structure does not enhance meaning and most often obscures it.
- Sentence fluency is jarring and unnatural.
- Sentence patterns do not vary in length and structure.
- Fragments are frequent and are the result of an oversight.
- Dialogue, if used at all, usually sounds monotonous and unnatural.

Writing Category: Voice

Voice describes how effectively the writer speaks to the reader in a manner that is individualistic, expressive and engaging and reveals his/her stance toward the subject.

Level 5: The writer demonstrates a compelling, individualistic, and sincere engagement with the subject or task.

- The writing communicates in an honest, sincere manner and the conviction of the writer is apparent.
- The writing brings the subject to life for the reader.
- The writing reveals the writer to the reader who gets a strong sense of the person behind the words.

Level 4: The writer demonstrates a clear, but not compelling, interest in the subject or task.

- The writing communicates in an earnest manner. The conviction of the writer is evident but not always consistent.
- The writing frequently moves the reader. The writer is inclined to take risks and is usually successful in revealing himself/herself to the reader.
- The writing generally reveals the writer to the reader but there may be times when the writer's presence is not apparent.

Level 3: The writer seems personable and sincere but does not demonstrate a compelling interest in the subject or task.

- The writing communicates in an earnest, but routine, manner.
- The writing moves the reader occasionally. The writer tends to avoid risk and although the writer's voice may emerge at times, it does not do so on a consistent basis.
- The writing tends to hide, rather than reveal, the writer to the reader.

Level 2 The writer is rarely personable and demonstrates only a superficial interest in the subject or task.

- The writing communicates at a functional level and is often flat.
- The writing rarely moves or involves the reader.
- The writing gives the reader little sense of the person behind the words.

Level 1: The writer shows some interest in the subject or task, but it is dispassionate, lifeless, and mechanical.

- The writing communicates at a functional level and is flat.
- The writing leaves the reader unmoved and uninvolved.
- The writing does not reveal the writer to the reader who gets no sense of the person behind the words.

Writing Category: Word Choice

Word choice describes how effectively the writer chooses words and expressions for appropriateness, precision, and variety.

Level 5: Words and expressions are powerful, rich, and precise.

- Words are precise and accurate.
- The writing contains strong images.
- The choice of verbs lends power to the writing.
- The vocabulary is strong and impressive, but not overdone.
- The form of expression is original and appealing to the reader. Slang, if present, is used only for effect.

Level 4: Words and expressions are specific and indicate purpose.

- Words are generally precise and accurate with occasional examples of imprecision and inaccuracy.
- The writing contains imagery which occasionally lacks detail.
- The writing contains strong verbs and an occasional use of more general and abstract verbs.
- The vocabulary is generally strong although may, on occasion, be a little overdone in order to impress the reader.
- The writing is imaginative and original; the occasional use of slang is effective.

Level 3: Words and expressions are general, yet functional.

- Words may lack precision and imaginative appeal.
- The images lack detail and often depend on the reader's knowledge of the subject.
- The writing contains some strong verbs, but most are general and abstract which weakens the text.
- The writer attempts to use poetic language but this is often overdone.
- The writer rarely experiments with language although there is some evidence of originality.
- Clichés and slang, when present, may not be effective.

Level 2: Words and expressions lack precision and clarity so that readability is beginning to be affected.

- Words are sometimes imprecise or unclear.
- There is a sporadic attempt to incorporate imagery, but the detail is too general to have appeal to the reader.
- Verbs most often tend to be mundane and overused.
- There are few attempts to use poetic language.
- The writing lacks imagination and originality of expression; the frequent use of clichés, redundancies, and slang detracts from the effectiveness of the writing.

Level 1: Words and expressions lack precision and clarity so that readability is seriously affected.

- Words are frequently imprecise, inadequate, or incorrect.
- Imagery, if used at all, is unclear. There are many generalities.
- Verbs are weak and few in number. Common verbs such as "is", "are", and "was" predominate.
- Words are consistently dull or abstract and, therefore, monotonous to the reader.
- The strong reliance on clichés, redundancies, and slang makes the writing unimaginative and uninteresting.

Writing Category: Conventions

Conventions describe how effectively the writer controls the use of punctuation, spelling, capitalization, usage, grammar and paragraphing.

Level 5: The writing reflects an excellent grasp of standard writing conventions which enhances readability.

- Errors tend to be so few and so minor that they do not distract the reader.
- The writing is essentially free from errors standard writing conventions.
- Minimal editing is needed to prepare the text for presentation.
- A wide range of conventions is used for stylistic affect.

Level 4: The writing reflects a good grasp of standard writing conventions. Errors are present but do not distract the reader.

- The writing has few errors in standard writing conventions.
- Minor editing is needed for the few errors to prepare the text for presentation.
- Many conventions are used, of which some achieve stylistic effect.

Level 3: The writing is beginning to impair readability. The errors are not overwhelming and do not block meaning, but they are beginning to distract the reader.

- The writing has some errors in standard writing conventions.
- Some editing is needed to prepare the text for presentation.
- A limited range of conventions are used, some of which distract the reader.

Level 2: The writing impairs readability. The errors are becoming so overwhelming that they distract the reader.

- The writing has frequent errors in standard writing conventions.
- Much editing is needed to prepare the text for presentation.
- Limited skill is reflected in the use of conventions and the text frequently confuses the reader.

Level 1: The writing blocks readability making it impossible for the reader to focus on the meaning owing to the severity and frequency of errors.

- The writing has extensive errors in standard writing conventions.
- Extensive editing is needed to prepare the text for presentation.
- There is limited skill in the use of conventions, and the meaning for the reader is completely distorted.