



California Common Core Writing Standards and Anchor Papers

From original documents on California Department of Education website cde.ca.gov, in Appendix C of the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts.

Grade 11

These documents are also available on our website www.knoxeducation.com along with student standards checklists and 11x17 posters, as well as teaching units, mini lessons, tools, and resources.

CCSS ELA Standards for Grades 11-12

Opinion/Argument



WRITING STANDARDS: OPINION/ARGUMENT WRITING

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-W 1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 1a.	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 1b.	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 1 e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 1 f.	<u>Use specific rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., appeal to logic through reasoning; appeal to emotion or ethical belief; relate a personal anecdote, case study, or analogy).</u>

Informative/Explanatory



WRITING STANDARDS: INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-W 2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 2a.	Introduce a topic or <u>thesis statement</u> ; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 2b.	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 2c.	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 2d.	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 2 e.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 2 f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Narrative



WRITING STANDARDS: NARRATIVE WRITING

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-W 3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 3a.	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 3b.	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 3c.	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 3d.	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 3 e.	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.



WRITING STANDARDS: ALL GENRES

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 5.	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 7.	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 8.	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and over reliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation <u>including footnotes and endnotes</u> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 9.	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 9. a.	Apply <i>grades 11–12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 9. b.	Apply <i>grades 11–12 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses)”).
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-W 10.	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.



WRITING STANDARDS: Opinion/Argument Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-WHST 1	Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1a.	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1b.	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.



WRITING STANDARDS: Informative/Explanatory Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-WHST 2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2a.	Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2b.	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2c.	Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2d.	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2 e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).



WRITING STANDARDS: Narrative Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
	11-WHST 3	(Not applicable as a separate requirement)

Note: Students' narrative skills continue to grow in these grades. The Standards require that students be able to incorporate narrative elements effectively into arguments and informative/explanatory texts. In history/social studies, students must be able to incorporate narrative accounts into their analyses of individuals or events of historical import. In science and technical subjects, students must be able to write precise enough descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they use in their investigations or technical work that others can replicate them and (possibly) reach the same results.



WRITING STANDARDS: All Genres for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 5.	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 7.	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 11-.	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 9.	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 10.	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.



WRITING STANDARDS: Opinion/Argument Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-WHST 1	Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1a.	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1b.	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.



WRITING STANDARDS: Informative/Explanatory Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-WHST 2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2a.	Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2b.	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2c.	Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2d.	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 2 e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).



WRITING STANDARDS: Narrative Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	11-WHST 3	(Not applicable as a separate requirement)

Note: Students' narrative skills continue to grow in these grades. The Standards require that students be able to incorporate narrative elements effectively into arguments and informative/explanatory texts. In history/social studies, students must be able to incorporate narrative accounts into their analyses of individuals or events of historical import. In science and technical subjects, students must be able to write precise enough descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they use in their investigations or technical work that others can replicate them and (possibly) reach the same results.



WRITING STANDARDS: All Genres for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

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<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 5.	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 7.	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 11-.	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 9.	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-WHST 10.	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Samples of Student Writing

Following are writing samples that have been annotated to illustrate the criteria required to meet the Common Core State Standards for particular types of writing—argument, informative/explanatory text, and narrative—in a given grade. Each of the samples exhibits at least the level of quality required to meet the Writing standards for that grade.

The range of accomplishment within each grade reflects differences in individual development as well as in the conditions under which the student writers were expected to work. Some of the samples were written in class or as homework; others were written for on-demand assessments; still others were the result of sustained research projects. Where possible, each sample includes information about the circumstances under which it was produced. The samples come from students in kindergarten through grade 12. The students attended school in a number of states and districts across the country.

At the lower grades, the samples include “opinion” writing, an elementary type of argument in which students give reasons for their opinions and preferences. Because reasons are required, such writing helps prepare students for drafting the arguments they will be expected to create beginning in grade 6.

Acknowledgment

The Standards work group would like to express its appreciation to teachers and students at Monte Vista High School in California and the Randolph Technical Career Center in Vermont; other colleagues in California, Massachusetts, and Washington state; and ACT, Inc., and the *Concord Review*, who helped find and obtain permission for several of the samples included in the set. The group also would like to express its appreciation to the New Standards Project and to the International Reading Association, which allowed the use of several samples from their publications, and to the other student writers who granted permission to reproduce their work here.

Student Sample: Grade 11, Informative/Explanatory

The essay that follows was written in response to this assignment: “Reflection Topic #3: Pride and Acceptance. Wright struggles to find his ‘place’ in society. He refuses to forgo his morality and beliefs to conform to the status quo. Examine Wright’s pride. Find examples in the text that demonstrate the influence pride has on Wright’s actions. How does his pride influence his decisions? Is pride a positive or negative influence in Wright’s life? How does Wright’s pride affect how his family members treat him?” Students had one week to complete this assignment. The maximum length allowed was three pages.

Marching to His Own Beat

Pride is often criticized by society and habitually seen as a negative characteristic evoking such connotations as conceit, egotism, arrogance, and hubris. In Richard Wright’s struggle to find his “place” in society in *Black Boy*, pride has both negative and positive connotations. Despite the negative consequences, pride allows Wright to maintain his moral compass, oppose conformity, and pursue his passion of writing, thus demonstrating pride’s positive influence on Wright’s life.

Wright’s pride prompts him to make principled decisions and carry out actions that illustrate his morality and inherent beliefs. Wright refuses to neglect his values and chooses right over wrong even when he recognizes that failure to adhere to what is expected of him will ultimately result in negative and often violent consequences. When he receives the title of valedictorian and refuses to read the speech prepared for him by his principal, choosing instead to present his own speech in spite of the threat of being held back, Wright’s pride is demonstrated. Although he comprehends the consequences and the gravity of his decision, Wright refuses to compromise his beliefs: “I know that I’m not educated, professor . . . But the people are coming to hear the students, and I won’t make a speech that you’ve written” (174). Though urged by his family members and his classmates to avoid conflict and to comply with the principal’s demand, Wright refuses because he does not believe it is the morally correct thing to do. Even though his pride is negatively perceived by his peers and relatives as the source of defiance, they fail to realize that his pride is a positive factor that gives him the self confidence to believe in himself and his decisions. Wright’s refusal to acquiesce to his family’s ardent religious values is another illustration of his pride. Wright is urged by his family and friends to believe in God and partake in their daily religious routines; however, he is undecided about his belief in God and refuses to participate in practicing his family’s religion because “[His] faith, such as it was, was welded to the common realities of life, anchored in the sensations of [his] body and what [his] mind could grasp, and nothing could ever shake this faith, and surely not [his] fear of an invisible power” (115). He cannot put his confidence into something unseen and remains unwavering in his belief. Pride allows Wright to flee from the oppressive boundaries of expectations and to escape to the literary world.

Wright’s thirst and desire to learn is prompted by his pride and allows him to excel in school and pursue his dreams of becoming a writer. The reader observes Wright’s pride in his writing when he wrote his first story. Pleased with his work, he “decided to read it to a young woman who lived next door . . . [He] looked at her in a cocky manner that said: . . . I write stuff like this all the time. It’s easy” (120-121). This attitude of satisfaction permits Wright to continue to push himself to improve and pursue his craft. Pride eventually leads Wright to submit his work to the local newspaper; his obvious pride in his work is clearly portrayed when he impatiently tells the newspaper editor, “But I want you to read it *now*” (165) and asks for his composition book back when he does not immediately show interest in his story. Pride in his academic achievements motivates him to excel in his studies; after Wright advanced to sixth grade in two weeks, he was elated and thrilled at his astonishing accomplishment: “Overjoyed, I ran home and babbled the news . . . I had leaped a grade in two weeks, anything seemed possible, simple, easy” (125). Wright’s pride in his intelligence and studies allows him to breeze through school: “I burned at my studies . . . I read my civics and English and geography volumes through and only referred to them in class. I solved all my mathematical problems far in advance” (133). Pride provides him with the self-confidence and contentment that his family and society fail to give him. It removes Wright from both the black culture and the white culture and moves him rather to the “art culture”, in which Wright can achieve higher than what is anticipated of him.

Wright’s ability to oppose conformity and forego the status quo also stems from his pride. Pride propels him to assert himself even if it defies what is expected of him as a black individual. Upon telling one of his old employers, a white woman, that he wants to be a writer, she indecorously scoffs at him and makes an impudent remark “You’ll never be a writer . . . Who on earth put such ideas into your . . .

Samples of Student Writing

Following are writing samples that have been annotated to illustrate the criteria required to meet the Common Core State Standards for particular types of writing—argument, informative/explanatory text, and narrative—in a given grade. Each of the samples exhibits at least the level of quality required to meet the Writing standards for that grade.

The range of accomplishment within each grade reflects differences in individual development as well as in the conditions under which the student writers were expected to work. Some of the samples were written in class or as homework; others were written for on-demand assessments; still others were the result of sustained research projects. Where possible, each sample includes information about the circumstances under which it was produced. The samples come from students in kindergarten through grade 12. The students attended school in a number of states and districts across the country.

At the lower grades, the samples include “opinion” writing, an elementary type of argument in which students give reasons for their opinions and preferences. Because reasons are required, such writing helps prepare students for drafting the arguments they will be expected to create beginning in grade 6.

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head?” (147). This remark causes him to almost immediately quit his job; Wright remarks, “The woman had assaulted my ego; she had assumed that she knew my place in life . . . what I ought to be, and I resented it with all my heart” (147). Wright’s refusal to simply go along with what is expected of him, thoroughly disappoints and aggravates his family and society, yet his pride has a positive influence on his life; pride allows Wright to not only remove himself from the boundaries of the black vs. white society and the insidious effect of racism but it also sets Wright free from the constraints of acceptance. Pride ultimately frees Wright to pursue his passion and identify himself not as a black or white person but rather as a “writer”.

In Wright’s struggle to overcome the overwhelming expectations he is faced with by society, pride puts him at odds with his family and society but ultimately serves as a positive influence, allowing him to withstand conformity and escape the status quo. This attitude allows Wright to maintain his moral compass, believe in his self worth, and pursue his passion. Pride is more than pure arrogance and haughtiness. To Wright, pride is something far greater; pride is the characteristic that gives him the strength to march to his own beat; to the beat of the literary world.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a topic.**
 - *Pride is often criticized by society and habitually seen as a negative characteristic evoking such connotations as conceit, egotism, arrogance, and hubris. In Richard Wright’s struggle to find his “place” in society in *Black Boy*, pride has both negative and positive connotations. Despite the negative consequences, pride allows Wright to maintain his moral compass, oppose conformity, and pursue his passion of writing, thus demonstrating pride’s positive influence on Wright’s life.*
- **organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole.**
 - In separate paragraphs, the writer organizes the body of his text to provide examples of the ways in which Wright’s pride allows him to *maintain his moral compass, oppose conformity, and pursue his passion of writing.*
- **develops the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.**
 - Examples: *When he receives the title of valedictorian and refuses to read the speech prepared for him by his principal, choosing instead to present his own speech in spite of the threat of being held back, Wright’s pride is demonstrated.*
 - Quotations: *Although he comprehends the consequences and the gravity of his decision, Wright refuses to compromise his beliefs: “I know that I’m not educated, professor . . . But the people are coming to hear the students, and I won’t make a speech that you’ve written” (174).*
 - Details: *. . . after Wright advanced to sixth grade in two weeks, he was elated and thrilled at his astonishing accomplishment . . . Upon telling one of his old employers, a white woman, that he wants to be a writer, she indecorously scoffs at him and makes an impudent remark . . .*
- **integrates selected information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.**
 - Using a standard format, the writer uses quotations selectively to illustrate examples of pride’s positive influence on Wright’s life: (e.g., *The reader observes Wright’s pride in his writing when he wrote his first story. Pleased with his work, he “decided to read it to a young woman who lived next door . . . [He] looked at her in a cocky manner that said: . . . I write stuff like this all the time. It’s easy” (120-121).*

- **uses appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.**
 - *... In Richard Wright's struggle ... When he receives the title of valedictorian ... Although ... Though urged by his family members ... Even though ... however ... The reader observes ... This attitude of satisfaction ... Upon telling one of his old employers ... This remark causes him ... In Wright's struggle to overcome the overwhelming expectations he is faced with by society ...*
- **uses precise language and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.**
 - *... moral compass ... principled decisions ... valedictorians ... the consequences and gravity of his decision ... obvious pride ... excel in his studies ... thoroughly disappoints and aggravates ...*
 - *... march to his own beat; to the beat of the literary world.*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which the student is writing.**
 - *Pride is often criticized by society and habitually seen as a negative characteristic evoking such connotations as conceit, egotism, arrogance, and hubris ... To Wright, pride is something far greater: pride is the characteristic that gives him the strength to march to his own beat; to the beat of the literary world.*
- **provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).**
 - *In Wright's struggle to overcome the overwhelming expectations he is faced with by society, pride puts him at odds with his family and society but ultimately serves as a positive influence, allowing him to withstand conformity and escape the status quo. This attitude allows Wright to maintain his moral compass, believe in his self worth, and pursue his passion. Pride is more than pure arrogance and haughtiness. To Wright, pride is something far greater: pride is the characteristic that gives him the strength to march to his own beat; to the beat of the literary world.*
- **demonstrates exemplary command of the conventions of standard written English.**

Student Sample: Grade 11, Informative/Explanatory

The essay that follows was written in response to an extra credit assignment in an anatomy and physiology class. Students were asked to summarize key points about a topic from given information and from their own research on the Internet and to explain how the topic was relevant to their future. A list of sources was not required in the assignment.

Summary of Key Points

For many years, scientists and researchers weren't able to examine normal, healthy brains. They only got brain data from autopsies and surgeries. Even so, they were able to learn a lot about how the brain functioned because when people suffered brain damage to parts of the brain, they could see what functions were impaired and know the parts of the brain that were responsible for that function. MRI technology has changed that because now scientists can examine healthy brains at all stages of development, including getting functional results that show areas of the brain that "light up" while performing tasks. Therefore, scientists are now able to measure how the brain works.

95% of the brain has been formed by age 6, but through MRI studies researchers now know that changes in the brain structure continue to occur late in child development. The prefrontal cortex has a growth spurt just before puberty and then prunes back in adolescence. This part of the brain is responsible for reasoning, controlling impulses, and making judgments. The growth and pruning is a very important stage of brain development, so when this second wave is happening teen's activities can affect how their brain responds for the rest of their lives.

Researchers have found waves of growth and change in other parts of the brain as well, including the corpus callosum and the cerebellum. The corpus callosum influences language learning, and the cerebellum helps physical coordination and is also used to process mental tasks and higher thought such as math, philosophy, decision-making, etc.

This recent research has confirmed what scientists have known for many years . . . that different parts of the brain mature at different times. However, the brain is much more changeable than previously thought, with structural changes taking place into adolescence and beyond. Knowing more about the brain's structure is only one piece of the puzzle. Much more research is needed to draw conclusions about how the brain structure and function directly cause behavior.

Conclusion:

MRI technology has enabled researchers to learn much more about the brain's growth and development. They have learned that parts of the brain, such as the pre-frontal cortex, an area of the brain that controls reasoning and judgment, goes through a second growth spurt just before puberty, and that this helps to explain why teenagers begin to have more control over their impulses and are able to make better judgments. Additionally, scientists have been able to confirm that some brain characteristics are genetic, and others are affected by environmental factors. Confirming that different parts of the brain mature at different times and that the brain has structural changes through adolescence is very important, but there is a great deal more research that needs to be done to learn about how brain structure and function relate to behavior.

How is this article relevant to my future?

Knowing more about the brain and how it influences behavior will have a major impact on how children and teenagers are raised and educated. For example, one of the researchers, Giedd believed that the growth and pruning can happen at a time of brain development when the actions of teenagers can affect them the rest of their lives, his "use it or lose it principle." This is the time when music or academic development could be "hardwired." This theory puts more emphasis on parents to make sure their teens have the right focus and guidance. Most parents already believe in a basic approach to raising and educating their children, but this research could lead to a very specific timetable and a do and don't guide to child development, making sure that their child is exposed to the appropriate factors at the right time.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a topic.**
 - *For many years, scientists and researchers weren't able to examine normal, healthy brains. They only got brain data from autopsies and surgeries. Even so, they were able to learn a lot about how the brain functioned because when people suffered brain damage to parts of the brain, they could see what functions were impaired and know the parts of the brain that were responsible for that function. MRI technology has changed that because now scientists can examine healthy brains at all stages of development, including getting functional results that show areas of the brain that "light up" while performing tasks. Therefore, scientists are now able to measure how the brain works.*
- **organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole.**
 - *95% of the brain has been formed by age 6, but through MRI studies researchers now know that changes in the brain structure continue to occur late in child development. The prefrontal cortex has a growth spurt just before puberty and then prunes back in adolescence . . . Researchers have found waves of growth and change in other parts of the brain as well, . . . This recent research has confirmed what scientists have known for many years . . . that different parts of the brain mature at different times.*
- **develops the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.**
 - *Details: 95% of the brain has been formed by age 6 . . .*
 - *Facts: The corpus callosum influences language learning, and the cerebellum helps physical coordination and is also used to process mental tasks and higher thought . . .*
 - *Examples: They have learned that parts of the brain, such as the pre-frontal cortex, . . .*
- **uses appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.**
 - *For many years . . . Even so . . . Therefore . . . other parts of the brain as well . . . This recent research . . . However, . . . Knowing more about the brain's structure . . . Additionally, . . . Confirming that different parts of the brain mature at different times and that the brain has structural changes through adolescence is very important, but . . . For example . . . This theory . . .*
- **uses precise language, domain-specific vocabulary (when appropriate), and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic (though sometimes important concepts, notably *pruning*, go undefined).**
 - *. . . data . . . autopsies . . . surgeries . . . MRI technology . . . prefrontal cortex . . . growth spurt . . . corpus callosum . . . cerebellum . . . puberty . . .*
 - *This is the time when music or academic development could be "hardwired."*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which the student is writing.**
 - *For many years, scientists and researchers weren't able to examine normal, healthy brains . . . Most parents already believe in a basic approach to raising and educating their children, but this research could lead to a very specific timetable and a do and don't guide to child development, making sure that their child is exposed to the appropriate factors at the right time.*
- **provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the information or explanations presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).**
 - *Knowing more about the brain and how it influences behavior will have a major impact*

on how children and teenagers are raised and educated. For example, one of the researchers, Giedd believed that the growth and pruning can happen at a time of brain development when the actions of teenagers can affect them the rest of their lives, his “use it or lose it principle.” This is the time when music or academic development could be “hardwired.” This theory puts more emphasis on parents to make sure their teens have the right focus and guidance. Most parents already believe in a basic approach to raising and educating their children, but this research could lead to a very specific timetable and a do and don’t guide to child development, making sure that their child is exposed to the appropriate factors at the right time.

- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English.**