



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 6

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.



Writing Standards for Grade 6

WRITING STANDARDS: OPINION/ARGUMENT WRITING

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 1a.	Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 1b.	Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

Informative/Explanatory



WRITING STANDARDS: INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2a.	Introduce a topic or <u>thesis statement</u> ; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2b.	Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2c.	Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2d.	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2 e.	Establish and maintain a formal style.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 2 f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

Narrative



WRITING STANDARDS: NARRATIVE WRITING

Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 3a.	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 3b.	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 3c.	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 3d.	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 3e.	Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Opinion/Argument Informative/Explanatory Narrative



WRITING STANDARDS: ALL GENRES

Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 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"/>	6W 5.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 7.	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 8.	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 9.	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 9. a.	Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 9. b.	Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6W 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

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 1	Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 1a.	Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 1b.	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.



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

Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2a.	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories as appropriate to achieving purpose; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2b.	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2c.	Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2d.	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2 e.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 2 f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.



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

Text Types and Purposes		
X	6WHST 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

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 5.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 7.	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 8.	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources (<u>primary and secondary</u>), using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 9.	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6WHST 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

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Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument

This argument was written as homework after a class in which grade 6 students viewed a movie titled *Benchwarmers* and discussed how movie writers and producers promote smoking. The letter is addressed to the producer of a film in which smoking appears.

Dear Mr. Sandler,

Did you know that every cigarette a person smokes takes seven minutes off their life? I mentioned this because I just watched the movie, *Benchwarmers*, and I noticed that Carlos smoked. Why did you feel the need to have one of the characters smoke? Did you think that would make him look cool? Did you think that would make him look older? It did neither of those things. As a matter of fact, I think it made him look stupid and not very cool. Especially when he put out a cigarette on his tongue.

If I were producing a movie, I would want my characters to be strong, healthy and smart. I would not have any smokers in my movies for many reasons. The first reason is it sets a bad example for children. An estimated 450,000 Americans die each year from tobacco related disease. In fact, tobacco use causes many different types of cancers such as lung, throat, mouth, and tongue. Another reason not to promote smoking is it ages and wrinkles your skin. Who wants to look 75 if you are only 60? It turns your teeth yellow and may lead to gum disease and tooth decay. Lastly, smoking is a very expensive habit. A heavy smoker spends thousands of dollars a year on cigarettes. I can think of better things to spend money on.

So Mr. Sandler, I urge you to take smoking out of all future movies you produce. Instead of having your characters smoke have them do healthy things. That will set a positive influence for children instead of poisoning their minds. Thanks for reading my letter. I hope you agree with my opinion.

Sincerely, _____

P.S. I love your Chanukah song.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a claim.**
 - *I would not have any smokers in my movies for many reasons.*
- **organizes the reasons and evidence clearly.**
 - *The first reason is it sets a bad example for children.*
 - *Another reason not to promote smoking is it ages and wrinkles your skin.*
 - *It turns your teeth yellow and may lead to gum disease and tooth decay.*
- **supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.**
 - *Lastly, smoking is a very expensive habit. A heavy smoker spends thousands of dollars a year on cigarettes.*
- **uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationship between the claim and reasons.**
 - *The first reason . . . Another reason . . . Lastly . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style (except for the postscript).**
 - *Dear Mr. Sandler . . . Thanks for reading my letter. I hope you agree with my opinion . . . Sincerely . . .*

- **provides a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented.**
 - *Instead of having your characters smoke have them do healthy things. That will set a positive influence for children instead of poisoning their minds.*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**

Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument

This argument (incorrectly labeled a story) is a process piece produced in class.

A Pet Story About My Cat . . . Gus

People get pets so that they will never be lonely, and they will always have a friend to be there for them. Ask your heart, what makes the best pet??? Some people think a best pet is picky, energetic, and sneaky, but I think my pet is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me! Gus was about eight weeks old when we got him, now he is 4 1/2 months old, and he is about as big as a size eight sneaker. He is a little gray and white kitten. If you look closely he has a gray tail, but there are darker gray rings around it. He has a little white on his face, and some on his tummy and paws. He has a little stripe on his leg but it is his back left leg only. He's very cute, and he purrs a lot! He also has a cute little gray nose.

One of the reasons why my cat Gus is the best pet is because he is a cuddle bug. When Gus was a baby, he had to be kept in a cage because he wasn't allowed to interact with the other pets until he was older. He couldn't interact with the other pets because when Twister was a baby, the ferrets bit her ear and dragged her under the bed, and bit her in the back of the neck and we didn't want the same thing to happen to Gus. Also because Twister had to be kept in a cage when she was little, too. His cage was in my room so when he meowed, as if to say, "Get me out!" I would have to take him out and sleep with him. All he would do is thank me for doing that by snuggling against my chin! Another example to prove that Gus is a cuddle bug, is that when I'm feeding Gus, I put his and Twister's bowl up on the counter when I do so, and Twister sits there patiently while Gus is snuggling against my legs to show affection toward me. He snuggles my leg even when I'm walking around! Well, at least he tries to, because he follows me, and when I stop walking, he starts to cuddle. Eventually I pick him up and cuddle him back!!! Finally, when I have nothing to do and I'm just sitting on my bed reading, Gus jumps up with me and then he pushes away the covers to get under them, and he sleeps on my chest to keep my company when I'm board. After he slept on my tummy many times, he finally got the nickname _____ Cuddle Buddy. Now I always snuggle with my favorite cuddle buddy . . . Gus!!!

A second reason why Gus is the best pet is because he's playful. Most of the time when Gus is lying on the couch minding his own business, I'll reach out to pet him then he'll start biting my hand and attacking it!!! He does this to be playful, not to hurt anyone but he just wants to have fun. It kind of tickles when he does it, actually. Gus also has a little toy mouse that is attached to a string that I drag around the house so that Gus will follow it. The mouse has a leopard skin pattern on it with balls of fur as hands and feet. The mouse is about the size of the pencil sharpeners in Mrs. _____ classroom. He goes after that mouse so fast that it's hard to see him running by to catch it. When Gus was a baby, I would put him in my bed to sleep with, but before we went to sleep, I would move my feet around underneath the covers, while Gus was on top chasing them around. Eventually, he got tired and lied down near my feet, but before he was completely asleep, I would pick him up and put him near my pillow and we slept together. Gus loves doing that all the time. I love how Gus is so playful!!!

The last reason why Gus is the best pet is because he loves me! He always misses me whenever I'm not there. When I come home from school and I open the door, Gus comes flying around the corner, and starts to climb my pants! When he gets high enough, I grab him in my arms and we start cuddling each other while Gus is happily purring. He does this a lot. Most of the time I'm in my room watching TV, while Gus and Twister are fighting and killing each other, they come dashing around the corner and into my room. I, of course, have to break up the fight. After that, I put them on my bed and hold them down, but they keep squirming. Soon, they get tired and sleep with me, silently, watching TV. Gus is with me as much as possible. Sometimes he's busy playing with Twister, sleeping, or eating. Otherwise, he's playing or sleeping with me. We do so many things together and I'm glad I got him, but technically, he chose me. It was a homeless cat shelter. They were able to catch the kittens, but not there mommy. His brothers and sisters were all playing, but he was sleeping under the table. Soon, he walked out from under the table and slept with me while we cuddled on the couch. That's how I met Gus.

People have feelings for their pets that show that they love them very much. When I had to decide what makes the best pet, I would say that Gus is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me. When you think about the examples that I gave you, like when I told you about how Gus snuggles against my chin, you saw that Gus **IS** the best pet and if you don't believe me, you have a problem with deciding who the best pet is.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a claim and organizes the reasons and evidence clearly.**
 - . . . *I think my pet is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me!*
- **supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.**
 - *One of the reasons why my cat Gus is the best pet is because he is a cuddle bug.* The writer elaborates this point by providing three examples of his cat's affectionate nature: freed from his cage, the cat snuggles against the narrator's chin; the cat rubs against the narrator's legs; and the cat sleeps on the narrator.
 - *A second reason why Gus is the best pet is because he's playful.* The writer elaborates this point with three examples of the cat's playful nature: Gus attacks the narrator's hand; Gus plays with a toy mouse; and Gus attacks the narrator's feet when they are under the covers.
 - *The last reason why Gus is the best pet is because he loves me!* The writer elaborates this point with three examples: Gus runs to greet the narrator when he returns home from school; Gus and the other cat, Twister, scuffle with one another until the narrator separates them, and then they sleep with the narrator as he watches television; and Gus spends as much time as possible in the narrator's company.
- **uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among the claim and reasons.**
 - *One of my reasons . . . A second reason . . . The last reason . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style (except for the last sentence).**
 - The style throughout the document is appropriate for convincing readers about the writer's claim although the last sentence in the three-page-long paper (*. . . if you don't believe me, you have a problem with deciding who the best pet is*) seems inappropriate because it lapses into *ad hominem*.
- **provides a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented.**
 - *When I had to decide what makes the best pet, I would say that Gus is the best pet . . . When you think about the examples that I gave you, like when I told you about how Gus snuggles against my chin, you saw that Gus **IS** the best pet . . .*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**

Student Sample: Grade 7, Argument

This argument was produced for an on-demand assessment. Students were asked to write a letter to their principal about a plan to install video cameras in the classroom for safety reasons. The abbreviated time frame of the assessment (and the consequent lack of opportunity to perform research and revise) explains the absence of information from sources and possibly also the occasional errors.

Video Cameras in Classrooms

You are seated in class as your teacher explains and points things out on the whiteboard. You twitch your hand, accidentally nudging your pencil, which rolls off your desk and clatters to the floor. As you lean over to pick up your pencil, your cell phone falls out of your coat pocket! Luckily you catch it without your teacher seeing, but it is in plain view of the video camera's shiny lens that points straight at you. The classroom phone rings, and after a brief conversation, your teacher walks over to your desk and kneels down beside you. "About that cell phone of yours . . ." How did that get you in trouble? How could it possibly be a good idea to put cameras in classrooms?

When students are in their classrooms, teachers are in the classroom too, usually. But when a teacher goes out of the classroom, what usually happens is either everything goes on as usual, or the students get a little more talkative. Cameras aren't there because people talk a lot. It is the teacher's job to keep people quiet. If something horrible happened, somebody in class would usually report it, or it would just be obvious to the teacher when he came back that something had happened.

If we already have cameras in the halls, why spend the money to get thirty more cameras for all the different classrooms? Our school district already has a low budget, so we would be spending money on something completely unnecessary. There hasn't been camera-worthy trouble in classrooms. Camera-worthy trouble would be bad behavior every time a teacher left the room. There is no reason to install cameras that might just cause trouble, both for the students and for the budget.

Different students react differently when there is a camera in the room. Some students get nervous and flustered, trying hard to stay focused on their work with a camera focused on them. 90% of students claim that they do better work when they are calmer, and cameras are not going to help. Other students look at cameras as a source of entertainment. These students will do things such as wave at the camera, make faces, or say hi to the people watching through the camera. This could be a big distraction for others who are trying to learn and participate in class. Still other students will try to trick the camera. They will find a way to block the lens or do something that the camera will not be likely to catch. All of these different students will be distracted by the cameras in their classrooms.

Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems. That is why I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a claim (stated late in the essay).**
 - . . . *I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.*
- **acknowledges alternate or opposing claims.**
 - *Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems.*
- **supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.**
 - *[Cameras are not necessary because] [i]f something horrible happened, somebody in class would usually report it, or it would just be obvious to the teacher when he came back that something had happened.*
 - . . . *we already have cameras in the halls . . .*

- *Our school district already has a low budget . . .*
- **uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claim, reasons, and evidence.**
 - *If . . . already . . . why . . . so . . . Some students . . . Other students . . . These students . . . All of these different students . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style.**
 - *When students are in their classrooms, teachers are in the classroom too, usually. But when a teacher goes out of the classroom, what usually happens is either everything goes on as usual, or the students get a little more talkative.*
 - *Different students react differently when there is a camera in the room.*
- **provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented.**
 - *Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems. That is why I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**