

# Grade 4 Writing: Grade Level Expectations

## Essential Academic Learning Requirements [EALR] for Writing K-10

### **EALR 1: The student understands and uses a writing process**

Component 1.1 Uses pictures and talk for thinking about planning writing.

Component 1.2 Produces Drafts.

Component 1.3 Revises to improve text.

Component 1.4 Edits Text.

Component 1.5 Publishes text to share with audience.

Component 1.6 Adjusts writing processes as necessary.

### **EALR 2: The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes**

Component 2.1 Adapts writing for a variety of audiences.

Component 2.2 Writes for different purposes.

Component 2.3 Writes in a variety of forms/genres.

Component 2.4 Writes for career applications.

### **EALR 3: The student writes clearly and effectively**

Component 3.1 Develops ideas and organizes writing.

Component 3.2 Uses appropriate style.

Component 3.3 Knows and applies writing conventions appropriate for the grade level.

### **EALR 4: The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of written work.**

Component 4.1 Analyzes and evaluates others' and own writing.

Component 4.2 Sets goals for improvement.

Cited from Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements:  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/Writing/pubdocs/EALRwritingfinal.pdf>

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## GRADE 4

In fourth grade, students write for a range of purposes, including describing, telling a story, and explaining. They are able to produce writing that goes beyond the formulaic. Because they are aware of the interdependence of the topic, audience, purpose, and form, they are able to select and sometimes adapt basic forms to meet specific requirements. Their understanding and use of figurative language introduces imagery to their writing. Informational writing reflects understanding of specific purpose, often requiring gathering and synthesizing information from a number of resources to express and justify an opinion. Students are more aware of the conventions of writing as they reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and strive to improve.

### **EALR 1: The student understands and uses a writing process**

#### **Component 1.1 Uses pictures and talk for thinking about planning writing.**

1.1.1 Applies more than one strategy for generating ideas and planning writing.

- Explains the difference between generating and organizing ideas and adjusts prewriting strategies accordingly (e.g., brainstorms list for generating ideas and narrowing topic, uses a graphic organizer for organizing ideas, story boards).
- Records information or ideas at prewriting and/or drafting stages (e.g., notes, lists, free writing, webs, or graphic organizers).
- Gathers information from more than one resource and synthesizes ideas to plan writing (e.g., uses information from the Internet and from books for a report).

#### **Component 1.2 Produces Drafts.**

1.2.1 Produces more than one draft of multiple paragraphs.

- Uses a prewriting plan to draft text.
- Works on more than one draft on a single topic over several days.

#### **Component 1.3 Revises to improve text.**

1.3.1 Revises text by adding, deleting, substituting, and moving text.

- Rereads work several times and has a different focus for each reading (e.g., first reading — adding specific details for support; second reading — substituting words for clarity; third reading—moving text by combining sentences for variety).
- Records feedback using writing group procedure (e.g., specific example from text in one column, suggestions in another column, and notes in margin).
- Makes decisions about writing based on feedback.
- Revises content based on new information.
- Uses different methods to delete or move text (e.g., cross out and rewrite or “cut and paste”).
- Uses more than one resource to revise (e.g., word wall or bank, writing guide, peer, adult, thesaurus).

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### Component 1.4 Edits Text.

1.4.1 Applies understanding of editing appropriate for grade level (see 3.3).

- Identifies and corrects errors in grade level conventions.
- Uses more than one resource (e.g., dictionary, writing guide, spell check, peer, adult).
- Proofreads final draft for errors.

### Component 1.5 Publishes text to share with audience.

1.5.1 Publishes in more than one format for specific audiences and purposes.

- Publishes pieces and explains choice of format, graphics, and illustrations.
- Publishes for a wide range of purposes (e.g., to inform, to tell a story) in different forms and formats (e.g., letter, poem).
- Uses a variety of available technology as part of publication (e.g., software program, overhead projector, video).

### Component 1.6 Adjusts writing processes as necessary.

1.6.1 Applies understanding of the recursive nature of writing process.

Revises at any stage of process.

Edits as needed at any stage.

1.6.2 Uses collaborative skills to adapt writing process.

- Contributes to different parts of writing process when working on a class newspaper (e.g., group plans together; partners prewrite and compose article on classroom computer; individuals illustrate and format; group revises, edits, and publishes).

1.6.3 Uses knowledge of time constraints to adjust writing process.

- Works on one draft over several days or weeks adjusting work to fit the time frame.
- Allots amount of time for each stage of writing process for on-demand writing.

## EALR 2: The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes

### Component 2.1 Adapts writing for a variety of audiences.

2.1.1 Applies understanding of multiple and varied audiences to write effectively.

- Identifies an intended audience.
- Writes to a diverse community audience (e.g., an informative newspaper article, a thank you letter after a field trip).
- Identifies and includes information a diverse audience needs to know (e.g., background information on the topic, definitions for specialized and/or culturally relevant vocabulary).

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### Component 2.2 Writes for different purposes.

2.2.1 Demonstrates understanding of different purposes for writing.

- Writes for different purposes (e.g., to learn, to tell a story, to explain, to reflect, to respond to a question, to summarize, to analyze informational text and data).
- Incorporates more than one purpose using a form (e.g., a letter can be used to explain, to request, or to persuade). n Includes more than one mode within a piece (e.g., descriptive or narrative anecdotes within an explanation to elaborate).

### Component 2.3 Writes in a variety of forms/genres.

2.3.1 Uses a variety of forms/ genres.

- Selects form/genre to meet requirements of task or content area (e.g., book report or science report).
- Maintains a log or portfolio to track variety of forms/genres used.
- Produces a variety of new forms/genres.

Examples:

- ~ fictional stories (e.g., fantasy, realistic)
- ~ procedures (e.g., process for problem solving in math)
- ~ tables
- ~ newspaper articles
- ~ scientific explanations
- ~ multi-paragraph explanatory letters
- ~ song lyrics for an established melody

### Component 2.4 Writes for career applications.

2.4.1 Produces documents used in a career setting.

- Collaborates with a partner on a writing project (e.g., newspaper article).
- Writes in forms associated with specific tasks or careers (e.g., letters, directions to house, charts or tables within a report).

## EALR 3: The student writes clearly and effectively

### Component 3.1 Develops ideas and organizes writing.

3.1.1 Analyzes ideas, selects a narrow topic, and elaborates using specific details and/or examples.

- Narrows topic (e.g., from general topic, such as “pets,” to specific topic, such as “My dog is smart.”).
- Selects details relevant to the topic to elaborate (e.g., adds detail to each main point using more than one sentence uses specific words and phrases, reasons, anecdotes, facts, descriptions, and examples).
- Uses personal experiences, observations, and/or research to support opinions and ideas (e.g., collects, organizes, and uses data to support conclusions in math, science, or social studies).
- Develops character, setting, and events within plot when writing a narrative.

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### 3.1.2 Organizes writing using a logical organizational structure.

- Writes in a logically organized progression of unified paragraphs.
- Constructs a recognizable introduction and conclusion.
- Uses a variety of transitional words and phrases to make connections between and within paragraphs.
  - ~ chronological (e.g., next, after)
  - ~ spatial (e.g., over, under, next to)
  - ~ ordinal (e.g., first, second, third)
- Structures plot in narratives using problem-solution-outcome.
- Describes procedures sequentially (e.g., steps in problem solving in mathematics).
- Organizes explanations (e.g., describes fitness activity and then explains why it is a favorite) and comparisons logically (e.g., writes a point-by-point comparison, such as about housing, agriculture, or clothing of the cultures of coastal and plateau Native Americans).
- Structures poetry (e.g., syllabic patterns, rhyme scheme).

### Component 3.2 Uses appropriate style.

#### 3.2.1 Understands that different audiences and purposes affect writer's voice.

- Adjusts voice for different audiences (e.g., letter to principal vs. letter to best friend).
- Adjusts voice for different purposes (e.g., a scientific explanation vs. a narrative).
- Writes in own voice in personal narrative (e.g., "spinach makes me gag").
- Writes in authentic voice in expository writing, i.e., the writing sounds real as opposed to stilted.

#### 3.2.2 Uses language appropriate for a specific audience and purpose.

- Uses precise words (e.g., vivid verbs — screeched, hovered, absorbed; specific nouns — granite, longhouse, cedar).
- Uses specialized vocabulary in informational writing (e.g., tessellate, parallelogram, butte, carbohydrate).
- Uses literary and sound devices (e.g., similes, personification, alliteration).

#### 3.2.3 Uses a variety of sentences.

- Writes a variety of sentence beginnings (e.g., starts with an introductory adverb clause: "If you want to see an ant up close, you should use a magnifying glass.").
- Writes a variety of sentence lengths.
- Writes a variety of sentence structures (e.g., "My dog enjoys music and howls when we listen to certain songs. It makes me laugh. After his song is over, I give him a treat.").
- Writes song lyrics with a specific rhythm.

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### Component 3.3 Knows and applies writing conventions appropriate for the grade level.

#### 3.3.1 Uses legible handwriting.

- Maintains consistency in printing or cursive handwriting (e.g., size, spacing, formation, uppercase and lowercase).

#### 3.3.2 Spells words appropriate for the grade level accurately.

- Uses spelling rules and patterns from previous grades.
- Spells high-frequency words correctly (e.g., people, water).
- Recognizes and uses grade level appropriate spelling patterns.

Examples:

~ Affixes (e.g., -en, -in, -on, -an at end of words)

~ Rules such as -ge after long vowel, -dge after short vowel (e.g., rage and edge)

- Self-corrects spelling errors.
- Develops a personal spelling list.
- Uses resources to find correct spelling for words identified as misspelled (e.g., electronic spellers, dictionaries, personal dictionaries).

#### 3.3.3 Applies capitalization rules.

- Uses capitalization rules from previous grades.
- Capitalizes important words in a title of a book or article (e.g., Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.).
- Capitalizes abbreviations correctly (e.g., Calif. or CA, Mr., Dr.).
- Uses resources to correct capitalization.

#### 3.3.4 Applies punctuation rules.

- Uses punctuation rules from previous grades.
- Uses comma to set off titles or initials (e.g., Dr. Smith, M.D.).
- Uses comma in complete address (e.g., 12345 67th Ave., Spokane, WA).
- Uses comma after an introductory phrase (e.g., After the scary movie, she wished she had read the book.) or clause (e.g., After she went to the movie, she wanted to read the book.).
- Uses italics, underlining, or quotation marks for titles.
- Uses colon after greeting in a business letter.
- Uses hyphen between syllables at line breaks.

#### 3.3.5 Applies usage rules.

- Applies usage rules from previous grades.
- Uses single/plural agreement between nouns and modifiers (e.g., one child and two children).
- Uses correct placement of pronouns.

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Correct examples:

- ~ Juanita and I went to the store.
- ~ She gave candy to Juanita and me.

Incorrect examples:

- ~ Me and Juanita went to the store.
- ~ She gave candy to me and Juanita.
- ~ She gave the candy to Juanita and I.
- Uses among (more than two) vs. between (two).
- Uses conjunctions logically (e.g., I like dogs, but I am allergic to them.).
- Uses prepositions correctly (e.g., in the past, from one to another).
- Uses collective nouns (e.g., cache, herd).

3.3.6 Uses complete sentences in writing.

- Does not use comma splices (e.g., They went to the store, they bought groceries.).

3.3.7 Applies paragraph conventions.

- Uses paragraph conventions (e.g., designated by indentation or block format, skipping lines between paragraphs).

3.3.8 Applies conventional forms for citations.

- Cites sources (e.g., lists titles and authors alphabetically).

**EALR 4: The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of written work.**

**Component 4.1 Analyzes and evaluates others' and own writing.**

4.1.1 Analyzes and evaluates writing using established criteria.

- Identifies professional authors' styles and techniques (e.g., word choice, introductions, endings, points of view).
- Critiques a peer's writing and supports the opinion using established criteria (e.g., content, organization, style, conventions).

4.1.2 Analyzes and evaluates own writing using established criteria.

- Explains strengths and weaknesses of own writing using criteria (e.g., WASL rubric and anchor papers, checklists, 6-trait scoring guides).
- Selects written work for a portfolio and justifies the decision with criteria.
- Provides evidence that goals have been met (e.g., "This piece demonstrates how well I now elaborate.").

**Component 4.2 Sets goals for improvement.**

4.1.2 Evaluates and adjusts writing goals using criteria.

- Sets goals by comparing own writing to rubric and anchor papers (e.g., WASL rubric and anchor papers, writing continuum).

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- Writes reflection about growth in writing and creates an improvement plan (e.g., across several pieces of writing or in response to a specific piece of writing).
- Evaluates own use of writing process and sets goals (e.g., “When I edit, I need to use a dictionary to check for spelling.” “When revising, I need to re-read my writing to see if it makes sense.”).
- Maintains a written log of goals.