Learning Progression for Information Writing

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
STRUCTURE							
Overall	The writer taught readers information about a subject. He put in ideas, observations, and questions.	The writer taught readers different things about a subject. He put facts, details, quotes, and ideas into each part of his writing.	The writer used different kinds of information to teach about the subject. Sometimes she included little essays, stories, or how-to sections in her writing.	The writer conveyed ideas and information about a subject in a well-structured text. Sometimes she incorporated arguments, explanations, stories, or procedural passages.	The writer brought together ideas and information about a subject in a text that develops a subtopic and/or an idea. He incorporated a variety of text structures as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages.	The writer discussed key concepts within a topic and made it clear why these concepts are important. She provided examples with relevant information, using a variety of text structures and formatting, as needed, to make concepts and information compelling and accessible.	The writer discussed complex concepts, presenting facts and information in an engaging manner, teaching the reader significant concepts and information. The writer conveyed the sources of the information and analyzed them when relevant.
Lead	The writer wrote a beginning in which she got readers ready to learn a lot of information about the subject.	The writer hooked her readers by explaining why the subject mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving a big picture. She let readers know that she would teach them different things about a subject.	The writer wrote an introduction in which he helped readers get interested in and understand the subject. He let readers know the subtopics that he would later develop, as well as the sequence.	The writer wrote an introduction in which she interested readers, perhaps with a quote or significant fact. She let readers know the subtopics that she would develop later and how her text would unfold.	The writer interested the reader in the topic by explaining its significance or providing a compelling fact, statistic, or anecdote. He made it clear what parts of this topic his text would tackle, and how the ideas and information in the text would unfold.	After hooking the reader, the writer provided context, introduced a focus/main idea, and oriented readers to the overall structure of the text (compare/contrast, cause and effect, claims and support, classification, etc.).	The writer wrote an engaging lead that explained the topic's significance, contextualized it with background information, and mentioned key points of view or issues that would be discussed.
Transitions	The writer used words to show sequence such as *before*, *after*, *then*, and *later*. He also used words to show what did not fit such as *however* and *but*.	The writer used words in each section that helped readers understand how one piece of information connected with others. If he wrote the section in sequence, he used words and phrases such as *before*, *later*, *next*, *then*, and *after*. If he organized the section in kinds or parts, he used words such as *another*, *also*, and *for example*.	When the writer wrote about results, she used words and phrases like *consequently*, *as a result*, and *because of this*. When she compared information, she used words and phrases such as *in contrast*, *by comparison*, and *especially*. In narrative parts, she used phrases that go with stories such as *a little later* and *three hours later*. In the sections that stated an opinion, she used words such as *but the most important reason*, *for example*, and *consequently*.	The writer used transitions to help readers understand how different bits of information and different parts of his writing fit together. He used transitions to help connect ideas, information, and examples, and to imply relationships such as when material exemplifies, adds to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. He used transitions such as *for instance*, *such as*, *similarly*, *therefore*, *as a result*, *in contrast to*, and *on the other hand*.	The writer used transitions to link concepts with related information. The transitions help the reader follow from part to part and make it clear when information is an example of a bigger idea, follows from an earlier point, introduces a new idea, or suggests a contrast. The writer used such transitions as *specifically*, *for instance*, *related to*, *just as*, *turning to*, *on the other hand*, and *however*.	The writer used transitions to lead the reader across parts of the text and to help the reader note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts, using phrases such as *just as*, *returning to*, *as we saw earlier*, *similarly to*, *unlike*, and *yet*.	The writer used transitional phrases to show the relationship between parts of the text, including references to prior sections and previewing future sections. The writer may have used transitions to show the source of cited information. These transitions might include *adapted from*, *excerpted from*, *according to*, *building from*, *revealed in*, *suggested by*, *illustrated by*, and *demonstrated in*.
Ending	The writer wrote an ending that drew conclusions, asked questions, or suggested ways readers might respond.	The writer wrote an ending in which she reminded readers of her subject and may either have suggested a follow-up action or left readers with a final insight. She added her thoughts, feelings, and questions about the subject at the end.	The writer wrote a conclusion in which he restated the main points and may have offered a final thought or question for readers to consider.	The writer wrote a conclusion in which she restated the important ideas and offered a final insight or implication for the reader to consider.	In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire piece a cohesive whole. The conclusion may have restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	In her conclusion, the writer suggested implications, built up the significance of her main points, and/or alluded to potential challenges.	In his conclusion, the writer strengthens implication, suggested action to take, and/or mentioned multiple perspective or potential challenges.
Organization	The writer grouped his information into parts. Each part was mostly about one thing that connected to his big topic.	The writer grouped her writing into sections and used paragraphs and sometimes chapters to separate those sections. Each section had information that was mostly about the same thing. He may have used headings and subheadings.	The writer organized her writing into a sequence of separate sections. She may have used headings and subheadings to highlight the separate sections. The writer wrote each section according to an organizational plan shaped partly by the genre of the section.	The writer chose a focused subject. The writer used subheadings and/or clear introductory transitions to separate sections. The writer made deliberate choices about how to order sections and about the sequence of information and ideas within sections. He chose structures such as compare and contrast, categories, or claim and support to organize information and ideas. Some sections are written as argument, explanation, stories, or procedural passages.	The writer focused her writing on a subtopic or a particular point or two. The writer organized her piece into parts and used structures (claims and supports, problem/solution, sequence, etc.) to organize those parts (and perhaps the whole). The writer used introductions, topic sentences, transitions, formatting, and graphics, where appropriate, to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight main points.	The writer focused on key concepts within the topic. The writer organized information and ideas into broader categories and clarified how sections are ordered and connected. The writer used his organizational structure to help the reader's comprehension, perhaps holding back details until first conveying broader points, or only offering a second perspective after the first was established. The sections and information built on each other throughout the piece: concepts and examples were introduced in a logical fashion.	The writer's organizational structure introduced and layered key concepts and information. The writer layered information to maintain tension, engage the reader's interest, and/or build complexity. The writer built the sections upon each other logically, allowing the reader to build knowledge and deeper understandings.

Learning Progression for Information Writing (continued)

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
DEVELOPMENT							
Elaboration	The writer wrote facts, definitions, details, and observations about her topic and explained some of them.	The writer taught her readers different things about the subject. She chose those subtopics because they were important and interesting. The writer included different kinds of facts and details such as numbers, names, and examples. The writer got her information from talking to people, reading books, and from her own knowledge and observations. The writer made choices about organization, perhaps using compare/contrast, cause/effect, or pro/con. She may have used diagrams, charts, headings, bold words, and definition boxes to help teach her readers.	The writer explained different aspects of a subject. She included a variety of information such as examples, details, dates, and quotes. The writer used trusted sources and gave credit when appropriate. She made sure to research any details that would add to her writing. The writer worked to make her information understandable to readers. To do this, she referred to earlier parts of her text or summarized background information. The writer let readers know when she was discussing facts and when she was offering her own thinking.	The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. The writer used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic and gave the sources credit. The writer worked to make his information understandable and interesting. To do this, he referred to earlier parts of his text, summarized background information, raised questions, or considered possible implications.	The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. She analyzed or explained the information, showing how the information fits with her key points or subtopics, including graphics where appropriate. The writer consistently incorporated and cited sources. The writer worked to make her topic compelling as well as understandable. She brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.	The writer brought out the parts of the topic that were most significant to his audience and to his point(s). The writer analyzed the relevance of his information and made sure the information supported the major concepts. The writer incorporated trustworthy and significant sources, and explained if and when a source seemed problematic.	The writer developed key concepts, giving some context and background. The writer used examples to clarify, explain, and interest. The writer analyzed the facts and information, explaining the relevance of cited source material. The writer included trustworthy and significant sources of information, analyzing and critiquing these sources when relevant.
Craft	The writer chose expert words to teach readers a lot about the subject. He taught information in a way to interest readers. He may have used drawings, captions, or diagrams.	The writer made deliberate word choices to teach his readers. He may have done this by using and repeating key words about his topic. When it felt right to do so, the writer chose interesting comparisons and used figurative language to clarify his points. The writer made choices about which information was best to include or not include. The writer used a teaching tone. To do so, he may have used phrases such as *that means, what that really means is,* and *let me explain.*	The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on his readers. He used the vocabulary of experts and explained the key terms. The writer worked to include the exact phrase, comparison, or image to explain information and concepts. The writer not only made choices about which details and facts to include but also made choices about how to convey his information so it would make sense to readers. The writer blended storytelling, summary, and other genres as needed and used text features. The writer used a consistent, inviting, teaching tone and varied his sentences to help readers take in and understand the information.	The writer chose her words carefully to explain her information and ideas and to have an effect on the reader. The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to explain information and concepts and to keep her reader engaged. The writer incorporated domain-specific vocabulary and, when necessary, she explained terms to readers, providing context clues, parenthetical explanations, text boxes, or similar support. The writer supported readers' learning by using a teaching tone and a formal style, as appropriate.	The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone. The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what he meant. The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary, and defined these when appropriate. The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.	The writer intended to affect her reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and she chose language to do that. The writer consistently used comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, and/or anecdotes to help readers grasp the meaning of concepts and the significance of information. The writer varied her tone to match the different purposes of different sections of her piece.	The writer intended to affect the reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and chose particular language to do that. In addition to using other literary devices, the writer may have used allusions. The writer varied the tone to match the different purposes of different sections of the argument, as well as to develop its overall impact. The writer made choices about formatting, considering the form to best convey the content.
CONVENTIONS							
Spelling	The writer used what she knew about spelling patterns to help her spell and edit before she wrote her final draft. The writer got help from others to check her spelling and punctuation before she wrote her final draft.	The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries to help her when needed.	The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries to help her when needed.	The writer used resources to be sure the words in his writing were spelled correctly, including technical vocabulary.	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling of citations.	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling and details of citations, excerpts, quotations, and statistics.	The writer spelled accurately throughout, including cited text and citations.
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks. The writer put punctuation at the end of every sentence while writing. The writer wrote in ways that helped readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another.	When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences (*for example, as you might know*). The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. He used punctuation to cite his sources.	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help her include extra information and explanation in some of her sentences. The writer accurately cited her references, using appropriate punctuation.	The writer varied his sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout her piece. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a citation back to her own writing), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate. The writer used internal punctuation effectively, including the use of ellipses to accurately insert excerpts from sources.	The writer used sentence structure and verb tense purposefully (i.e., using fragments to emphasize key points; using present tense to create immediacy). The writer used punctuation to emphasize connections, to strengthen tone, to clarify, and to add complexity.