



# District Writing Prompt: Writing Handbook

Grade 7 and 8 ONLY

Fall 2009

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## Introduction

### Purpose of District Writing Prompts

On September 26, 2007 the Chicago Board of Education approved amendments to the Elementary Promotion Policy (*Board Report # 07-0926-P01*) which requires that 8th grade students demonstrate proficiency in Writing as a condition for promotion. The policy states that students must have a “C or better” report card grade in Writing for the academic year or pass a District Wide Writing Assessment (DWWA). Requirements of this policy are not applicable to English Language Learners or students who do not take ISAT.

This portion of the policy went into effect in Fall 2008 and there will be no significant changes for the 2009-2010 school year. The policy includes the District Writing prompts and Writing grade along with a secured District Wide Writing Assessment (DWWA) in the spring for grade 8 students.

Grade 7 and 8 students will be expected to complete three Writing prompts representing the types of Writing assessed on ISAT (Narrative, Persuasive and Expository). These prompts will be locally administered during the Benchmark Assessment testing window and scored by teachers three times a year. The three District Writing prompts will be administered throughout the school year in the following order and on the following dates:

### Introduction to District Writing Prompt Writing Handbook

This document contains sample compositions from the grade 7-8 CPS District Writing Prompt administrations. Included are the scores the compositions received for each feature, rationales for these scores based on the ISAT Writing rubrics, and the prompts associated with the student responses. These student samples are intended to give educators a basis for scoring their students’ responses to the District Writing Prompt and to give both educators and students a sense of what is expected on the ISAT Writing Assessment.

Please note that in order to limit the number of compositions included while providing a sample at each rubric score point, the samples provided in this handbook often have received the same score for each feature. In reality, teachers will not find this consistency in all student responses and will often give students different scores for each feature.

### Scoring Rubrics

Each rubric is based on a six-point scale on which the features of Focus, Support/Elaboration, Organization, and Integration are rated. The Conventions feature is rated on a three-point scale. The Integration score is weighted (doubled) to reflect the holistic nature of good writing.

### ISAT Writing Cut Scores

|                | <b>Academic Warning</b> | <b>Below Standards</b> | <b>Meets</b> | <b>Exceeds</b> |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Grade 8</b> | 6-14                    | 15-20                  | 21-27        | 28-33          |

### Additional Information

Please contact the Department of Student Assessment for questions about ISAT or District Writing prompt test administration. Please contact the Office of Reading and Language Arts at (773) 553-3550 for all other inquiries.

ISAT Writing Rubric – Grade 8 Narrative

10/12/06

|          | <b>Focus</b>  | <b>Elaboration</b>  | <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Integration</b>  |
|----------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>6</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject and unifying event clear and maintained throughout with the event commented upon by the end of the composition</li> <li>Clearly sets purpose of composition through successful introduction strategy</li> <li>Reactions are effectively connected to unifying event</li> <li>Effective closing which unifies the writing</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All major episodes are developed by specific detail</li> <li>Episodes developed evenly (to the same degree of specificity as appropriate)</li> <li>Considerable Elaboration through multiple strategies (e.g., points of view/perspective, others' reactions, dialogue, etc.)</li> <li>Most episodes show significant depth of development</li> <li>Word choice enhances specificity</li> <li>Voice is appropriate for topic, purpose, and audience</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative structure is clear, effective, and appropriate – sequence of episodes is logically presented without gaps</li> <li>Appropriate and purposeful paragraphing</li> <li>Coherence and cohesion demonstrated by effective and varied devices (transitions, parallel structure, pronouns, etc.)</li> <li>Paragraph development follows narrative sequence</li> <li>All episodes and reactions logically presented and interrelated</li> <li>Varied sentence structure and word choice produce cohesion</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully-developed composition for grade level</li> <li>Clear and purposeful Focus; in-depth, balanced Elaboration; sequence of episodes is coherently and cohesively developed throughout the composition</li> </ul> |
| <b>5</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject and unifying event clear and maintained throughout with the event commented upon by the end of the composition</li> <li>Clearly sets purpose through effective opening or may attempt more sophisticated strategy (may not be completely successful)</li> <li>Reactions are relevant to unifying event</li> <li>Effective closing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All major episodes developed by specific detail</li> <li>Most Elaboration is even or balanced</li> <li>Some Elaboration through multiple strategies (e.g., points of view/perspective, others' reactions, dialogue, etc.)</li> <li>Word choice may enhance specificity</li> <li>Voice is appropriate for topic, purpose, and audience</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative structure is clear and effective – sequence of episodes is logically presented through time without significant gaps</li> <li>All paragraphs appropriate</li> <li>Coherence and cohesion demonstrated by appropriate devices (transitions, parallel structure, pronouns, repetition, etc.)</li> <li>Most episodes and reactions logically presented and interrelated</li> <li>Some varied sentence structure and word choice produce cohesion</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed composition for grade level</li> <li>All features not equally well-developed throughout the composition</li> <li>Depth is evident</li> </ul>   |
| <b>4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject and unifying event clear and maintained with event commented upon by the end of the composition</li> <li>Sets purpose through effective opening</li> <li>Reactions clearly present and appropriate</li> <li>Has closing</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many major episodes developed by specific detail; some Elaboration may be general</li> <li>Elaboration may not be even or balanced</li> <li>Some depth</li> <li>Word choice may enhance specificity</li> <li>Voice is present but inconsistent</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative structure is evident – sequence of episodes moves through time with a beginning, a middle, and an ending with few gaps</li> <li>Most paragraphs appropriate</li> <li>Coherence (paragraph to paragraph) and cohesion (sentence to sentence) demonstrated with appropriate devices</li> <li>Coherence may depend on holistic structure (e.g., chronology)</li> <li>May have minor digressions</li> <li>Most episodes logically presented and organized</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bare-bones-developed composition for grade level</li> <li>Simple and clear, presenting nothing more than the essentials</li> <li>Limited depth</li> </ul>  |
| <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject and event clear; may be prompt-dependent</li> <li>Minor Focus drift or lapses in logic</li> <li>Reactions are present</li> <li>May lack closing</li> <li>Lacks sufficiency to demonstrate developed Focus</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some major episodes developed by specific detail; some Elaboration may be general or repetitive</li> <li>May be list of specific episodes/reactions with some extensions</li> <li>Limited depth</li> <li>Voice shifts or disappears</li> <li>Lacks sufficiency to demonstrate developed Elaboration</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative structure is evident – sequence of episodes moves through time with significant gaps</li> <li>Some appropriate paragraphing</li> <li>May have a major digression</li> <li>May have intrusive or inappropriate transitional devices</li> <li>Lacks sufficiency to demonstrate developed Organization</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially developed</li> <li>Some (or one) of the feature(s) are not sufficiently formed, but all are present</li> <li>Inference is usually required</li> </ul>  |

**ISAT Writing Rubric – Grade 8 Narrative**

10/12/06

|          | <b>Focus</b>   | <b>Elaboration</b>   | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Integration</b>  |
|----------|--|--|---|---|
| <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject and/or event may be vague</li> <li>Unrelated or illogical ideas or major drift from Focus (composition consists mostly of repetitions/redundancies)</li> <li>Off-mode response (NOT narrative showing a sequence through time)</li> <li>Multiple events without an umbrella statement</li> <li>No reactions</li> <li>Insufficient writing to determine that Focus can be sustained</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of episodes and/or reactions which may have extensions</li> <li>Most Elaboration is general or consists of repetition/redundancy</li> <li>No evidence of suitable voice</li> <li>Insufficient writing to determine that the Elaboration can be maintained</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is noticeable, but the reader must infer it – sequence of episodes moves through time with either an expository preview developed by event/reaction, OR an event developed by reasons/examples</li> <li>Limited evidence of appropriate paragraphing</li> <li>May have major lapses/digressions</li> <li>Insufficient writing to determine that Organization can be sustained</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempts to address the assignment, but only rudiments of techniques for forming Focus, Elaboration, and Organization can be detected</li> <li>Some confusion and/or disjointedness</li> <li>Lacks narrative structure</li> <li>Insufficient writing to determine that the features can be maintained</li> </ul> |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject/event unclear</li> <li>Reactions absent</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May lack clarity</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no evidence of structure</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfill the assignment; barely deals with the topic; or does not present most or all of the features</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met</li> </ul>   |

**Conventions**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong knowledge of Conventions is demonstrated</li> <li>Standards of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are consistently followed – may have minor lapses</li> <li>May have minor errors in usage and sentence formation</li> <li>A variety of sentence structures is evident</li> </ul> |
| <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partial knowledge of Conventions is evident</li> <li>Severity and density of errors constitute a noticeable pattern</li> <li>Little attempt at varying sentence structures</li> </ul>  |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no discernable knowledge of Conventions</li> <li>Severity and density of errors is such that meaning is impaired</li> <li>Sentence structure is simplistic or in error</li> </ul>  |

## Fall 2009 Narrative Writing Prompt

Friendships change and evolve over time. Some friendships can last a lifetime, others may last only a few months. Think about a time when a friendship you had changed, evolved, or ended. Perhaps you or your friend moved, transferred to a different school, or became part of a different crowd of friends.

### Assignment

Write a *narrative* composition about a time a friendship of yours changed, evolved, or ended. Tell what happened and how you felt about it.

#### DIRECTIONS

- 1 Take a few minutes to plan your composition by making notes on the "Graphic Organizer" below.
- 2 Choose one time when a friendship of yours changed, evolved, or ended.
- 3 Think about what happened. Remember specific details, descriptions, and reactions.
- 4 Organize your ideas carefully.
- 5 Check that you have correct sentences, punctuation, and spelling.

## Sample Narrative Response 1

Begin your essay here.

Have you ever had a friendship that suddenly changed, evolved, or just ended over one small thing? I know I have and over a dumb toy car. A simple toy car ended my and Edward's friendship.

It was a Saturday afternoon and me and Edward, my best friend in the second grade, were playing soccer in my backyard. We were having a great time until something tragic happened. He brought up his toy car. Edward had this toy car he let me borrow. I had it for about a week and I was positive I gave it back. "I don't have it I gave it back to you last week." I said. "Well I don't have it so you have to have it." "I don't have it!" "Yes you do you little car stealer!" "I didn't take your dumb car!" I was thinking to myself "This isn't going to be pretty," and I was right.

After about a three minute argument he just came up to me and just shoved me. I went back and fell down. I got straight up on my feet, went to him and shoved me back. He got up and tickled me. While he was on the floor I choked him a little,

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

but only a little so I wouldn't kill him,  
with a lock my cousins taught me.  
We got up and the next thing I know  
he started swinging. I closed my eyes  
and swung with my right hand. I  
know I had hit him because when I  
opened my eyes he was gone and  
my fist hurt really bad.

At school Monday he was sitting  
alone at lunch. I wanted to talk  
things out but he just wouldn't talk.  
I can't believe I lost my best friend  
over a dumb toy car. When I went  
home that day my mom was holding  
something in her hand and she asked  
me if the object was mine. To my  
surprise it was Edward's toy car. "Now  
if I give it to him he won't be mad  
anymore and we could be friends again."  
I thought to myself. On Tuesday I  
was going to school with the car in  
my Pokémon bookbag. I was going to give  
it to him that day. When I walked  
into Mrs. P's classroom I walked up  
to Mrs. P's and said, "Where is  
Edward?" "I'm afraid he transferred so  
he won't be with us anymore."

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

"Oh I see." I was very depressed now. I didn't even get to say bye. Even though he won't talk to me. Now I would never see him again. This was the end of our friendship.

So take care of your friends. Don't fight with them over something as simple as a toy car. I learned my lesson that week.

## Sample Narrative Response 1 Scores

**FOCUS 6:** Effective introduction captures the reader’s attention and sets the purpose of the composition. Reactions are strong and effectively connected to the unifying event (*I got straight up on my feet, This isn’t going to be pretty, I can’t believe I lost my best friend over a dumb toy car, I was very depressed*). The closing is brief, but effectively unifies the writing.

**ELABORATION 6:** All major episodes are developed evenly by specific detail. Uses multiple strategies (effective use of dialogue and monologue, points of view, and others’ reactions). Word choice enhances specificity (*something tragic happened, you little car stealer, tackled me, choked him, transferred*). Voice is natural, appropriate, and very engaging.

**ORGANIZATION 5:** Narrative structure is clear and effective. Episodes move through time in a logical manner. Most episodes and reactions are logically presented and interrelated. Varied sentence structure, word choice, and transitions but lacks appropriate paragraphing.

**CONVENTIONS 2:** Several spelling errors (*friendship, simpile*). Grammatical errors (*my and Edward’s friendship, me and Edward*). Sentence fragment (*Even though he wont talk to me*). A 2 or a 3 in Conventions is considered developed for grade level.

**INTEGRATION 6:** The strong Focus and Elaboration features outweigh the slightly weaker Organization feature, indicating an Integration score of 6.

## Sample Narrative Response 2

Begin your essay here.

We were having the time of our lives! We were with one another and having a blast. My day could not be more fun all my friends were with me including my best friend Mellissa. I felt as if nothing could possibly go wrong but I was wrong.

It was Sunday morning and me and my sister had nothing to do so I called a few of my friends to see if they wanted to go to Sixflags. When I got off the phone I told my sister that I was going to sixflags and she did not really care so I just left. There was a car waiting for me in front of my house that was filled with my friends. Among my friends in the car was my best friend Mellissa. She was quiet the whole two hour trip there which was unlike her since she is usually a wisecracker. When we got to the parking lot she started to come to and start to joke around.

We headed through the gates and saw a great variety of rides for young kids and for teens and adults. My friends and I all decided to ride the merry go round just to relax from the long drive which everyone was ok with. After the merry go round ride was over we decided to go on the Superman which everyone except Mellissa seemed excited to go on. Once one

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

of my friends started calling her a chicken she got in line and said that she was not a chicken even though she was shaking with fear. When we got up to the roller coaster she was not paying attention to the line and got separated from us and was seated next to complete strangers. The roller coaster started and we were sitting faced down toward the ground going really high into the air and about to spiral out of control. When the roller coaster was over Mellissa was crying and panicked. She would not talk to anyone and just went home with her mom.

The next day I called her and she would not answer the phone so I went over to her house in person. She was really upset with how I did not stick up for her when the others were calling her names. Just because of one day we went from best friends to enemies. She told me that she hated me and how she was not sure if she will ever be my friend again which really hurt my feelings. We are no longer friends and we are in our own crowds she is popular and I have no idea what I am but I am starting to wonder if she was really meant to be my friend for life.

## Sample Narrative Response 2 Scores

**FOCUS 5:** Attempts a more sophisticated opening, but is not completely successful; attempts to set the stage but is vague. However, Focus is maintained throughout and the event is commented on by the end of the composition (*I am starting to wonder if she was really meant to be my friend for life*). Reactions are strong and relevant to the event (*having a blast, excited, shaking with fear, crying and panicked, really upset*).

**ELABORATION 5:** All major episodes are developed by specific detail; however, the composition lacks significant depth of development. Some specific word choice enhances specificity (*wisecracker, spiral out of control*). Some use of multiple strategies (others' reactions, point of view). Voice is appropriate, but not particularly engaging.

**ORGANIZATION 5:** Clear and effective narrative structure. Sequence of episodes is logically presented through time without significant gaps. Uses some appropriate transitional devices. Some varied sentence structure aids cohesion.

**CONVENTIONS 3:** Minor errors, but strong knowledge of Conventions and varied sentence structure is demonstrated.

**INTEGRATION 5:** All features are well developed for grade level.

### Sample Narrative Response 3

Begin your essay here.

One of my friendships from my other school was with a girl name Annai. She was short, nice, and she was very friendly. We first meet in pre-school, since pre-school is divide into two periods she was on the first period and I was on the second period, but my mom got me there early and I got to meet her.

Then we moved to first grade, we were good friends already.

Before first grade end my mom decide to sign my sister, my brother, and me to these after school program called YMCA so she could go to work without having to leave us alone in the house. When we went there a notice Annai and her brother were going there, too.

We did activities together there. We were together throught out the second grade.

We weren't playing a lot together than because she mostly played more with girls and I played more with

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

the boys.

Later my mom and my dad bought a new house for our family to live in but in order to do that we had to transfer from school.

I was starting third grade and I was in the same class with her this year but I need to go.

After we left I haven't seen her again.

Since this same day - I still haven't seen her.

This is why my friendship with her ended because I had to transfer from school so I could go to my new house.

The End

## Sample Narrative Response 3 Scores

**FOCUS 4:** Subject and events clear; has a closing. Some reactions are clear (*she was very friendly*); most are implied (*I haven't seen her*). Focus is maintained.

**ELABORATION 4:** Some specific detail (*pre-school is divide into two periods, after school program called YMCA*). Some Elaboration is general. Attempts some depth.

**ORGANIZATION 4:** Coherence depends on a holistic (chronology) structure. Some simple transitions move the story through time. Most episodes are logically presented and interrelated.

**CONVENTIONS 2:** Only partial knowledge of Conventions is demonstrated.

**INTEGRATION 4:** The composition meets the minimum requirements for grade level.

#### Sample Narrative Response 4

The first day I saw John, he was with a pack of kids. Then I went to wash a car in the front. He said "hey want to play soccer" I ask my dad he said "yes" then we played, had fun but then he said to me "big boy" because I was chubby now that I'm twelve years old I don't care but I was seven years old. So I punch him and we started to fight then when I was eight I went to go buy some ice cream he ran to me and tried to hit me but I karate kick him. When I was nine a new kid move in his name was Edgar he was bullying every one just because he's eleven years so one day I saw he was picking on Johnaten (John) so I ran and punch him so then he try to beat me up but John help me. So then Edgar ran away to his house then me and John started to hang out together. One year later Edgar moved out and two kids named Emmanuel and Felix live there they where cool.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

## Sample Narrative Response 4 Scores

**FOCUS 3:** The response is prompt dependent; without prior knowledge, the reader is unable to understand the assigned task. Lacks a closing.

**ELABORATION 3:** Most Elaboration is general; few specific details. Limited depth.

**ORGANIZATION 3:** Narrative structure is evident; however, sequence of episodes moves through time with very significant gaps. Lacks appropriate paragraphing.

**CONVENTIONS 2:** Demonstrates partial knowledge of Conventions.

**INTEGRATION 3:** Focus, Elaboration, and Organization are only partially developed.

## Sample Narrative Response 5

Begin your essay here.

In 3 years I knew  
a friend call Erica  
Everything start  
when I was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
I have to many friends, but  
this start look at me all  
weird and I ask her  
what happen why are you  
look at me all weird? and  
she said to me "HI" and I  
start laughing all crazy and  
she like "oh?" I was joking  
oh! I said "I was laughing  
because you saided funny."

Like in 2 hrs we  
went to recess and she was  
by her self and I went to  
her and said do you want  
to talk or do something!  
She no because she was  
feird I said ok then...

I ask her what's  
her name! she said Erica.  
"I said" oh beautiful name "Erica"  
and how old are you? I ask"  
she said 12 years old you?

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

I said 11 years old. And  
we still be Best Friend for 3  
years.

## Sample Narrative Response 5 Scores

**FOCUS 3:** Prompt dependent.

**ELABORATION 2:** Elaboration is general; few extensions.

**ORGANIZATION 2:** Structure is noticeable, but the reader must work hard to infer it. First half of composition is very confusing.

**CONVENTIONS 1:** Little knowledge of Conventions is demonstrated.

**INTEGRATION 2:** Student attempts to address the assignment, but lacks the basic techniques for forming Elaboration, Organization, and Conventions. Focus is only partially developed. Confusing and disjointed.

## Sample Narrative Response 6

Have you ever been accused of something you'd never do? I have. I've been accused of flirting with my friend's ~~Emily~~ friend Emily's boyfriend. There are three reasons why I wouldn't do that. One, she's my friend. Two, I would never break them up. ~~And~~ And three, I don't even like him.

Ok, so I told you how Emily is mad at me because my so called other friends told her, Jazmin, Jape, and Oh Day told her that I was flirting with her boyfriend, Danny. Which is not true. I mean, she's my friend and I wouldn't do that to her. I wouldn't hurt her that way. We've been friends since third grade. And I ~~to~~ love her to death. She's never done that to me, so why should I do it to her.

One of the second reasons why I ~~is~~ is because I wouldn't break them up. I mean they're happy together, I think. And she's happy with him. But I don't know about him being happy because he's always trying to talk to her and she just walks ~~away~~ away. I mean, sometimes I think that Danny deserves ~~some~~ someone better than Emily. But I'm not sure if he's ready to admit it yet.

The third reason is why I wouldn't is because I don't even like him. He's just a friend. The only reason why ~~I was accused of flirting was~~

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

I'm accused of flirting is because I talk to him and ~~mess~~ we mess around a lot. But I mean I do that to everyone! It's just different to all of them because Danny's with her. Even he thinks it's stupid for them to mad at me. We laugh about it all the time.

So these are my reasons. I hope ~~eventually~~ Emily, Jazmin, Jane, and Ody will that Emily, Jazmin, Jane and Ody will realize that Danny and I are just friends and that they're being stupid for thinking that I would do that. But I do get a kick out of ~~there~~ their faces when they look at us. Up until now, they're still mad at me. But I really, honestly, truly do not care.

## Sample Narrative Response 6 Scores

**FOCUS 2:** Off-mode response. Not a narrative telling a story that moves through time. Expository composition.

**ELABORATION 3:** Elaboration is general; few details. Limited depth.

**ORGANIZATION 2:** Off-mode response. Structure is expository rather than narrative.

**CONVENTIONS 3:** Demonstrates strong knowledge of Conventions.

**INTEGRATION 2:** Off-mode response.

## 2009-2010 Grading Guidelines for Schools

### CUT SCORES FOR DISTRICT WRITING PROMPTS

Consistent with ISAT, the cut scores for the District Writing Prompts are as follows:

| 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade ISAT<br>Cut Score Range | Letter Grade<br>Equivalent | Academic<br>Achievement Level<br>(State Assigned) |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| 6-14  | F                          | Academic Warning                                  |
| 15-17<br>18-20                                | F<br>D                     | Below Standards                                   |
| 21-24<br>25-27                                | C<br>B                     | Meets Standards                                   |
| 28-33   | A                          | Exceeds Standards                                 |

### GRADING YOUR DISTRICT WRITING PROMPTS

As you've noticed above, a letter grade equivalent table has been provided for each ISAT cut score range. Please use this table when assigning a student a letter grade. **You MUST use the letter grade equivalent to ISAT cut score range for all students when entering grades. CPS cannot provide a point value or percentage for these letter grade equivalents, rather teachers will have to make this determination based on their local school grading scale.**

Students who score below 21 on the externally scored District Wide Writing Assessment in Spring 2010 are classified as struggling in Writing and needing additional support (as these students would be classified as not "meeting standards" on ISAT). Because quarterly writing prompts are scored using the same rubric, a letter grade of C or higher should not be awarded as a Writing Prompt grade to these students.

| Fall Narrative Writing<br>Prompt               | Winter Persuasive<br>Writing Prompt            | Spring Expository<br>Writing Prompt            |
|--|--|--|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter grade                  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter grade                  | 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter grade                  |
| Weight = 50% of total<br>Writing quarter grade | Weight = 50% of total<br>Writing quarter grade | Weight = 50% of total<br>Writing quarter grade |

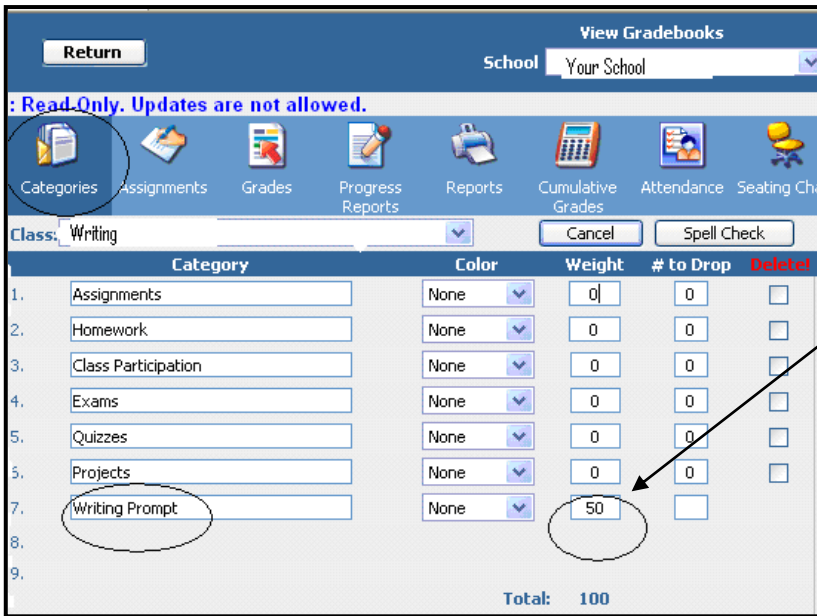
A student's scores on the three District Writing Prompts should make up 50% of their quarter grade (ultimately totaling 37.5% of the final end of year grade). The other 50% of a student's grade per quarter should be determined at the local school level (i.e., class work, homework, class participation, etc.).

# Grade Book Entry Guidelines for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade District Writing Prompts

We understand that not all teachers will enter student grades in Grade Book by assignment and may instead enter an end of quarter grade for that category (subject). Below are some general guidelines for teachers entering grades by assignment using Grade Book.

## 1. How do teachers assign weighting to different assignments?

- Prior to creating assignments, teachers make categories. The Writing prompt will be a category. In the screen shot below, you will find that each category can be assigned a specific weight (homework, class prep, exams, etc). Although Grade Book has a default weighting system, teachers will modify the default and enter a value weight of '50%' to the Writing Prompt.



### IMPORTANT Notes:

- The total of all category weights **MUST** equal 100

- IMPACT highly recommends defining categories **BEFORE** adding assignment level detail. Deletion of a category will result in the removal of any assignments that have been associated with that category.

## 2. Using the ISAT writing rubric to grade a piece of student work, would a teacher enter in a percentage, point value or letter grade?

- Teachers have the option to use grades, percentages, or points but they should be consistent and use one option only. Screen shot I, to the right, depicts an example using percentage with the numeric display option. If the teacher normally enters grades in Grade Book using a letter value, Grade Book will automatically assign a percentage to that letter grade based on the pre-programmed grade distribution scale. (As its default, Grade Book utilizes the CPS recommended grading ranges; however a Principal has the authorization to change this to reflect the school's criteria.)

| Student   | Att             | Avg   | Writing Prompt |
|-----------|-----------------|-------|----------------|
|           | Due:            |       |                |
|           | Points Possible |       | 100            |
| Student A | 0-0             | 86.79 | 100            |
| Student B | 0-0             | 83.59 | 90             |
| Student C | 0-0             | 90.41 | 100            |

Screen Shot I: percentage

Grade Book rolls up all four quarter grades to an average in order to determine an end of year final letter grade.

| Student | Avg             | Sep-5 |
|---------|-----------------|-------|
|         | Due:            | Sep-5 |
|         | Points Possible | 10    |
|         | A               | 10    |
|         | A               | 10    |
|         | A               | 10    |

Screen Shot II: letter grade

| Student | Avg             | Sep-5 |
|---------|-----------------|-------|
|         | Due:            | Sep-5 |
|         | Points Possible | 10    |
|         | 100.00          | 10    |
|         | 100.00          | 10    |
|         | 100.00          | 10    |

Screen Shot III: points

### Overriding Marking Period Grades

Teachers wishing to override the calculated grade MUST do so BEFORE final submission at the end of the marking period.

### *Steps for Grade Override*

Go to the **Verify Gradebook** page. Enter the desired marking period grade for the student in the ‘Override Cycle Avg.’ Click Update to save your changes. Once this is complete, you can follow the regular instructions for final submission of grades.

| Student            | Computed Cycle Avg. | Override Cycle Avg. | Comments | Citz |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------|------|
| Crestler, Clive    | A                   |                     |          |      |
| Connelly, Theresa  | B                   | A                   |          |      |
| Darcy, Audrey      | B                   |                     |          |      |
| Egiziaco, Florence | B                   |                     |          |      |
| Henry, Edmund      | B                   |                     |          |      |

For additional details on gradebook setup and grade calculation, visit

<http://impact.cps.k12.il.us/downloads/Elementary%20Grading%20Scale%20and%20Conversion.pdf>

## **Office of Reading and Language Arts**

### **Looking at Student Writing: A Calibration Protocol**

**Purpose:**

Grade level teams and/or groups of writing teachers can use this calibration protocol and attached scoring sheet to increase their discriminating ability and acuity in applying rubrics to student writing samples.

**Directions:**

To conduct a calibration protocol at your school:

- Gather your grade level/ course team
- Choose a sampling of student writing from a common assignment
- Select a common rubric
- Using the rubric, individually score the student writing samples
- Compare the individual feature scores for each paper
- Any feature score that deviates more than one point must be discussed and a consensus must be reached for that score
- Take note of student strengths and challenges
- Note areas of writing, where score deviation occurs (e.g., teacher scores deviate particularly on grammar, or when there is a tendency to include focus in elaboration scores. In each case, we need to refer back to the rubric)

Note: Once teachers have conducted a calibrating protocol a few times, there is usually no need to continue this protocol for the same type of writing. When a new genre is assigned, this protocol is again necessary because the rubric as well as teacher expectations will have changed.

## Looking at Student Writing: A Calibration Protocol Reporting Sheet Using the ISAT Writing Narrative Rubric

The ISAT Writing Narrative Rubric is based on a six-point scale on which the features of Focus, Elaboration, Organization and Integration are rated. The Conventions feature is rated on a three-point scale. The Integration score is weighted or doubled to reflect the holistic nature of good writing.

Academic Warning: 6-14; Below Standards: 15-20; Meets: 21-27; Exceeds: 28-33

| FOCUS | ELABORATION | ORGANIZATION | CONVENTIONS | INTEGRATION | SCORE |
|-------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
|       |             |              |             |             |       |

**Comments:**

| FOCUS | ELABORATION | ORGANIZATION | CONVENTIONS | INTEGRATION | SCORE |
|-------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
|       |             |              |             |             |       |

**Comments:**

| FOCUS | ELABORATION | ORGANIZATION | CONVENTIONS | INTEGRATION | SCORE |
|-------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
|       |             |              |             |             |       |

**Comments:**

| FOCUS | ELABORATION | ORGANIZATION | CONVENTIONS | INTEGRATION | SCORE |
|-------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
|       |             |              |             |             |       |

**Comments:**