

# 2012-2013 DISTRICT BASELINE WRITING ASSESSMENT

## Technical Assistance Paper

The Division of Language Arts/Reading is providing prompts for baseline writing assessment to be administered to students in grades 4, 8, and 10. The results of these assessments should be used as instructional tools to prepare students for the state writing assessment (FCAT Writing) as well as to develop their lifelong writing skills. Effective writing instruction is outlined in the Language Arts Pacing Guides available in the Learning Village.

In order to meet state requirements, all Prevent, Focus, and Priority schools are required to report baseline writing assessment results of students in grades 4, 8, and 10 during the 2012-13 school year for **both** a narrative and an expository writing prompt (grade 4) and a persuasive and expository writing prompt (grades 8 and 10). **Prompts for both narrative and expository (grade 4) and persuasive and expository (grades 8 and 10) will be provided for the mid-year assessment at a later date.**

- Baseline Assessment prompts are to be administered **August 22 – August 31, 2012**. Schools will score the essays using the ***Vertical Alignment to Show Application of the Holistic Rubric for FCAT Writing- 2013***, the **Anchor Sets**, the **Calibration Scoring Guides**, and use Edusoft to report scores.

Directions for electronically collecting student performance writing data on Edusoft are available on the Instructional Technology website at <http://it.dadeschools.net/edusoft.htm>.

The *District Baseline Writing Assessment Packet* is available on the Language Arts/Reading website at <http://languageartsreading.dadeschools.net/>.

The *Baseline Packet* includes:

- Baseline Writing Prompts
- *Vertical Alignment to Show Application of the Holistic Rubric for FCAT Writing for 2013*
- Recommendations for Instruction

Calibration Scoring Guides and Anchor Sets are available on the Language Arts/Reading website at <http://languageartsreading.dadeschools.net>.

Visit the Language Arts/Reading Website for additional instructional resources.

Elementary schools should contact Rosa Ochoa, Division of Language Arts/Reading, at (305) 995-3120 for any questions.

Secondary schools should contact Dr. Sharon Scruggs-Williams, Division of Language Arts/Reading, at (305) 995-3122 for any questions.

## CHANGES TO FCAT WRITING – 2013

The current rubrics will continue to be used for scoring in 2013. In addition to the elements of *focus*, *organization*, *support*, and *conventions* described in the rubrics, scoring decisions will include expanded expectations regarding increased attention to the following:

- Scoring will include the correct use of standard English conventions. In the past, the scoring of this element has been applied with leniency. Responses will continue to be scored holistically as draft writing, but scoring will be more **stringent**.
  - Responses earning scores of **4 or 5** must at least **generally** follow the conventions of sentence structure, mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.
  - To earn a score of **6**, sentence structure is varied, and **few, if any**, errors occur in mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.
  - Although spelling will continue to be considered in scoring, it is the preponderance of commonly used words being misspelled that could impact the score. (e.g., if a fourth grade student generally spells fourth grade words correctly and chooses to write about a rhinoceros and misspells the word throughout the response, the scoring will not be negatively affected.)
- Scoring will include increased attention to the **quality of details**, requiring use of **relevant, logical, and plausible support**, rather than contrived statistical claims or unsubstantiated generalities. The quality of the support depends on **word choice, specificity, depth, relevance, and thoroughness**.
  - Responses earning **high scores** must include **specific** and **relevant** supporting details that **clarify** the meaning, i.e., the point of the paragraph or the central theme of the response.
  - **Rote memorization** or **overuse** of compositional techniques, such as **rhetorical questions, implausible statistics, or pretentious language** is **not** the expectation for quality writing at any grade level.

To review the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards expectations on the use of conventions for each grade level, go to [floridastandards.org](http://floridastandards.org) and select Reading/Language Arts for that grade level, followed by the Writing Process strand and Standard 4: Editing for Language Conventions.

# FCAT Writing

## 2012-2013 Baseline Assessment Packet

### Grade 8



# FCAT Writing

## Grade 8

Enclosed please find:

- Instructions for Teachers
- Assessment Directions
- Baseline Persuasive and Expository Prompts
- Student Writing Folder
- Holistic Scoring Procedures
- Vertical Alignment Chart
- Allowable Interpretations
- Recommendations for Instruction



# FCAT Writing

Grade 8

## Baseline Writing Instructions for Teachers

- Duplicate and administer the Baseline Writing Assessment between **August 22, 2012 and August 31, 2012**.
- Each student will receive both a persuasive and expository prompt for each assessment period.
- Read the *Assessment Directions* to the class.
- Encourage students to use the planning sheet.



## Assessment Directions:

The following is a synopsis of the directions test administrators read to students for the essay:

Today you are going to complete a writing exercise, and it is important for you to do as well as you can. Your scored response will be returned to you as part of your record.

The prompt explains what you are going to write about and gives you some ideas for planning your writing. You may use the planning sheet for jotting down ideas and planning and organizing what you will write.

After planning what you will write, begin the writing that will be scored. You may continue your writing until you are finished. You do not have to fill up both of the pages, but you should respond completely to the prompt.

The writing should be easy to read and show that you can organize and express your thoughts clearly and completely.

You may give your writing a title if you would like, but you do not have to title your writing.

You may not use a dictionary. If you do not know how to spell a word, sound the word out and do the best you can.

You may either print or write in cursive. It is important to write neatly.

Remember, you must first read your prompt and then plan what you will write. I cannot read your prompt to you or help you plan what to write. You must read and plan yourself.

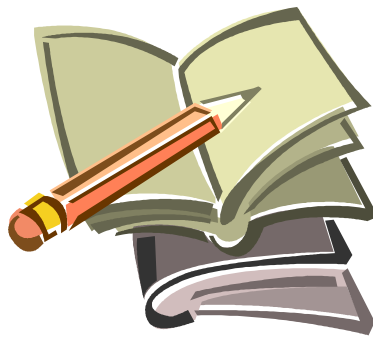
*You have a total of **60** minutes to read, plan, and respond to your prompt. I will let you know when you have **10** minutes left.*

*If you finish early, check your work and make corrections to improve your writing.*

# **FCAT Writing Assessment**

## **Grade 8**

### **2012-2013 Baseline Prompts**



# **Middle School Expository Prompt**

## **Grade 8**

### **Baseline**

**You have 60 minutes to respond to the following writing topic.**

#### **Expository Prompt**

Some people like to go to the same place again and again, such as a park, a restaurant, or someone's house.

Think about a place you like to go again and again.

Now write to explain why you like to go to this place again and again.

# **DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAGE**



# **Middle School Persuasive Prompt**

## **Grade 8**

### **Baseline**

**You have 60 minutes to respond to the following writing topic.**

#### **Persuasive Prompt**

Your principal is considering whether or not students should be graded on how they behave in school.

Think about the consequences of students receiving grades based on their behavior in school.

Now write to persuade your principal whether or not students should be graded on how they behave in school.

**DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAGE**







# FCAT Writing

## Baseline Writing Assessment

### Holistic Scoring Procedures

- After administering each writing assessment, the teacher should score the students' papers using:
  - *2012 FCAT Writing Grade 8 Expository Calibration Scoring Guide* and the *2012 FCAT Writing Grade 8 Persuasive Prompt Anchor Set*. These documents can be found on the Language Arts/Reading website at <http://languageartsreading.dadeschools.net>
  - Vertical Alignment to Show Application of the Holistic Rubric for FCAT Writing for 2013 included in this packet.



**Vertical Alignment to Show Application of the Holistic Rubric for FCAT Writing 2013  
Examination of Criteria by Score Point**

1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>FCAT 2.0 Rubric – Grade 8</b>					
<b>Focus</b>					
The writing addresses topic, may lose focus with extraneous or loosely related ideas.	The writing addresses topic, may lose focus by including extraneous or loosely related ideas.	The writing is focused, but may contain ideas that are loosely connected.	The writing is focused; few, if any, loosely related ideas	The writing is focused.	Writing is focused and purposeful, reflecting insight into writing situation.
<b>FCAT Writing Exemplar/Anchor Set Annotations (Interpretation of the Rubric for 2013)</b>					
<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The writing is related to the topic but loosely related and extraneous information obstruct the focus of the response.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> The writing minimally addresses the topic, but is too brief to demonstrate an understanding of focus.</p> <p>In addition, the first sentence contains extraneous information that is not addressed further in the writing</p> <p>The writer presents a weak position in the first paragraph.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The writing is related to the topic.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> The writing is related to the topic and presents a position.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The writing is generally focused on the topic.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> The student directly addresses the prompt.</p> <p>The writing is focused on the topic and the student presents a position.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> This response is focused on the topic, but some loosely related material in the last body paragraph weakens the focus somewhat.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> The student presents a clear position.</p> <p>The writing is focused on the topic.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The writing is focused on the topic.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> The student states a clear position in the introduction.</p> <p>From the opening sentence, this response is focused.</p> <p>The writer's position is clearly established in the introduction, and the tone is maintained throughout the response.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The writing is focused on the topic, and the skillfully crafted, relevant details reflect insight into the writing situation.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> The writing maintains a consistent focus on the topic. The student establishes a position in the introduction and continues to reinforce this position with relevant details throughout the response.</p> <p>A unique opening scenario reinforces the writer's position.</p>
<b>FCAT 2.0 Rubric – Grade 8</b>					
<b>Organization</b>					
The writing may have organizational pattern; may lack sense of completeness or closure.	The organizational pattern usually includes beginning, middle, and ending, but those elements may be brief.	The organizational pattern is demonstrated, but may lack logical progression of ideas.	The organizational pattern is apparent and strengthened by use of transitional devices.	The organizational pattern provides for logical progression of ideas; transitional devices give a sense of completeness.	The organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas; transitional devices give a sense of completeness.

**FCAT Writing Exemplar/Anchor Set Annotations (Interpretation of the Rubric for 2013)**

<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> There is little evidence of an organizational plan, as the response is presented in a rambling, stream-of-consciousness fashion. Overall, the response lacks a sense of completeness.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Sparse details make it difficult to discern an organizational pattern.</p> <p>The conclusion is an attempt to summarize details in the writing but ends up as simple declarative phrases.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> There is evidence of an organizational plan through a basic introduction that previews the main ideas and the use of simple transitions.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Though it is not apparent at first because there are no paragraphs, there is an attempt at organization. The student uses simple transitions to provide a framework.</p> <p>An organizational pattern is attempted with an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion that briefly restates the three reasons.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> There is evidence of an organizational pattern, with a preview of three reasons provided in the introduction, the use of simple transitions between paragraphs, and the brief conclusion.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> An organizational pattern is presented through a basic introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion that relates to the topic.</p> <p>Simple transitional phrases introduce each paragraph .</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The writing is organized around the writer’s favorite things. The first transitional phrase, however, is awkward and the transitions between paragraphs are relatively simple .</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> An organizational plan is evident through the use of a clear introduction and effective use of topic sentences.</p> <p>Contributing to the organization is the use of concluding sentences to summarize each paragraph.</p> <p>Transitions are used within paragraphs and the organization within each paragraph strengthens the response.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> The organizational pattern provides for a progression of ideas through the introduction, followed by three body paragraphs, and ending with a successful conclusion. The transitional devices signal the connections between paragraphs.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Although each body paragraph begins with a rudimentary transitional phrase, an organizational plan is evident by the progression of ideas within each paragraph.</p> <p>The conclusion is thoughtful and summarizes the ideas presented in the response.</p> <p>An organizational plan is evident in the logical progression of ideas within each paragraph. Each idea builds upon the previous one. The conclusion is thoughtful and summarizes the ideas presented in the response. The topic sentence in each paragraph effectively serves as a transitional device</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> There is a logical progression of ideas throughout the response. Each unique topic sentence serves as a transitional device.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> An organizational pattern is evident. There is a logical progression of ideas throughout the response, all focusing on the topic.</p> <p>The final sentence in the first body paragraph not only briefly summarizes the paragraph, but also leads to the information discussed in the next paragraph.</p> <p>Each topic sentence serves as a transitional device. In addition, the concluding sentence summarizes each paragraph.</p>
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<b>Support</b>					
<b>FCAT 2.0 Rubric – Grade 8</b>					
There is little development of supporting ideas; may consist of generalizations or fragmentary lists; word choice is limited or inappropriate and obscure meaning.	The development of support may be erratic and nonspecific; ideas may be repeated; word choice is limited, predictable, or vague.	The development of support is uneven; word choice is adequate.	The support is consistently developed, but may lack specificity; adequate word choice.	The support is developed through ample use of specific details and examples; mature command of language.	The support is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete; mature command of language; commitment to and involvement with subject; may use creative writing strategies.
<b>FCAT Writing Exemplar/Anchor Set Annotations (Interpretation of the Rubric for 2013)</b>					
<p><b>Annotations from 2011</b> Support is inadequate, list-like, and repetitive. Word choice is limited and vague.</p> <p><b>Annotations from 2012</b> Little development of support is apparent. The single reason is minimally supported.</p> <p>The writing provides two minimally related reasons; there is no support for this judgment contained in the response.</p> <p>Support is repetitive and circular and does not further the writer's argument.</p>	<p><b>Annotations from 2011</b> Some support is included, but development is inadequate and limited, often in the form of lists. Word choice is limited and occasionally vague.</p> <p><b>Annotations from 2012</b> Support is basically a list of reasons with inadequate development .</p> <p>Some support is included for a couple of the ideas, but it is limited and repetitive.</p> <p>The first body paragraph contains two reasons that are minimally supported.</p>	<p><b>Annotations from 2011</b> Although the development of support sometimes helps to clarify the topic, the word choice is sometimes repetitive, limited, and vague.</p> <p><b>Annotations from 2012</b> Details become somewhat specific, indicating more control than a score point 2. Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence and contains some support.</p> <p>Support is initially list-like, including some repetitive word choice</p> <p>In the second body paragraph, the student begins to flesh out the outline with some specific reasons and support.</p>	<p><b>Annotations from 2011</b> The development of support is adequate, contributing to the sense of In the last body paragraph, rather than developing support for the topic sentence, the details shift, creating a lapse in cohesion and a bit of uneven development .</p> <p><b>Annotations from 2012</b> Support is amply developed, yet concise. Each sentence is purposeful and illustrates the point.</p> <p>The use of statistics in the first body paragraph neither adds to nor detracts from the quality of the support.</p> <p>In the first body paragraph, a specific example is used to develop and bolster the response.</p> <p>The second body paragraph, however, does not provide as</p>	<p><b>Annotations from 2011</b> The writing demonstrates a mature command of language, including some precise word choice. Support is amply developed and clarifies the intended meaning .</p> <p><b>Annotations from 2012</b> Support is amply developed throughout each paragraph with specific examples.</p> <p>The use of examples and supporting details bolsters the response.</p> <p>The writing is controlled and fluent, and each idea supports the next .</p> <p>The student acknowledges the opposition in the response.</p>	<p><b>Annotations from 2011</b> Support for each paragraph is specific and illustrative, with carefully selected details. There is mature command of language and precise word choice.</p> <p><b>Annotations from 2012</b> Support for each paragraph is specific and illustrative with carefully selected examples to bolster the response.</p> <p>The writing is natural, reasonable, and convincing.</p> <p>Support for each paragraph is specific and illustrative with carefully selected details to reinforce the writer's point of view. The writer exhibits effective techniques in each topic sentence and then provides relevant details to support this point.</p> <p>The writer has a mature command of language that enables the reader to visualize</p>



			much specificity, which gives this response an uneven quality.		events.
<b>Conventions FCAT 2.0 Rubric – Grade 8</b>					
Frequent and blatant errors in conventions including errors in sentence structure; mechanics, usage, and punctuation, common words misspelled.	Errors may occur in basic conventions including sentence structure; mechanics, usage, and punctuation, common words are spelled correctly.	Some variation in sentence structure; conventions are generally followed (mechanics, usage, punctuation).	Variation in sentence structure is demonstrated; conventions are generally followed (mechanics, usage, punctuation, spelling).	Variation in sentence structure; conventions are generally followed (mechanics, usage, punctuation, spelling).	Sentence structure is varied; conventional errors are few (mechanics, usage, punctuation, spelling).
<b>FCAT Writing Exemplar/Anchor Set Annotations (Interpretation of the Rubric for 2013)</b>					
<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> This response is basically several run-on sentences that are often unclear. Commonly used words are misspelled, and frequent errors occur in capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence structure.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Commonly used words are misspelled. In addition, there are errors in capitalization.</p> <p>The lack of punctuation creates run-on sentences, signaling a lack of control.</p> <p>Frequent and blatant convention errors impair understanding.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> There is little variation in sentence structure, and gross errors occur in the basic conventions of spelling, mechanics, and usage.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Frequent errors occur in capitalization, punctuation, and usage.</p> <p>The first body paragraph is basically one run-on sentence. Sentence structure is often awkward.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> Although some sentence structures are varied, frequent errors occur in the basic conventions of punctuation, capitalization, spelling, usage, and sentence structure.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Sentence structure consists of mostly simple sentences.</p> <p>Some sentences are awkward.</p> <p>The response usually demonstrates knowledge of the conventions of mechanics and usage.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> Sentence structure is varied, and although some errors occur, knowledge of the conventions of mechanics, usage, and spelling is generally demonstrated.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Knowledge of the conventions of mechanics, usage, and spelling is generally demonstrated.</p> <p>Sentence structure is varied, giving fluency to this response.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> There is variation in sentence structure, and although some errors occur, the response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, and spelling.</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Sentence structure is varied, creating a compositional facility and rhythm to this response that contributes to the meaning.</p>	<p><b><u>Annotations from 2011</u></b> Sentence structure is varied, and sentences are complete except when fragments are used purposefully. Although this substantial response is not perfect, few errors occur in mechanics, usage, and punctuation. [ ]</p> <p><b><u>Annotations from 2012</u></b> Although this response is not perfect, few errors occur in mechanics, spelling, usage, and punctuation.</p> <p>There is variation in sentence structure throughout, making the writing natural, reasonable, and convincing.</p>

## FCAT Writing Allowable Interpretations For Grades 4, 8, and 10

Allowable interpretations describe acceptable ways of responding to the prompt. The allowable interpretations serve as a scoring tool that assists scorers in distinguishing scorable from unscorable responses.

-  The words in the prompt may be broadly defined.
-  It may be fact or fantasy.
-  The student may present information as “factual” even if the information is not based on fact as long as the information is **plausible** in the context of the writing situation.
-  The story may include or be limited to the time period before, during, or after the event(s).
-  The writer may cite one or more things that happened during the event(s) suggested by the prompt. The writer may write about all the things that happened or may write about one aspect.
-  The writer may tell about the + or – aspects of the time/event, the consequences of the time/event, and /or reactions to the time/event.
-  Description and exposition “work” if it is part of a story line.
-  The main character in the story may be the student or someone else.

## FCAT Writing Grade 8

### Recommendations for Teachers

Pacing Guides that outline instructional procedures and strategies aligned with the Sunshine State Standards should guide instruction in Language Arts classes. These pacing guides are available in the *Learning Village*. Daily contact with students provides teachers with many direct opportunities to influence student attitudes toward writing. Instruction in writing should regularly involve the full writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Displaying or publishing student writing completes and authenticates the writing process.

Real-world writing often requires demand writing (writing a response to a topic in a short period of time). As a part of writing instruction, students should work independently to read a topic, plan for writing, and formulate a response within a specified time frame. Analysis of writing that includes constructive feedback for students is a necessary step to enable students to improve their writing skills.

Teachers can prepare students for the demand writing through a number of teacher generated activities that include asking students to:

- write responses to questions as an alternative to selecting correct responses on a multiple-choice test;
- read passages and create summary questions;
- write their views on current events before or after the events have been discussed in class;
- critique written pieces (e.g., published works and student writings);
- read and analyze different types of writing (e.g., biographies, science fiction, fantasies, historical accounts, speeches, and news reports);
- write letters to explain views on a particular issue or to refute the views of another person;
- write stories about real or imagined events;
- write descriptions of how things look, smell, taste, sound, and feel;
- write endings for unfinished fictional and nonfictional stories;
- write personal anecdotes and incorporate them into writing that either explains or persuades;
- maintain subject-area writing portfolios or participate in a long-term writing project