

Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 6

Lessons Learned

Comprehension is the overarching reason for reading. No matter how accurate or fluent a reader may be, without comprehension, and the deeper levels of understanding that strong comprehension instruction provides, reading is purposeless. While on their own accuracy and fluency are important, the real purpose for reading is to understand and, thus, to think.

– EECD, 2012 p. 19

The interconnectedness of reading and writing is profound and inescapable ... Fragmenting these complex literacy processes interferes with the greatest goal of literacy education – the construction of meaning from and through text. Using reading and writing together in harmonious concert enables learners to draw on these complementary processes at the same time as they work to construct meaning.

– Fountas and Pinnell, 2001, p. vi

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Purpose of this document

This *Lessons Learned* document was developed based on an analysis of the item description reports for each administration of the Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 6 (2012–2013, 2013–2014, 2014–2015, and 2015–2016). It is intended to support classroom teachers (4–6) and administrators at the school, board, and provincial levels, in using the information gained from this assessment to inform next steps for literacy focus.

After the results for each assessment become available, an item description report is developed in which each item/question of the reading assessment is described in relation to the curriculum outcomes and cognitive processes involved with comprehending the text and answering the question correctly. The percentage of students across the province who answered each question correctly is also included in the item description report. Item description reports for reading are made available to school boards for distribution to schools, and they include provincial, board, and school data. Schools and boards should examine their own data in relation to the provincial data for continued discussions, explorations, and support for reading focus at the classroom, school, board, and provincial levels.

This document specifically addresses areas that students across the province found challenging based on provincial assessment evidence. It is essential that teachers consider assessment evidence from a variety of sources to inform the next steps most appropriate for their students. Effective classroom instruction and assessment strategies are responsive to the individual learners within a classroom. As well, it is recognized that students need opportunities to engage and interact with a range of texts in the classroom, and that teachers use ongoing classroom assessment to support appropriate text selection for students for both instructional and independent reading purposes (see Appendix A for a description of characteristics associated with early, transitional, and fluent stages of reading).

The Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 6 generates information that is useful in guiding classroom-based instruction and assessment in reading and writing. This document provides an overview of the reading and writing tasks included in the assessment, information about this year's reading and writing assessment results, and a series of lessons learned for reading and writing. Suggested next steps for classroom instruction and assessment are included for each lesson learned.

Each lesson learned in reading identifies skills that students generally found more challenging across a variety of curriculum outcomes, cognitive levels, and text genres. Each lesson learned in writing is based on four areas of writing: Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions. Instructional and assessment strategies are suggested for each of these four areas. Scored student samples of writing are presented and annotated (see Appendix G). Teachers can use these strategies and writing samples to support targeted writing instruction. It is important to remember that writing instruction should always take place in a contextualized manner.

Overview of the Nova Scotia Assessment (NSA): Reading and Writing in Grade 6 (RW6)

This assessment provides information about reading and writing performance for each student and complements assessment evidence collected in the classroom. This assessment is administered at the beginning of Grade 6. It is designed to provide detailed information for every student in the province regarding his or her progress in achieving a selection of reading and writing curriculum outcomes at the end of Grade 5. Information from this assessment can be used by teachers to inform their instruction.

The design of this assessment includes the following:

- reading and writing tasks that reflect the end of grade 5 curriculum outcome expectations
- reading passages in the narrative, information, poetry/song, and visual text genres
- reading comprehension questions in selected response format
- reading comprehension questions that are designed to provide a broad range of challenge, thereby providing information about a range of individual student performance
- one letter writing task and one story writing task

Reading and Writing in Grade 6 Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned: Reading in Grade 6

- 1) Students need to engage in active reading strategies to more fully understand a text's intended meaning.
- 2) Students need to understand how to read visual text features and organizational devices such as headings and tables, and how they support meaning in the context of an entire text.
- 3) Students need to be able to identify a variety of elements of text and understand how they contribute to the overall meaning of a text.

Lessons Learned: Writing in Grade 6

- 1) Ideas: Students need to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details and examples that support the main idea.
- 2) Organization: Students need to organize their writing in a logical sequence with an introduction, body, and conclusion using a variety of transitional devices.
- 3) Language Use: Students need to use voice, style, word choice, and varied syntax to contribute to clear and fluid written communication.
- 4) Conventions: Students need to use correct conventions (punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, noun-pronoun agreement, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, spelling of frequently used words including homonyms) to contribute to effective written communication.

Key Messages

The following key messages should be considered when using this document to inform classroom instruction and assessment.

- The workshop framework is one of the most effective approaches for classroom literacy instruction. It involves planning literacy lessons so there is opportunity for explicit instruction, time for student practice, and time for sharing. The workshop approach encourages balanced and developmentally appropriate instruction, while scaffolding student learning.
- Current research suggests that there is a place for strategy instruction (targeted instruction in mini-lessons and individual conferences, for example). In order to support students in deepening their reading comprehension, they need exposure to a variety of thought provoking texts and opportunities to engage in discussion. During this discussion students must be encouraged to ask and respond to deeper level questions about the text they are reading. Explicit instruction on comprehension strategies is most effective when it is embedded within the context of such discussions.
- Reading and writing are reciprocal processes. Reading and writing instruction is strengthened when teachers make explicit connections between the two. For example, if the learning goal is for students to begin to use quotation marks in their writing it helps to provide a mini-lesson on noticing how authors use quotation marks in their stories. Highlighting for students that quotation marks indicate the beginning and ending of dialogue helps them to recognize when they need to insert quotation marks in their writing. Conversely, a student who has been taught how to use quotation marks appropriately in their writing will be able to attend to this punctuation when reading.

If the learning goal is for students to be able to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details that support the main idea, it is helpful to have them read a variety of texts to identify and discuss the main idea and details that support it. In doing so students begin to understand various text features the author used, the word choices the author made, and any other characteristics that were used to connect the details to the main idea. Again, when students begin to identify these characteristics while reading, they are more likely to attend to them in their writing. This helps students enhance their comprehension of the text and, at the same time, better understand how to organize their writing.

- Ongoing assessment for learning (formative assessment) is essential to effective teaching and learning. Assessment for learning can and should happen every day as part of classroom instruction. It involves the teacher focusing on how learning is progressing during instruction, determining where improvements can be made, and identifying the next steps. “Such assessment becomes ‘formative assessment’ when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs” (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2003, p.2). Effective strategies of assessment for learning during a lesson include: strategic questioning, observing, conversing (conferring with students to “hear their thinking”), analyzing student’s work (products), engaging students in reviewing their progress, as well as providing opportunities for peer feedback and self-assessment.
- Assessment of learning (summative assessment) should also occur periodically. Assessment of learning involves the process of collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of summarizing learning at a given point in time, and making judgments about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria. The information gathered may be used to communicate the student’s achievement to students, parents, and others. It occurs at or near the end of a learning cycle.

- All forms of assessment should be planned with the end in mind, thinking about the following questions:
 - What do I want students to learn? (identifying clear learning targets)
 - What does the learning look like? (identifying clear criteria for success)
 - How will I know they are learning?
 - How will I design the learning so that all will learn?
- Teachers use many different sources of assessment information to provide evidence of understanding in the area of comprehension, including the following:
 - conferring notes
 - reading behaviour checklists
 - observation notes from small and whole group discussions
 - running records (also known as oral reading records)
 - samples of students' writing in response to their reading
- One of the most effective ways to gather information about a student's reading comprehension is to engage students in a conversation about what they are reading during individual student conferences. Questions that encourage students to think aloud about their understanding of a text can provide valuable insight into student achievement in reading. Drawing on the lessons learned in this document, teachers can ask students to find explicitly and implicitly stated information in the text, as well as to analyze and evaluate this information to draw conclusions that are based on the text. Teachers can also ask students about the function of text features, punctuation marks, spelling conventions, and grammatical indicators in the context of the text's meaning. Anecdotal notes (observations/conversations) gathered during conferences provide a valuable source of assessment information that can be used to inform instruction and monitor student progress.
- Before planning for instruction using the suggestions for instruction and assessment, it is important that teachers review individual student results in conjunction with current independent reading and writing assessment information. A variety of current classroom assessments should be analyzed to determine specific strengths and areas for continued instructional focus or support.
- The lessons learned are aligned with suggestions for instruction and assessment. These suggestions were designed with the workshop approach in mind and with the intent that specific areas of literacy instruction are identified using current assessment evidence. Common understandings inherent in each teaching suggestion include:
 - The essence and central purpose of reading is comprehension and of writing is communication; all other aspects of reading and writing contribute to and are in support of these aims.
 - Learning is strengthened when students have opportunities to talk with peers in a collaborative work environment, but there also need to be opportunities for individual and independent demonstration of reading and writing competence.
 - All strategies and skills are enhanced when learners are aware of their own thinking processes (metacognition). In doing so, students monitor their learning by thinking about their thinking and articulating both their thinking and learning processes; for example, they can explain their thinking behind a given answer/response.
 - Learners require explicit instruction and teacher demonstration in addition to timely feedback that provides specific support and guidance during the process of reading and writing.

Overview of the Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading in Grade 6

The reading questions on this assessment reflect three cognitive levels:

- *Literal comprehension* questions are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended explicit information in the text.
- *Non-literal comprehension* questions are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended implicit information in the text such as inferences, connotative meaning, idioms, and figurative language (e.g., simile and metaphor).
- *Analysis* questions are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has thought critically about texts by analyzing, synthesizing, or evaluating the explicit and/or implicit information in the text.

Each text genre represents 20–30% of the assessment, and each cognitive level represents between 30–40% of the assessment. These percentages and the assessment’s table of specifications were developed and vetted by a provincial RW6 Advisory Group made up of grade 5 and grade 6 teachers to reflect classroom practice at those grade levels. When planning instruction and assessment teachers must be aware of the cognitive levels of questions and provide opportunities for students to interact with a range of texts across all cognitive levels. The different cognitive levels of questions (literal, non-literal, and analysis) require students to engage in different types of strategic thinking in order to fully understand and respond to the text.

Assessment Results for Reading in Grade 6

Nova Scotia Assessment results are reported across four levels of performance. A description of the Reading Performance Levels is provided below:

- Level 1: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 1 can find information that is clearly stated in the text. They can also infer information that is not directly stated but is clearly suggested in the text.
- Level 2: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 2 can use information from the text to form a conclusion. They can use some text features like pictures and titles to help them understand the text. They can also make sense of some abstract language in the text; for example, they may understand that a person who feels “blue” is sad.
- Level 3: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 3 can understand how different parts of the text fit together. They can make connections among information in different parts of the text and use the connections to form their own conclusions.
- Level 4: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 4 can analyze and evaluate information from the text. They can also make complicated connections among parts of the text to form their own conclusions.

The latest provincial reading results (2015–2016) for Reading and Writing in Grade 6 showed the following:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reading Performance	9%	19%	66%	6%

This information provides opportunities for continued discussions, explorations, and support for writing at the classroom, school, board, and provincial levels.

Sample Poem and Questions to Illustrate Reading Cognitive Levels

The Friendly Lion

by Donna Kealy

1 I'm delighted to make your acquaintance, my dear,
2 But I'm rather short-sighted, so won't you come near?
3 You look tender and juicy and plump—pardon me!
4 I mean, clever, and charming and nice as can be.
5 I enjoy friendly chats but, to tell you the truth,
6 I'm in terrible pain from an ache in my tooth.
7 Do you think if I opened my mouth very wide
8 You could stick your head in to see what's inside?
9 I can tell you're suspicious, but don't run away;
10 I'm a strict vegetarian (have been all day).
11 I eat only bananas and grapes by the bunch.
12 You can see for yourself if you stay until lunch.
13 Would you care to relax in this kettle of stew?
14 Wait! I mean, in this bath that I've heated for you.
15 That's the third time today that my dinner has fled—
16 Do you think that it might have been something I said?

1. Re-read lines 13 and 14. What does the lion mean by “this bath”? [Literal]
 - ☐ bubble bath
 - ☐ lake
 - ☐ stew
 - ☐ swimming pool
2. What is meant by “strict vegetarian (have been all day)” in line 10 of the poem? [Non-Literal]
 - ☐ The lion has a toothache so he cannot eat meat.
 - ☐ The lion has not eaten meat on the day in the poem.
 - ☐ The lion likes eating fruit and vegetables the best.
 - ☐ The lion only eats vegetables as part of his regular diet.
3. What is the purpose of the lion's speech? [Analysis]
 - ☐ to make friends with another animal
 - ☐ to persuade another animal to keep him company
 - ☐ to share a meal with another animal
 - ☐ to trick an animal into becoming his next meal

Reading in Grade 6 Lesson Learned 1

Students need to engage in active reading strategies to more fully understand a text's intended meaning.

Successful readers often do so automatically, without much thought or attention to the processes and strategies involved. Students who are challenged by reading often think there is a magic solution that they just don't have. Explicitly discussing and modeling the strategies are critical to supporting all learners as readers, now and in the future when texts they encounter will be more complex in terms of content, vocabulary use, and writing style.

This begins with reinforcing that reading is an active process that is based on comprehension. In order to read a piece of text, readers must continuously build meaning by integrating context, printed words, specific vocabulary, and visual information. Readers must always be self-monitoring, asking themselves if what they are reading makes sense and if they are building a growing knowledge of the content or the story. They must be encouraged to be meta-cognitive by being aware when comprehension breaks down and being ready with a bank of effective strategies to regain meaning.

Readers need to be aware that there is a message or specific pieces of information that the author is aiming to communicate. Although a reader's level of understanding will vary depending on a number of personal factors, including their familiarity with vocabulary and the subject matter, all readers should leave a text having understood the same intended meaning.

Understanding the intended message of a text is strengthened when readers can identify the main message/theme/topic or key idea and supporting events or details. This is an important skill that is critical to learners being able to work with text through summarizing, analyzing, and synthesizing. Readers should have multiple opportunities to develop this skill through explicit instruction and demonstration, using the gradual release of responsibility model that supports the learner until independence can be demonstrated.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">actively and purposefully apply effective strategies that support reading comprehensionuse short information text to build comprehension strategiesidentify the intended meaning of a piece of textdevelop students' vocabulary	<p>Model that reading is a problem-solving activity that requires continuous self-monitoring to ensure that the reader is making sense of the text. Spend a few minutes sharing your own experiences as a reader, especially when reading aloud.</p> <p>To reinforce that reading is about comprehension, tell the students a story or listen to a new story on the radio. Then, discuss the meaning of the story, including the main idea and details shared.</p>	<p>Provide multiple, ongoing examples of applying comprehension and fix-up strategies to reading contexts. Students benefit from frequent reminders of these lifelong reading strategies and especially from an explicit explanation and modeling of the strategy in action. Pages 36 to 39 of <i>Teaching in Action: Grades 4–6</i> may help with this. Teachers knowing themselves as readers and thinkers is paramount to their explicit sharing of the processes and strategies with students.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>A Think Aloud is an effective way to help students understand effective reading strategies. Modeling the thinking processes in use when one reads include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending to meaning • Self-monitoring to ensure ongoing comprehension • Applying strategies, such as visualization, prediction, and text connections, to support comprehension • Using “fix-up” strategies when a word poses trouble 	

Selected Resources

- *Active Young Readers 4-6 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 11-12, pp. 53-54, 2003, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 132-137, pp. 308-313, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.

Reading in Grade 6 Lesson Learned 2

Students need to understand how to read visual text features and organizational devices such as headings and tables, and how they support meaning in the context of an entire text.

Many learners *look at* visual texts and organization features without *reading* them. Explicit instruction and teacher demonstration are required to guide learners in how such features are structured to communicate meaning and how to integrate that information with the content of the main body of printed text.

Page navigation can pose a challenge for many readers as many begin reading with the first word of the first paragraph, while others head directly—and often solely—to any visual text features (photographs, charts, maps, etc.). It must be reinforced that all elements of the page work together to create meaning and that there is often an intended order to read the page contents. Readers benefit from explicit instruction that teaches the purpose of structural features such as titles, headings, legends, and text features such as bold or italicized font, and teaches how the text directs a reader to a figure/image, definition, or footnote.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• read and use organizational devices such as tables, charts, or graphs• interpret, compare, and combine information from within and across information text, including organizational features, to identify relationships among details and to draw a conclusion	<p>Using tables, charts, and graphs from a variety of sources, share the purpose of this text form, explore its various components (rows, columns, headings, etc.), and model how to read the components to understand the intended meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide small groups of students with statements about the content, asking them to identify if a given statement is True or False and to support their thinking using specific reference to the table/chart/graph.• Include statements that require readers to compare contents within a chart/table/graph. <p>Extensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask each group to create its own statements about one component of the table/chart/graph.• Provide students with statements that can be easily presented in table/chart/graph form. Ask each group to create its own table. (Variation: use	<p>Explicitly demonstrate how the components of a table/chart/graph work together to create meaning. This involves providing direction for how one navigates reading a table/chart/graph (e.g., a statement can be made when a row and a column of a table intersect).</p> <p>Explicitly instruct that comparatives and superlatives exist within a specific relational context provided by the chart/table/graph (e.g., “more than <i>what</i>”, “least of <i>what</i>”).</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	student-collected research; apply content from info text excerpts or from info books for younger grades.)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrate information from main body text and from organizational features (tables/charts/ graphs) or visual text features (images with captions/diagrams) to create meaning 	<p>Demonstrate how to navigate reading when text includes written paragraphs as well as organizational or visual text features. Show how the information details of the text features work together with the paragraphs to create, support, and/or add to the main idea and overall meaning.</p> <p>As readers become more competent and confident, they can control when to direct their attention to a referenced organizational or visual text feature. Some readers may prefer to read a paragraph or printed text section through before re-directing to a text feature, while other readers may prefer to alternate between the two sources of information. It is important that readers understand that all text contributes to the reader's comprehension.</p>	<p>Draw students' attention to text indicators (such as "See Figure 2.3"; "¹ to indicate a footnote"; "*" to indicate a note at the page bottom"; etc.). Many students do not realize that these are deliberate markings to bring the reader to other areas of text, related in concept or content.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use subtle text-based inferences to show an understanding of relationships between and among details in visual text, such as an advertisement recognize that media text forms are developed with an intended purpose and target audience in mind and that style elements and presentation features are chosen specifically for that purpose and target audience 	<p>Every detail in visual media literacy is deliberately selected to attract the reader/viewer and to promote a specific message. Demonstrate this using a highly visual print advertisement projected for small group or whole class viewing. Engage students in critical discussion through questions that require them to analyze multiple features of the text sample, especially those placed most prominently on the page. Invite their comments</p>	<p>Make explicit connections to critical literacy, as they apply to media in a variety of forms, including the Internet. A reader/consumer/viewer who is informed of the persuasion techniques central to multi-media presentations has an enhanced awareness and can more critically engage with the information presented.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>on the intent and the effects of these features on the reader/viewer/consumer. Discuss how the features work together to impact the message being communicated.</p> <p>Collect multiple samples of visual print ads from magazines. Ask students in small groups to select a number of samples and, for each, identify choices of visual text and text features and determine their intended effect on the reader/viewer/consumer.</p> <p>Extension Have groups of students create their own visual print advertisement or public service message for a specific target audience (the choices made during development will depend on the identified target audience). Ask students to share the deliberate choices of words and images used to communicate their message, and the effects they were intending these choices to have on a target audience. Different groups of students could create advertisements or a public service message to communicate the same message, but designed for different target audiences. Upon completion, students could engage in a critical comparison of each group's work, noting the differences in the end products based on the various perspectives of differing target audiences.</p>	

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 308-313, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.

Reading in Grade 6 Lesson Learned 3

Students need to be able to identify a variety of elements of text and understand how they contribute to the overall meaning of a text.

Authors and publishers make choices about every element of text as a deliberate way to communicate an intended message. Comprehension of text is supported when a reader attends to these elements and understands how they impact the overall communication. These elements include setting, narrator, character development, point of view, lead /introduction, sequence of events, as well as the purpose of the text, its intended audience, and the presentation or organization of information. When students examine these elements as readers, there are opportunities to integrate them into their own work as writers. The reciprocity of reading and writing should be explicitly explored with students across genres and text forms.

It is important for readers to know how to connect specific genres and text forms with common ways of presenting certain elements. This allows the reader to begin reading with an expectation in mind that sets a context for comprehension. One example is an advertisement, where every word and image is deliberately selected and positioned to persuade a target audience to buy a product or believe a proposed message. In a mystery narrative, the author unfolds the plot through a deliberate sequence of events, often for the purpose of creating suspense.

Although authors and publishers give deliberate attention to include these elements in effective ways, it is often a challenge for developing readers to identify how the elements are used. Learners need many guided opportunities with engaging text samples to help attend to the clues and cues that certain elements are present and how they contribute to the meaning of the overall text.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• make connections among several explicit and implicit text elements to determine a moral, lesson, theme, or main idea or message of a variety of text forms• use structural or organizational elements to understand the purpose and main idea of information• attend to the sequence of events in a narrative text• interpret and analyze the relationships among elements of a poem to draw a conclusion• recognize and understand the use of abstract/figurative language to imply meaning	<p>Using short complete pieces of information text, guide students through the process of determining a main idea by identifying the path of supporting events or details.</p> <p>It is helpful to begin instruction using information text since the details and ideas are more explicit than in poetry or narrative forms of text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• use a graphic organizer or list the support events or details in a column so that connections among them can be seen more easily• use questioning to guide students to identify a common focus or statement from the list of elements and details (i.e. the main idea)	<p>Use Think Aloud strategies to demonstrate how readers use both explicit and implicit information in a text to determine a main idea.</p> <p>Explain what is meant by moral, lesson, and theme, using multiple examples from familiar sources (e.g., texts, movies, songs, familiar children’s stories).</p> <p>Explicitly draw attention to the specific elements and details that contribute to creating a moral, lesson, or theme, as these may not be immediately apparent.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use text-based inferences to determine the purpose of an information text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> show the transfer of thinking and the process used to determine the main idea of information text and to use events, setting, character development, mood, and resolution to determine the moral, lesson, or theme of a narrative or poem <p>Demonstrate how a title, headings, topic sentences, introduction, and concluding paragraphs contribute to forming the main idea of information text.</p> <p>From a piece of information text, have groups of students examine headings of a text to determine the overall topic of the text before reading it thoroughly to confirm the main idea of the text.</p> <p>Record multiple sets of events from a story on individual strips of paper and place them envelopes, one per student group. Have students arrange the events in a logical sequence, prepared to explain and defend their choices.</p> <p>Variations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have students create event strips for a familiar movie or story. using a graphic organizer (or creating their own), have groups of students identify the chain of actions/events of a story. provide an event related to but not explicitly stated in the story. Ask students to place this in the chain of events and to defend their choice. 	<p>Include explicit attention to an author's use of pronouns. Although students are familiar with pronouns, they aren't always confident with identifying who or what pronouns are referring to in text. Display complex sentences that include pronouns.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>Using a variety of short poems or song lyrics, guide students through discussion to identify the speaker and who is being spoken to and/or about. Explicitly discuss the evidence for each, identifying clues within the text.</p> <p>Provide instruction around how personification can be used to help readers visualize the images that are described in a text.</p>	

Selected Resources

- *Active Young Readers 4-6 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 73-82, 2003, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 314-317, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.

Overview of the Nova Scotia Assessment: Writing in Grade 6

The RW6 assessment includes two writing prompts, a transactional writing task (letter), and a narrative writing task (story).

Student writing is scored according to four criteria: Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions. Each criterion is scored at one of four levels (see Appendix E for the Nova Scotia Assessment: Analytic Writing Rubric). The student assessment booklet includes the following tips for students to keep in mind while they are writing, and there is a planning page for students to plan their writing:

Tips

- Be sure to respond to the instructions above.
- Be sure to explain and support your ideas.
- Be sure to present your ideas in an organized manner.
- Be sure to use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Use no more than the three pages provided.

Grade 5 and grade 6 classroom teachers are involved in every step of the development of the assessment, establishing the expectations for the assessment, as well as scoring the writing components of this assessment. Their professional input is essential in ensuring that the assessment reflects what students are required to know and be able to do at the end of Grade 5.

Assessment Results for Writing in Grade 6

Student writing is scored by Nova Scotia teachers at a scoring session using an analytic writing rubric (see appendix E), and scoring guide (see Appendix G) that establishes the provincial expectations for this assessment. The rubric includes four components, each with four levels of performance: Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions. Each piece of student writing is scored independently by at least two different teachers and individual student writing results reflect the student’s writing performance across both writing tasks. Writing results are reported by performance level across both tasks within each component. Like the reading portion of this assessment, the expectation for the assessment is performance level 3 and above. The latest provincial writing results (2015–2016) for Reading and Writing in Grade 6 showed the following:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Ideas	1%	21%	62%	16%
Organization	2%	36%	51%	11%
Language Use	1%	32%	55%	13%
Conventions	2%	37%	50%	11%

This information provides opportunities for continued discussions, explorations, and support for writing at the classroom, school, board, and provincial levels.

Writing in Grade 6 Lesson Learned 1

Ideas: Students need to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details and examples that support the main idea.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and distinguish between a theme, main idea, or key message and supporting events or details compose text around a main idea or theme develop texts using relevant details and events that support a main idea or theme 	<p>Short pieces work well as models for identifying the main idea or theme of a published text. Refer to the first teaching suggestion in the Reading Lesson Learned 3 for details.</p> <p>After modeling how to identify the main idea in a text, have students do the same in small groups. Focus on information texts and fiction selections separately. It is often easier to identify main ideas using information text due to the explicit nature of the writing style. However, students also need explicit instruction around how to identify main ideas across a variety of genres and text forms. This will help students integrate the development of a main idea in their own writing of various forms.</p> <p>Have student groups next examine <i>how</i> the author developed the main idea or theme by identifying supporting details or events. Graphic organizers can be helpful during this process. Ask student groups, using the completed graphic organizer, to report on how the details and events link to and develop the main idea or theme. This discussion is critical to students being able to transfer the knowledge into a writing skill of their own.</p> <p>Provide the same graphic organizer as a planning tool for writing. Remind students how they used the tool to identify a main idea or theme and</p>	<p>Graphic organizers can be helpful tools, as long as their use is explicitly demonstrated. There are strategies and skill behind effective use of graphic organizers. Instruction includes explicitly sharing how a graphic organizer is completed and how one decides which information should be included.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	supporting details or events from published texts. Support, as needed, this new applied use to create a main idea or theme and to develop supporting details or events.	

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 351-401, pp. 427-432, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades 4–6: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 53-57, 2007, NS Department of Education

Writing in Grade 6 Lesson Learned 2

Organization: Students need to organize their writing in a logical sequence, with an introduction, body, and conclusion, using a variety of transitional devices.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand the importance of organizing written work and that a sequence of events/details that makes sense to the reader contributes to the reader's comprehension 	<p>Using a copy of a short piece of text, cut the text into meaningful sections. Give each small group of students a complete set of the divided text. Ask each group to arrange the sections in a meaningful way and prepare to explain/defend the order.</p> <p>Variation If familiar text is used, students bring background knowledge to the task as a support. Unseen text taps into a deeper level of thinking, requiring a more thorough read of the details in the text.</p> <p>Note For group activities of this type, it is helpful to use text that all students can access. This allows the focus to be on the task and not bogged down by challenges with word identification. Many students who may have difficulties with accessing print may have no problem contributing to a discussion about written organization that makes sense.</p> <p>Applying the same thinking, have small student groups use phrases or summary statements to represent the text organization using an appropriate graphic organizer, such as a story map, cause and effect organizer, or a flowchart. Ask students to discuss their thinking behind the choices</p>	<p>Use text models from a variety of forms to explicitly teach the purpose of an introduction/lead and conclusion. Students may know what these are but may not fully understand their role and how to write an effective intro/lead and conclusion, appropriate to a particular type of writing.</p> <p>When asking students to identify the organizational structure of a narrative, it is helpful to begin with texts that include explicitly stated events with evident chronology. As students become more independent with recognizing organizational structures, guide them to apply the thinking using short narrative samples where the events or transitions are more implied or less direct transitions are used than in information text. Such text samples will likely require more explicit instruction.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>they made when completing the organizer. This gives students an opportunity to assess their understanding of how text can be organized and the impact of such organization.</p> <p>Variation Have students watch a short, engaging digital or DVD clip and apply the appropriate graphic organizer to identify organization structures. This engages students who learn best through visual and/or auditory means as well as kinesthetic learners who associate the learning through the movement on the screen.</p> <p>Once students are able to identify organizational patterns in existing texts, they should be provided with explicit instruction around how to apply such patterns to their own writing. For example, students can review a piece of writing they had previously composed and focus on its organization, considering its organization as a whole (introduction, body, and conclusion) as well as the organization of information within each section. They can work individually on this task or with a partner to provide peer feedback in the area of organization.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and use transition words or phrases to enhance written organization 	<p>Using copies of model texts, ask student groups to read through the passage and highlight words and phrases that provide organization to the text. These may be familiar transition words or phrases the author has chosen for the purposes of organization.</p>	<p>When sharing transition words on an anchor chart or word wall, demonstrate with examples how select words advance and organize a piece of text. For example, if <i>firstly</i> is used, a reader can assume there will be a <i>secondly</i>, whether implied or directly stated.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	Once students are able to identify different types of transitions in existing texts, students need opportunities to practice using a variety of transitions in their own writing.	

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 427-431, pp. 437-442, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades 4–6: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 53-57, 2007, NS Department of Education

Writing in Grade 6 Lesson Learned 3

Language Use: Students need to use voice, style, word choice, and varied syntax to contribute to clear and fluid written communication.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand what writing voice is and recognize features that depict an author's voice according to writing style, purpose, and audience 	<p>Using short passages from published texts or created passages written to present a certain voice, provide students with a set of 3 passages, each with a distinct voice connected to either text purpose or author's style. To illustrate, use a piece of very familiar text, with an easily identified voice. Ask student groups to match each passage with an author, form, or genre from a given list. Students must prepare to defend their choices.</p> <p>Variations Create passages using characters, performers, or personalities familiar to students.</p> <p>Ask students to take a topic or a small passage and re-write it to reflect the voice of a favourite personality of their choice. Have students share and discuss the word choice, sentence structures, and style they used to represent this person's voice. Or, turn this into a fun game where students guess who the voice is representing but must state a reason in order to have a successful answer.</p>	<p>Identifying voice evident through an author's style is more challenging than identifying voice appropriate to information text or, for example, a formal letter. Helping students identify and develop their own writing voice in fiction will require more explicit instruction and multiple published examples. Be on the lookout for strong examples from student writing (e.g., "He was a <i>Watch out!</i> kind of dog.").</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compose texts using a variety of sentence structures and descriptive vocabulary expand students' vocabulary 	<p>Provide student groups with a variety of sentences on different topics. Ask each group to select three different sentences and re-arrange each to create a different sentence structure while maintaining meaning. Discuss the</p>	<p>Demonstrate the thinking behind rewording a sentence so that the syntax is changed. This would involve identifying the key words and main idea of the sentence and playing around with word order and phrasing.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>effect certain structures have on communication of the message.</p> <p>The same process can be applied to revising word choice. Discussion should include the fact that some words, particularly proper nouns or specific subject vocabulary, have no synonyms, and that adjectives and adverbs are more easily varied. This is an authentic way to reinforce these particular parts of speech, within the context of writing.</p> <p>When looking at a variety of texts, identify how word choice impacts the overall meaning as well as style of the text. Students can then apply their understanding of word choice to their own writing. Peer conferencing focused on word choice can be helpful to students during the revision stage of the writing process.</p>	

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 427-432, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades 4–6: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 53-57, 2007, NS Department of Education

Writing in Grade 6 Lessons Learned 4

Conventions: Students need to use correct conventions (punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, noun-pronoun agreement, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, spelling of frequently used words including homonyms) to contribute to effective written communication.

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use conventional spelling when writing proofread and edit for conventional spelling, punctuation, and noun-pronoun alignment and understand the connection between conventions and clear written communication use digital correction features, such as spell and grammar check, to support writing development and the use of conventions when writing 	<p>Create an environment of word study, encouraging curiosity, exploration and analysis when it comes to spelling. Notice and discuss spelling patterns, the number of syllables, connections to known words with the same pattern, root words and affixes, and how to apply strategies when encountering difficulties.</p> <p>Model this with particular words used during shared talking, reading, and/or writing opportunities with students, as a small group or whole class.</p> <p>Have students work in small groups selecting familiar words from a page of published text to identify the spelling patterns used.</p> <p>Extension Have students brainstorm a list of words that use the same patterns. (This is for the purpose of exploring spelling patterns, not a list for study or memorization.)</p> <p>A Word Sort is an effective activity that strengthens spelling skills by having students identify a generalization rather than a rule. Have small groups of students sort words that share the same sound but have different spelling patterns creating that sound (e.g., long “a” sound as in <i>cape</i>, <i>main</i>, <i>weigh</i>, and <i>day</i>). (See pages 91–98 in NS Department of Education</p>	<p>Start with what students know. Using words that are familiar to their reading and writing vocabulary, model the analysis process by identifying the phonetic components (letters used to create specific sounds) and the vowel pattern(s) demonstrated.</p> <p>Help students spell (and read) by noticing letter patterns (or <i>chunks</i>) within a word. Many students get lost when trying to tackle a longer word letter-by-letter. A strategy that focuses on spelling syllables and familiar patterns (or <i>chunks</i>) is often more manageable (e.g., <i>un+pre+dict+able</i>). Stronger spellers may strategize using the root word and affixes (e.g., <i>un+predict+able</i>).</p> <p>Often, the tricky spot is representing vowel sounds. Demonstrate how a particular vowel sound is created in a given word and show its application in words using the same pattern.</p> <p>Note Despite the familiar saying “a,e,i,o,u and sometimes y,” it is helpful to know that y is actually used mostly as a vowel. As students consider which letter is creating a vowel sound, y might be an option, especially at the end of a word, as in <i>day</i>, <i>baby</i>, <i>by</i>, <i>hey</i>, and the suffix <i>-ly</i>.</p>

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>(2008) <i>Spelling Primary–9: A Teaching Resource</i>.)</p> <p>Build on familiar regular spelling patterns as a way of modeling how spelling is like a puzzle and that letter patterns combine to create certain units of sound.</p> <p>Reinforce visual memory of irregular spelling chunks by labelling areas of the room, work tables, shelves, etc. with frequently used irregular pattern (e.g., -ight; -tion; -able). Refer to the area by saying the spelling pattern.</p> <p>Have students highlight spelling patterns within words that give them trouble. This makes an impression on visual memory as well as reinforces the strategy of attending to syllables (chunks) and patterns to support spelling/reading a word.</p> <p>Compose a piece of text that includes misspellings, misplaced punctuation or no ending punctuation, and/or confusing use of pronouns (i.e. A pronoun is used without an antecedent or a clear connection to an antecedent). Model the process of proofreading to locate errors or areas of confused communication. Have groups of students do the same with another created text sample.</p> <p>Ask students to discuss how they identified errors or points of confusion. Reinforce the link between reading and writing as well as the role conventions play in clearly communicating messages.</p> <p>When students write using a digital device, turn off the spell-check and grammar-check features</p>	

Support Readers to	Try these Teaching Suggestions	Note these Areas for Explicit Instruction
	<p>so that focus can go to all aspects of composing, at this stage in the writing process. During editing and proofreading, students can first attempt to identify and correct grammar and spelling errors independently, then use the digital correction features to help with remaining errors identified.</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>For some students, misspellings are reduced when using a keyboard, perhaps because they select the letters to use instead of writing them on their own.</p> <p>Most auto-correct features require the writer to make a selection from a list of choices. For some students, this act of selection helps the development of conventions by focusing on the distinctions between/among options and making a deliberate choice. In terms of spelling, selecting an option draws focus to patterns as a way of identifying the appropriate word among words that look similar. It also helps reinforce visual memory.</p>	

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6*, pp. 443-446, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades 4–6: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 53-57, pp. 122-123, 2007, NS Department of Education

Additional Teacher Resources to Support Classroom Literacy Instruction and Assessment

NS Department of Education (2003). *Active Young Readers 4–6 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*. Retrieved January 28, 2015, from http://www.ednet.ns.ca/files/curriculum/AYR4-6AR.pdfRAR_Complete.pdf

NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). (2014 Draft). *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4–6*. Halifax, NS: Province of NS.

NS Department of Education (2007). *Teaching in Action Grades 4–6: A Teaching Resource*. Retrieved January 28, 2015, from http://www.ednet.ns.ca/files/curriculum/TIA4-6_WEB.pdf

Ontario Ministry of Education (2006). *A Guide to Effective Literacy Instruction Grades 4–6, Volume One, Part one: Foundations of Literacy Instruction for the Junior Learner*. Retrieved March 12, 2015, from http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide_Lit_456_Vol_1_Pt1_Junior_Learner.pdf

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Fountas, I.C., and Pinnell, G.S. (2001). *Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades 3–6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fountas, I.C., and Pinnell, G.S. (2012). *Prompting Guide for Comprehension: Thinking, Talking, and Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) (2012). *Active Young Readers Grades P–3 Assessment Resource: A teaching resource*. Retrieved February 20, 2015 from <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/files/curriculum/AYRP-3-RAR.pdf>

NS Department of Education (2008). *Spelling Primary–9: A Teaching Resource*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.

Appendix A: Stages of Reading Development

Students in the beginning of grade 6 may exhibit a variety of reading behaviours across the stages of reading development. The below chart from page 10 of the Active Readers Grades 4–6 Assessment Resource outlines information about these behaviours within each stage of reading development. Some students may demonstrate reading in more than one stage depending on the text they are reading.

Later Part of Early	Transitional	Fluent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can identify and discuss many different kinds of text (letters, stories, lists, newspaper and magazine articles, information text) • reads familiar text confidently • generally slow and deliberate when reading unfamiliar text (fluency deteriorates when focus is on decoding) • relies heavily on initial letters and sounds • is beginning to develop new strategies for word solving • uses visual support to check meaning • can connect personal experiences to the text • is beginning to comment on and question text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can adapt reading to the type of text and the purpose for reading • recognizes basic text structures and uses features of texts to construct meaning • is able to integrate a variety of reading strategies (makes predictions and substantiates them, self-corrects, rereads to clarify meaning, reads on when encountering difficult text, slows down, substitutes familiar words, uses knowledge of print conventions) • reads aloud with expression, respecting the punctuation of the text, has a wider range of sight vocabulary including more challenging and technical vocabulary • is able to make connections (text to self, text to text, and text to world) • can retell and discuss own interpretations of text, providing supporting details • can make inferences from text (goes beyond the surface meaning) • responds personally to text • is beginning to respond critically to text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands that reading is purposeful • uses a range of strategies automatically • recognizes and understands the features and elements of various text types and uses these to construct meaning • independently uses knowledge of text structures to construct meaning • reads fluently with appropriate phrasing, expression, and rate • has extensive vocabulary, both general and technical • uses sophisticated word identification strategies for unknown words (word families, word structure, word origin) • automatically makes connections to extend meaning (text to self, text to text, and text to world) • can construct meaning from text that is abstract and beyond personal experience • makes inferences and judgments based on information that is drawn from the text • responds personally and critically to the content, messages, and construction of text

Appendix B: Curriculum Connections

This assessment is based on the following end of grade 5 reading and writing provincial English language arts curriculum outcomes:

- GCO 4: Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.
- GCO 5: Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.
- GCO 7: Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.
- GCO 8: Students will be expected to use writing and other forms of representation to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings; and to use their imaginations.
- GCO 10: Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.

Appendix C:

Questioning to Prompt Conversation and Assess Comprehension

Setting a Purpose for Reading – the reader identifies the reason(s) for reading the text

- I am curious about your book choice. Tell me a little bit about what you were thinking when you chose it.
- How are you finding it – is it a good fit for you? Tell me more about that.
- Tell me what you have been working on in your reading since we last met?
- Last time we met you were going to try _____. How is that going?
- You have chosen a new book since we met last. How is that going?
- I've noticed that you have abandoned your last book. Tell me about that.
- I see you're still reading _____. Tell me how your reading is going.
- What have you been thinking about today as a reader?
- You have been reading this book for awhile. How long do you think it will take for you to finish it?
- You have been reading a lot of fiction (whatever genre) lately; perhaps next time you can share a different genre and tell me why you chose it.

Thinking Within the Text

Determining Importance – the reader identifies central ideas and selects key points

- What was the problem in the story? How was it solved/fixed? How do you think it will get solved?
- What were the most important ideas in the story?
- What is the main idea? Why do you think that? (Non-fiction)
- What do you think are some of the big ideas here?
- Choose an important scene and explain its significance.
- Can you think of ideas or details that are important to remember? How did you make your decision?

Metacognition – the reader thinks about his/her thinking processes

- Where was the tricky part? What was tricky about it? What did you/can you do to help yourself with that?
- What else can you try?
- Did you find the text easy, hard, or just right?
- Last time we met, you mentioned you were having some trouble with some of the words in this book. How is that going now?
- Are there parts of the book that are sticking in your head today?
- What new vocabulary have you noticed today?
- Is there a passage, section, quote, or a line in your reading that really made sense or resonated with you?

Monitoring Comprehension – the reader notices when he/she needs to use a comprehension strategy

- Talk to me a little bit about what you do when you find yourself not understanding something.
- You stopped for a moment when you were reading to me. What were you thinking when you stopped?
- When you read that page to me you didn't slow down at all. Remember we talked about pausing, considering and reflecting as we read. What would happen if you read it a little more slowly?
- I'm thinking that when you might not be grasping what the book is telling you, you just keep reading without making sure it makes sense. I would like you to focus on stopping periodically to check on your understanding.
- You seem to be having trouble reading the dialogue when two characters are talking. What could you do to help you know who is saying what?

Thinking Beyond The Text

Questioning/Wondering – the reader asks questions to understand what he/she is reading

- I would love to hear you read just a little bit to me. Why don't you read a portion/page or two to me that you are thinking/wondering about?
- Thinking about what you just read, what do you think will happen next? What's your thinking behind your prediction?
- Think about all the questions or thoughts you have as you read and then pick one or two that best help you to understand the story. What are they?
- Do you have any unanswered questions about the story?
- Find a part that you especially loved or a part that you are wondering about. Read a bit of that section to me so we can talk about what you are thinking.
- What did this passage (selection/piece/story) make you wonder about? Why did you wonder that?

Making Connections / Using Schema– the reader uses background and prior knowledge to understand

- What do you already know that helps you understand this text?
- Have you read any other texts written by this author? If yes, how is this similar or different from the other text?
- What are all the things you already know, believe, or feel that will help you understand this piece?
- How is this book like another one you have read and why?
- What background knowledge did you use to help you understand the passage (selection/piece/story)?
- Have you had any experiences in your life that helped you better understand the story?
- Did the story remind you of something?
- How does this book compare to the author's other books?
- You talked a lot about using your background knowledge. Now, see if you can pin-point those times when it's your background experience that is helping you understand.

Synthesizing – the reader combines information from many sources to make new meaning

- What surprised you in the story?
- What is another possible title for this story (text/selection/piece)? What makes this a good title?
- How has your thinking changed as a result of reading this story?
- What conclusions have you made so far?
- How would you complete this sentence: I used to think.... but now I'm thinking ...
- What have you learned about yourself, people, relationships or life in general [pick one] after reading this book?
- What does this story mean to you?
- What information is useful and how does it fit (or not fit) with what you already know?
- What have you learned after reading this text/book?
- How is your thinking changing as you have been reading this book?

Inferring – the reader uses clues in the text to understand implied meanings

- Why did you think ____ happened?
- Are any of your questions unanswered after reading? What could/might the answers be to your questions?
- Why do you think (character) did (action)?
- Describe the behaviour of one of the main characters. What kind of person is he/she? How do you know?

Thinking About the Text

Personal Response – the reader explains how reading the text affected him/her

- Tell me something you liked or didn't like about the story/text. Why did you like (or not like) that?
- What did you think about the story/text? Why did you think that?
- To whom would you recommend this story/book/text? Why?
- How did you feel when you were reading this text/book?

Critical Response: Critical Literacy– the reader notices and questions assumptions and looks at how language is used to construct particular historical, social, cultural, political, and economic realities

- Tell me something you were wondering about in the story. Why were you wondering that?
- What do you think is the author's intended message? (fiction and non-fiction)
- What do you think the author's purpose was in writing this? (fiction and non-fiction)
- Who do you think is the intended audience?
- Whose point of view is used in the story? How would the story change if told by another character?
- In this story/text, what point of view do we mainly hear from? What points of view are absent? (fiction and non-fiction)
- In another time or place, how would the story change?
- Who else could be in the story? Is there someone missing?
- How are minority roles depicted?
- Could the story be told if gender roles were reversed?
- If you were the author, how would you have ended the story in a different way?
- Has the author been fair? Why or why not? (fiction and non-fiction)
- If everything you learned about ____ (e.g., teenagers, girls, boys, mothers, fathers) came from this book, what would you know? (fiction and non-fiction)

Critical Response: Analysis of Style, Text Structure and Features – the reader notices and reflects on the author/publisher's choice of style, text structure, and features

- How is this text structured? How does this structure support the author's purpose? (e.g., question and answer, cause and effect, descriptive, compare and contrast, language choice, categories, repeating patterns, beginning-middle-end)
- How has the author organized this text to help you understand it?
- Using examples, tell me how the text features helped you understand the text.
- Did the author present the information clearly?
- How qualified was the writer to inform us about the topic?
- Why do you think the author bolded (or italicized, underlined, used different font on) these words? What was the author's purpose in doing this?
- What was the purpose of the text boxes in this piece? (or ask about paragraphs, spacing, chapters, indentations, titles, headings)
- What interesting punctuation choices has the writer made in this text?
- How did the illustrations, charts, maps, etc. support your understanding?
- Are the characters believable? Why or why not?
- Did the author's style hold your attention? Why or why not?

Questions taken from *Conferring: The Keystone of Reader's Workshop* (Allen, 2009) and *Prompting Guide for Comprehension: Thinking, Talking, and Writing* (Fountas and Pinnell, 2012)

Appendix D: Using the Nova Scotia Assessment: Analytic Writing Rubric

The rubric includes four criteria (Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions), and there are four levels of performance for each criterion. Level 3 and above is the expectation for writing assessments, so it's important to look at these levels first when reviewing the rubric. The following information is provided to teachers prior to scoring student writing at provincial scoring sessions. It may also be helpful for teachers who wish to use this rubric with students in their classrooms. Please keep in mind that the expectations for specific assessments are anchored in the writing samples in a scoring guide, as they are relative to specific grade levels (end of grades 2, 5, 8). The scoring guide provides two student writing samples that illustrate each performance level outlined in the rubric. A sample scoring guide is available in Appendix G of this document.

- 1) Read the rubric as a whole before looking at each criterion in more detail.
- 2) **Ideas:** Read the four levels of performance under Ideas. Ideas includes the presence and quality of a main idea, the extent to which the main idea is developed through details, and the quality of the details used to support the main idea.
- 3) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Ideas: *main idea, developed, details*
- 4) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Ideas:
 - a. Level 3: *clear, relevant*
 - b. Level 4: *distinct, vivid, relevant*
 - c. Level 2: *evident, somewhat, may be irrelevant* (Even if details are relevant, a piece of writing can be a Level 2 if it's only somewhat developed.)
 - d. Level 1: *not present, or, not developed*
- 5) **Organization:** Read the four levels of performance under Organization. Organization includes the way the writing is organized as a whole as well as how it is organized throughout (internal and external organization). There should be a beginning, middle, and end and a logical sequence between ideas. Transitions include transitional words or phrases, but also the way the writer transitions from one idea to the next.
- 6) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Organization: *writing, organized/organization, transitions*
- 7) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Organization:
 - a. Level 3: *effective, varied*
 - b. Level 4: *skillfully, skillful, varied*
 - c. Level 2: *somewhat, vague, and/or mechanical* (Even if transitions are not vague or mechanical, a piece of writing can be a Level 2 if it's only somewhat organized.)
 - d. Level 1: *lacking, little or no evidence*
- 8) **Language Use:** Read the four levels of performance under Language Use. Language Use includes voice, word choice, sentence style, syntax. Sentence structure is considered in terms of writing style in this criterion, not the grammatical correctness of sentence structure since correctness is assessed under the Conventions criterion.
- 9) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Language Use: *Language use, writing*

- 10) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Language Use:
- a. Level 3: *clear, fluid*
 - b. Level 4: *vivid, skillful*
 - c. Level 2: *vague, and/or mechanical*
 - d. Level 1: *confusing, or, little evidence of language use*
- 11) **Conventions:** Read the four levels of performance under Conventions. Conventions includes spelling of commonly used words (including homonyms), punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, verb tense agreement, noun/pronoun agreement – these are grounded in what’s appropriate for a given grade level
- 12) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Conventions: *conventions, communication*
- 13) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Conventions:
- a. Level 3: *variety, generally correct, effective*
 - b. Level 4: *variety, consistently correct, enhanced*
 - c. Level 2: *errors, noticeable, coherent*
 - d. Level 1: *errors, confusing, or, little evidence of conventions*
- 14) **Not Enough Evidence:** This designation would only be used in rare cases when there is not enough evidence to assess a student’s writing (e.g., indecipherable, blank paper, not enough information to score such as a single word).

Once teachers have become familiar with the rubric, they may wish to use it in their classrooms to support student writing. Looking at the rubric with students may facilitate useful conversations about Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions and how these elements work together in a piece of writing. Through these discussions, writing samples (either students’ own samples or scoring guide samples) could be used to illustrate the various writing components outlined in the rubric. When students have an opportunity to engage in these conversations, they may begin to enhance their own writing processes.

Appendix E: Analytic Writing Rubric

Nova Scotia Assessments:
Analytic Rubric for Scoring Writing (RWM6/RWM8)



Ideas
<p>4 A main idea is distinct and is developed through vivid and relevant details.</p> <p>3 A main idea is clear and is developed through relevant details.</p> <p>2 A main idea is evident and is somewhat developed through details, some of which may be irrelevant.</p> <p>1 A main idea is not present, or a main idea is not developed with details.</p>
Organization
<p>4 The writing is skillfully organized with skillful use of varied transitions.</p> <p>3 The writing is organized with effective use of varied transitions.</p> <p>2 The writing is somewhat organized with vague or mechanical transitions.</p> <p>1 The writing is lacking organization; there is little or no evidence of transitions.</p>
Language Use
<p>4 Language use contributes to vivid and skillful writing.</p> <p>3 Language use contributes to clear and fluid writing.</p> <p>2 Language use contributes to vague or mechanical writing.</p> <p>1 Language use contributes to confusing writing, or there is little evidence of language use.</p>
Conventions
<p>4 A variety of consistently correct conventions contribute to enhanced communication.</p> <p>3 A variety of generally correct conventions contribute to effective communication.</p> <p>2 Errors in conventions are noticeable, but communication is coherent.</p> <p>1 Errors in conventions contribute to confusing communication, or there is little evidence of conventions.</p>
Not Enough Evidence
<p>There is not enough evidence to assess the student's writing (e.g., indecipherable, blank paper, not enough information to score).</p>

September 2014

Appendix F: Using the Nova Scotia Assessment: Scoring Guide Sample

Student writing is scored using the analytic writing rubric and scoring guide. It is important to have a solid understanding of the analytic writing rubric before reviewing the scoring guide. The scoring guide includes the writing prompt and one or two samples at each performance level in the following order: Level 4, 3, 2, 1. Please note that permissions have been obtained for the student writing samples in the following scoring guide.

Although adherence to writing task is important during classroom instruction and assessment, it is important to note that this is not the focus of provincial writing assessments. Provincial assessment writing prompts are designed to allow for a broad interpretation of the prompt. This allows students from across the province with a variety of life experiences to connect to the prompt in some way so they can provide a response that can be assessed for writing quality based on the rubric (ideas, organization, language use, and conventions).

Each writing sample includes an annotation at the bottom of the page that provides the rationale for the scores using language from the rubric and the student's writing. Level 3 and above is the expectation for writing assessments, so it's important to look at these levels first when reviewing the scoring guide. Below are a few suggestions for reviewing the scoring guide:

- 1) Review the rubric criteria for Level 3 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 2) Read the Level 3 Scoring Guide samples and annotations
- 3) Review the rubric criteria for Level 4 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 4) Read the Level 4 Scoring Guide samples and annotations
- 5) Review the rubric criteria for Level 2 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 6) Read the Level 2 Scoring Guide samples and annotations
- 7) Review the rubric criteria for Level 1 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 8) Read the Level 1 Scoring Guide sample and annotation

Once teachers become familiar with the scoring guide, they may wish to use some of the writing samples with their students for talking about elements of writing.

Since writing is personal and involves risk-taking, students may be more comfortable critiquing anonymous writing samples from the scoring guide. After students have had an opportunity to understand the rubric, teachers could begin with showing them a sample of writing at Level 3, Level 4, then Level 2 and Level 1. (This would be spaced out over several mini-lessons at the teacher's discretion.) The samples could anchor some wonderful conversations about what students notice about how main ideas are developed through supportive details, as well as other elements of writing. The level 2 and 1 samples could be used as a springboard for students to discuss how the writing could be enhanced in each of the criterion of the rubric. Finally, once students have had an opportunity to engage in these discussions with teachers about writing, they should feel more comfortable to begin pulling out some of their own writing from their portfolios. They could work with an existing piece of writing from their writing portfolio to focus on each criterion at a time to gradually enhance the same piece of writing each time. Students can engage in peer review and conversations to support their revisions. At the end of the process, they will be able to compare their original piece of writing with the revised piece of writing and reflect on their process and progress.

2013–2014 Nova Scotia Assessment:
Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 6

SCORING GUIDE

Writing Task: Letter

October/November, 2013



Writing Task: Letter

Instructions: Imagine that the principal of your school will soon be making a decision about how technology should be used for learning in your school.

Choose to do **one** of the following:

Write a letter to your principal supporting why you think technology **helps** students learn in school.

or

Write a letter to your principal supporting why you think technology **does not help** students learn in school.

Tips:

- Be sure to respond to the instructions above.
- Be sure to explain and support your ideas.
- Be sure to present your ideas in an organized manner.
- Be sure to use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Use the box below to plan your letter.
- Use no more than the 2 pages provided.

Begin writing your letter on the next page. →



Letter

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

Personally, I believe technology does help us learn and should remain available for students. I'm sure most children would find that it would save much more time to search for something on a computer rather than searching hopelessly through textbooks or other books such as encyclopedias and dictionaries. Also, sites such as Cool Math Games and Jumblebooks are great to use in free time.

There are many educational and fun apps for devices like iPads. You can find lots of math games or reading games, even apps to help you learn French! Plus, you can type your work on them, and take pictures of homework so you won't forget it. There's also quite a few relaxing apps for stressed or perhaps not the best behaved students.

If you have not completed your letter, continue on the next page. →



Level 4 (page 6)

- Ideas (4): A main idea is distinct and is developed through vivid and relevant details: "technology does help us learn and should remain available....it would save much more time to search....great to use in free time....many educational and fun apps for devices like iPads....even apps to help you learn French!"
- Organization (4): The writing is skillfully organized with skillful use of varied transitions: "I'm sure most children would find that....Also, site such as Cool Math Games....Plus, you can type your work...."
- Language Use (4): Language use contributes to vivid and skillful writing: "rather than searching hopelessly through textbooks....many educational and fun apps for devices like iPads....quite a few relaxing apps for stressed or perhaps not the best behaved students"
- Conventions (4): The writing consistently demonstrates correct use of a variety of conventions.

Technology is very helpful when used correctly, and I think it should still be available to students.

Sincerely,



Please go back and check your work.
Be sure you have answered every question for Day 1.
Then close your booklet.
You are finished for today.



* 2 3 1 1 4 *

Letter

47

Day 1 | Page 11

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

Children these days are growing up in a world of technology, so my view is [REDACTED] we should know how to use it. Obviously, knowing the proper way to wield a sword would help you use it, it is the same with technology. Having knowledge of this can help you in a great variety of real world problems as well. Learning with even an iPod is both more fun and quicker than hand writing it. I could already finished this on a computer, as an added bonus, it is faster to go onto google or bing etc. and find the name of giant prehistoric scorpion (Brotoscapio, its in latin or something) than it would be to go to a dictionary, get the alphabetich order in your head, waste another 5 mins. finding the page memorize it and write it down. Whereas on an iPad or something like that, go to safari type in what you want to find and BAM! there it is. badda bing, badda boom, as an Italian Mafia leader would say. plus just about everyone in my school has an iPod or a 3DS or both so its not like there going to have to go to the nearest apple shop and buy one, is it. But wait theres more, not letting people go on electronics is like making ants illigle, its never ever going to happen

If you have not completed your letter, continue on the next page. →



Level 4 (page 47)

- Ideas (4): A main idea is distinct and is developed through vivid and relevant details: "Children these days are growing up in a world of technology...we should know how to use it....it is faster to go on google or bing etc. and find the name of giant prehistoric scorpion (Brotoscapio, its in latin or something) than it would be to go to a dictionary, get the alphabetich order in your head, waste another 5 mins. finding the page memorize it and write it down"
- Organization (4): The writing is skillfully organized with skillful use of varied transitions: "Obviously, knowing the proper way to wield a sword would help you use it, it is the same with technology....as an added bonus....plus just about everyone in my school....But wait theres more"
- Language Use (4): Language use contributes to vivid and skillful writing: "Where as on an iPad or something like that, go to safari and type in what you want to find and BAM! there it is. badda bing badda boom"
- Conventions (3): The writing generally demonstrates correct use of a variety of conventions.

Sincerely, [REDACTED]



Please go back and check your work.
Be sure you have answered every question for Day 1.
Then close your booklet.
You are finished for today.



Letter

17

Day 1 | Page 11

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

I think technology helps students learn in school because if they do not understand something they can look it up on the computer. They could also use an ipad if given one by a teacher to look up something. There is so much technology that can be used to help learn.

Students could use ipads to play math games, addition and subtraction games, or multiplication and division games. They could also play word games to help with punctuation and grammar. There are so many games a student can play to help with math, english, science, etc.

There are so many other things technology can be used for, but I can't write it all. The last

If you have not completed your letter, continue on the next page. →



Level 3 (page 17)

- Ideas (3): A main idea is clear and is developed through relevant details: "technology helps students learn in school because if they do not understand something they can look it up on the computer....could use ipads to play math games, addition and subtraction games or multiplication and division games"
- Organization (3): The writing is organized with effective use of varied transitions: "I think...because....They could also play word games to help with....There are so many other things technology can be used for"
- Language Use (3): Language use contributes to clear and fluid writing: "They could also use an ipad if given one by a teacher to look up something."
- Conventions (3): The writing generally demonstrates correct use of a variety of conventions.

Thing I want to write about
is how on a computer or iPad
you can type up a story instead
of writing it by hand. On a
computer it may look neater than
by hand. Those are only a few
reasons why technology helps.



Please go back and check your work.
Be sure you have answered every question for Day 1.
Then close your booklet.
You are finished for today.



Letter

49

Day 1 | Page 11

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

I am writing to you today to convince you that technology does not help students learn. I have come up with three good reasons on why I feel this way.

My first reason is it would save money. The school has to pay for electricity, books, teachers, staff, and renovations, so why go out and buy some technology? Technology is very expensive and the school has to save money for extra stuff like school trips.

Secondly we already have books. We already have books for every subject so why do we need technology? The school has been using books for many years and there has never been a problem. If we already have the books we don't need to go and buy technology.

If you have not completed your letter, continue on the next page. →



Level 3 (page 49)

- Ideas (3): A main idea is clear and is developed through relevant details: "technology does not help students learn....would save money....we already have books....it would be less work"
- Organization (3): The writing is organized with effective use of varied transitions: "My first reason....so why go out and buy some technology?....why do we need technology?"
- Language Use (3): Language use contributes to clear and fluid writing: "The school has been using books for many years and there has never been a problem."
- Conventions (3): The writing generally demonstrates correct use of a variety of conventions.

Finally it would be less work. If we didnt have technology it would be less work for teachers and staff. They wouldnt have to worry about spending money, getting someone to hook up the computer, and getting someone to fix it when it breaks.

It is for the reasons I've listed that I dont think technology will helps us learn. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope you consider my idea.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]



Please go back and check your work.
Be sure you have answered every question for Day 1.
Then close your booklet.
You are finished for today.



Letter

31

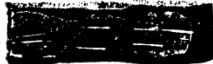
Day 1 | Page 11

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

I think that technology is really good for kids and addaltes too because it tells you stuff and shows you stuff like math and science and dose more than that. kids should use technology you can look up stuff you can do up bills on technology and there is so much stuff out there that can help you like science test if they did not have the technology that we all have today we would not know some things that we know now. I think that we should all have technology the pore and the rich. Technology can be fun. technology can be bad for you and be usefill or not usefill

by



If you have not completed your letter, continue on the next page. →



Level 2 (page 31)

- Ideas (2): A main idea is evident and is somewhat developed through details, some of which may be irrelevant: "technology is really good for kids and addaltes too because it tells you stuff and shows you stuff like math and science and does more than that"; although some additional details are present, they only somewhat develop the main idea.
- Organization (2): The writing is somewhat organized with vague or mechanical transitions: although the information within the piece is connected to the main idea, it seems like a mechanical listing of ideas without the presence of transitional techniques to guide the reader from one idea to the next.
- Language Use (2): Language use contributes to vague or mechanical writing: the language used throughout is vague: "it tells you stuff and shows you stuff....can look up stuff....there is so much stuff out there....technology can be bad for you and be usefill or not usefill"
- Conventions (2): Errors in conventions are noticeable, but communication is coherent: although there are errors in spelling (addaltes, dose, pore, usefill), capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure (run-on sentence), the communication is still coherent.

Letter

81

Day 1 | Page 11

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

Dear Principal: I think that technology helps students a lot. Because it gives students a chance to experenise technology if they have not before. I no that it is a lot of fun because I used it at my old school. I used them for math, English and scince. They helped me a lot with all of those classes. that is why I think that it is usfull to students and staff.

from: 

Level 2 (page 81)

- Ideas (2): A main idea is evident and is somewhat developed through details, some of which may be irrelevant: "technology helps students a lot....gives students a chance to experenise technology if they have not before....a lot of fun....helped me with all of those classes"; these are all relevant details, but they are not expanded upon in order to more fully develop the main idea.
- Organization (2): The writing is somewhat organized with vague or mechanical transitions: the repetition of "I think that....Because...that is why I think..." creates a mechanical feeling throughout this short piece.
- Language Use (2): Language use contributes to vague or mechanical writing: Some of the language is vague throughout: "I no that it is a lot of fun because I used it at my old school. I used them for math...."
- Conventions (2): Errors in conventions are noticeable, but communication is coherent: although there are errors in spelling (experenise, no, scince, usfull), capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure (fragment), the communication is still coherent.

Letter

27

Day 1

Page 11

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

Technology helps us find stuff
faster gives us moor infomathian,
about stuff.

Level 1 (page 27)

- Ideas (1): A main idea is not present, or a main idea is not developed with details: The response includes a main idea, but it is not developed with details.
- Organization (1): The writing is lacking organization; there is little or no evidence of transitions: There is no evidence of transitions in this short piece.
- Language Use (1): Language use contributes to confusing writing: "helps us find stuff faster...moor infomathian. about stuff"; it is unclear to what "stuff" the writer is referring, and this impedes the overall communication.
- Conventions (1): Errors in conventions contribute to confusing writing: errors in spelling (moor, infomathian), punctuation, and sentence structure (fragment) impede the writer's communication of meaning.

When thinking about "confusing writing," it is important to note that there is a difference between simply being able to decode the writer's words and being able to understand the writer's meaning.

Letter

Begin writing your letter on this page.

Dear Principal: (Do not write the principal's name.)

I think technology

If you have not completed your letter, continue on the next page. →



Not Enough Evidence: there is not enough evidence to assess the student's writing performance

Appendix H: Transitions Used in Student Writing

The below chart includes transitions used in student writing from Nova Scotia Assessments and Examinations. Though it includes only words and phrases, it is recognized that “transitions” also includes the way a piece of writing is organized and flows from one idea to the next.

Grade 3	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First...two...three • So that’s my • I think • This is how • First you... you keep doing this • Does the exact same thing • And that’s how • I love that • Take... then... next... now • If there are • If you • You can • The main point is • But there is • It is important too • Or as I say • Oh! And I almost forgot • Whenever I • But my • They are my favourite • People will see and • Just to • Then when • Others may not • At least I • Mostly because • If I don’t • So • When I • I will be • I am going to • I hope I can be • Like this • If it doesn’t work • I also want to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By this time • Once inside • After successfully • Finally • I have been...since • If we were to • Before we would • An hour later • As we • When • In the end • If I... I would • The first thing • To end our • Next • But of course • Firstly, secondly, thirdly etc. • The next thing • That night • While at the • Do you know why • It’s because • There are many reasons why • For one • These will also • It that’s not enough • If we don’t...we won’t • I also think • I have heard about • When people... they... because • Some ideas could be • That is why • And most of all • They should, however, only • First of all...second... lastly • As well as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But these only worked because... • It is my opinion that... • Instead of going to..., we can go.... • I think...because... • And with that kind of access to..., we can... • Also • Another thing... • In the past,... Now... • If it were a long time ago, ... • Not only does..., it allows... • Just yesterday, I • First off • Next • So in the following I will tell you about... • To start... • In fact... • Such as • So why... • By..., we can... • This means... • All in all • The last issue • Because • Finally • But • So, as you can see... • I highly think that... • The first one I am going to talk about is... • The reason why... • The 2nd topic on the list is... • For example • This could lead to... • What I mean about...is... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimately • Essentially • Based on how • Unique to • As the • Also serves as • First of all... second • In conclusion • Often • Every... every... will have • Although • So • Have you ever • Whether it be... or • Every day there are • It gives • Everyone wants • All of these • It makes • Or • Some form of • Though not always • Sometimes • We are more... than • Is one strong example • After reading • When I think about • But how does • It is helped by • Overall • It generally • It implies • She point out that • It will cause • As well as • Also as • Is not the only but is the most • What if • When reading

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are still • In conclusion • I think this because • Also • Don't you think • By now • Just to add • It all started when • Just as • After I... then • She turned and • He thought for a moment then • So what are we • Once they • Next • One of the • I wouldn't want • The first...then...so after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So if you ever... • So these are the three reasons why I think... • I am sure...but • In my opinion, I think... • For teenagers,... • If we can..., maybe there will be... • It even helps you... • Not only for teenagers, but for parents too • In conclusion, I think... • That's my opinion... • I finally finished... • At first nothing happened, but then... • An hour later... • Then realizing what had happened, ... • After a minute or two of silence, ... • While • As intriguing as... • When suddenly... • A few seconds later... • All of a sudden,... • Now it is time... • One day after... • I started to..., and then • I slowly sat up to see... • Could this really be happening? • I started to wonder if...until I saw... • The answer for many is clear:... • This requirement would provide... • If none of the above tickles your fancy, this will – ... • Perhaps this has enlightened you with... • Either way, ... • There are pros and cons to this idea, but in my opinion... • Sure, it's still... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though • As long as • This I find • To think • It was supposed • A lot can change • Nothing in the world is • Whether it is... or • You know those times when... and • I think by now • It applies to • And I noted that • Have you ever...then • Many...may not be...but • Have you ever...but then • I have my doubts • I would look for • Sometimes things can be • While the • This shows • Just because • Because of • As... we often • Quite frequently we • One of the main reasons...another • We often assume that • To conclude • In saying that though • Which means that • Mainly by • Mainly • Other times • If you were to • Yet • So many times • Although nothing will be able to • But it's so much • Not only could • And no, it isn't always... but • Whenever • My first argument... • The last and strongest argument
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite all of the previously listed negative outcomes... • Even if... • So, yes, I definitely think... • However, if I think further... • Well for one thing... • I believe that... • It doesn't matter how much... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without this • As stated above • And arguably • Even if not • And ultimately • In the very same way that • Have you ever • If a • Say that • No matter how • Be it • Because they offer • How can • Is it • Go on then...take • Aforementioned • In addition • After ... of some kind • They may seem...but • Once you • If you do...then. If you don't...then • Simply • Such • All you have to do is • Well then • But in the end • Most of • But is it really • Without this...would • So, be it your • Overall it can be said • It isn't just • This is just as • I do believe • So far • An even bigger • All I need • An excellent example • If people want • On the other hand • We can...by doing • In order to • As the last...suggested • This can be proven
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