

**Writing Instruction and Assessment:
Information and Tips for Addressing Writing Prompts
on MAAP ELA State Assessments (3-8 and End-of-Course)**

Topic	Notes
Scoring Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are approximately 30 scorers per grade. • There are several Team Leaders and a Scoring Director per grade. • MDE staff and teachers travel to MN to observe scoring. • MDE staff and teachers participate in training process and then “read behind” scorer responses as a quality/agreement measure. • All writing scores of 0 are reviewed by the Scoring Director and Team Leader.
Rubric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is scored four times for each student – once per standard (domain). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of Ideas (4 points) ○ Organization of Ideas (4 points) ○ Mechanics (2 points) ○ Grammar (2 points)
Prompt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompts align with writing and language standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ W1 (opinion), W2 (informative), and W3 (narrative) ○ L.1 and L.3 - Grammar and Usage (tone, word choice, varied sentence structure, etc.) ○ L.2 – Mechanics (Standard English – punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc.) • Students MUST respond to ALL components of the prompt. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Determine the mode of response. ○ Deconstruct the prompt to ensure all components are answered.
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no standard or expectation for response length, including the number of sentences or number of paragraphs. • There must be sufficient writing to score language conventions.
Formulaic Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction regarding the impact of formulaic writing comes from the Rangefinding Committee and may adversely affect a writer’s scores. • Formulaic writing does not demonstrate an understanding of the principles of effective organization, sequencing of ideas, or understanding of transitions. • In the upper grades more is expected from students.
Development of Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas must be clear, consistently focused, and show a complete understanding of the task. • Depending on the mode to which the student is asked to respond, use facts or inferences from the text to support the response. • Provide evidence to support any response. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DO NOT rely on text evidence or citations ALONE to serve as the response to the prompt. ○ Provide context and synthesize ideas. ○ Integrate original thoughts to tie ideas together.

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Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is evidence of planning, and the writing shows a logical progression of ideas.• Make evidence connect to thoughts utilizing transition words.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The words assist students in moving from one thought to another.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate grade-level grammar and mechanics.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mechanics includes capitalization, end punctuation, and spelling.• Write using formal language.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Do not use slang words or phrases.○ Do not use contractions.

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Sample of Formulaic Writing

I am writing to let you know that you should not have cancelled my favorite TV show. The first reason you should put my favorite show back on TV is because it is entertaining. The second reason you should bring back my show is because it teaches kids how to do the right thing. The third reason you should bring back my show is because lots of people love this show.

The first reason you should put my favorite show back on TV is because it is entertaining. It is one of the funniest shows on TV, and it is has a lot of excitement. It is really entertaining.

The second reason you should bring back my show is because it teaches kids how to do the right thing. There are kids my age on the show and they go through the same things I do. So it teaches us to do the right thing.

The third reason you should bring back my show is because lots of people love this show. It will make lots of people happy if they could watch the show again. I know if you put the show back on, lot's of people will watch it.

So in conclusion, I have told you three reasons why you should bring back my favorite show. It is entertaining, it teaches kids to do the right thing, and lots of people want to watch the show.

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**Deconstruct the Prompt: Development of Ideas
(Example)**

Text: “Life in the Pond”

Sample Prompt: You have read “Life in the Pond.” Write an essay **discussing which is the more important inhabitant of the pond, plants or animals.** Use evidence from “Life in the Pond” to **support your claims.**

Determine the mode: Opinion

<p>Deconstruct the Prompt (<i>Prompt Components</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which is the more important inhabitant • Use evidence from the text 		
<p>State your claim Plants are the more important inhabitant of the pond.</p>		
<p>What does the text say?</p>	<p>What does the text mean (use facts, inferences, or background knowledge depending on the mode)?</p>	<p>Why is the text important?</p>
<p>What parts of the passage address the prompt (textual evidence)?</p>	<p>In your own words, what does the textual evidence mean?</p>	<p>Based on what the text explicitly states and what was inferred/concluded, how does this support your response to the prompt?</p>
<p>SAMPLE</p>		
<p>Use examples from the text to state why plants are more important than animals. You may compare/contrast plants and animals to support your claim, providing more details to support why plants are more important.</p>	<p>This evidence will show why plants are more important than animals. Use your own words to further explain and support your claim with details.</p>	<p>The evidence from the text provides facts and details to support my claim.</p>

**This template is specific to textual evidence, which is a component of the development of ideas.*

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**Deconstruct the Prompt: Development of Ideas
(Template)**

Text:
Prompt:

Determine the mode:

Deconstruct the Prompt (<i>Prompt Components</i>)		
Determine the task		
What does the text say?	What does the text mean (use facts, inferences, or background knowledge depending on the mode)?	Why is the text important?
What parts of the passage address the prompt (textual evidence)?	In your own words, what does the textual evidence mean ?	Based on what the text explicitly states and what was inferred/concluded, how does this support your response to the prompt?

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Transition Words

The following chart includes words and phrases found in the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Writing Standards.

Grade	Opinion Writing	Informative Writing	Narrative Writing
2	Because And Also		Temporal words generally refer to time-related transitions such as 'tomorrow;' 'for;' or 'before long.'
3	Because Therefore Since For example	Also Another And More But	Temporal words generally refer to time-related transitions such as 'tomorrow;' 'for;' or 'before long.'
4	For instance In order to In addition	Another For example Also Because	Variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events
5	Consequently Specifically	In contrast Especially	Variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events

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Sample Transition Words and Phrases

Addition	Time	Place	Comparison	Contrast	Example
further	meanwhile	At that point	similarly	however	For example
Furthermore	presently	Opposite to	comparable	nevertheless	For instance
moreover	At last	Adjacent to	In the same way	On the other hand	That is
In addition	finally	On the other side	likewise	On the contrary	Such as
Additionally	immediately	In the front	As with	Even so	As revealed by
then	thereafter	In the back	equally	alternatively	Illustrated by
also	At that time	there	Just as	At the same time	Specifically
too	subsequently	here	In the manner	otherwise	In particular
besides	eventually	beyond	By the same token	instead	For one thing
again	currently	nearby	Given these points	nonetheless	This can be seen in
First, second	In the meantime	Next to	For the most part	conversely	An instance of this
Finally, last	In the past	At that point	overall	though	because