

## Purpose/ Definition

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes:

- To increase reader's knowledge of a subject
- To help readers better understand a procedure or process
- To provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept

Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types and components; size, function, or behavior; how things work; and why things happen.

To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing.

## Techniques to Convey Information

- **Naming**
- **Defining**
- **Describing**
- **Differentiating between different types or parts**
- **Comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts**
- **Citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point**

6-12

# Informative Explanatory Writing

Common Core  
Standards

Wayne RESA

## KEY ELEMENTS

- **Introduction (previews what is to follow)**
- **Organization (definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect)**
- **Development (with relevant facts, concrete details, quotations, other information)**
- **Transitions**
- **Precise Language**
- **Formal Style**
- **Conclusion**
- **Conventions of English**

## The Introductory Paragraph

1. **Grabs the reader's attention**
2. **Narrows the subject**
3. **States the thesis, claim, or key point**

6th –12th Grade

**Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow.**

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## Conventions of Standard English

L.3.1f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.

L.3.3a. Choose words and phrases for effect.

L.4.1f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

L.4.1g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., *to/too/two*; *there/their*).

L.4.3a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.\*

L.4.3b. Choose punctuation for effect.

L.5.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.

L.5.2a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series.†

L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).

L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.

L.6.3a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.‡

L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.7.1c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

L.7.3a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

L.8.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.9-10.1a.. Use parallel structure

## Organization

6th and 7th Grades

Organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

8th Grade

Organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

9th/10th Grades

Organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

Adapted from MISD—"Protocol for Analysis of Informative/ Explanatory Writing"

11th/12th Grades

Organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension

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## Formal Style

6th, 7th, 8th Grades

Establish and maintain a formal style.

9th—12th Grades

Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing

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## FORMAL STYLE

- Avoid using colloquial words/expressions
- Avoid contractions
- Write in third person
- Avoid addressing readers using second person pronouns
- Avoid using abbreviated words
- Longer complex sentences are preferred

## Development

6th, 7th, and 8th Grades

Develop the topic with relevant, well chosen (8th) facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

9th and 10th Grade

Develop the topic with well chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

11th and 12th Grades

Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

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## Precise Language

6th, 7th and 8th Grades

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic

9th and 10th Grades

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.

11th and 12th Grades

Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.

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## Transitions

6th, 7th, and 8th Grades

Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

9th/10th Grades

Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

11th /12th Grades

Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

## Conclusions

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.