



AREA V REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS

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Writing to Sources

Narrative Writing Tasks

Middle-High School

Literacy Design Collaborative Template Tasks

Purpose:

Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) tasks translate the common core literacy standards into what we ask students to do and how we know they can do it. They take the standards from the page into action in the classroom. Template tasks are fill-in-the-blank shells built off of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). They primarily are used to create high-quality student assignments that develop reading and writing skills in the context of learning science, history, literature or some other element of the middle or high school curriculum. Practitioners adapt template tasks for use in specific classes by filling in the kinds of texts to be read, writing to be produced and content to be addressed. Template tasks can also be used to create shorter classroom assessments that complement larger assignments.

LDC has created a prototype set of template tasks that connect the experiences of reading, writing, and thinking as established by the CCSS. The initial collection focuses on argumentation, informational/explanatory and narrative writing in response to reading single or multiple texts. Template tasks require students to:

1. *Read texts* as specified by the CCSS;
2. *Write products* as specified by the CCSS; and
3. *Apply common core literacy standards to content* with a focus on ELA, social studies, and/or science.

Tasks Differentiated:

How can the rigor levels of tasks be varied?

By changing choices (as described below), practitioners can adjust the rigor level in four major ways:

1. **By selecting the level of difficulty within a template task.** LCD template tasks include levels that allow practitioners to vary the type of demands of students to manage and complete the task. Individual tasks can be made simple or complex by varying the task demand, with up to three tiers of possibilities:
 - Level 1 (L1) refers to the most fundamental level of difficulty and narrows the task to those skills in reading, writing and critical thinking that are essential for the task. Often more than one version of L1 is given to allow for choice.
 - Level 2 (L2) refers to a next-step-up skill or cognitive demand such as managing more than one point of view or multiple processes.
 - Level 3 (L3) adds additional demand to the task in which student writers are asked to make connections and use background knowledge to reflect implications beyond the specific topic.

Some tasks have only one level. Others have two or three levels. For leveled tasks, teachers can choose to teach level 1 (L1) alone or add demands to the prompt by including Level 2 (L2) and/or Level 3 (L3).

2. **By choice of reading materials.** The rigor level of a task also can be adjusted by varying text type and complexity, as well as by the number and length of text students are asked to read. Reading demands are tethered to difficulty levels that are being established by the CCSS through its text complexity specifications. Currently, common core exemplars and systems such as Lexile scores set the demand levels.
3. **By type of writing demand.** Demand levels for academic writing will be established as common core exemplars are produced and assessment systems are developed. The type of writing demand can be varied as part of a larger instructional strategy that includes scaffolding and student engagement.

Literacy Design Collaborative Task Development Basics

This one-page organizer summarizes how LDC teaching tasks are created.

1. Choose Your Template Task

Your template task can:

- Be argumentation, informational or explanatory, or narrative.
- Use an essential question or an “after researching” task.
- Call for students to develop a definition, a description, a procedural-sequential piece, a synthesis, an analysis, a comparison, an evaluation, a problem-solving piece, or a discussion of cause and effect.

2. Choose Your Topic

Your choice should:

- Address a major issue in your discipline (big enough to be a good investment of 2 to 4 weeks of class time).
- Fit the state and local standards for which you are responsible.
- Make sense as a subject to teach during the weeks you are planning to schedule this task.

5. Create Your Teaching Task

Your prompt should:

- Use the exact wording of the template.
- Use your topic, reading texts, and writing text choices to fill in the blanks and brackets.
- Be both challenging and feasible for students, with a balance of reading demands and writing demands that works well for the intended grade and content.
- Require sustained writing and effective use of ideas and evidence from the reading texts.
- Be built out for students by adding introductory background statement and ending with extension if applicable.

3. Choose Texts Students Will Read

Your choices should:

- Address your topic.
 - Be short enough to allow close reading and careful analysis.
 - Use and develop academic understanding and vocabulary.
 - Where possible, include models of the kind of text students will be writing.
- Or, you can specify a topic and assign students to research the issue to select texts that address the issue.

4. Choose Texts Students Will Write

Your choice should:

- Be a good fit for your topic, template task, and students.
- Where possible, resemble writing students may need to do in adult life (for example, make an argument in a letter to the editor, or explain a process in a memo to a colleague.)

Potential Text Types (or Genre) That Can be Inserted into Template Task Prompts

Suggestions For:

Literature	Informational Text	Written Products	Stylistic Devices
fiction	nonfiction	essay	metaphor
adventure stories	text books	review	simile
historical fiction	academic texts	article	personification
mysteries	articles	editorial	imagery
fantasy	journal	speech	apostrophe
science fiction	newspaper	proposal	symbol
realistic fiction	magazine articles	report	allegory
allegories	Scientific/historical sources	article	motif
parodies	primary source documents	lab report	paradox
satire	guides/manuals	manual	tone
graphic novels	scientific articles/documents	narrative	
dramas	technical/business articles	account	
one-act & multiple-act plays	technical/business documents	biography	
poetry	political articles/documents	play/script	
narrative poems	speeches		
lyrical poems	narratives	Content	Techniques
free verse poems	reference books	topic	suspense
sonnets	encyclopedias	issue	time frames
odes	dictionaries	theme	dialogue
ballads	thesauruses	concept	description
epics	atlases		first-person
folk literature	almanacs		narration
myths	guides		persuasion
fables	how-to books		subjective
fairy tales	video		
legends	digital text		
folktales	graphical information		
tall tales			

Task 26 Template: After researching _____ (informational texts) on _____ (content), write a _____ (narrative or substitute) that describes _____ (content). L2 Use _____ (stylistic devices) to develop a narrative. L3 Use _____ (techniques) to convey multiple storylines.

Task 26 ELA Example: After researching reference books on how to write a script, write a short play aimed at teens that describes ways to eat healthy foods. L2 Use a stylistic device to develop a narrative.

Task 26 Social Studies Example: After researching guides on Washington DC, write a narrative that describes how the site was selected for the nation's capital.

Task 27 Template: [Insert question] After reading _____ (literature or informational texts), write a _____ (narrative or substitute) from the perspective of _____ (content). L2 Use _____ (stylistic devices) to develop a narrative effect in your work. L3 Use _____ (techniques) to convey multiple storylines.

Task 27 ELA Example: How do characters send a message in a novel? After reading *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck write a narrative from the perspective of Juana, the fisherman's wife. L2 Use imagery and tone to develop a narrative effect in your work.

Task 27 Social Studies Example: What can historical accounts teach us about someone's struggle for dignity? After reading historical documents and accounts about The Trail of Tears, write a narrative article from the perspectives of a Choctaw and George Gains. L3 Use dialogue to convey multiple storylines.

Task 28 Template: After researching _____ (informational texts) on _____ (content), write a _____ (narrative or substitute) that relates _____ (content) and the events that _____ (content). L2 Use _____ (stylistic devices) to develop your work. L3 Use _____ (techniques) to convey multiple storylines.

Task 28 ELA Example: After researching articles and biographies on WWII veterans, write a short biography that relates the story of a person with courage and conviction and the events that influenced this person the most and in what ways. L2 Use suspense to develop your work.

Task 28 Social Studies Example: After researching historical documents and maps on the Battle of Waterloo, write an account that relates the timeline and the events that caused the Emperor's military forces to lose. L2 Use imagery to develop your work. L3 Use time-frames to convey multiple storylines.

Task 29 Template: [Insert question] After reading _____ (literature or informational texts) about _____ (content), write a _____ (narrative or substitute) that relates _____ (content). L2 Use _____ (stylistic devices) to develop your work.

Task 29 ELA Example: What was it like to live in the Victorian age in England? After reading accounts about life in the Victorian age, write an article that relates a year in the life of a Victorian family.

Task 29 Social Studies Example: What place in the world would you like to visit? After reading maps and articles about a place you would like to visit, write a short narrative account that relates significant events in its history. L2 Use imagery and sensory language to develop your work.

How are LDC teaching tasks scored?

LDC Rubrics:

The LDC rubrics are aligned to the common core standards and address argumentation, informational/explanatory and narrative products. The LDC rubrics are holistic, written to describe demands (do this) and qualities (how well). The score a student receives is an informed professional representation of the skills and qualities described in the rubric based on the grade and curriculum continuum. As data, the LDC score provides feedback on these skills students still need to develop, pointing to the teaching that should follow and they type of learning the student should engage in. A score of *meets expectations* or better tells students that they have demonstrated the qualities of thinking and use of skills to warrant that score for the teaching task. If not, the student receives a not yet and works with the teacher to improve the work until it meets expectations.

The Scoring Process:

Where possible, student work should be scored by practitioners in pairs or in small groups. Practitioners can refer to the CCSS grade-by-grade standards if they need further description for what is highlighted in the rubric. The process includes:

- Collecting and identifying student work using some notation system that identifies student grade levels and class, but not individual students.
- Scoring in pairs or small groups in which differences in scores are discussed.
- Agreeing on and providing one score. Practitioners might note on the rubric where there are weaknesses and strengths or where students need to work more diligently; the notation would be used to confer with students.
- Collecting scores in a matrix to identify how many scores are at each level. Teams should discuss what the classroom, student groups and individual student data indicate about learning progress and what students need next. Questions to consider:
 - *Do students need to repeat the task, with other texts and content?
 - *Are they ready to move to a higher Level 2 or 3?
 - *Are they ready to move to another type of module? Do they need some interim teaching on specific skills before they engage in another module?
- Select a small number of paper that pose interesting questions for instruction.
- Collect sample papers to serve as exemplars for future scoring.

Practitioners can also add specific content criteria. Ultimately, though, the student receives one score. This sends the message that content and skills work together to demonstrate understanding and adherence to the teaching task.

Making Scoring Matter:

Common scoring with rubrics is one of the most powerful activities for building consensus about the meaning of achievement for both teachers and students. A score is not an exact measurement, nor is a rubric an exact description of performance, although a good rubric describes as well as words can the most salient skills and qualities relevant to a task. Because scoring is inexact even with a high quality rubric, it requires experience and collaboration to arrive at decisions. As practitioners gain more confidence in their scoring, the score gains more and more meaning and accuracy. As a result, scoring provides critical classroom-based data to inform the next steps teachers and students must take to improve literacy skills.

Scoring Rubric for Narrative Writing Template Tasks

Scoring Elements	Not Yet	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Advanced	
	1	2	3	3.5	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.	Addresses prompt appropriately, but with a weak or uneven focus.	Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus.		Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately and maintains a strongly developed focus.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a theme or storyline, but lacks a clear or sustained purpose.	Establishes a theme or storyline, but purpose is weak, with some lapses in coherence.	Establishes a theme or storyline, with a well-developed purpose carried through the narrative.		Establishes a compelling theme or storyline, with a well developed purpose carried through the narrative through skillful use of narrative techniques.
Reading/ Research	Directly restates information from reading materials, interviews, and/ or visual materials; uses materials inaccurately, OR information from source materials is irrelevant for the purpose at hand.	Uses reading materials, interviews, and/ or visual materials with minor lapses incohesion, accuracy or relevance.	Accurately integrates reading material, interviews, and/ or visual material to authenticate the narrative.		Accurately and seamlessly integrates reading material, interviews, and/ or visual material to authenticate the Narrative.
Development	Descriptions of experiences, individuals, and/ or events are overly simplified or lack details. L2 Attempts to use stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) but devices are used awkwardly or do not serve the purpose of the narrative.	Develops experiences, individuals, and/ or events with some detail but sense of time, place, or character remains at the surface level. L2 Uses appropriate stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) unevenly.	Develops experiences, individuals, and/ or events with sufficient detail to add depth and complexity to the sense of time, place, or character. L2 Uses appropriate stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) to support the purpose of the narrative.		Elaborates on experiences, individuals, and/ or events with comprehensive detail to add depth and complexity to the sense of time, place, or character. L2 Skillfully integrates appropriate stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) to support the purpose of the narrative.
Organization	Attempts to use a narrative structure; composition is disconnected or rambling.	Applies a narrative structure (chronological or descriptive), with some lapses in coherence or awkward use of the organizational structure.	Applies a narrative structure (chronological or descriptive) appropriate to the purpose, task, and audience; storyline clearly conveys the theme or purpose.		Applies a complex narrative structure (chronological or descriptive) appropriate to the purpose, task and audience that enhances communication of theme or purpose and keeps the reader engaged.
Conventions	Lacks control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; little or ineffective use of transitions.	Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English; inconsistently uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs to connect ideas.	Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions with few errors; consistently uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs to connect ideas. Provides bibliography or works consulted when prompted.		Demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions; effectively uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs to connect ideas. Provides bibliography or works consulted when prompted.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.	Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.	Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.		Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.