

English and Communication Benchmarks, Grades 4 – 12

CREATE ADP PRODUCTS (P)

PRODUCT 1: INFORMATIONAL/EXPLANATORY ESSAY (P.1)

As students progress across the grade levels, they should draft informational or explanatory essays on topics that are increasingly complex. The draft of the *NAEP 2011 Writing Framework* defines writing to explain as writing that is:

... designed to present information and ideas to others in a manner that aids understanding of the subject. Writing to explain commands a large portion of the K – 12 curriculum (Graham & Perin, 2006) where students write summaries, research reports and other explanatory tasks in all of their school subjects. Writing to explain is an everyday occurrence in the workplace and the adult world as well, where millions write informative e-mail messages, fill out applications and write instructions.¹

The Writing strand describes the development of general writing skills and abilities; please use these benchmarks in connection with those below. Also, please note that while the benchmarks below are specific to writing, students can also convey information via Speaking or Producing Digital Media. The benchmark criteria below can be modified accordingly.

The benchmarks for an effective informational essay progress across the grades in the following areas:

P.1.1 Topics, Development and Focus

- P.1.1.1 presenting a thesis that is focused and cogent
- P.1.1.2 making valid inferences and conclusions
- P.1.1.3 providing relevant details and/or examples to develop the thesis

P.1.2 Coherence and Cohesion

- P.1.2.1 creating a sustained, effective organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience and context, with an effective introduction
- P.1.2.2 creating a sustained, effective organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience and context, with an effective body
- P.1.2.3 creating a sustained, effective organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience and context, with an effective conclusion

These benchmarks are described in greater detail below.

¹ Achieve's English and Communication Benchmarks include separate strands for Research Essay and Work-Related Texts.

INFORMATIONAL/EXPLANATORY ESSAY

GRADES 4 – 5	GRADES 6 – 8	GRADES 9 – 10	GRADES 11 – 12
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P.1.1 Topics, Development and Focus

P.1.1.1 presenting a thesis that is focused and cogent

<p>P.1.1.1.4-5.a Summarize and explain a relatively uncomplicated topic. <i>For example, read an article about pioneers and summarize the difficulties they had in crossing the plains. (NAEP grade 4 example: A grade 4 NAEP explanatory writing task might call for a basic explanation of personal knowledge to an audience already somewhat familiar with the topic.)</i> (ADP C9)</p>	<p>P.1.1.1.6-8.a Summarize, explain and/or analyze a topic. <i>For example, read several articles about pioneers and compare and contrast the difficulties they had crossing the plains. (NAEP grade 8 example: A grade 8 NAEP explanatory writing task may ask students to analyze a process or write a response that summarizes and evaluates the main points of a brief reading passage.)</i> (ADP C9)</p>	<p>P.1.1.1.9-10.a Summarize, explain, interpret and/or analyze a somewhat complex topic. <i>For example, read several; articles about pioneers, identify the difficulties they had crossing the plains and relate these difficulties to similar situations in literature or in contemporary life, for instance, illegal immigrants passing the border. (NOTE: See grade 11 – 12 example –P.1.1.1.11-12.a – from NAEP for one example of an explanatory writing task at the high school level. No grades 9 – 10 example from NAEP is available.)</i> (ADP C9)</p>	<p>P.1.1.1.11-12.a Summarize, explain, interpret and/or analyze a complex topic. <i>For example, compare the descriptions of the causes of pioneer travel from a variety of primary and secondary sources and account for any variances in the materials. (NAEP grade 12 example: A grade 12 NAEP explanatory task might require students to analyze the causes of a problem, analyze similarities and differences between two events, or analyze data in a simple figure.)</i> (ADP C9)</p>
<p>P.1.1.1.4-5.b Present a central idea that clearly identifies the topic and addresses the purpose of the writing. <i>For example, "After you read these directions, you will be able to make a kite that you can fly yourself."</i> (ADP C9)</p>	<p>P.1.1.1.6-8.b Present a controlling idea that represents an explanation of the topic and explicitly or implicitly addresses the purpose of the writing. <i>For example, "The following summary of the novel provides an overview of the major characters and events in the book."</i> (ADP C9)</p>	<p>P.1.1.1.9-10.b Present a thesis that focuses on a specific concept or idea and provides foundational support for an explanation, interpretation and/or an analysis of the topic and addresses the purpose of the writing. <i>For example, "According to the author, our widely accepted beliefs about health and nutrition may be based on faulty scientific evidence. This essay will outline the information presented on this issue."</i> (ADP C9)</p>	<p>P.1.1.1.11-12.b Present a thesis that focuses on a specific concept or idea and provides foundational support for an explanation, interpretation and/or an analysis of the topic and addresses the purpose of the writing. <i>For example, "According to two critical sources on Kafka's Metamorphosis, Gregor Samsa's transformation into a large bug stems from deep and longstanding problems with his father."</i> (ADP C9)</p>

P.1.1.2 making valid inferences and conclusions

<p>P.1.1.2.4-5 Make valid inferences and draw reasonable conclusions based on the evidence from uncomplicated informational and technical texts. (ADP C9 and ADP F4)</p>	<p>P.1.1.2.6-8 Make valid inferences and draw reasonable conclusions based on the evidence from somewhat challenging informational and technical texts. (ADP C9 and ADP F4)</p>	<p>P.1.1.2.9-12 Make valid inferences and draw reasonable conclusions based on the evidence from complex informational and technical texts. (ADP C9 and ADP F4)</p>
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P.1.1.3 providing relevant details and/or examples to develop the thesis

<p>P.1.1.3.4-5 Adequately communicate uncomplicated ideas, insights or theories</p>	<p>P.1.1.3.6-8 Competently communicate more complicated ideas, insights or</p>	<p>P.1.1.3.9-12.a Use evidence to effectively support perspective or firmly anchor the controlling idea. (ADP C9 and ADP C4)</p>
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UNDERSTAND TEXT COMPLEXITY	ACQUIRE INFORMATION	COMMUNICATE INFORMATION	CREATE ADP PRODUCTS INFORMATIONAL/EXPLANATORY ESSAY	WORK IN TEAMS
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GRADES 4 – 5	GRADES 6 – 8	GRADES 9 – 10	GRADES 11 – 12
through relevant facts, concrete details, quotations, statistics or other information in support of the controlling idea. (ADP C9 and ADP C4)	theories through relevant facts, concrete details, quotations, statistics or other information in support of the controlling idea. (ADP C9 and ADP C4)	P.1.1.3.9-12.b Effectively support complex ideas, insights or theories through substantial evidence including: relevant facts, concrete details, quotations, statistics or other information. (ADP C9 and ADP C4)	
P.1.2 Coherence and Cohesion			
P.1.2.1 creating a sustained, effective organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience and context, with an effective introduction			
P.1.2.1.4-5 Craft an introduction in which the thesis of a relatively uncomplicated informational essay is stated clearly at the outset and reader interest is developed. (ADP C3)	P.1.2.1.6-8 Craft an introduction in which the thesis of a somewhat complicated informational essay is stated, a knowledgeable stance is conveyed, and reader interest is developed. (ADP C3)	P.1.2.1.9-12 Craft an introduction in which the thesis of a complex informational essay is stated as the concluding sentence of an introductory paragraph or section; a knowledgeable stance is achieved; and varied details and techniques purposefully and effectively engage the audience. (ADP C3)	
P.1.2.2 creating a sustained, effective organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience and context, with an effective body			
P.1.2.2.4-5.a Present a body of textual evidence that supports the analysis or presentation of relatively uncomplicated information. (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	P.1.2.2.6-8.a Competently present a body of textual evidence that supports the presentation of challenging information. (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	P.1.2.2.9-12.a Effectively present a text that advances and supports the presentation or analysis of complex information. (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	
P.1.2.2.4-5.b Connect relatively uncomplicated ideas using relatively simple transitions (e.g., <i>as a result, because of</i>). (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	P.1.2.2.6-8.b Connect ideas using a variety of transition strategies (e.g., transitional words and phrases, such as <i>as a result, in contrast, therefore, however</i>). (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	P.1.2.2.9-12.b Maintain coherence through the consistent and effective use of transitions within and between sentences and paragraphs (e.g., transitional words and phrases that compare/contrast, <i>similar to</i> , show sequence, <i>subsequently</i> , or indicate relative importance, <i>perhaps most importantly</i>). (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	
P.1.2.2.4-5.c Create an effective organizing structure based on relatively uncomplicated information (e.g., description, compare/contrast, cause-and-effect). (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	P.1.2.2.6-8.c Create an effective organizing structure based on more challenging information (e.g., description, compare/contrast, cause-and-effect). (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	P.1.2.2.9-12.c Create an effective organizing structure based on complex information (e.g., one that employs multiple structures within the overall organization, including description, compare/contrast, cause-and-effect, question-answer). (ADP C9 and ADP C3)	
P.1.2.3 creating a sustained, effective organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience and context, with an effective conclusion			
P.1.2.3.4-5 Craft an appropriate conclusion that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides closure, such as by restating the thesis and main ideas; and, Makes a general statement or claim about the significance of the information analyzed. (ADP C9 and ADP C3) 	P.1.2.3.6-8 Craft an appropriate and engaging conclusion that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-emphasizes the thesis and main idea; and, Makes a general statement or claim about the significance of the information analyzed. (ADP C9 and ADP C3) 	P.1.2.3.9-12 Craft a sophisticated and engaging conclusion that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposefully and effectively re-emphasizes the thesis and main points; and, Presents in a new light the analysis of information. (ADP C9 and ADP C3) 	