

## **English and Communication Benchmarks, Grades 4 – 12**

### **CREATE ADP PRODUCTS (P) PRODUCT 4: RESEARCH ESSAY (P.4)**

**As students progress through the grade levels, they should research and draft research essays on topics that are increasingly complex.** 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 research findings via Speaking or Producing Digital Media; the benchmark criteria below can be modified accordingly.

The benchmarks for an effective research essay (or documented essay) <sup>1</sup> progress across the grades in the following areas:

#### **P.4.1 Topics, Development and Focus**

- P.4.1.1 presenting a thesis
- P.4.1.2 identifying and evaluating sources for reliability, credibility, consistency and strength
- P.4.1.3 synthesizing information from a variety of sources
- P.4.1.4 marshaling evidence in support of a thesis or related claims
- P.4.1.5 paraphrasing and summarizing the range of arguments related to the thesis

#### **P.4.2 Coherence and Cohesion**

- P.4.2.1 sustaining a logical organizing structure, with an effective introduction
- P.4.2.2 sustaining a logical organizing structure, with an effective body
- P.4.2.3 sustaining a logical organizing structure, with an effective conclusion

#### **P.4.3 Research Formatting Guidelines**

- P.4.3.1 including accurate citations and references
- P.4.3.2 adhering to publishing guidelines for a research essay
- P.4.3.3 adhering to established format for a research essay
- P.4.3.4 using technology effectively to prepare the essay and to present information

These benchmarks are described in greater detail below.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The expectation is that students will write extended documented essays, which may be original research but are not necessarily so. The term “research essay” is used because of its familiarity to the field and its use in ADP D5.

<sup>2</sup> We have incorporated, when appropriate, examples from the College Board *Standards for College Success*, published in 2006, to elaborate and exemplify the content of the “backmapped” benchmarks.

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GRADES 4 – 5	GRADES 6 – 8	GRADES 9 – 10	GRADES 11 – 12
<b>P.4.1 Topics, Development and Focus</b>			
<b>P.4.1.1 presenting a thesis</b>			
<b>P.4.1.1.4-5.a</b> Focus on a topic of particular interest about which to become informed. <i>For example, write on local birds, choose a particular bird and explain its preferred habitat, or report on the life of a favorite author.</i> (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.6-8.a</b> Narrow a topic so that the research process is manageable and the controlling idea is focused. <i>For example, choose a particular species of birds and investigate its habitat, noting why that habitat is successful for this species. Or write a report on the life of a favorite author and comment about how elements of his or her life are reflected in two of the author’s books.</i> (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.9-10.a</b> Narrow a somewhat complex topic so that the research process is manageable and a clear research question is identified. <i>For example, choose a particular species of bird researching its habitat, and identify a problem or issue connected with this habitat as the focus of the essay. Or write a report on a favorite author and analyze how one or two of his or her works were reviewed when they were released, and whether and how the evaluation of the works changed over time.</i> (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.11-12.a</b> Focus on a complex topic that is sufficiently narrow to examine the topic in depth. <i>For example, choose a species of bird, researching its habitat, and identify a problem or issue related to habitat, and frame a focused research question about this issue, exploring the complexity of the particular issue by dealing with multiple perspectives; or compare and contrast two authors from similar backgrounds and critically analyze how their backgrounds connect to or deviate from their work.</i> (ADP D1)
<b>P.4.1.1.4-8.b</b> Take and organize notes on what is known and what needs to be researched about the topic. (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.4-8.b</b> Take and organize notes on what is known and what needs to be researched about the topic. (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.9-10.b</b> Take and organize notes on relevant knowledge and identify areas for research. (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.11-12.b</b> Take and organize notes on relevant knowledge, identifying multiple perspectives and areas for research. (ADP D1)
<b>P.4.1.1.4-5.c</b> Focus on concrete, factual information. (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.6-8.c</b> Focus on factual information and/or relevant theories. (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.9-10.c</b> Focus on both factual data and somewhat complex inferences. (ADP D1)	<b>P.4.1.1.11-12.c</b> Focus on relevant data that are complex and theoretical, as well as factual. (ADP D1)
<b>P.4.1.2 identifying and evaluating sources for reliability, credibility, consistency and strength</b>			
<b>P.4.1.2.4-5.a</b> Use sources which are provided or suggested and locate additional sources that are relevant to the topic. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.2.6-8.a</b> Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, defining the characteristics of each and evaluating each for their benefits and limitations. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.2.9-10.a</b> Reference relevant primary, secondary and tertiary sources, demonstrating a systematic search by including resources that are: written by authorities in the topic area; and written for an informed audience in the field. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.2.11-12.a</b> Reference relevant primary, secondary and tertiary sources, demonstrating a systematic search by including resources that are: written by authorities in the topic area; written for an informed audience in the field; recent (in topics for which timeliness is essential); and important, but less-easily obtained (e.g., primary sources or articles from outside the school library system). (ADP D2 and ADP D5)
<b>P.4.1.2.4-5.b</b> Identify elements of print	<b>P.4.1.2.6-8.b</b> Choose among sources	<b>P.4.1.2.9-12.b</b> Evaluate resources for their credibility, reliability, strengths and	

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and electronic resources that make them reliable and/or credible resources. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	provided and those found independently based on the usefulness, credibility and reliability of the resources. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	limitations, using criteria appropriate to the discipline. <i>For example, a research paper on a science topic should draw from the newest research and sources, while one for a history topic should draw on older primary documents as well as contemporary secondary resources.</i> (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	
<b>P.4.1.2.4-5.c</b> Identify features that indicate if Web sites are reliable or unreliable. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.2.6-8.c</b> Identify reasons for choosing one source over another, including those found on Web sites. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.2.9-12.c</b> Demonstrate ability to distinguish between reliable and unreliable resources by choosing reliable resources and not relying too heavily on any one resource. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	
<b>P.4.1.2.4-8.d</b> Identify the characteristics and limitations of source material. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)			
<b>P.4.1.3 synthesizing information from a variety of sources</b>			
<b>P.4.1.3.4-5</b> Use information from at least two different resources. <i>For example, use resources such as those referenced by the College Board: student-generated data, such as interviews, observations and surveys; classroom speakers; field trips; Internet sources; encyclopedias; almanacs.</i> (ADP F7)	<b>P.4.1.3.6-8</b> Incorporate information from multiple resource media. <i>For example, use resources such as those referenced by the College Board: student-generated data, such as interviews, observations and surveys; appropriate Internet sources; books; magazines; newspapers; encyclopedias.</i> (ADP F7)	<b>P.4.1.3.9-10</b> Synthesize resources that have been evaluated for quality and appropriateness. <i>For example, use resources such as those referenced by the College Board: student-generated data, such as interviews with experts in a field, observations and surveys; appropriate Internet sources; books; magazines; newspapers; documentaries.</i> (ADP F7)	<b>P.4.1.3.11-12</b> Synthesize resources that have been evaluated for quality and appropriateness. <i>For example, use resources such as those referenced by the College Board: student-generated data, such as interviews with experts in a field, observations and surveys; appropriate Internet sources; books; professional journals; periodicals; documentaries.</i> (ADP F7)
<b>P.4.1.4 marshaling evidence in support of a thesis or related claims</b>			
<b>P.4.1.4.4-5.a</b> Provide relevant research information to adequately develop and support a relatively straightforward topic. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.6-8.a</b> Provide relevant research information to develop and support a complicated topic. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.9-10.a</b> Provide relevant research information to develop and support a multi-faceted research question. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.11-12.a</b> Provide relevant research information to develop and support effectively a complex research question specific to a discipline or discourse style. (ADP D5)
<b>P.4.1.4.4-5.b</b> Interpret data in one format on a familiar topic. <i>For example, interpret a bar graph based on the number of male and female students in the school.</i> (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.6-8.b</b> Analyze and interpret data in multiple forms on a familiar topic. <i>For example, interpret and analyze data provided in more than one form, such as a bar graph and a circle graph.</i> (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.9-10.b</b> Accurately analyze and interpret data in multiple formats on an unfamiliar topic. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.11-12.b</b> Accurately and critically analyze and interpret data in multiple formats on an unfamiliar topic. (ADP D5)
<b>P.4.1.2.4-5.c</b> Identify features that indicate if Web sites are reliable or unreliable. (ADP D2 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.4.6-8.c</b> Marshal evidence in various ways. <i>For example, marshal evidence in ways such as those referenced by the College Board: gathering relevant reasons, examples</i>	<b>P.4.1.4.9-10.c</b> Marshal evidence in varied ways to meet the needs of the question. <i>For example, marshal evidence in ways such as those referenced by the College Board:</i>	<b>P.4.1.4.11-12.c</b> Marshal evidence in varied ways to meet the needs of the research question. <i>For example, marshal evidence in ways such as those referenced by the College Board:</i>

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	<i>and facts; defining key terms and ideas; setting up comparisons. (ADP D5)</i>	<i>gathering relevant reasons, examples and facts; defining key terms and ideas; setting up comparisons; explaining relationships such as cause and effect; explaining connections to past events; predicting future outcomes; summarizing and synthesizing information from multiple sources; defining multiple points of view, listing the strengths and weaknesses of each and identifying bias. (ADP D5)</i>	<i>gathering relevant reasons, examples and facts; defining key terms; setting up comparisons; analyzing relationships such as cause and effect; analyzing connections to past events; predicting future outcomes; summarizing, analyzing, comparing and evaluating, and synthesizing information from multiple sources; summarizing, analyzing, comparing and evaluating multiple points of view, listing the strengths and weaknesses of each and identifying bias. (ADP D5)</i>

<b>P.4.1.5</b> paraphrasing and summarizing the range of arguments related to the thesis			
<b>P.4.1.5.4-5</b> Summarize research information in own words. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.5.6-10</b> Summarize, paraphrase and report research information supporting or refuting the thesis, as appropriate. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.1.5.11-12</b> Paraphrase, summarize and report the full range of relevant research information supporting or refuting the thesis, as appropriate. (ADP D5)	

**P.4.2 Coherence and Cohesion**

<b>P.4.2.1</b> sustaining a logical organizing structure, with an effective introduction			
<b>P.4.2.1.4-5</b> Craft a clear opening paragraph in which the topic is clearly stated. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.2.1.6-8</b> Craft an introductory paragraph in which a thesis statement(s) clearly presents the topic of the documented essay. (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.2.1.9-10</b> Craft an introductory section in which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A research question is stated or implied;</li> <li>• A thesis statement(s) clearly reflects the research question;</li> <li>• A clear perspective or point of view is stated or implied;</li> <li>• Necessary terms or concepts are defined; and,</li> <li>• A context for the research is provided. (ADP D5)</li> </ul>	<b>P.4.2.1.11-12</b> Craft an introductory section in which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A research question is stated or implied;</li> <li>• The complexity of the research question is reflected;</li> <li>• A clear perspective or point of view is stated or implied;</li> <li>• Necessary terms or concepts are defined; and,</li> <li>• The thesis is placed in the context of multiple perspectives when appropriate. (ADP D5)</li> </ul>

<b>P.4.2.2</b> sustaining a logical organizing structure, with an effective body			
<b>P.4.2.2.4-5.a</b> Present a body of facts	<b>P.4.2.2.6-8.a</b> Present a body of well-	<b>P.4.2.2.9-10.a</b> Present a body of well-	<b>P.4.2.2.11-12.a</b> Present a body of well-

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and information. (ADP C3)	developed and specific facts and information pertinent to the topic, developed as a series of paragraphs which support the topic. (ADP C3)	developed and specific facts and information that develop and support a somewhat complex research question. (ADP C3)	developed and specific facts and information that purposefully and effectively develop and support a complex research question. (ADP C3)
<b>P.4.2.2.4-5.b</b> Connect relatively uncomplicated ideas using relatively simple transitions. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.2.6-8.b</b> Connect more complicated ideas using a variety of transition strategies. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.2.9-10.b</b> Maintain coherence through the consistent use of varied transitions between sentences and paragraphs. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.2.11-12.b</b> Maintain coherence through the consistent and effective use of connective transitions within and between sentences and paragraphs. (ADP C3)
<b>P.4.2.2.4-5.c</b> Create an effective organizing structure based on relatively uncomplicated research information (e.g., description, problem-solution, question-answer). (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.2.6-8.c</b> Create an effective organizing structure based on more complicated research information (e.g. description, problem-solution, question-answer, compare and contrast, cause-and-effect). (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.2.9-10.c</b> Create an effective organizing structure based on somewhat complex research information, sometimes using multiple organizing structures within the essay. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.2.11-12.c</b> Create an effective organizing structure based on complex research information, sometimes using multiple organizing structures within the essay. (ADP C3)
<b>P.4.2.3</b> sustaining a logical organizing structure, with an effective conclusion			
<b>P.4.2.3.4-5</b> Craft a clear ending sentence or paragraph in which closure is provided, such as by restating the topic and summarizing information. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.3.6-8</b> Craft a conclusion in which closure is provided, such as by restating the topic and summarizing findings. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.3.9-10</b> Craft a conclusion in which the research question and topic are re-emphasized; the main findings are summarized; and conclusions are drawn. (ADP C3)	<b>P.4.2.3.11-12</b> Craft an effective conclusion in which the research question is answered, the significance of the research findings is explained, recommendations, as appropriate, are made and future research needs, as appropriate, are suggested. (ADP C3)
<b>P.4.3 Research Formatting Guidelines</b>			
<b>P.4.3.1</b> including accurate citations and references			
<b>P.4.3.1.4-5.a</b> Acknowledge source material (i.e., from other sources), and make them distinct from the student's own ideas. (ADP C6 and (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.6-8.a</b> Acknowledge source material (e.g., list sources). (ADP C6 and (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.9-10.a</b> Acknowledge source material and create a bibliography following a standard format and with a high degree of accuracy. (ADP C6 and (ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.a</b> Skillfully acknowledge source material (create a reliable bibliography or list of works cited and/or works consulted). (ADP C6 and (ADP D5)
		<b>P.4.3.1.9-10.b</b> Cite sources using a standard format (such as MLA or APA) with a high degree of accuracy. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.b</b> Cite sources using a standard format appropriate to the discipline (such as MLA or APA), with a high degree of accuracy. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)
	<b>P.4.3.1.6-8.b</b> Understand the differences between quoting, paraphrasing and	<b>P.4.3.1.9-10.c</b> Appropriately quote, paraphrase or summarize text, ideas or	<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.c</b> Skillfully and strategically quote, paraphrase or

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	summarizing. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	other information taken from print or other electronic sources. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	summarize text, ideas or other information taken from print or other electronic sources. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)
		<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.d</b> Incorporate ideas and quotations effectively and correctly within text. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.d</b> Incorporate ideas and quotations effectively and correctly within text. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)
<b>P.4.3.1.4-5.b</b> Use correct punctuation when quoting. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.6-8.c</b> Quote, paraphrase or summarize text, ideas or other information taken from print or other electronic sources. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.9-10.e</b> Accurately embed quotations from other sources. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.e</b> Accurately and skillfully embed quotations from other sources. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)
	<b>P.4.3.1.6-8.d</b> Embed graphics with good accuracy and some skill, when appropriate. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.9-10.f</b> Accurately embed graphics, when appropriate. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)	<b>P.4.3.1.11-12.f</b> Accurately and skillfully embed graphics, when appropriate. (ADP C6 and ADP D5)
<b>P.4.3.2</b> adhering to publishing guidelines for a research essay			
<b>P.4.3.2.4-12</b> Report findings within prescribed time and/or length requirements, as appropriate. (ADP D4)			
<b>P.4.3.3</b> adhering to established format for a research essay			
<b>P.4.3.3.4-5</b> Format text and graphics (using technology as appropriate), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A title; and,</li> <li>• A list of references. (ADP C8)</li> </ul>	<b>P.4.3.3.6-10</b> Format text and graphics (using technology as appropriate), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A title;</li> <li>• A contents page;</li> <li>• Numbered pages; and,</li> <li>• Bibliography, following a standard format. (ADP C8)</li> </ul>	<b>P.4.3.3.11-12</b> Format text and graphics (using technology as appropriate), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A title;</li> <li>• An abstract, when appropriate;</li> <li>• A contents page;</li> <li>• Numbered pages; and,</li> <li>• Bibliography, following a standard format appropriate to the subject matter. (ADP C8)</li> </ul>	
<b>P.4.3.4</b> using technology effectively to prepare the essay and to present information			
<b>P.4.3.4.4-5</b> Use simple graphics and illustrative material effectively to support research ideas in the text as appropriate. (ADP C7)	<b>P.4.3.4.6-8</b> Include graphics and illustrative material effectively to support research ideas in the text as appropriate. (ADP C7)	<b>P.4.3.4.9-10</b> Use graphics and illustrative material effectively to support and enhance research ideas in the text as appropriate, demonstrating an understanding of which concepts can be better addressed graphically to support reader understanding. (ADP C7)	<b>P.4.3.4.11-12</b> Use complex graphics and illustrative material effectively to support and enhance research ideas in the text as appropriate, demonstrating an understanding of which concepts can be better addressed graphically to support reader understanding. (ADP C7)

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