

# Writing Across the Curriculum™ Online

**W**riting Across the Curriculum Online promotes the “Writing Workshop” as a place for teaching writing skills or “craft.” The course introduces a structure and process of “Writing Workshop” that teachers can use in their own classrooms. Students will practice and create their own writing craft lesson plans and activities. This course also explores the applications of writing content subject areas such as math, science, and social studies.

To the right are the key areas of focus for the eight-week online asynchronous course. For more information, refer to the syllabus, which provides a detailed outline of the course material as well as a bibliography of research on which the course is based.

## **In this course, participants will**

- ▶ Describe the basic philosophy and structure of Writing Workshop.
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to support students in coming up with their own topic ideas in personal narrative and nonfiction units of study.
- ▶ Teach a variety of specific craft and mechanics lessons.
- ▶ Explain the benefits of Writing Workshop and writing within content subjects.
- ▶ Identify craft and mechanics techniques that can support informational writing across content areas.
- ▶ Apply a variety of formal and informal writing formats that can be used in math, science, and social studies.
- ▶ Create and use assessments that address both content and writing expectations.

# Writing Across the Curriculum™ Online

## Course Description

*Writing Across the Curriculum* is a Performance Learning Systems® online course designed to support teachers in grades three through six with effective writing instruction across content areas. Created specifically for upper-grade teachers, this course begins by focusing on direct writing instruction in a writing workshop. Participants will learn and practice specific craft and mechanics techniques that are tangible for students, supporting visible progress toward more general goals, such as writing with detail, sentence fluency, and voice. These sessions will also address how to support student independence within personal narrative and nonfiction units of study. The second half of this course looks at writing in the content areas, including math, science, and social studies. Participants will learn a broad range of writing formats that can elevate the way students process information and engage with material learned. For each content area, participants will learn strategies for effective writing instruction, ways to model writing formats, ways to support below-grade-level writers, and how to balance expectations of writing and content in formal and informal assessments.

## Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this class, the learner is expected to be able to:

1. Describe the basic philosophy and structure of writing workshop.
2. Explain the benefits of student independence in topic choice.
3. Demonstrate the ability to support students in coming up with their own topic ideas in personal narrative and nonfiction units of study.
4. List the characteristics of a specific writing craft lesson.
5. Teach a variety of specific craft and mechanics lessons.
6. Demonstrate how to use punctuation lessons to enhance the quality and complexity of writing.
7. Explain the benefits of writing workshop and writing within content subjects.
8. Demonstrate a familiarity with his or her own state's standards for literacy skills within math, social studies, and science.
9. Identify craft and mechanics techniques that can support informational writing across content areas.
10. Apply a variety of formal and informal writing formats that can be used in math, science, and social studies.
11. Explain and describe the connections between writing, comprehension of material, and student engagement.
12. Create and use assessments that address both content and writing expectations.

## **Required Text**

Hale, E. (2008). *Crafting writers K-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Daniels, H., Zemelman, S., & Steineke, N. (2007). *Content-area writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Instructors and learners will also use instructor-generated materials, learner-generated materials, and Web-based resources to facilitate learning.

## **Topical Outline**

## **List of Concepts**

### **Writing Instruction**

Personal history of literacy reflection; writing workshop introduction; shifts in writing instruction expectations in the elementary grades; units of study and curriculum calendars; writing notebooks; benefits of student independence in topic choice; lessons and strategies for supporting independence in memoir and poetry units of study

### **Teaching the Craft of Writing**

Defining the craft of writing; using children's literature and student writing as a resource for learning about craft; naming craft to make it tangible for students; mini-lesson structures that support direct, clear instruction; strategies for improving student ownership of craft techniques taught

### **The Mechanics of Writing and Conferring**

Connections between teaching specific craft lessons and mechanics lessons; strategies that address basic punctuation concerns; craft techniques involving commas and their relation to elevating quality and complexity of writing; connections between whole-class instruction and individual instruction in writing conferences

### **Nonfiction Units of Study**

Supporting fluency with informational writing; nonfiction writing without research; scaffolding independence in research nonfiction; successful craft and mechanics techniques for nonfiction writing; biography and persuasive essay units of study

### **Writing Within Content Subjects**

Different purposes for writing within content areas; challenges and benefits of teaching writing within content areas; shifts in state standards related to literacy skills within content areas; connections between writing and metacognition; quick writes; brainstorming; double-entry journals; mapping; graphic organizers; final product writing

### **Writing in Mathematics and Science**

Writing formats and activities particularly effective in mathematics and science; math journals; writing word problems; science notebooks; drawing and observation; providing evidence and analysis in writing; labeling; balancing content versus literacy skills; assessment of math and science writing; rubrics as assessment tools

### **Writing in Social Studies and the Arts**

Writing formats and activities particularly effective in social studies; double-sided journals; letters; memoir; balancing content versus literacy skills; assessment of social studies writing; connections between visual arts, comprehension skills, and writing

**Assessment and Preparing for Implementation**      Impact of writing instruction and expectations on assessments and grading; creation of rubrics; practice assessments with samples of student work; preparing for implementation; individual professional growth plan

**Course Assessments and Links to Course Outcomes**

Throughout the course, the learner will be assessed and evaluated on the completion of the following assessments. Learning activities include large- and small-group discussions and assessments for a total of 762 points.

<b>Modules</b>	<b>Topics of Modules</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Correlation With Course Outcomes</b>
Module 1:	Writing Instruction	140	1, 2, 3
Module 2:	Teaching the Craft of Writing	162	4, 5
Module 3:	Teaching the Mechanics of Writing	108	5, 6
Module 4:	Nonfiction Units of Study	153	2, 8, 9
Module 5:	Informal Writing Within Content Subjects	108	7, 9, 10
Module 6:	Formal Writing in the Content Subject	93	10, 11, 12
Module 7:	Content Specific Approaches – Math, Science, and Social Studies	139	9,10,11
Module 8:	Assessment and Preparing for Implementation	155	12
<b>Total</b>		<b>1058</b>	

Criteria specific to each assessment will be explained in conjunction with the instructional activities.

**Instructional Methodology**

The instructional methodology of this course focuses on developing, enhancing, and improving the instructional expertise and pedagogical knowledge base of practicing educators. Strategies include presentation of new content through online readings, active construction of knowledge through practice and problem solving, collaborative group work, personal reflection, structured small-group or whole-class discussion, analysis of assigned reading, and the application of course content and skills to participant’s individual grade level, subject area(s), and classroom.

**Grading Scale**

The course facilitator will post the grading scale.

**Performance Learning Systems’ Late Policy**

There will be a 10% deduction of points per day for all posts and submitted assignments which are late. Replies posted after the due date will earn no points. In rare cases, partially or poorly completed assignments may be resubmitted for partial credit at the discretion of the instructor. The following exceptions apply:

- If a participant is sick/hospitalized or has a death in the family, the timing of makeup work may be arranged with the course facilitator. No points will be deducted if the work is completed according to the agreement.

- If a participant is on vacation/traveling/etc., the participant must contact the course facilitator ahead of time to avoid a penalty. This type of absence may occur only once during a course. All posts should be submitted for the missed module before leaving.
- If a participant has difficulty completing everything in a week, an extension can be granted if the participant contacts the facilitator during the week (not at the last minute).

### **Performance Learning Systems' Participant Drop Policy**

- Participants are eligible to receive a refund if they attend class for one week or less. This means participants must withdraw by the end of Module 1 to receive a refund.
- Refunds of the balance of tuition paid will be given, minus the \$50 deposit.

### **Performance Learning Systems' Academic Integrity Policy**

Performance Learning Systems expects absolute academic honesty and integrity from every course participant. The specific Academic Integrity and Honor Code policies of our partner colleges and universities are embraced and enforced by PLS instructors. The following are considered to be serious violations:

- Plagiarism: the use of another's ideas, data, or words without proper acknowledgment.
- Fabrication: the use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.
- Collusion: improper collaboration with another in preparing assignments or projects.
- Cheating: an act of deception by which a student misrepresents that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered.
- Academic misconduct: tampering with grades, or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of student work that is not his or her own.

Violation(s) or suspected violation(s) will be investigated and pursued according to specific college/university procedures.

### **Identity Authentication**

The college/university, Performance Learning Systems (PLS), and students share a joint responsibility to ensure that each student's contribution in an online course activity comes from that student alone. For the student, this responsibility has two parts:

1. Students are responsible for positively ensuring that every contribution to an online course created with the students' computer account is made by the student alone. Contributions covered under this policy include: written assignments; quiz and exam submissions; discussion forum postings; live participation in text-based chat sessions, phone conferences, and videoconferences. If a student allows another person to write or make any kind of submission to an online activity in the student's name, then this constitutes cheating and will be treated as a violation of academic honesty.
2. Students are responsible for ensuring the integrity of their computer account security by following the actions required of them by the PLS Acceptable Use Policy. These actions include keeping passcodes private, updating passcodes when required by Performance Learning Systems, and reporting breaches of the security policy to the IT Helpdesk.

## **Course Evaluation**

The evaluation of learner work will be based on the defined criteria for learner assessments. The criteria for learner assessments will be outlined for students prior to instructional activities and engagement with student learning targets (outcomes). Grading is based solely on the evaluation of student learning targets and defined criteria for learner assessments.

Formative assessment of learning outcomes is conducted throughout the course, using a variety of means that include the following: completion of assessments; constructive contributions to class discussions (whole-class as well as small-group); sharing of valuable, pertinent, and/or applicable ideas and experiences; and active participation in online interactions. It is expected that each participant will contribute to the academic quality of the course.

Summative assessment includes the completion of weekly learning activities and assignments for which the participant will need to synthesize class content, apply it to his or her own practice, and complete a plan for implementing the major components of content and skill acquired during the course.

## Course Outcome Correlations With INTASC Standards for Teachers

	Course Outcomes
<b>Standard 1: Subject Matter</b> The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
<b>Standard 2: Student Learning</b> The teacher understands how children and youth learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.	1, 2, 3, 7, 11
<b>Standard 3: Diverse Learners</b> The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.	3, 5, 9
<b>Standard 4: Instructional Strategies</b> The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12
<b>Standard 5: Learning Environment</b> The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.	1, 7, 10, 11
<b>Standard 6: Communication</b> The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.	1, 2, 3, 9
<b>Standard 7: Planning Instruction</b> The teacher plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.	8, 10
<b>Standard 8: Assessment</b> The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.	12
<b>Standard 9: Reflection and Professional Development</b> The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.	8, 12
<b>Standard 10: Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships</b> The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.	N/A

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and the Support for Consortium (INTASC) standards were developed by the Council of the Chief State School Officers and member states. Copies may be downloaded from the Council's website at <http://www.ccsso.org>.

© Council of Chief State School Officers. (1992) Model standards for beginning teacher licensing, assessment, and development: A resource for state dialogue. Washington, DC: Author. <http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/corestrd.pdf>.

## Course Outcome Correlations With National Board for Professional Teaching (NBPTS) Propositions and Standards

<b>Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning.</b>	<b>Course Outcomes</b>
NBCTs are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn.	1, 2, 3, 11
They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account for these differences in their practice.	1, 2, 3, 11
NBCTs understand how students develop and learn.	1, 2, 3, 11
They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom.	11
They are concerned with their students' self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships.	1, 2, 3, 11
NBCTs are also concerned with the development of character and civic responsibility.	NA
<b>Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students.</b>	
NBCTs have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history, structure and real-world applications of the subject.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject.	1, 2, 3, 7, 10
They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12
<b>Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning.</b>	
NBCTs deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11
They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet instructional goals.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
NBCTs know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole.	12
They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents.	12
<b>Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.</b>	
NBCTs model what it means to be an educated person – they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things.	7, 8, 11
They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education.	1, 2, 3, 8, 11
They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice.	1, 10, 11, 12

**Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.**

NBCTs collaborate with others to improve student learning.	<b>1, 2</b>
They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses.	<b>N/A</b>
They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.	<b>8</b>
They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives.	<b>8</b>
They know how to work collaboratively with parents to engage them productively in the work of the school.	<b>N/A</b>

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