

Introduction to Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Descriptors for Writing (adapted from Karin Hess, 2005)

According to Norman L. Webb ("Depth of Knowledge Levels for Four Content Areas," March 28, 2002), interpreting and assigning depth of knowledge levels to both objectives within standards and assessment items is an essential requirement of alignment analysis.

Four Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels were developed by Norman Webb as an alignment method to examine the consistency between the cognitive demands of standards and the cognitive demands of assessments.

In language arts, four DOK levels were developed by Norman Webb as an alignment method to examine the consistency between the cognitive demands of standards and the cognitive demands of assessments. The DOK writing levels discussed below are based on Valencia and Wixson (2000, pp.909-935).

DOK Level 1: Recall or Reproduction

Requires the student to write or recite simple facts. Does not include synthesis or analysis, but basic facts.

Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 1 performance are:

- Listing/generating ideas or words prior to developing written composition
- Writing simple sentences
- Using punctuation marks and capitalization correctly in writing and editing
- Identifying misspelled words in a written passage

DOK Level 2: Skills and Concepts/Basic Reasoning

Requires some mental processing, such as beginning to connect ideas using a simple organizational structure. At this level, students are engaged in first draft writing for a limited number of purposes and audiences. Students are beginning to connect ideas using a simple organizational structure.

Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 2 performance are:

- Note-taking or outlining as a means of organizing ideas for writing
- Developing text which may be limited to one paragraph
- Constructing a variety of sentence types
- Editing final drafts of compositions for mechanics and conventions

DOK Level 3: Strategic Thinking/Complex Reasoning

Requires some higher level mental processing. Students are developing multi-paragraph compositions that may include complex sentence structures or demonstrate some synthesis and analysis.

Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 3 performance are:

- Developing compositions that include multiple paragraphs
- Using complex or varied sentence structures written compositions
- Showing awareness of audience and purpose through focus, organization, voice/tone
- Editing and revising to improve the quality of the composition

DOK Level 4: Extended Thinking/Reasoning

Higher-order thinking is central and knowledge is deep at Level 4. This level includes multi-paragraph compositions that demonstrate synthesis and analysis of complex ideas or themes and evidence of a deep awareness of purpose and audience.

Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 4 performance are:

- Demonstrating evidence of a deep awareness of purpose and intended audience
- Creating compositions that demonstrate a distinct voice and that stimulate the reader or listener to consider new perspectives on the addressed ideas or themes
- Writing an analysis of two selections, identifying the common theme and generating a purpose that is appropriate for both

Depth-of-Knowledge Level Descriptors for Writing (adapted from Karin Hess, 2005)

| 1 Recall and Reproduction | 2 Concepts and Skills/Basic Reasoning | 3 Strategic Thinking/Complex Reasoning | 4 Extended Thinking/Reasoning |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>WRITING PROCESS</p> <p>Editing Skills/Conventions & Mechanics</p> <p>Language Usage Apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> subject/verb agreement (singular & plural subjects) present, past, future verb tenses comparative and superlative forms of adjectives/adverbs special problems in usage (a/an, to/two/too, their/there/they're), pronoun references, double negatives idiomatic expressions <p>Sentence Structure Correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> run-on and awkward sentences sentence fragments <p>Spelling Apply knowledge of spelling patterns, generalizations, and rules to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commonly used words plural forms of words contractions change verb endings <p>Capitalization Capitalize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> proper nouns, days, months beginning of sentences the pronoun "I" proper adjectives first word in a quote when appropriate capitalize words in a title <p>Punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punctuate declarative, exclamatory, interrogative, and imperative sentences Use commas in a series, a date, a compound sentence, and the greeting and closing of a letter Use beginning and ending quotation marks in dialogue Correctly apply the rules of punctuation for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commas in appositives, direct address, and introductory phrases and clauses apostrophes in possessives and contractions periods in abbreviations and acronyms semi-colons in items in a series and combined sentences colons in introducing a list and the business letter greeting quotation marks in dialogue, titles and direct/indirect quotes | <p>WRITING CONVENTIONS</p> <p>Language Exemplify effective language choices by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applying correct grammar and usage applying concise use of language incorporating strong verbs, precise nouns, concrete details, and sensory details applying language appropriate to the content, purpose, and audience <p>Correctness Communicate clearly by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applying correct spelling applying correct punctuation applying correct capitalization incorporating acceptable departure from standard correctness to enhance meaning when appropriate incorporating appropriate documentation of ideas and information from outside sources <hr/> <p>WRITING PROCESS</p> <p>Editing Skills/Conventions & Mechanics</p> <p>Sentence Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine short choppy sentences effectively. Combine simple sentences using subordination & coordination. Correct misplaced and/or dangling modifiers. <p>Revising Skills (Content and Ideas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect to determine where to add, delete, rearrange, define/redefine, or elaborate content when revising. Consider voice, tone, style, intended audience, coherence, and transitions when revising. Consider effectiveness of language usage and sentences to communicate ideas when revising. <p>Idea Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and compose a topic sentence of a paragraph. Select appropriate supporting details. Identify extraneous/irrelevant material. <p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct sentences that are out of chronological/sequential order or insert new sentences in the correct chronological/sequential position. Identify the most effective transitions. Develop effective introductions and closures. <p>Word Choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate redundant words and phrases. Choose the most specific word for use in a sentence. | <p>WRITING STRUCTURE</p> <p>Organization Students will create unity and coherence to accomplish the focused purpose by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engaging the audience establishing a context for reading when appropriate communicating ideas and support in a meaningful order applying transitions and transitional elements to guide the reader through the piece developing effective closure <p>Sentence Structure Students will create effective sentences by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applying a variety of structures and lengths developing complete and correct sentences unless using unconventional structures for an intentional effect when appropriate | <p>WRITING CONTENT</p> <p>Purpose and Audience Students will establish and maintain a focused purpose to communicate with an authentic audience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrowing the topic to create a specific purpose for writing establishing a controlling idea, theme or thesis about the topic choosing a perspective authentic to the writer analyzing and addressing the needs of the intended audience adhering to the characteristics of the form applying a suitable tone allowing voice to emerge when appropriate <p>Idea Development/Support Students will support main ideas and deepen the audience's understanding of purpose by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing logical, justified, and suitable explanations providing relevant elaboration explaining related connections or reflections applying idea development strategies appropriate to the form |

