

## ***Standard VI***

# ***Writing and Producing***

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*Accomplished English language arts teachers provide instruction in the processes, skills, and knowledge about writing that their students will need to effectively produce a variety of texts for a range of audiences and purposes.*

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Accomplished English language arts teachers have a broad understanding of the ways in which the traditional field of writing is evolving to incorporate varied forms of production. Accomplished teachers realize that, no matter what the ultimate product may be, effective writing and producing involve the processes of formulating, revising, and refining texts to share ideas in compelling and meaningful ways. Accomplished teachers understand that their role is to help students refine the skills they need to communicate for specific purposes, to specific audiences, and in specific forms. Teachers understand the value and purpose of each writing or producing task, and they choose activities that develop each student's communication skills in response to student needs and interests and to learning goals.

Accomplished English language arts teachers understand that writing and producing are not limited to the academic environment. Today's students are regularly writing and producing meaningful texts outside school; these include private texts such as journals, diaries, and poetry, and more public texts such as social media, messaging, online videos, and blogs. Accomplished teachers recognize that today's students are no longer passively consuming texts; rather, they are often simultaneously consuming and producing them. Students see media products as ripe for adapting, remixing, and recreating; furthermore, authorship is often collaborative rather than individual. Out-of-school writing mirrors the traditional writing process in many ways but is different in other respects. Accomplished teachers know how to capitalize on out-of-school writing and producing so that students grow as effective writers and producers in both academic and nonacademic contexts.

Accomplished English language arts teachers know that writing and producing are ways to communicate understanding, demonstrate acquired knowledge, share experiences, defend claims, promote entertainment, connect with others, and experience enjoyment and beauty. Teachers respect their students' abilities as innate communicators and build on these abilities to empower students' voices, expand their thinking, and equip them with the tools to write across the curriculum. Accomplished teachers instill in students the dispositions recognized as central to success in writing and producing: engagement and open-mindedness, accuracy and imagination, determination coupled with adaptability, and the willingness to

analyze one's own thought processes. Teachers provide an equitable space for both individual development and collaboration, and they use writing as a means of developing students' sense of civic responsibility and their global awareness.

## Knowledge about Writing and Producing

Accomplished English language arts teachers understand that their students need to gain experience with a wide range of writing and producing tasks to progress in their overall expertise. Accomplished teachers possess and apply knowledge about the purposes, genres, processes, and evolving nature of writing and producing. They understand that public forms of writing and producing can be used to inform, explain, entertain, describe, illuminate, persuade, influence, beguile, impress, or otherwise affect an audience. Accomplished teachers understand that private forms of writing and producing can be used to promote self-awareness, clarify the writer's thoughts, or work through emotions.

Accomplished English language arts teachers are fluent, effective writers and producers who themselves regularly practice writing and producing. They model the love of writing and producing and the satisfaction gained from effective communication. Accomplished English language arts teachers have expertise in the technical aspects of writing; they know the rules of English grammar, usage, and composition and understand how to create a distinct voice. They understand and appreciate devices such as figurative language, symbolism, dialogue, foreshadowing, and characterization. They comprehend many ways of structuring texts, depending on the purpose, format, audience, or medium involved. For example, teachers understand that designing a website involves presenting material in a nonlinear or multilayered fashion as opposed to sequencing ideas linearly in a traditional printed text.

Accomplished English language arts teachers are familiar with the full range of genres that students can write and produce, including, but not limited to, critical essays, research papers, policy documents, song lyrics, fiction, screenplays, poetry, websites, digital stories, creative nonfiction, responses to literature, journalism, memoirs, captioned photographic essays, book trailers, social media, wikis and blogs, video games, mobile applications, and audio compositions. Teachers understand the conventions and purposes associated with various genres, but they also realize that genres can be redefined and combined according to different contexts and purposes. Accomplished teachers explore emerging genres for their potential in developing standards-based knowledge and skills in English language arts.

Accomplished English language arts teachers understand that it can be helpful to think of writing and producing in terms of stages such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. They also acknowledge that not all writing and producing requires each step in the process; that students may approach the steps in different ways; and that the order of the steps may change depending on the context, purpose, and audience. Teachers recognize the recursive nature of writing. For example, a student writer preparing a college admissions essay often revises

the text many times to perfect the final product, altering the essay for submission to different colleges. A student writer completing an illustrated class biography might need to revise drafts based on new life events.

Accomplished English language arts teachers know that writing and producing are means of connecting with literature, culture, and society, as well as with personal growth, opinions, and feelings. Teachers know that effective writing and producing encompass skills that are refined in the learning environment but that can have immediate impact and application in the real world. Accomplished English language arts teachers explain that good writing and producing must move beyond the merely formulaic to reflect the student's ability to retrieve information, select relevant details, organize topics logically, synthesize ideas, generate insights, and evaluate the results of their work. Students of accomplished teachers learn that the goal of public writing is to create fluent, connected, and relevant texts that engage the audience. Ultimately, accomplished teachers know how to help their students gain expertise in using writing and producing to cross many different contextual borders.

Accomplished English language arts teachers are aware of the strong connections that exist among the language arts. They know that students who are strong readers are likely to have greater control over their writing than students who have trouble reading or who choose not to read. Likewise, students who are articulate speakers can often build on their speaking and listening skills to become better writers and producers. Teachers understand that students can also use writing and producing to explore the questions developed through inquiry. (See [Standard V—Reading and Viewing](#), [Standard VII—Speaking and Listening](#), and [Standard IX—Inquiry](#).)

Accomplished English language arts teachers are also aware of the relationships that exist among language arts and other disciplines. Accomplished teachers understand that language arts students need specific skills to produce meaningful texts in other content areas. Teachers also understand that students can use writing and producing to reinforce their learning in other subjects. For example, an accomplished teacher might model how summarizing can reinforce a student's comprehension of a mathematical concept, or how writing a personal narrative can deepen students' appreciation for a historical memoir such as Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* or Mary Chestnut's Civil War diaries. English language arts teachers might invite colleagues in other disciplines to instruct their students. A film teacher might teach language arts students how to create podcasts or short films, or a social studies or science teacher might illuminate the topics about which English language arts students are writing and producing texts. (See [Standard XI—Collaboration](#).)

Accomplished English language arts teachers recognize that students are more connected to peers, media, and the world at large than ever before. Youth converse across space and over time in a hyperproductive fashion. Regular engagement in textual conversations, media production, and participatory gameplay acculturates students toward meaningful production that invites feedback, immerses students in collaborative communities, and values student knowledge. Accomplished teachers

capitalize on these components of engagement when constructing and implementing in-class production.

Accomplished English language arts teachers instruct students in the etiquette of participating in online forums. Teachers contrast the tones and styles appropriate for academic versus social communication. They also teach students how to participate in such forums effectively, for example, by considering the potentially negative impact of overusing elements such as capital letters, excessively short sentences, and abbreviations. Students learn to temper a disagreement with an introductory phrase, and realize how their comments will appear online, for example, in the context of a previous discussion or in isolation. Accomplished teachers instruct students in the effective use of hyperlinks, showing them how to insert such links so that they do not interrupt the flow of the text in a jarring way.

Accomplished English language arts teachers recognize that technology tools, particularly social media sites and text messaging, have the potential for misuse by early adolescents and young adults, particularly through spreading rumors and in cyberbullying. Accomplished teachers actively teach students that not only do writers have ethical responsibility for their work, but also that there can be school sanctions and legal consequences for writing that is hurtful, slanderous, or hateful. (See [Standard II—Fairness, Equity, and Diversity.](#))