

P.A.R.E.N.T.S.

PARTICIPATE Participate in learning activities. Studies show that parental participation and influence have long-term positive effects on student performance.

ASSIST Assist the teacher by stressing the importance of setting and achieving educational goals.

REASSURE Reassure that the online writing section of WESTEST 2 is used to determine strengths and weaknesses, and aids the teacher in planning appropriate instruction.

ENCOURAGE Encourage consistently working to full potential.

NURTURE Nurture by promoting a healthy lifestyle of good nutrition, a balance of rest and relaxation and a positive attitude for setting educational goals.

TEACH Teach that best performance is always important. Information from both formal and informal assessments are used to improve learning and preparing for the future.

SUPPORT Support by staying involved, encouraging good study habits, supporting reading activities, checking homework and discussing school-related issues.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Must students participate in the online writing section of WESTEST 2 RLA?

Yes. The online writing is a section of the reading/language arts (RLA) WESTEST 2. Scores from both sections are combined for a total score.

Will students receive a report of their writing performance?

Yes. The Individual Right Response Record (IRRR) provides each student with the performance for each writing trait.

What happens if students take only one section of WESTEST 2 RLA?

When a section of the RLA test is not taken by the student, points cannot be obtained from that section which reduces the RLA score.



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Dr. Steven L. Paine
State Superintendent of Schools

West Virginia Education Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2)

ONLINE WRITING Parent Guide 2010



Grades 3-11

Office of Assessment, Accountability
and Research

Division of Curriculum and
Instructional Services
West Virginia Department of Education

FOREWORD

Communication skills are essential as West Virginia continues its mission to prepare students to be successful in the 21st century. Students must learn to communicate their thoughts clearly and effectively through speaking and writing. The West Virginia Board of Education remains committed to improving the writing skills of West Virginia students to meet national educational standards, higher educational goals and global economic demands.

The 2010 WESTEST 2 administration will include an online writing component. Each West Virginia student in grades 3-11 will be required to read an assigned passage and prompt, and submit a written response on a secure Web site. This composition will be assessed on the five writing traits of organization, development, sentence structure, word choice/grammar usage and mechanics. Each writing trait has a 1 to 6 range of possible points. The online writing scores will be included in the overall score of the reading/language arts section of WESTEST 2.

This Parent Guide provides information about the 2010 WESTEST 2 Online Writing.



Dr. Steven L. Paine

State Superintendent of Schools



WESTEST 2 ONLINE WRITING

The **WESTEST 2 Online Writing** will be administered from March 1-April 30, 2010. Students are encouraged to use the five-step writing process in outlining their essay. Students may create a graphic organizer or handwrite a rough draft of their essay before submitting the final copy.

The final essay **must be submitted** electronically on a secure Web site, and students must complete the assignment within the confines of the testing day.

Students respond to an assigned passage and prompt based on one of these writing genres:

Descriptive: This genre features sensory details and images describing sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, motion and emotion.

Narrative: This genre focuses on an event or a situation of interest to the writer and includes a sequence of events.

Informative: This genre conveys facts, feelings and ideas; it is logical, concise and supported by relevant details.

Persuasive: This genre reflects a point of view supported with examples and reasoning to influence a reader's perspective.

The Six-Point Rubric Scoring Process

The submitted essays are scored on a scale of 1-6 for each analytic writing trait: 1) organization, 2) development, 3) sentence structure, 4) word choice/grammar usage and 5) mechanics. A total score of 30 is possible. The computer is trained by representative hand-scored student essays from West Virginia students.

WRITING CHECKLIST

Parents may review their child's school writing assignments and check for evidence of the following:

ORGANIZATION

- a clear focus
- a clearly stated purpose
- a clear progression of ideas
- a beginning, middle and end
- effective transitions

DEVELOPMENT

- a main idea supported with details and examples
- logically presented ideas

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

- clear and complete sentences
- variety of sentence complexity

WORD CHOICE/GRAMMAR USAGE

- vivid word choice
- correct use of pronouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs

MECHANICS

- correct punctuation
- correct capitalization
- correctly spelled words

For additional information please contact:

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