

NOTE: The alternative Language Arts Assessment Program in grade 3 at LWW was studied by the Third Grade Study Group at LWW in 2001 – 2002. It was piloted in 2002 – 2003. The information below is how the program was explained to parents in Ms. Camp’s class in that year. In 2003 – 2004, however, the program has been modified in ways that offer improvements. In regards to graphic organizers, the Story Map is now used for Problem-Solution, Cause-Effect, and Character Trait. The 4-Square is used for Main Idea – Detail. In regards to the rubrics, their organizational structure has been changed so as to make more sense for how they are used, and they have been simplified (made more generic), so that there is now one rubric for Story Map Writing, and one rubric for 4-Square Writing. Both rubrics are still based on the 6+1 Traits.

The Alternative Language Arts Assessment Program (as described to parents)

In response to reading literature, there are two tasks for the students:

1. Complete a graphic organizer.
2. Use the graphic organizer to write one paragraph.

Completing the graphic organizer is the task that requires reading comprehension. For the most part, writing the paragraph is just taking the sentences off of the graphic organizer and putting them in a certain order. The steps are:

- ①Deciding on an Introductory Sentence
- ②Putting the sentences from the Graphic Organizer in a certain order
- ③Adding some “transitional words” (i.e. first, after that, therefore, however, etc.)
- ④Adding a Concluding Sentence

- ✓ The graphic organizers turn into these type of paragraphs:

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER	TYPE OF PARAGRAPH	NY ELA STANDARD
Main Idea – Detail (non-fiction)	→ One-paragraph Report	1
Problem – Solution with Events	→ One-paragraph Summary	2
Character Traits	→ One-paragraph Character Analysis	2 or 3
Cause – Effect	→ One-paragraph analysis of Cause – Effect	3
Compare – Contrast	→ Multiple-paragraph Comparison (with opinion)	3, 4

- ✓ Once the paragraph is completed, the students score their own work by using a rubric tailored to that type of paragraph. The rubric provides 2 scores:
 - **Content and Organization**
 - **Mechanics and Presentation** (including grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, word choice, indenting, and neatness).
- ✓ The scoring of the Mechanics and Presentation is the same for every paragraph. The scoring of the Content and Organization is tailored to each type of paragraph.
- ✓ **Each score is either 4, 3, 2, or 1:**
 - 4: The “C” on the U-E Progress Report. A “Wow” paper. Practically Perfect.
 - 3: The “P” on the U-E Progress Report. The score we want students to receive.
 - 2: The “I” on the U-E Progress Report. Almost there. Needs a bit of work.
 - 1: The “U” on the U-E Progress Report. Information is inaccurate, or missing.
- ✓ The rubric serves two purposes:
 - It can be used as a guide for how to write the paragraph.
 - It empowers the student to have control over his/her own score.
- ✓ As a last step, the student conferences with the teacher to go over the paragraph, and to determine the final scoring using the rubric.

Language Arts Assessment (specifics of the alternative program piloted in 2002-2003 at LWW):

- ✓ This year (2002-2003), at Linnaeus West, the third grade teachers are piloting a new method of language arts assessment.
- ✓ Our Guided Reading and Writing program focuses on using Graphic Organizers for Reading Comprehension and Paragraph Writing. Therefore, to assess the student's reading comprehension and paragraph writing, it makes sense to use these same graphic organizers. The assessment will then serve two purposes:
 - It will provide us with information about the individual's reading comprehension and writing skills.
 - It will help us evaluate the effectiveness of our guided reading and writing program.
- ✓ One assessment will be given for each of the 5 types of reading comprehension and paragraph writing that we are focusing on in our Guided Reading & Writing groups.
- ✓ There are **two parts** to each assessment. The first evaluates reading comprehension, and the second evaluates the skill of writing a type of paragraph.
 - Reading Comprehension: Student reads a short story (or selection), and fills out a graphic organizer.
 - Paragraph Writing: Student reads a short story (or selection), and then uses a standardized graphic organizer (one that has already been filled out, and is the same for each student) to write a paragraph.

(These two activities are the same as the ones done during Guided Reading & Writing)

- ✓ **Scoring:**
 - The graphic organizer and the paragraph are scored *using the same rubrics* that the students use themselves for their work in Guided Reading & Writing.
 - The rubrics are based on 4 of the 6 traits of Writing Assessment.
 - Content/Ideas & Organization are given one score.
 - Word Choice & Conventions (spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation) are given a separate score.
- ✓ *More about the Rubrics (based on the 6+1 Traits):*
 - So that the students can use the rubrics themselves more easily, the Content/Ideas & Organization sections of the rubrics are tailored to each type of writing that the student does (i.e. Summary, Character Analysis, Cause & Effect, Non-Fiction report, Compare/Contrast)
 - The word choice section stays mostly the same on each of the rubrics, with different suggestions for transitional words. For example:

Type of Paragraph	Recommended Transitional Words
Summary	First, Then, After that, last, finally, later (indicating sequence)
Character Trait Cause – Effect	So, Also, Therefore, In addition, Now, Instead, However, Even though, First, Next, Then, After that, Last, Finally
Main Idea – Detail	So, Also, Therefore, In addition, Now, Instead, However, Even though, Another, Since, Whether

- The sections on spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization are the same on each rubric.