Planning for Write to the Source

Write to the Source is unique in its dual emphasis on developing the writing process and writing for social justice. A strategic writing process allows students to produce more refined and creative thoughts and to better understand the collaborative nature of writing.

Tasks in the 3-5 learning plan focus on the importance of brainstorming and planning before students draft their written work. Students are also asked to revise their work for content and edit for mechanics before presenting a final product. Teachers using the 6-12 grade tasks should incorporate such elements into the prompts at their discretion. Strategies included in Word Work, Close and Critical Reading and Community Inquiry can function as prewriting opportunities.

The flexible design of the templates in Write to the Source will allow you to customize tasks for a variety of purposes. You can design different prompts for different students, groups or classes. Once your students have practiced writing from these prompts, they can choose their own.

Follow these steps to create Write to the Source tasks for your students:

1. CRAFT OR SELECT AN ESSENTIAL QUESTION. Every learning plan is driven by an essential question; during Write to the Source, students respond critically and creatively through writing. You can write your own question or select from a bank of suggested essential questions located in the learning plan builder.
To craft or select an essential question, navigate to Build a Learning Plan and begin building a new plan.

2. CHOOSE A CENTRAL TEXT. Search hundreds of texts that reflect the Common Core's approach to text complexity, range and quality. Select texts that provide windows and mirrors for your students and address your individual teaching goals.

3. CHOOSE A WRITING TYPE AND STRUCTURE. Decide what type of writing students will produce—argumentative, explanatory/or narrative. Then, review the different prompts within that writing type; each employs a different structure to achieve its purpose. Choose the writing structure most appropriate for your task. This decision can only be made with the central text(s) in mind; not all prompts and texts match. Be sure that students can reasonably achieve the task requirements with the text you selected.

Writing type	CCR Anchor Standard	Structure (3-5)	Structure (6-12)
Argument	1	Analysis (What is the Argument?) Comparison (Agree or Disagree? & What do We Share?)	Analysis (Where I Stand) Comparison (I'll Be the Judge) Evaluation (Are You Convinced?) Problem and solution (Problem Solver)
Explanatory	2	Description (Lift the Line & Questions that Come Up Comparison (Cause and Effect) Analysis (Fact or Opinion)	Definition (So What?) Description (Break It Down) Comparison (A Two-Sided Coin) Cause and effect (What's the Impact)
Narrative	3	Applying (Point of View) Personal (Small Moment) Understanding (Beautiful Language) Applying (In Conversations)	Imaginary (Imaginary Narrative) Historical (Put the Story in History) Personal (The Pages of My Life)

4. CHOOSE A WRITING PRODUCT. Each Write to the Source task includes suggested writing product that you can choose. The writing product is critical to student success and engagement, as it helps them determine their audience, purpose, tone and point of view. Once your students have practiced writing from these prompts, they can choose their products from a menu of options or create their own.

5. DETERMINE ADDITIONAL TASK DEMANDS. Each Write to the Source task requires students to make a reading-writing connection. The argument and explanatory tasks require students to cite textual evidence. The narrative tasks require them to parallel or connect to the style and theme of the central text.

Write to the Source tasks include additional task demands that invite students to incorporate personal experiences, social concerns, world views or cultural/familial "funds of knowledge" into their writing.

The additional task demands are labeled "At," "Above" and "Beyond" to indicate increasingly complex levels of rigor. This allows for differentiation based on considerations such as:

• **Grade level:** The Integrated Learning Plan spans grade bands. Use the At, Above and Beyond levels to build tasks appropriate for the grade you teach.
• **Readiness:** Individual students may read and write above/below their chronological grade level. Use the At, Above and Beyond levels to build tasks that challenge each student in the zone of proximal development.
• **English language proficiency:** Use the At, Above and Beyond levels to build tasks that support English language learners as they become increasingly proficient.
• **Scaffolding:** Students achieve learning goals best either when supports are provided and then gradually re-

moved, or when rigor is increased over time. Use the At, Above and Beyond levels to scaffold tasks in either direction.

• **Student choice:** Most students will rise to a challenge when given choices. Use the At, Above and Beyond levels to empower students to set their own writing goals.

6. CREATE A RUBRIC. Write to the Source includes a rubric for each of the three writing types. The rubrics reference the central text and can be used for summative formative assessment. Students can also use the rubrics to aid them in understanding performance expectations. The writer's checklist allows students to assess and improve their own work.

Rubrics can be adapted, revised or substituted depending on the needs of your classroom. While rubrics provide criterion for scoring student work, be sure to also build in additional forms of feedback, reflection and evaluation. These can include peer editing, self-assessment and conferencing.