COLLEGE-READY WRITING ESSENTIALS™

*An Online Resource for Creating a Bridge
Between High School and College Writing*

White Paper

William Bryant, PhD
BetterRhetor Resources, LLC
Contact: collegereadywriting@better-rhetor.com

Abstract

The majority of students entering college are underprepared for college-level academic work. One of the most glaring areas of deficiency—yet one of the most important for overall success—is writing. Research points to many potential causes behind poor academic performance, such as family problems and socioeconomic disadvantages. But the potential causes behind poor writing skills also include existing classroom instructional practices: specifically, research indicates that not enough students get practice at authentic composition prior to college, and pre-college writing instruction too often is not aligned with college-level expectations. BetterRhetor has developed an instructional resource that directly addresses these impediments to college-ready writing, for use in high school classrooms, as well as pre-college and early college programs. Our aim is to provide educators with a tightly focused college-ready writing resource that they can easily integrate into existing courses and programs. The resource is designed on deeply researched, evidence-center principles, so that schools and instructors can have a high degree of confidence that their students are acquiring the competencies they will need most for college-level writing success. Ultimately, our goal is to provide more students with effective writing instruction, practice, and assessment, to improve their opportunities for success at college-level academic work. This paper describes our approach, its theoretical foundations and pedagogical strategy. It serves as an argument for the validity of our College-Ready Writing Essentials (CRWE) resource.

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Introduction

The college-readiness gap is well documented and gravely concerning.[1] The majority of students entering college are not ready for college-level work: nearly three quarters of 12th-graders fail to meet standards of academic proficiency[2]; more than half of all students entering college need remedial coursework[3]; almost half of all students who enter college fail to complete their degrees.[4]

Writing is one of the key areas of academic deficiency, and one of the most important, since it is a foundational skill essential for success across disciplines.[5] The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicates that only 27 percent of 8th-graders and 27 percent of 12th-graders write at the level of "proficient" or above. That is, by the end of their high school years, 73 percent of graduates cannot write with the skills needed for success in college.[6] Though the problem of writing deficiencies in high school graduates has been recognized for many years, student performance has not been improving.[7]

The consequences are significant: 68 percent of students entering 2-year colleges and 40 percent of those entering public 4-year schools take remedial courses in English and math.[8] First-year students who need remedial education are 74 percent more likely to drop out.[9] Meanwhile, remedial coursework costs students and their families an extra $1.5 billion each year.[10]

Largely because they are underprepared, far too many students who start college fail to see it through to completion. As Jackson, et al, state, "Among the many determinants of college degree completion, arriving at college academically prepared to do college-level work is among the most predictive factors of collegiate success."[11] The lack of college-ready writing skills is a big part of why so many students fail to complete college. According to leading researcher Steve Graham, this lack of preparedness constitutes a "national writing crisis."[12]

Clearly, many students, teachers, and schools would benefit from a more effective approach to pre-college writing instruction.

BetterRhetor has developed an instructional resource that directly addresses the college-ready writing gap. In our theory of change, targeting the right skills and concepts, and teaching them

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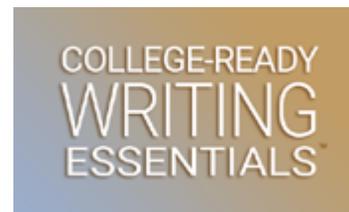
[1] cf. Achieve, 2014; Attewell, Heil, & Reisel, 2011; Barry & Dannenberg, 2016; Briggs, 2009; Conley, 2007; Conley, et al., 2006; Shapiro, et al, 2017; Shulock & Callan, 2010.

[2] NCES, 2012.

[3] Chen, 2016.

[4] NCES, 2016; NCHEMS 2016.

[5] Adelman, 2006; Bangert-Drowns, Hurley, & Wilkinson, 2004; Coker & Lewis, 2008; Conley, 2007; Fallahi, 2012; Long & Boatman, 2013; Marlink & Wahleithner, 2011; Graham & Perin, 2007a.

[6] Snyder & Dillow, 2011; NCES, 2012.

[7] Applebee, Lehr, & Auten, 1981; Applebee & Langer, 2011; Graham, 2013; Greenwald, et al, 1999; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; NCES, 2012, 2016; Persky, et al, 2003; Salahu-Din, et al, 2008; Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015; Snyder & Dillow, 2011; Troia, 2007.

[8] Chen, 2016; Ezarik, 2003; Shulock & Callan, 2010.

[9] Barry & Dannenberg, 2016; NCHEMS, 2016; Shapiro, et al, 2017w

[10] Barry & Dannenberg, 2016.

[11] Jackson, et al, 2014, p. 966. See also Bettinger, Boatman, & Long, 2013; Howell, Kurlaender, & Grodsky, 2010.

[12] Graham, 2013.

in a way that mitigates existing instructional challenges, will better prepare more students for college-level writing, will reduce the need for remediation, will help increase completion rates, and ultimately will better equip more people for success in their educational pursuits, in their careers, and in their personal and civic lives.

This paper describes the theoretical foundations and pedagogical decisions underlying the resource. Our aim has been to employ a coherent design strategy with a strong research basis, resulting in a defensible argument for the validity of our approach.

Diagnosing the Problem

Why are so many students failing to become college-ready writers? Many factors interfere with student learning, including family problems, socioeconomic disadvantages, and other influences that originate outside of the classroom.[13] Additionally, high school graduation requirements in the majority of states do not align with the entrance requirements of the states' own colleges and universities, so what their students learn in high school is not what they need to learn to be prepared for college.[14] Given the many factors that detract from college-readiness, we do not intend to suggest that the writing skills of all students can be turned around simply by improving classroom instruction; nor do we wish to over-assign poor student performance to teachers and schools, many of whom strive to help students learn in the presence of powerful social and economic forces that work against them.

Nevertheless, there are areas within the control of teachers and schools where improvements
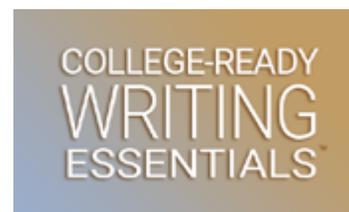
can be made. Research points to widespread problems with classroom writing instruction.[15] "Although there are many factors to which we can attribute these alarming statistics," writes one researcher, responding to the dismal NAEP writing exam results, "we must acknowledge that there is often less than optimal writing instruction in classrooms."[16] Likewise, the findings from a major national survey on how writing is taught in high schools "raised some concerns about the quality of writing instruction."[17] Another survey "raised serious concerns about the quality of middle school writing instruction."[18] Yet another study of classroom writing practices found that they fell "far short. . . of the quality and rigor" needed for college and career readiness.[19]

In our distillation of the research on writing instructional practices, the problems can be grouped into two primary areas:
1) Students do not get enough instruction and practice in authentic academic composition prior to college;
2) Pre-college writing instruction too often is not aligned with college-level expectations.

[13] Ravitch, 2016; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013.

[14] Jimenez & Sarsgrad, 2018.

[15] cf. Applebee & Langer, 2011; Bridge, Compton-Hall, & Cantrell, 1997; Graham, et al 2014; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; Palincsar & Klenk, 1992; Perin, 2013; Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Troia, 2007.

[16] Troia 2007, p. 3.

[17] Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009, p. 136.

[18] Graham, et al, 2014, p. 1015.

[19] Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015, p. 12.

Not enough authentic composition

The studies of middle and high school writing instruction conducted in recent years are consistent in finding that students do not get sufficient practice at composing. A report issued by the National Commission on Writing in 2003 stressed the importance of increasing the amount of writing students do,[20] but that increase has not happened: the vast majority of classroom assignments require little generation of text and no critical thinking. In contrast, college coursework typically requires extended compositions in which students analyze, interpret, and construct evidence-based explanations and arguments.[21]

In their analysis of a national survey of high school writing instructional practices, Kiuhara, Graham, and Hawken report that "the writing activities [high school students] were assigned most frequently by teachers involved little analysis and interpretation," and that "a sizeable proportion of the participating teachers seldom assigned activities that clearly involved writing multiple paragraphs."[22]

A study of NAEP data by Applebee and Langer showed that "many students are not writing a great deal for any of their academic subjects, including English, and most are not writing at any length."[23] Their later study, "A Snapshot of Writing Instruction in Middle Schools and High School," found that ". . . the actual writing that goes on in typical classrooms across the United States remains dominated by tasks in which the teacher does all the composing, and students are left only to fill in missing information, whether copying directly from a teacher's presentation, completing worksheets and chapter summaries, replicating highly formulaic essay structures keyed to the high-stakes tests they will be taking, or writing the particular information the teacher is seeking."[24]

Graham, et al. conducted a national survey of instructional practices in middle school classrooms. They likewise found that students spent insufficient time writing, that little time was spent on writing instruction, and that assignments "mostly involved writing without composing."[25]

Writing without composing was also a primary finding in a report on middle school classroom writing instruction from The Education Trust.[26] According to the report, assignments most often asked students to take notes or provide short answers to text-based questions. Only nine percent of assignments, the report states, "asked students to . . . do the heavier lift of composing original text to express their own thinking and analysis in multiple paragraphs,

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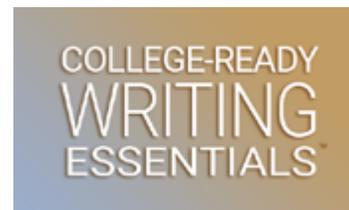
[20] National Commission on Writing, 2003.

[21] cf. Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2011; Melzer, 2009; Perin, 2013; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006.

[22] Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009, p. 151.

[23] Applebee & Langer, 2006, p. ii.

[24] Applebee & Langer, 2011, p. 28.

[25] Graham, et al, 2014, p. 1017.

[26] Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015.

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much less multiple pages." The researchers found that in most of the assignments they reviewed, "composing a coherent piece of extended writing was simply not a goal."[27]

An abundance of research thus indicates that most students' writing experience prior to college is not rigorous enough to prepare them for the demands of college-level academic work. They are not getting enough experience at authentic academic composition and the interpretive reading, analysis, argumentation, and other higher order skills that go with it. Whatever forces outside the classroom are working against them, this lack of rigorous writing experience is a major disadvantage to students entering college, since, as one study found, "the academic intensity of the student's high school curriculum still counts more than anything else in precollegiate history in providing momentum toward completing a bachelor's degree."[28]

Myriad causes underlie the absence of composition in middle and high school instruction. Classrooms are overcrowded, making it impractical for teachers to assign extended projects that require them to read and respond thoroughly to a large volume of student prose.[29] Standardized test preparation tends to drive classroom instruction toward short, inauthentic writing assignments, at the expense of writing that requires invention, sustained engagement,

research, multiple drafts, and other dimensions of authentic academic work.[30] Writing, especially argumentative writing, is a difficult skill to teach, even under the best of circumstances.[31] Many composition teachers feel unprepared, and there is a widespread lack of confidence among them that their approach is in synch with how their students will be asked to write in post-secondary classrooms.[32] In addition, available instructional resources, despite claims of alignment with college-readiness standards, often do not support the competencies actually required for college success; nor do they conceptualize or contextualize writing in ways that convey to students the important work that writing accomplishes within and beyond academics.[33]

There is no universal definition of college-ready or college-level writing, in part because there are such wide differences in the academic demands of postsecondary institutions, from open-access community colleges to highly selective universities.[34] Nevertheless, the large number of
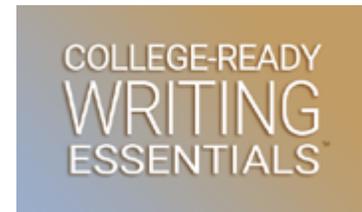
[27] Ibid. p. 11.

[28] Adelman, 2006. Also see Attewell & Domina, 2008; Long, Conger, & Iatarola, 2012

[29] Applebee & Langer, 2011; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; National Commission on Writing, 2003; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006.

[30] Applebee & Langer, 2011; Council of Writing PRogram Administrators, et al., 2011; Hassel & Giordano, 2013; Hamp-Lyons, 2002; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013.

[31] Lunsford, 2002; Prior, 2006.

[32] From their national survey of high schools, Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken (2009) report that "seventy-one percent of all teachers indicated that they received minimal to no preparation to teach writing during college" (p. 148). See also Graham et al, 2014; Kirst & Bracco, 2004; Marlink & Wahleithner, 2011; Read & Landon-Hays, 2013; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006; Troia & Olinghouse, 2013; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013; Venezia & Voloch, 2012.

[33] Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011; Hassel & Giordano, 2013; Perin, 2013; Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015; Troia & Olinghouse, 2013.

[34] Marlink & Wahleithner, 2001; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006.

sources seeking to define competencies needed for college writing success agree that postsecondary students, whatever their institution, must be prepared to produce extended pieces of writing that critically engage with source materials and other perspectives, and that conform to academic conventions of style and presentation.[35] The "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing," developed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project, states that college writers should demonstrate rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, a knowledge of writing processes, and knowledge of conventions, as well as habits of mind such as engagement, persistence, and responsibility.[36]

The competencies needed for successful academic writing are acquired through direct instruction and practice. Students who do not have an opportunity to begin learning and practicing such skills prior to leaving high school consequently are unprepared for college-level work after graduation.

Our mission, therefore, is to help make it possible for more students to gain experience with authentic academic composition prior to beginning their college careers. But to succeed in properly preparing students, we must also address the second major problem underlying the college-ready writing gap: the misalignment between pre-college writing instruction and

college-level expectations. That is, we need to have confidence that the composition instruction we provide pre-college students targets the skills and understandings they will need most. To gain this confidence, we must understand the differences between how students are taught composition in secondary school and how they encounter it in college.
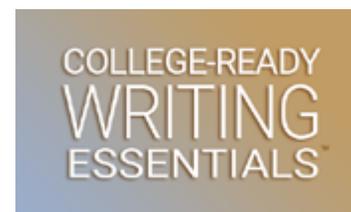
Misalignment between pre-college instruction and college expectations

A general disconnect between high school and college instruction is well documented.[37] According to a six-year national study on college readiness from Stanford University, "coursework between high school and college is not connected; students graduate from high school under one set of standards and, three months later, are required to meet a whole new set of standards in college."[38] Efforts by many states to integrate instruction from pre-K through college via collaborative "P-20 Councils" have proven difficult to sustain and have lost momentum in recent years.[39] High school graduates themselves recognize large gaps in their preparedness: only one in four reports that their high school set high academic expectations, while over 70 percent say that, knowing what they know now about the expectations of college and the work world, they wish they had taken more

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[35] cf. Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Conley, 2003; Harris, 1996; Sparks, et al, 2014.

[36] Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011.

[37] cf. Association of American Colleges, 2007; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; Shulock & Callan, 2010; Spellings, 2006; Perin, 2013; Venezia & Kirst, 2017.

[38] Venezia, Kirst, and Antonio, 2003.

[39] Perna & Armijo, 2014; Rippner, 2017.

challenging courses in high school.[40]
Writing is the academic skill most linked to success at the college level.[41] Even so, rigorous writing is among the fundamental areas of disjuncture between high school and college instruction.[42] Indeed, the majority of college students themselves feel that their writing does not meet expectations for quality.[43] As one group of writing researchers states, "the distance between high school and college is not just another step up some academic staircase but instead a chasm."[44] As we have established, not enough authentic composition happens in pre-college classrooms; but when composition is taught, in what ways is it at odds with what students encounter in college? Understanding the nature of the misalignment is a necessary step in designing a better approach.

The role of standards

K-12 standards frameworks—the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the frameworks developed by individual states—are intended to help ensure that instruction targets the skills students need for success after high school. Unfortunately, based on test results, these frameworks are not achieving their goal. From 1998 through 2016, the NAEP assessments have consistently shown that only about a quarter of high school students have graduated ready for college-level academics. For low-income and minority groups, the numbers are even lower and have not improved over time.[45] Likewise, the fact that more than half of entering college students must take remedial courses suggests that their standards-based high school curricula are not adequately preparing them for college.[46]

There is substantial variation among state standards frameworks, so they do not, as a class, serve well as instruments that either illuminate or narrow the nation-wide gap between high school instruction and college readiness.[47] But focusing on just one set of widely used standards, the CCSS, we can ask why, since 2010 when states first began to adopt them, these standards have not succeeded in improving the writing skills of high school graduates.

One possible reason is that the standards are not comprehensive enough in their coverage of essential writing skills.[48] The CCSS Writing standards signal only some of the instructional practices that lead to positive student outcomes, according to Troia and Olinghouse. Their study finds that the CCSS "do not address some aspects of writing that represent current theoretical models of writing and that have been shown through research to be strongly related to

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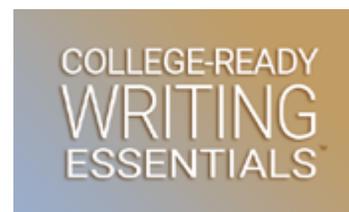
[40] Achieve, 2014.

[41] Conley, 2008b.

[42] Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Conley, 2007; Denecker, 2013; Hoppe, 2014; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Tsui & Gao, 2006.

[43] Achieve, 2014.

[44] Sullivan, Tinberg, & Blau, 2012 (p. 28).

[45] Greenwald, et al., 1999; Persky, Daane, & Jin, 2003; Salahu-Din, Persky, & Miller, 2008; NCES, 2012. For most recent NAEP results: The Nation's Report Card, https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/

[46] Chen, 2016

[47] Troia, et al, 2016.

[48] Troia & Olinghouse, 2013; Mo, et al, 2014.

better student writing."[49] The authors identify 36 practices that demonstrably work for the majority of students and determine that the CCSS signal less that half at any given grade. Among the missing pieces are, for example, peer and teacher feedback, the study of text models, and motivation.

This last missing element speaks to a larger absence in the CCSS and other standards frameworks: they do not adequately address noncognitive dimensions of learning. In the case of writing, noncognitive competencies such as self-regulation are among the strongest predictors of performance.[50] Their absence from the standards means that in many classrooms these skills are not taught; thus, not only do students fail to acquire them, but they and their teachers never come to recognize them as skills essential to proficient writing.

Another element identified by Troia and Olinghouse as missing from the CCSS (and doubtless from other frameworks as well) is teaching strategies. In fact, one of the primary complaints about the CCSS is that they have not provided teachers, schools, and districts with guidance for implementation.[51] This lack of guidance, combined with evidence that most teachers feel unprepared to teach composition, helps explain why, according to The Education Trust, instruction ostensibly aligned with the CCSS often is mere "window dressing." Based on an examination of classroom writing instruction,

their report states, "The majority of assignments included keywords and phrases found in the Common Core standards, fostering a comforting sense that 'we are aligned.' Unfortunately, this is not the case. . ." As an example of this window dressing, the report observes, "Some assignments did ask students to make a claim and provide evidence for it. But rarely did these tasks progress beyond a superficial level of implementation. There were *very few* assignments, for example, that pushed students to [in the language of the CCSS] 'assert and defend a claim, show what they know about a subject, or convey what they experienced, imagined, thought and felt' through 'complex and nuanced writing.'"[52]
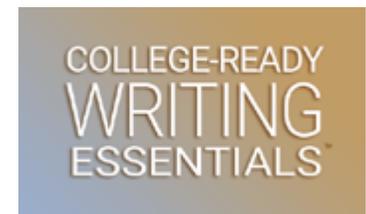
The role of standardized tests
Many of the best practices reflected in the CCSS and other standards frameworks do not make it into classroom instruction because they cannot be assessed via conventional standardized testing. That is, the frameworks typically, and rightly, emphasize authentic composition skills such as research, planning, and revision—skills essential to completing a substantive analytical academic essay. Conventional testing, however, asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of writing by answering multiple-choice questions with limited ability to evaluate authentic composition or higher-level thinking skills. Many tests do also ask students to generate a timed,

[49] Troia & Olinghouse, 2013.
[50] Limpo & Alves, 2017.
[51] Kober & Rentner, 2011.

[52] Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015.

impromptu essay, based on a standardized prompt. But these assessments bear little resemblance to authentic academic composition: for example, they provide no opportunity for students to find and analyze credible sources, to strategize and plan a nuanced argument or presentation of ideas, or to refine their thinking and polish their work through revision. In their examination of assessments from 20 states, Brown and Conley found that English tests "aligned poorly or not at all" with the higher order thinking skills required for entry-level college success.[53] Standards frameworks may articulate essential writing skills, but the execution of many of those skills requires authentic educational contexts and extended time frames; they thus cannot be elicited and assessed by conventional standardized accountability or college-readiness tests.

To the extent that teachers and schools are held accountable for their students' performance on standardized tests, they have incentive to prioritize the skills that are measured by the tests, and to neglect those that are not.[54] Thus, even where standards frameworks do cover authentic and effective writing practices, these skills may not receive much attention in the classroom, because they are not part of year-end accountability tests.

A large body of research documents the detrimental impact of high-stakes standardized tests on student learning, especially their tendency to narrow classroom curriculum to test-taking preparation.[55] In the case of writing, as Applebee and Langer state, "high stakes tests are having a very direct and limiting effect on classroom emphasis. And given the dearth of writing required on most tests, this creates a powerful momentum away from the teaching of writing."[56] While the tests purport to serve as a proxy for writing ability broadly conceived, they are not valid measures of authentic writing. The tests create a highly contrived context for writing that does not exist outside of testing; they thus elicit and measure few of the skills required for successful writing in authentic contexts. Since the writing students generate on the tests does not resemble the writing they are required to produce in authentic contexts, the tests have low construct validity.[57]
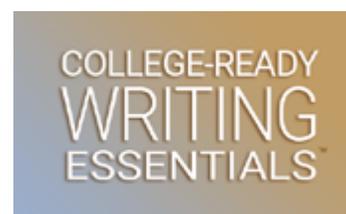
Standardized assessments tend to shift the focus of classroom writing instruction toward form rather than content, and toward product rather than process. This shift points away from research-verified best practices, and from the skilled writing that is needed for college and workplace success.[58] When teachers prepare students for standardized tests, writes Hillocks, "they are likely to mirror the worst features of

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[53] Brown & Conley, 2007.

[54] Amrein & Berliner, 2003; Moss, et al, 2008; Mintrop & Sunderman, 2009; Nichols & Berliner, 2007.

[55] Amrein & Berliner, 2003; Au, 2007; Au & Gourd, 2013; Ketter & Pool, 2001; Madaus, 1994; Mintrop & Sunderman, 2009; Moss, et al, 2008; Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Watanabe, 2007.

[56] Applebee & Langer, 2011 (p.18).

[57] Behizadeh, 2014.

[58] Au & Gourd, 2013; Beck & Jeffery, 2007; Behizadeh, 2014b; Perin, 2013; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Watanabe, 2007.

the assessment, focusing on form, rewarding students for surface features and grammatical correctness—even though instructional literature indicates students need strategies for thinking about content far more than they need instruction in formal features of writing."[59] According to Hassel and Giordano, the texts produced on conventional standardized tests, "almost never demonstrate a student's ability in the most important skills sets, including knowledge of academic conventions, rhetorical knowledge, and process."[60]

A further concern about the impact of standardized tests on classroom instruction and learning stems from the automated scoring of test-taker essays.[61] A piece of effective writing is intended to have an impact on its readers, but automated scoring systems do not understand what they read and thus cannot register the rhetorical effect of a student's work, even though this is one of the primary measures of its quality. One leading researcher states, "the features of writing to which automated scoring systems are least sensitive are the very ones that writing instructors most value, including audience awareness, factual accuracy, rhetorical style, and quality of argument. Conversely, the factors to which machines are most sensitive—essay length and mechanical correctness—are the ones the writing community values least. To the extent that students and teachers adjust their practice to emphasize the latter set of factors over the

former, student writing may suffer."[62] That suffering translates into a lack of preparation for college-level academic work. The "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" recommends against this kind of testing, because "standardized writing curricula or assessment instruments that emphasize formulaic writing for nonauthentic audiences will not reinforce the habits of mind and the experiences necessary for success as students encounter the writing demands of postsecondary education."[63]

Modes of discourse

Research on classroom practices indicates that the default mode of discourse prior to college tends to follow a three-part sequence, known as Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE).[64] The teacher cues participation by asking a question that he or she expects students to know the answer to (initiation); a student supplies an answer (response); the teacher appraises the student's response (evaluation). Through this process, students gather that in academic discourse they are expected to passively await a prompt, then respond with information that should already be known to them.[65] Students who do not seize the cued opportunities for participation are not heard and likely are penalized for non-participation.

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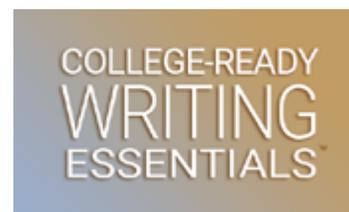
[59] Hillocks, 2002.

[60] Hassel & Giordano, 2013 (p. 131).

[61] cf. Herrington & Moran, 2012; National Council of Teachers of English, 2013.

[62] Bennett, 2015 (p. 397).

[63] Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011 (p. 3).

[64] Sperling & Dipardo, 2008.

[65] Cazden, 2001.

Literacy research suggests that college classroom participation does not tend to follow the mostly passive and formulaic IRE pattern.[66] Rather, students are expected to actively speak, listen, read, and write in conversation with others in their discourse community—instructors; fellow students; researchers, authors, and critics; and others who have a stake in the topics and issues they pursue. Further, students are expected to think critically and express their viewpoints, including their perspectives on course materials and instruction, their educational environment, and the discourse communities in which they are engaged.[67] Freshman seminar coursework typically employs a discussion format that emphasizes interdependent speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.[68] A seminar assignment—typically a written paper and its oral presentation—requires not merely the recitation of known information in response to an instructor's prompting, but multiple discourse competencies, including invention, analysis, and an ability to respond to questions and critiques from the learning community.[69] As David Conley writes, "college courses require students to be independent, self-reliant learners... [adept at working] with others in and out of class on complex problems and projects."[70]

The body of research on classroom practices suggests that a mode of discourse that follows the IRE pattern does not prepare students for college-level expectations. In pre-college settings then, college preparation likely should encourage students to develop into active classroom discourse participants.[71]
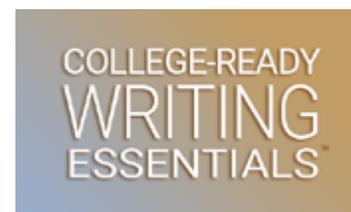
Noncognitive and metacognitive skills

The array of research on college readiness agrees that students need not only content knowledge and cognitive skills, but also certain noncognitive and metacognitive competencies. The California Center for College and Career boils the content of some 12 college and career readiness frameworks down to four common areas of competency: knowledge; skills; productive dispositions and behaviors; and educational, career, and civic engagement.[72] These frameworks recognize and validate the fact that productive dispositions, behaviors, and engagement are necessary if students are to put their knowledge and skills to effective use.

In our discussion of standards and standardized tests, we noted the absence of noncognitive competencies, which research indicates are essential to proficient writing. Personal competencies, especially self-regulation (goal-setting, self-monitoring, motivation, task management, etc.) are well established as important elements of writing ability.[73] Social

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[66] Mehan, 1979.

[67] Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004.

[68] McLeod, 1989.

[69] Tsui & Gao, 2006.

[70] Conley, 2007 (p. 24).

[71] Carter, 2007.

[72] ConnectEd, 2012.

[73] Graham & Harris, 2000; Limpo & Alves, 2017; MacArthur & Philipakos, 2013; Pajares, 2003; Santangelo, Harris, & Graham, 2008; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997.
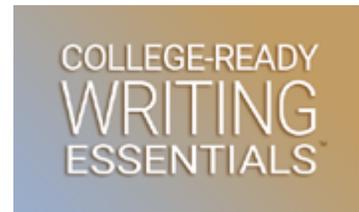
competencies—the ability to meet the behavioral expectations and norms of an academic discourse community—are likewise essential; they include skills such as the ability to identify and address multiple perspectives, and to give and respond to constructive feedback.[74] Metacognitive competencies include, for example, understanding the work that writing does in specific rhetorical contexts, and recognizing the ways in which credibility and persuasive authority can depend on the use of language.

The studies of middle and high school classroom practices suggest that noncognitive and metacognitive knowledge and skills such as these are missing from pre-college writing instruction.[75] Accordingly, a great number of students are not equipped with the full array of competencies needed for successful writing in college. What they learn in high school is not aligned with what is expected of them afterwards.

Theory

In the 1970s, advances in writing theory began to move pedagogy from a concentration on the end product of writing to the process of writing. Classroom instruction began to emphasize the "complex of activities out of which all writing emerges"[76]—activities such as planning, drafting, and revising. A highly influential model of writing, developed by Flower and Hayes in the early eighties, described the process of composition in terms of cognitive functions—the mental processes by which decisions are made, ideas are translated into written language, long-term and working memory are engaged, and so forth.[77] By the 1990s, the process model of writing, grounded in cognitive theory, shaped instruction across primary, secondary, and postsecondary education.[78] Indeed, this model continues to be predominant in pre-college instruction. Applebee and Langer found that over 90 percent of high school English teachers, when they taught composition, employed process-oriented instruction, teaching specific strategies for planning, organizing, drafting, and revising.[79] (Evidence that these processes are taught using evidence-based instructional practices is mixed, however.[80])

In higher education, the cognitive theory of writing has been challenged and supplemented by sociocultural theory, a change that has not made its way into most secondary school instruction and assessment.[81] Sociocultural theory accounts for the fact that, whatever cognitive processes are at work in the production of text, writing is always shaped by the particular social and

[74] Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997.

[75] Applebee & Langer, 2006, 2011; Graham, et al, 2014; Kiuhara, Graham, & Harken, 2009; Santelises & Dabrowski, 2015; Troia & Olinghouse, 2013.

[76] Bizzell, 1986 (p. 49).

[77] Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hayes, 1980.

[78] Applebee & Langer, 2006; Haswell, 2008; Hyland, 2003; Kellogg, 2008.

[79] Applebee & Langer, 2011. As noted, Applebee and Langer make the case that the primary problem with high school writing instruction is not so much that teachers do not teach process skills, as the fact that not enough class time is dedicated to authentic composition due to competing priorities, such as standardized test preparation.

[80] Applebee & Langer, 2011; Graham, et al, 2014; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Troia & Olinghouse, 2013.

[81] Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2011; Behizadeh & Pang, 2016; Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Duncheon & Tierney, 2014.

cultural contexts in which it takes place.[82] The writer is always situated within a discourse community, which has its own governing values, shared assumptions, accepted and expected ways of communicating and behaving. In the discourse community of academia, for example, evidence-supported argumentation is a primary, legitimized, and rewarded means for making meaning and persuading others, whereas unsupported opinionating is not. Obtaining an education entails learning to think and communicate in ways established as valuable and acceptable within the academic discourse community.

Each academic discipline, and each classroom, for that matter, forms its own discourse community, while also serving as an instantiation of the larger discourse community of academia.[83] In the most general sense, college equips students for participation in the broader discourse community of educated society, wherein clear, well-reasoned expression and evidence-supported argumentation are effective modes of meaning-making and persuasion.

The sociocultural or "post-process" model of writing does not necessarily reject the cognitive process model, but rather extends it.[84] That is, evidence-based practices grounded in the cognitive model are taught within a broader conceptualization, wherein writing processes are understood to operate within a complex of external factors relating to cultural identities, social norms, linguistic resources, power relations, and familial and environmental influences. Writing, in this conceptualization, is a situated communication practice learned through socialization, not (or not merely) an abstract skill that follows a natural developmental progression within isolated individuals.[85]

Socialization into the discourse community of academia is easier for some students than for others.[86] Every student brings to their education particular linguistic resources, background experiences, assumptions, values, and expectations from their own native culture. The degrees of variance between native and academic culture differ widely, of course. Some students are better able to navigate the culture of academics from the start because it is already relatively familiar to them; the vocabulary and values characteristic of college academics are not so far from what they have grown up with. Thus, they enter college already understanding how to interpret what is being said, and how to discern and meet behavioral and performance expectations. For other students, the culture they come from bears little resemblance to the culture of college academics. Thus, if they have no prior exposure to the norms of behavior, communication, and meaning-making

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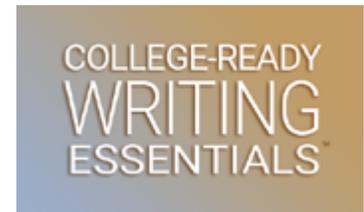
[82] Bloom, 2003; Kent, 1999; Matsuda, 2003; Perry, 2012; Prior, 2006.

[83] Bazerman, 1988; Bazerman & Prior, 2005.

[84] Bizzell, 1986; McComiskey, 2000; Sperling & Freedman, 2001; Trimbur, 1994.

[85] Bartholomae, 1995; Bazerman, 1988; Bazerman & Prior, 2005; Faigley, 1985.

[86] Binkley & Smith, 2006; Gee, 2001; Fowler, 1996; Lee & Anderson, 2009.

in academic culture, then they likely begin their college careers without apprehending how to conform to expectations or what will count as a successful performance.[87] For example, according to Hassel and Giordano, new college students who struggle with writing tend to lack experience writing in formal academic ways; they therefore do not know how to make appropriate choices given their audience and rhetorical purposes, and they are unfamiliar with academic conventions.[88]

The implications of the sociocultural model of writing on pedagogy, compared with the cognitive model, are manifold. For example, the cognitive model tends to position writing as an isolated discipline comprised of a fixed compendium of process skills applicable irrespective of purposes and contexts. The classroom is the place where a teacher dispenses these skills to individual students, who learn and practice them through mental processes that function similarly from person to person.[89] Instruction tends to deemphasize the cultural perspectives and personal differentiators students bring with them to their studies, and to leave unexamined the social contexts for learning and writing.

In contrast, in the sociocultural model, the classroom is a community wherein it is impossible to separate literacy from the external influences of a student's environment—the cultural, social, economic, familial and other factors that affect them. These influences inherently produce inequalities among students,[90] particularly students from non-dominant backgrounds.[91] Pedagogy within the sociocultural model, then, seeks to recognize and account for these differences, rather than overlook them.
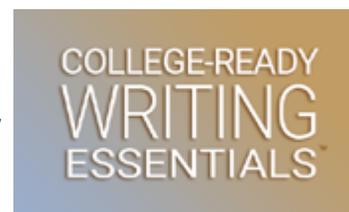
The instructor serves as a facilitator of students enjoined through their writing and interactions in public conversation—certainly among themselves, but also, in a broader sense, with other authors, critics, readers, and stakeholders engaged with their topics of inquiry.[92] Writing is a social practice learned in concert with reading, speaking, listening, and thinking skills. Metacognition becomes extremely important, as students are given to understand that they are engaged in learning the conventions of a particular culture (academics), and that they themselves are situated within that culture in ways that bring to bear their personal backgrounds, experiences, knowledge, identities, and language resources.

While the cognitive model leads toward the production of writing in which the particulars of students' identities and experiences are absent, their *selves* evacuated from the texts they produce, the sociocultural model brings their particular identities into play, examining and emphasizing the agency of writers as participants situated within particular

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[87] Heath, 1983.

[88] Hassel & Giordano, 2013.

[89] Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Gutiérrez, Morales, & Martinez, 2009; Sperling & DiPardo, 2008.

[90] Purcell-Gates & Tierney, 2009.

[91] Au, 2000.

[92] Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Conley, 2007; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006; Tsui & Gao, 2006

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communities. Their identities and backgrounds thus become potential resources that they can leverage in the service of contributing their own perspectives and ideas to ongoing, consequential conversations.[93]

Writing is positioned as an empowering tool for pursuing one's interests and advancing one's objectives. Pedagogically, this puts a premium on students choosing and scoping their own projects, discovering the topics and issues they care about, and taking responsibility for their own intellectual engagement. But students succeed in leveraging their backgrounds and advancing their interests only to the degree that they communicate in ways that are valued and persuasive within the community—that is, by thinking logically, reasoning carefully, reading perceptively, discussing knowledgeably, communicating clearly—in short, by acquiring and exercising the literacy skills of an academically educated person.

The sociocultural perspective is closely compatible with principles of rhetoric: both situate the writer in a public context and call upon the skills of persuasion operative within the relevant discourse community. Rhetorical concepts and considerations—awareness of audience; definition of purpose; ethos, logos, and pathos—often are taught in the process-oriented instructional model found in secondary classrooms, but they tend there to be abstract and decontextualized.[94] The sociocultural

model, by contrast, comprehends rhetors in terms of their particular cultural identities and social situatedness; it configures purpose in terms of agency, audience in terms of discourse community, position-taking in terms of conversational participation, meaning-making and persuasiveness in terms of rhetorical context.

This model of writing facilitates one of the major goals of college-level writing instruction: to equip each student for effective participation within his or her discipline, with its particular text forms, language styles, customs of presentation, and modes of analysis.[95] Where "rhetorical knowledge" and "knowledge of conventions" are invoked as necessary for college-level writing success, they refer to students' awareness that they are always situated within specific discourse communities (especially academic disciplines), and that effective communication within those communities entails understanding and adhering to community expectations—such as supporting claims with evidence and practicing standards of academic integrity.[96]

How college-ready writing is conceptualized determines how its instruction is strategized. The disconnect between secondary and post-secondary theories of writing results in
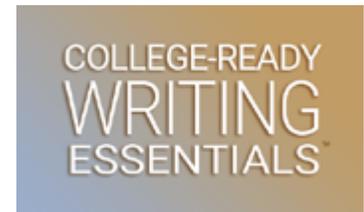
[93] Behizadeh & Lynch, 2017.
[94] Berlin, 1987; Cohen & Riel, 1989.

[95] Harrington, et al, 2001; Fallahi, 2012; Perin, 2013; Sparks, et al, 2014.
[96] Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011; Harrington, et al, 2001.

pedagogical differences that leave most high school graduates unprepared for the writing demands and expectations they encounter in college. The theory of writing operative within an educational community shapes not only teachers' strategies for instruction, but also students' understanding of what writing is and is for. The disparity between the theories of writing at work in secondary versus college instruction contributes to students' difficulties in producing the kind of academic writing required for success in college.

Critical thinking

College students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking in their compositions, by insightfully analyzing and evaluating information, arguments, and perspectives from other sources, and by contributing ideas, arguments, and solutions of their own.[97] Much of secondary-school writing instruction, however, emphasizes formulas and surface features over disciplined inquiry and rigorous analysis.[98] As noted above, standardized testing in particular tends to focus secondary school writing instruction on form at the expense of content.[99] As a result, many students come to believe that correct form and mechanics, more than substance, constitute good writing.[100]

This misconception can be a major impediment to success for new college students. As Marlink and Wahleithner write, "By privileging form over an exploration of ideas and analysis, the formulaic approach to writing stands in direct opposition to the type of writing expected in the post-secondary world."[101] In higher education, writing is understood as more than a means for demonstrating command of form and language: it is itself a method of learning, an occasion for complex problem-solving, a tool for discovering and refining one's own thinking, and for contributing meaningfully to conversations within a discourse community.[102] As Perin notes, "College instructors routinely assign writing not for the purpose of teaching writing skills, but to promote students' development of knowledge and ideas."[103]
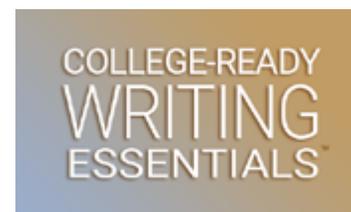
Students benefit from understanding prior to beginning their college careers that academic writing will be a primary means for demonstrating not only their language skills and mastery of form, but also the depth of their knowledge and the quality of their thinking. Pre-college writing instruction, therefore, should equip them with this understanding.

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[97] Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Council of Writing Program Administrators, el al, 2011; Sullivan, et al, 2010.

[98] Behizadeh 2014a; Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2011; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Hillocks, 2005; Marlink & Wahleithner, 2011; Rowlands, 2016; Sullivan & Tinberg 2006.

[99] Au & Gourd, 2013; Beck & Jeffery, 2007; Jeffery, 2009; Watanabe, 2007.

[100] Englert, et al. 1988; Graham, Schwartz, & MacArthur, 1993; Santangelo, Harris, & Graham, 2008; Troia, 2007.

[101] Marlink & Wahleithner, 2011 (p. 7).

[102] Sparks, et al, 2014.

[103] Perin, 2013 (p. 48).

College-Ready Writing Gap	
Pre-College	*College*
Primarily short responses and worksheets; "writing without composing."	Multiple-page source-based compositions: reports, essays, position papers, critical reviews, etc.
Formulaic structures: e.g. 5-paragraph essay, 11-sentence paragraph.	Structure determined by student author according to disciplinary conventions, scope of task, nature of research findings, needs of argument, etc. General aversion to formulas at all levels of text.
Emphasis on surface features: grammar, spelling, mechanics.	Emphasis on critical thinking: invention, explication, analysis, argumentation.
Standardized prompts/topics.	Student discovery of topic and theme; writing as occasion for personal intellectual engagement.
Cognitive model: writing as compendium of process skills. Student learning = acquisition of skills in developmental progression.	Sociocultural model: writing as purpose-driven communicative act by situated agents. Student learning = socialization.
Classroom as locus where instructors dispense and students acquire executable skills; students learn independently.	Classroom as discourse community; students learn in concert from one another's successes and failures, with instructor as facilitator.
Initiation-Response-Evaluation mode of classroom discourse.	Improvised, conversational mode of classroom discourse, calling upon multiple competencies.
Student performance measured against generalized writing process and product ideals.	Student performance measured against cognitive, noncognitive, metacognitive competency ideals specific to discourse community.
Author's cultural identity, background, experience incidental in academic writing.	Identity, background, experience are resources, available to enrich diversity of perspectives and to leverage in service of author's ethos and objectives.
Author absent from text.	Author present in text, exercising agency.
Argumentation as mode of persuasion that stages two-sided contest of positions, arbitrated by student author with little stake in outcome.	Argumentation as mode of persuasion within complex of interacting perspectives. Student author engages multiple perspectives, takes and supports position with goals of enriching conversation and persuasively advancing own reasoned perspective.
Language as unproblematized conveyor of information and ideas.	Language as socially, culturally, historically contingent.
Rhetorical tools abstract and decontextualized.	Rhetorical awareness key to disciplinary writing success. Persuasion strategies responsive to conventions, audiences, purposes operative in given context/discipline.

Our Solution

College-Ready Writing Essentials™

There are significant differences in how writing is conceptualized, taught, and practiced in secondary compared with postsecondary classrooms, and these differences contribute to the college-ready writing gap. CRWE is designed to help close that gap by addressing the two primary obstacles to college-ready writing: students' lack of experience with authentic composition prior to college; and pre-college instruction that is not aligned with college-level expectations.

The discussion below describes the resource at length, including rationales for the task design and instructional strategy. In brief, College-Ready Writing Essentials is an instructional resource that guides students over five weeks through the process of composing a research-supported persuasive essay. It is a resource for teaching and eliciting the skills and knowledge students need in order to meet the writing demands they will face early in their college careers—the complex of cognitive, noncognitive, and metacognitive competencies involved in successfully generating an extended source-based academic essay.

CRWE is intended for use in pre-college and early college classrooms and programs. It is suitable for composition, English, or rhetoric courses, but also for history, communications, culture studies, social science, or other contexts—wherever students may be asked to practice disciplined inquiry: to discover a topic that interests them, define an issue, research it, consider multiple perspectives, and produce an extended composition that takes a position and supports it with evidence and argumentation. Since students choose their own topic to research and write about, they may take multiple passes through the resource, perhaps in different courses or programs, accumulating and improving skills with each iteration.

With the central problems underlying the college-ready writing gap in mind, our goals in developing this resource are to:

1) Provide an opportunity for the kind of composition experience that will best prepare students for college-level writing. This entails aligning task and instruction with college-level expectations in terms of both essential competencies and conceptual approach;

2) Make the resource easy to implement by attending to the factors that commonly impede composition instruction in pre-college classrooms. This objective aims at ensuring that the instructional unit can be readily integrated into existing curricula and easily managed by teachers who have limited resources, perhaps little training in teaching extended composition, and many competing demands.

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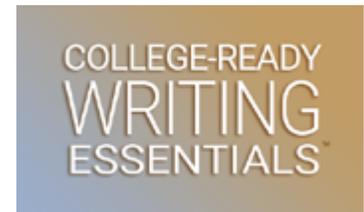
An overarching goal is to impart to teachers, administrators, parents, and students a high degree of confidence that the skills, knowledge, and experience derived from the resource are indeed those most needed for college writing success.

Design

Our strategy for designing CRWE entailed:

1) Consulting and consolidating research-based frameworks to identify the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary for college-level writing success;

2) Selecting an authentic writing task that invokes these competencies;

3) Developing a framework that articulates the target competencies in terms applicable to the writing task;

4) Designing a mode of instruction that teaches and elicits the competencies in the competencies framework, grounded in evidence-based practices, aligned with the theory of writing and instructional approach found in college settings, and attentive to common impediments to composition instruction in pre-college classrooms;

5) Creating a mode of student performance assessment that generates both actionable diagnostic information and supportable, evidence-based claims about student readiness.

Guiding Frameworks

To determine the key competencies CRWE should teach to and elicit from students, we consulted two groups of knowledge and skills frameworks, one concerned with college readiness writ large, and the other with college-ready writing. There are a variety of frameworks of both types. We elected in the first case to focus on the framework proposed in the ConnectEd report, *College and Career Readiness: What Do We Mean?*[104] Based on some 12 college- and career-readiness frameworks, plus the perspectives of leading economists, educators, researchers, and policy organizations, it provides a comprehensive, high-level description of knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for success after high school.

For college-ready writing, we relied on the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*, produced by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project, three of the most authoritative voices on college-ready writing.[105] This framework identifies the skills needed for early college writing success, in alignment with the Council

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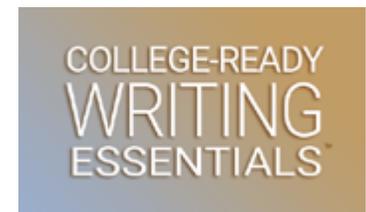
[104] ConnectEd, 2012.
[105] Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011.

of Writing Program Administrators' *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition*.[106] Together, the "Framework for Success" and the "WPA Outcomes Statement" are intended to "help establish a continuum of valued practice from high school through to the college major."[107] After first-year composition, students are expected to be prepared to learn how to write in their disciplines.

One aim in consulting both frameworks was to discover whether they are in alignment with each other. That is, does the guidance offered by the writing framework conform to the broader vision of college readiness proffered by the ConnectEd framework? This seems an especially appropriate question, given the importance of writing to overall college success. Unsurprisingly, the two align well, though we note a comparative under-emphasis on metacognitive skills in the writing framework, as discussed below.

The two guiding frameworks in many cases use differing terms and categorizations to express the same or similar concepts. "Persistence," for example, appears in the writing framework as a "habit of mind," but in the college-readiness framework under "productive dispositions and behaviors." To ensure alignment of our CRWE resource

with the two guiding frameworks, we have found it useful to categorize elements of all three in terms of *cognitive*, *noncognitive*, and *metacognitive competencies*. We have elected to use the term "competencies" to encompass the "knowledge," "skills," "dispositions," "behaviors," "strategies," and "habits of mind" found in the guiding frameworks. In practice, these attributes often are inseparable from one another, especially in the writing domain. In the actual production of a successful academic essay, that is, many of the abilities a writer must employ call upon intermingled knowledge, skills, and behaviors.

Cognitive competencies include the mental skills and knowledge employed in the production of a successful academic essay: for example, the ability to plan and research, produce a draft, and revise in response to feedback. The college-readiness framework refers to such competencies as "core academic knowledge and skills." The cognitive competencies found in the writing framework can be viewed as the "core knowledge and skills" that pertain to academic writing. They include "rhetorical knowledge," "process skills," "critical thinking," and "knowledge of conventions."

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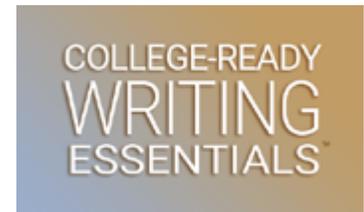
[106] Harrington, 2001 (2014).

[107] *ibid*.

Noncognitive competencies are behaviors and dispositions needed for academic success. In education research, these often are enfolded within the category of "social and emotional learning" (SEL) skills, though that term is not used by either guiding framework.[108] In general, the college-readiness framework identifies noncognitive competencies as "productive dispositions and behaviors," while the writing framework includes them within "habits of mind." We feel confident in calling this group of competencies "noncognitive," since many of them are identified as such in other studies. Nagaoka, et al., for example, identify five categories of noncognitive college-readiness factors: "academic behaviors," "academic perseverance," "social skills," "learning strategies," "academic mindset."[109] These categories match many of the "productive dispositions and behaviors" and "habits of mind" found in our two guiding frameworks.

Metacognitive competencies include the ability to reflect on oneself—e.g., one's thinking,

motivations, objectives, performance—and to recognize the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which one is operating, including the processes and systems that structure knowledge and agency within education. In the college-readiness framework, some metacognitive competencies are named as skills and behaviors. The major metacognitive emphasis, however, is on the ability to "navigate" higher education, the world of work, and civic life. The writing framework encourages students' ability to examine and analyze their own writing processes, texts, and choices, but does not stress a broader awareness of the function of writing in academic, work, and civic realms. This appears to us a missed opportunity, since a strong metacognitive grasp of writing is of aid in each of these contexts.

The table on the next page illustrates our strategy for aligning the ConnectEd college-readiness framework with the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing, using the *cognitive*, *noncognitive*, and *metacognitive competencies* categories.

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[108] Durlak, 2015.
[109] Nagaoka, et al, 2013.

College and Career Readiness: What Do We Mean?	Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing
Cognitive Competencies	**Cognitive Competencies**
Academic Knowledge Core subject area content Skills Academic skills in core disciplines 21st Century skills • Critical thinking • Communication	Writing Processes Rhetorical Knowledge Critical Thinking Knowledge of Conventions
Noncognitive Competencies	**Noncognitive Competencies**
Skills 21st-Century skills • Creativity and innovation • Collaboration Productive Dispositions and Behaviors Self-Management • Goal-setting • Time-management • Precision and accuracy • Persistence • Initiative/self-direction • Task completion Effective Organizational and Social Behavior • Flexibility/adaptability • Responsibility	Habits of Mind Curiosity Openness Creativity Flexibility Persistence Responsibility
Metacognitive Competencies	**Metacognitive Competencies**
Academic Skills Metacognition and knowing how to learn Productive Dispositions and Behaviors Productive self-concept • Self-knowledge • Self-esteem • Self-efficacy Engagement Navigate higher education Navigate world of work Navigate civic life	Habits of Mind Engagement Metacognition

We are, of course, concerned here primarily with the competencies needed for success in one fundamental area of college academics: writing. The college and career-readiness framework is more comprehensive than that, however, and so includes elements ("career-related and technical knowledge," for instance) that apply more broadly to career and college readiness. Accordingly, we have left some of the framework's elements out of our design considerations. Similarly, the college-ready writing framework is in some ways more comprehensive than the tightly-focused scope of our resource. We have not included in our design the framework elements related to "Composing in Multiple Environments." While we recognize that mastering composition in multiple digital environments is imperative for students today, specific skills related to writing technologies lie outside our objectives for the CRWE resource.

Task

Having identified competencies that research indicates are needed for early college writing success, the next step in our design was to develop an authentic task that would provide an opportunity for students to learn and practice these competencies—an opportunity, that is, for them to gain experience with college-level composition.

What is an authentic college-level writing task? A primary goal of writing instruction early in college is to prepare students for writing in their disciplines later on.[110] General principles of academic writing that are transferable across disciplines, therefore, are important for students to master in their introductory courses.[111] This kind of writing generally requires students to compose multiple-page essays that engage with other sources.[112] The essay types most commonly required in college are persuasive and informational; comparatively little narrative or creative writing is assigned.[113]

In *What Is "College-Level Writing*," Patrick Sullivan writes that the central goal of college writing instruction is to "introduce students to an ongoing conversation that is multilayered and complex. . . [and] ask them . . . to engage the issues and ideas in that conversation thoughtfully."[114] Student essays, accordingly, should demonstrate:

- "A willingness to evaluate ideas and issues carefully;"
- "Some skill at analysis and higher-level thinking;"
- "The ability to shape and organize material effectively;"

[110] Fallahi, 2012; Harrington, et al, 2001 (2014).

[111] Haswell, 2008.

[112] Brockman, et al, 2011; Perin, et al, 2017.

[113] Beaufort, 2004; Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Brockman, et al, 2011; Melzer, 2009; Perin, 2013.

[114] Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006.
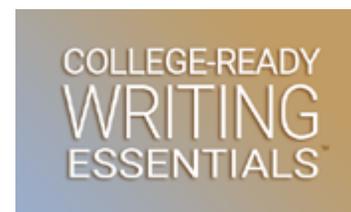
- "The ability to integrate some of the material from the readings skillfully;"
- "The ability to follow standard rules of grammar, punctuation, and spelling."[115]

Given the portrait of college-level writing that arises from these various sources, we elected to organize CRWE around the production of a research-supported persuasive essay. This type of essay is typical of college-level work and calls upon the full complement of cognitive competencies identified in the college-ready writing framework. A persuasive essay provides the greatest opportunity to emphasize argumentation, a skill central to a number of genres students are likely to encounter later in their academic and work lives.[116] Almost half of writing assignments in composition courses are based on argumentation.[117] A persuasive essay also foregrounds the rhetorical and sociocultural dimensions of writing that composition studies indicate are integral to college-level writing: in composing a research-supported persuasive essay, students define a debatable issue that matters to them, conduct a disciplined inquiry, formulate and advance a position that draws upon academic knowledge and reasoning skills as well as their own background and experience, and contribute to a meaningful conversation within a discourse community.

The selection of a persuasive, research-based essay provides an opportunity for students to critically engage with texts and to exhibit critical thinking through their own analysis and reasoning. The importance of critical thinking is stressed throughout the college-readiness literature, and in our guiding frameworks. Condon and Kelly-Riley identify with some precision the form critical thinking takes in college-level writing:

- "Identification of a problem or issue;"
- "Establishment of a clear perspective on the issue;"
- "Recognition of alternative perspectives
- "Location of the issue within an appropriate context(s);"
- "Identification and evaluation of evidence
- "Recognition of fundamental assumptions implicit or stated by the representation of an issue;"
- "Assessment of implications and potential conclusions."[118]

A research-supported, persuasive essay—with its focus on defining a debatable issue, examining multiple perspectives, and taking and supporting a position—provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate critical thinking in each of these areas.

The parameters of the essay students produce as they make their way through CRWE can be set by teachers according to their needs, but we recommend that students write essays that are three to five pages in length (800 - 1200 words),

[115] *ibid.*

[116] Gilbert, 1997; Rottenberg & Winchell, 2011; Toulmin, Rieke, & Janik, 1979.

[117] Yancey, 2009.

[118] Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004.
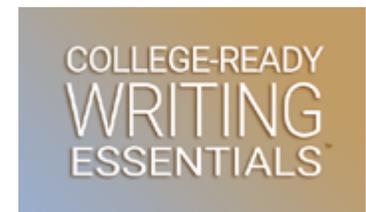
and incorporate and cite at least three credible sources. The resource guides students through the process of planning, drafting, revising, and finalizing their essay.

College-Ready Writing Essentials Competencies Framework

The third step in our design process entailed developing a competencies framework that articulates the target competencies in terms applicable to the specific writing task. The guiding college-readiness and college-ready writing frameworks identify the competencies an effective instructional resource must teach and elicit. But to be useful in the classroom, the high-level descriptors from the guiding frameworks must somehow be rendered into practicable instruction. Our approach to this task entailed translating the high-level descriptors into precise competency statements that can be applied to the actual work of composition.

For example, "rhetorical knowledge" is a key cognitive competency for college-ready writing, per the "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing." But what kind of rhetorical knowledge is needed in the production of an academic essay aimed at cultivating college-ready writing skills, and what features of a student's performance show evidence of it? To answer this kind of practical question, we developed the CRWE Competencies Framework, which consists of specific competency statements aligned with the cognitive, noncognitive, and metacognitive competencies identified above. These statements can be read as articulations of the guiding frameworks' high-level competencies

as they manifest in the production of a particular essay type in a particular educational context. That is, the CRWE Competencies Framework translates high-level descriptors of knowledge, skills, and behaviors found in the guiding frameworks into specific statements articulating the competencies students need for the successful completion of an authentic, extended writing project in an educational context aimed at preparing them for college-level composition.
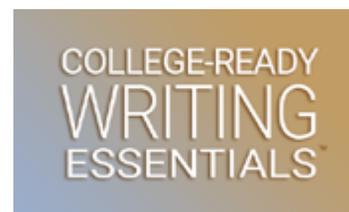
The Competencies Framework comprises a tiered structure of competency statements, in which the statements below serve as evidence of the statements above. The statements delineate for students precisely the qualities required of their work in order for it to be adjudged competent. They can be used by teachers to evaluate student performance in a way that supports claims about competency and, ultimately, college-readiness. In this way the Competencies Framework supports an evidence-based mode of student performance assessment. The specificity and structure of the statements affords an easy way to provide diagnostic feedback that students and teachers can use to improve performance.

The full Competencies Framework is attached to this document as an appendix. The table below shows the broad alignment of the CRWE Competencies Framework with the two guiding frameworks, using the cognitive, noncognitive, and metacognitive categories. The cognitive competences alignment is relatively

straightforward: "writing processes," "rhetorical knowledge," "critical thinking," and "knowledge of conventions," the core academic competencies in the writing domain, are directly converted into competency statements relevant to planning, drafting, revising, and finalizing an essay. Cognitive competencies are labeled "Knowledge and Skills" in the Framework.

We have divided the noncognitive competencies into two types: personal and social. Personal competencies include behaviors necessary for personally succeeding in academic work, from conscientiously meeting deadlines and completing assignments, to persistently putting forth a high level of effort to advance one's own knowledge and skills. Social competencies include a willingness to put forth a high level effort for the sake of others in a discourse community—meeting obligations, engaging with peers, and providing feedback that is socially and intellectually constructive. These noncognitive competencies appear in the guiding frameworks as, for example, "persistence," and "responsibility." Curiosity, openness, and creativity, which are included as "habits of mind" in the college-ready writing framework, are not called out explicitly in our Competencies Framework, but are implicit in the instructional resource insofar as it emphasizes generating ideas, making a contribution to a meaningful conversation, considering multiple perspectives, and so forth. For ease of understanding, the Framework labels noncognitive competencies "Behaviors."

Metacognitive competencies, labeled "Awareness" in the Framework, are separated into "Self Awareness" and "Social Awareness." In reference to metacognition, the college-ready writing framework recognizes the research-verified importance of self-regulating behaviors, such as reflecting on one's own writing process and choices. It also mentions, but does not elaborate on, the ability to reflect on the "cultural processes and systems used to structure knowledge."[119] The competencies included under "Social Awareness" in our Competencies Framework align with the college-readiness framework's emphasis on "engagement," which we take to include metacognitive awareness of the processes and systems that structure knowledge and agency within education. "Social Awareness" as a category of metacognitive competence also helps to conform our Competencies Framework with the sociocultural theory of writing undergirding our approach to instruction.
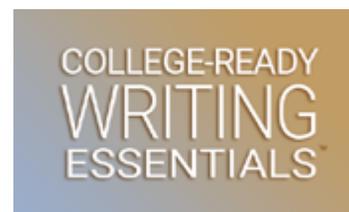
The CRWE Competencies Framework allows for evidence-based claims about the competencies students demonstrate in their work. It makes possible a classroom instruction and assessment method that helps teachers provide to students clear performance expectations, explicit criteria for evaluation, and diagnostic language for improvement. Student essays arising from CRWE also can serve as demonstrations of mastery in competency-based accountability systems.

[119] Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011.

College and Career Readiness: What Do We Mean?	*Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*	*College-Ready Writing Essentials Competencies Framework* (see appendix for full framework)
Cognitive Competencies	*Cognitive Competencies*	*Cognitive Competencies*
Knowledge Core subject area content Skills Academic skills in core disciplines Critical thinking Communication	Writing Processes Rhetorical Knowledge Critical Thinking Knowledge of Conventions	Competency statements: "Skills and Knowledge" Writing processes Rhetorical knowledge Critical thinking Knowledge of conventions
Noncognitive Competencies	*Noncognitive Competencies*	*Noncognitive Competencies*
Skills Collaboration Productive Dispositions and Behaviors Self-Management • Goal-setting • Precision and accuracy • Persistence • Task completion Effective Organizational and Social Behavior • Responsibility	Habits of Mind Curiosity Openness Creativity Flexibility Persistence Responsibility	Competency statements: "Behaviors" Personal behaviors Social behaviors
Metacognitive Competencies	*Metacognitive Competencies*	*Metacognitive Competencies*
Skills Metacognition and knowing how to learn Productive Dispositions and Behaviors Self-efficacy Engagement Navigate higher education Navigate world of work Navigate civic life	Habits of Mind Engagement Metacognition	Competency statements: "Awareness" Self awareness Social awareness

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Instruction

A five-week resource divided into 25 lessons, CRWE is designed to be easily slotted into existing curricula and programs. It leads students through the processes of planning, drafting, revising, and finalizing a three- to five-page research-supported persuasive essay. Lessons are presented via thorough and transparent instructional language addressed directly to students, with clearly articulated goals and performance expectations. The "voice" of instruction assumes that students are capable, curious, mature, and motivated to learn. Instruction is organized around the target competencies found in the Competencies Framework. It includes:

Knowledge and Skills (cognitive competencies)

Writing processes

Modeled strategies, guidance, and exercises for generating ideas; choosing and scoping a topic; researching credible sources and reading them critically; defining an issue; mapping a range of perspectives; taking a position; supporting a position with evidence and argumentation; developing an outline; composing a draft; reading one's own work critically; evaluating feedback from others; revising; and polishing the end product.

Rhetorical knowledge

Lessons, resources, and exercises on rhetorical concepts, including considerations of task, audience, purpose, and strategies of persuasion, especially evidence-supported argumentation;

Critical thinking

Lessons and models for evaluating the perspectives of others; contributing analysis, adding new perspectives, proposing solutions;
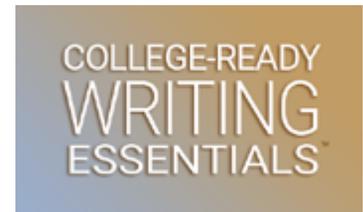
Knowledge of conventions

Lessons, resources, and exercises on academic conventions of language use, tone, style, presentation, and integrity.

Behaviors (noncognitive competencies)

Personal behaviors

Discussions of behaviors and performance expectations aimed at advancing one's own knowledge, skills, and success in the context of postsecondary education; conscientiousness in meeting requirements and presenting one's work;

Social behaviors

Guidance and exercises for responding to the perspectives and work of others; behavioral expectations in a college-level academic discourse community; learning and using the language and concepts of an academic discourse.

Awareness (metacognitive competencies)

Self Awareness

Discussions of and exercises for self-appraisal; critical thinking and communication skills as means for advancing one's own goals, interests, and perspectives.

Social Awareness

Prompts and resources for reflecting on writing, education, work, and related topics; reflection on one's own relationship to, and place within, the culture and institutions of education.

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Our goals in developing the instructional content are to:

Teach and elicit the competencies in the Competencies Framework.

The cognitive competency and evidence statements serve as scaffolding for lessons and exercises covering the processes of planning, drafting, revising, and finalizing a research-supported persuasive essay. Noncognitive competencies are taught and elicited through discussions, prompts, peer reviews, and evaluation tools. Metacognitive competencies are taught through discussion, with students prompted to reflect on their own motivations and learning processes, and on topics such as writing and agency in education, work, and civic life.

Employ evidence-based instructional practices.

Instruction emphasizes sustained writing, process strategies, models, peer review, self-evaluation, and self-efficacy, drawing on recommendations from a variety of research on best practices in teaching writing.[120]

Align with the rigor, theory, and instructional approach found in college settings.

As discussed above, high school and college-level writing instruction tend to be misaligned thanks to the impact of standardized tests, differing theories of writing and modes of classroom discourse, and a lack of emphasis on noncognitive and metacognitive competencies

and critical thinking in pre-college instruction. CRWE is aimed at introducing to students college-level practices, concepts, and expectations. It provides pre-college and early-college students with an opportunity to work on a rigorous, authentic college-aligned writing project, and to gain exposure to concepts and performance expectations that will structure their college experiences.

A sociocultural theory of writing undergirds instruction, in conformity with how writing is widely understood and taught in postsecondary contexts.[121] Accordingly, the instructional content frames college-ready writing in terms of the expectations and conventions of a college-level academic discourse community. It emphasizes the socialization of student writers into the culture of college academics, bringing to the fore their situatedness, responsibilities to the community, and opportunities for agency. It presents persuasive reasoning and skillful writing as means for advancing students' own perspectives, interests, and goals in education, work, and civic contexts.

The instructional content of CRWE has been designed so that teachers, if they choose, can assign reading and exercises outside of class and use class time for sustained writing, feedback, and discussion. This model is more in keeping with what students will encounter

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[120] De La Paz, 2007; Graham & Harris, 2006; Graham & Perin, 2007b; Isaacson & Gleason, 2001; MacArthur & Philippakos, 2013; Perin, 2013; Troia, 2007.

[121] Bloom, 2003; Kent, 1999; Matsuda, 2003; Perry, 2012; Prior, 2006.

in college than is the Initiation-Response-Evaluation model typically found in pre-college classrooms. Consonant with both sociocultural writing theory and postsecondary practices, the instructor functions as a facilitator within the discourse community of the classroom; students acquire writing skills in concert with speaking, listening, thinking, and reading skills, learning from one another's successes and failures.[122] Writing is presented less as a compendium of executable skills than as a method of learning and a strategy for refining one's thinking, as it is in college contexts.[123]

Attend to common impediments to authentic composition instruction and practice in pre-college classrooms.

Research indicates that the majority of students do not get enough experience with authentic composition prior to entering college. As discussed above, two of the primary impediments to teaching composition are: 1) teachers feel inadequately prepared;[124] and 2) overcrowded classrooms make it impractical for teachers to assign extended writing projects that demand time-intensive responses.[125] These are problems, we contend, that can be relieved to a significant degree by a well-designed and targeted instructional resource, such as CRWE.

The deeply researched and evidence-centered design of CRWE is intended to give teachers a high level of confidence that their students are acquiring the skills and knowledge they need most for college readiness, via a thorough and coherent instructional strategy. While teachers can choose to modify, supplement, and adapt the resource as needed, CRWE is designed to be complete in itself, including all of the instructional language, exercises, evaluation tools, and other resources needed for a self-contained unit of study. A detailed Instructor's Guide also aids implementation.
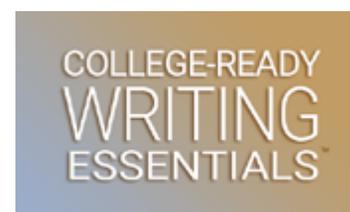
In addition to bolstering teacher confidence, the resource is also intended to help ease the workload that comes with teaching composition. The completeness of the resource helps reduce planning time. Further, CRWE is directly addressed to students; teachers can thus elect to "flip" their classrooms if they desire, assigning lessons and exercises as homework, while using class time for sustained writing, peer review, discussion, and for reviewing and responding to student work. This model is intended to help relieve the difficulty of conferencing and providing detailed feedback to students in overcrowded classrooms.

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[122] Carter, 2007; Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004; Conley, 2007; McLeod, 1989; Mehan, 1979; Sparks, et al, 2014; Tsui & Gao, 2006; Venezia & Jaeger, 2012.

[123] Sparks, et al., 2014.

[124] Graham et al 2014; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; Kirst & Bracco, 2004; Marlink & Wahleithner, 2011; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006; Troia & Olinghouse, 2013; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013; Venezia & Voloch, 2012.

[125] Applebee & Langer, 2011; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; National Commission on Writing, 2003; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006.

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Provide a mode of student performance assessment that generates both actionable diagnostic information and supportable, evidence-based claims about student readiness.

The lessons in CRWE include exercises designed to elicit evidence of the competencies found in the Competencies Framework. Each exercise provides an opportunity to evaluate student performance. Each evaluation, in turn, can be mapped to a competency in the Competencies Framework. (Teachers can choose to make use of as many or as few of the exercises and evaluations as they desire.) This approach to assessment supports evidence-based claims about student competency. In addition, since the competency statements in the Framework are precise articulations of target student performances, they serve as a means for providing diagnostic feedback.

For example, the Competencies Framework identifies the ability to successfully draft an academic essay as a competency needed for college-ready writing. Success in drafting includes drafting a successful essay introduction. Evidence of that ability is specified as follows in the Framework:

a) You draft an effective introduction to a research-supported persuasive essay.

- You draft an introduction that clearly conveys the topic and issue your essay addresses;

- You draft an introduction that clearly conveys the broader context and significance of the issue your essay addresses;

- You draft an introduction that clearly conveys the position your essay takes on the issue;

- You draft an introduction in which the parts are well-integrated and the approach is engaging.
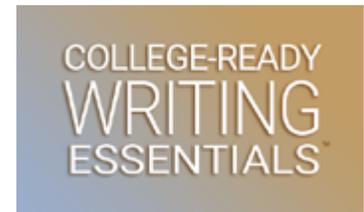
Each of the bulleted statements correspond to lessons in the instructional resource. Using a model-based rubric, the teacher can evaluate the introduction drafted by a student according the criteria specified in this section of the Competencies Framework. Likewise, peer reviews and self-evaluations can be based on the same criteria. Both teacher and student can identify where the student's work is succeeding and where he or she needs to make improvements.

Since it is founded on research-verified college-ready writing competencies, this system of assessment allows for evidence-based claims about student readiness for college-level writing.

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Summary

Not enough students entering college are prepared for college-level academic work, and writing is one of the signal areas of deficiency. Our review of the literature on college-readiness and college-ready writing points to two primary problems underlying the college-ready writing gap:

1) students do not get enough instruction and practice in authentic academic composition prior to college; and

2) pre-college writing instruction too often is not aligned with college-level expectations.

College-Ready Writing Essentials is a hands-on instructional resource designed to directly confront these underlying problems.

Research-based frameworks that identify the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for college success provide guidance for classroom instruction, but they leave it to teachers to implement that guidance. Given the demands placed on teachers, this frequently is not an altogether reasonable expectation. CRWE represents an effort to translate the high-level principles of college-ready writing research into a practicable resource that teachers and students can make ready use of in pre- and early-college contexts.

In developing the resource, we have employed a coherent design strategy with a strong research basis, resulting in a defensible argument for the validity of our approach. We identified key competencies needed for college-readiness in writing, then developed an instructional resource that teaches, elicits, and evaluates those competencies. Further, we designed the resource for ease of use in pre-college and early-college courses and programs, recognizing and mitigating some of the primary constraints and challenges that teachers and students face in pursuing authentic composition in their classrooms.

CRWE is available via Canvas, one of the most widely-used learning management systems. We intend eventually to develop our own proprietary platform that will help make CRWE accessible to even more students, allowing for expanded features and greater ease of use. Our ultimate objective is to provide as many students as possible with effective writing instruction, practice, and assessment, to improve their opportunities for success at college-level academic work.
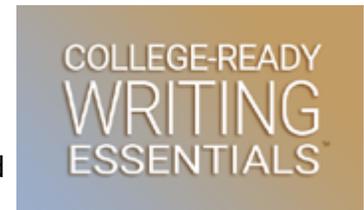
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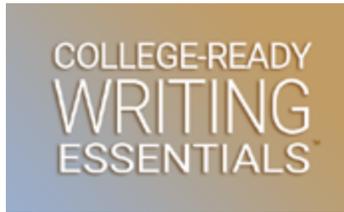
Appendix
College-Ready Writing Essentials
Competencies Framework

PRIMARY COMPETENCY

You can produce an extended, research-supported academic essay that demonstrates the competencies needed for success in postsecondary writing.

Competencies needed for success in postsecondary writing include:

Knowledge and Skills
Behaviors
Awareness

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The four competencies described below are employed throughout the composition of an academic essay, often in combination.

Writing Process Competencies [WP]
You successfully use planning, drafting, revising, and finalizing process strategies to compose an extended, research-supported academic essay.

Rhetorical Knowledge [RK]
In composing an academic essay, your considerations and decisions are guided by a thoughtful understanding of the writing task, your purposes for writing, and your audiences. You use modes of expression and reasoning that are valued and persuasive in college academics.

Critical Thinking [CT]
Your writing demonstrates an ability to insightfully analyze and evaluate ideas, arguments, and perspectives from other sources, and to contribute your own well-reasoned ideas, arguments, and perspectives to conversations within an academic discourse community.

Knowledge of Conventions [KC]
You understand that academic discourse communities expect texts to adhere to established conventions of form, style, and presentation. Your writing demonstrates an ability to adhere to the conventions associated with an extended research-supported academic essay, by exhibiting correct grammar, mechanics, and formatting; effective organization; and appropriate tone and style.

Evidence of these competencies is indicated by the following statements.

1) **You demonstrate the writing process competencies, rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, and knowledge of conventions needed for success in postsecondary writing.**

Planning

1.1) You demonstrate that you can effectively plan an academic essay. **[WP, RK, CT]**

  a) You understand the task assigned, the expectations of those who will be reading and evaluating your work, and your own purposes for writing. **[RK]**

  b) In response to an academic writing assignment, you successfully employ strategies for generating topic ideas. **[WP, CT]**

  c) You select a topic that is well-suited to your writing task, audiences, and purposes. **[WP, RK]**

  - Your topic lends itself to research.

  - Your topic lends itself to argumentation.

  - You select a topic with a scope that can be effectively accommodated within the time and length constraints of the assignment.

  - You effectively call upon your interests, experience, knowledge, and background as you select a topic for academic writing.

  d) In researching an academic topic, you find credible, relevant sources and read them perceptively. **[WP, CT]**

  e) With the aid of your research, you clearly define an issue that is suitable, given your task, audiences, and purposes. **[WP, CT]**

  f) You connect specific issues to the more general concerns they invoke. **[WP, CT]**

  g) You identify and map a range of perspectives on a defined issue. **[WP, CT]**

  h) Drawing upon your analysis of other perspectives, as well as your own background, knowledge, and experience, you formulate and clearly state your own supportable position. **[WP, RK, CT]**

  i) You construct an outline that helps you formulate and map an effective approach to drafting a research-supported persuasive essay. **[WP, RK]**

  - Your outline reflects a plan for clearly and effectively presenting your essay's topic, issue, and position.

  - Your outline maps an effective strategy for providing background information and analysis of your topic and issue.

  - Your outline reflects a strategy for supporting your position with an effective argument.

  - Your outline maps an effective conclusion.

  - From beginning to end, your outline reflects a focused sequence of elements that lead logically from one to the next.

Drafting

1.2) You demonstrate that you can successfully draft an academic essay. **[WP, RK, CT]**

    a) You understand the meaning and uses of ethos, logos, and pathos in drafting an academic essay. **[RK, CT]**

    b) You draft an effective introduction to a research-supported persuasive essay. **[WP, RK, CT]**

- Your draft introduction clearly conveys the topic and issue your essay addresses.
- Your draft introduction clearly conveys the broader context and significance of the issue your essay addresses.
- Your draft introduction clearly conveys the position your essay takes on the issue.
- The parts of your draft introduction are well-integrated and the approach is engaging.

    c) You draft an effective body to a research-supported persuasive essay. **[WP, RK, CT]**

    i) You draft a body that clearly presents relevant background information that helps your reader understand the topic and issue addressed by your essay.

    ii) You draft a body that summarizes and analyzes multiple perspectives on the issue addressed by your essay.

    iii) You draft a body that explains and develops your position on the issue.

    iv) You draft an argument that effectively supports your position with evidence and reasoning.

- The claims supporting your position are well-developed with explanation, evidence, and reasoning.
- Your argument addresses relevant alternative perspectives and counterarguments.
- Your argument considers the consequences, implications, and limitations of your position.
- You draft a body that makes effective use of ethos and pathos to persuade your reader.

    d) You draft an effective conclusion to a research-supported persuasive essay. **[WP, RK, CT]**

- Your essay's conclusion brings the strands of your argument into clear, cohesive focus, effectively summarizing the contribution your essay makes to the conversation around the issue.
- The conclusion extends your reader's thinking on the issue toward further considerations.
- The parts of your conclusion are well-integrated and the approach is satisfying to your reader.

Revising

1.3) You demonstrate that you can improve the quality of your academic essay by revising it. " **[WP, RK, CT]**

 a) You accurately assess the quality of your draft, recognizing where key elements can be improved. **[CT]**

 b) You revise your essay according to your own critical evaluation of its merits and shortcomings. **[WP]**

 c) You judiciously use feedback from others to improve the quality of your academic essay. **[CT]**

 d) You make substantive revisions to the content of your essay that improve the quality of its analysis, argument, and presentation of ideas and information. Your revisions to content improve the essay's success at meeting the requirements of the task, the expectations of your audience, and your purposes for writing. **[WP, RK, CT]**

 e) You make language-level revisions to your essay that improve its clarity, precision, and readability. **[WP, RK, KC]**

Finalizing

1.4) You demonstrate that you can produce a final essay that is polished in its presentation and satisfying to your reader. **[WP, RK, KC]**

 a) You produce an academic essay with an effective organizational structure; **[KC]**

 b) Your essay demonstrates an effective use of language. **[KC]**
 • The grammar and language mechanics in your essay, including sentence structures, spelling, and punctuation, are correct.
 • The style and tone of your essay's language use are appropriate, given your task, audiences, and purposes for writing.

 c) Your essay skillfully presents information, ideas, and quotes from other sources. **[KC]**

 d) Your essay clearly and accurately cites the sources it draws upon, making clear which words and ideas are your own and which are attributable to someone else. **[KC]**

 e) Your finished essay conforms to the presentational conventions of academic writing, reflecting your seriousness of purpose and awareness of your readers' expectations. **[RK, KC]**

 f) Your finished essay leaves your reader with a satisfying sense that you explored the issue knowledgeably and thoroughly, presented your position effectively, and left no important elements unattended. **[RK]**

 g) Your finished essay has the desired impact upon your readers, persuading them, whether or not they agree with you, that your position on the issue addressed is well-reasoned and supported with evidence. **[RK]**

BEHAVIORS

2) You demonstrate the personal and social behaviors needed for success in postsecondary writing.

Personal

2.1) You demonstrate the personal behaviors needed for success in postsecondary writing.

   a) You put forth a high level of effort in the interest of advancing your academic knowledge, skills, and behaviors.

- You persistently review information and instruction to improve your understanding.
- You persistently review, revise, and edit your work in an effort to improve its quality.
- You make efforts to advance your knowledge and skills beyond the minimum required for course completion.
- You demonstrate determination to improve your performance over time.

   b) You are conscientious in the performance of your academic work.

- You devote a sufficient amount of time to producing your academic work.
- You complete required tasks.
- You meet required deadlines.

Social

2.2) You demonstrate the social behaviors needed for success in postsecondary writing.

   a) You put forth a high level of effort for the benefit of others in an academic community.

- You contribute to the community ideas and perspectives that enrich discussion and promote critical thinking.
- You thoughtfully consider the work of others and provide thorough critical feedback that is intellectually and socially constructive.
- You make contributions to your academic community beyond the minimum required for course completion.
- You meet your deadline obligations to others.

   b) You show respect for others in an academic community.

- The tone of your exchanges with others is respectful.
- The content of your exchanges with others is respectful.
- The focus of your exchanges with others is relevant and on-task.
- The overall impact of your exchanges with others is supportive of the efforts of individuals and of the academic goals of the community.

   c) You learn and productively use the language and concepts of an academic discourse.

- You accurately incorporate key academic writing terms into your exchanges with others (e.g., "argument," "ethos," "credible").
- You demonstrate an understanding and effective use of key writing concepts (e.g., meeting the expectations of an audience; supporting a position with evidence and reasoning).

AWARENESS

3) **You exhibit the self and social awareness needed for success in postsecondary writing.**

Self Awareness

3.1) You exhibit the self awareness needed for success in postsecondary writing.

   a) You thoughtfully assess the quality of your own effort and performance.

   b) You strive to improve your effort and performance in response to your self-assessment.

   c) You recognize that you are responsible for your own intellectual engagement, for discovering and pursuing your own academic interests, and for determining your own academic motivations and goals.

   d) You thoughtfully reflect on your own motivation and readiness to do college-level academic work.

Social Awareness

3.2) You exhibit the social awareness needed for success in postsecondary writing.

   a) You recognize that becoming an academically educated person entails learning and practicing the modes of communication and meaning-making that are accepted and valued within particular educational communities.

   b) You recognize that the agency of individuals -- their capacity for advancing their own perspectives and goals—depends on their ability to communicate and make meaning in ways that are accepted and valued by the communities in which they operate.

   c) You recognize that your relationship to your educational communities—classrooms, schools, discipline—is structured in part by your own background, identity, experiences, and values.

   d) You recognize the value of good writing skills in school, work, and civic life.