



The Alignment of Utah Compose to the Utah Core Standards for Writing

The Utah Core State Standards for writing, like the other Utah Core Standards, have been based on research, with a focus on how best to prepare our students for college and careers in a global economy. To be college- and career-ready writers, students must take task, audience, and purpose into careful consideration, while choosing words, information, structure, and format deliberately. They must be able to strategically use technology when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing. They must also have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality first-draft text under tight deadlines. Finally, they must have the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it. In light of these considerations, Measurement Incorporated (MI) has implemented the following features into their practice writing websites:

- Graphic organizers designed to help students identify task, audience, and purpose during the pre-writing stage of development.
- Interactive learning activities using best practices to strategically address organization, idea development and elaboration, vocabulary and conventions.
- Web-based essay writing with multiple drafts and revisions allowed for more efficient creation and refinement of writing.
- Automated essay scoring for instant feedback on six writing characteristics.

The Utah Core standards have been written in a vertical alignment and are divided into three major writing types: argument, informational-explanatory, and narrative. Unlike individual state standards, which may have emphasized one category over another at different grade levels, the Utah Core puts equal emphasis on all three at every grade, whether elementary, middle or high school. In response to these new areas of focus, MI has developed hundreds of pre-made writing prompts for all three categories of writing across all grade levels for their practice writing websites. Teachers can create and add their own writing prompts, as well.

The new writing standards also include steps in the writing process (planning, revising, editing, rewriting), the use of technology to produce and publish writing, and collaboration with peers. To assist in the development of these skills, MI's writing sites provide:

- Automated essay scoring to provide error recognition and suggested edits instantly.
- Capacity to allow multiple drafts for each essay, each with its own score.

- Electronic messaging to support collaboration between teachers and students.
- Digital writing portfolios that capture and organize multiple drafts of the same essay.

The automated scoring tool offered by MI's writing sites is an award-winning one, based on how closely it aligns to human scoring. Thus, teachers have more time to devote to giving students specific feedback and teaching the skills they need to improve their writing.

Another aspect of the Utah Core writing standards is their clear interdependence on the reading and language standards. The writing standards specifically refer to the language standards when addressing production and distribution of writing, and to the reading standards when addressing research, the use of textual evidence and the use of multimedia resources. To support this integration, each MI writing site enables teachers to attach reading passages and digital media to the writing prompts they create in the program. Students are encouraged to utilize and refer to the reading passages and multimedia resources during the development of an essay.

The Utah Core State Standards for writing offer a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum for teachers as they prepare their students to be career- and college-ready. Through the utilization of one of these online, interactive, formative writing programs, students will have opportunity for extensive practice applying the concepts taught and measured through the Utah Core writing standards. In collaboration with the writing sites, teachers can offer multiple opportunities for student success, monitor student progress, and offer specific and timely feedback for improved student writing.