Kentucky Department of EDUCATION

Text-Based Writing
ACROSS DISCIPLINES
An Expansion of Composition in the Classroom

Spring 2025

What is Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines?

What does "Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines" mean?

Defining "Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines" requires clarity around the terms "Text-Based," "Writing" and "Across Disciplines." "Text-Based" signals that students are engaged with complex, grade level texts throughout their learning. Most simply, writing is communicating. Student writers communicate with themselves, peers, teachers and others. Writing in the classroom can have many purposes and audiences and may be formal or informal. In the academic setting, writing can serve as a tool to promote student learning, to allow students to demonstrate their thinking and understanding of the content and/or concepts taught, and/or to share with others in a real-world setting. These types of writing are called Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication. "Across Disciplines" refers to using the types of writing—as defined here—in English/language arts as well as other disciplines, such as social studies, science, math and visual and performing arts.

Each of the tasks in this resource ground students in complex, grade-level text throughout the writing process.

What is Reading and Writing Across Disciplines, and what is its purpose?

Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines is an expansion of *Composition in the Classroom,* a resource developed by reading and writing teachers to help Kentucky educators provide students with opportunities to develop into confident, independent and proficient writers. *Composition in the Classroom* and its expansions support teachers implementing existing High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs) adopted by school districts as well as educators teaching in districts that have not yet adopted a primary HQIR in reading and writing. The tips, suggestions and tasks in *Composition in the Classroom* and its expansions should not replace adopted HQIRs but rather should serve to supplement instruction towards the full depth and rigor of the *Kentucky Academic Standards*. For more information regarding high-quality literacy curricula, districts and school leaders may access The Reading and Writing Instructional Resources Consumer Guide, a tool for evaluating and selecting instructional resources for alignment to the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing*.

Composition in the Classroom is organized around three modes of writing in the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing,* including information regarding standards-aligned instruction through Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication. *Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines*, however, contains sample discipline-specific reading and writing tasks, organized by each of the three types of writing mentioned above. This resource is grounded in the *KAS for Reading and Writing,* which includes the Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices as well as each discipline's content specific standards. The ten Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices are part of the *KAS for Reading and Writing*, appearing on every page of the standards document but should not be confused as additional standards. They should guide teachers in providing intentional opportunities for students to engage in deeper learning by practicing the behaviors of a literate citizen. The student practices serve as the overarching goals for literacy instruction for each student across the state. These practices are further clarified by possible teacher and student actions. These actions do not define curriculum, but rather they demonstrate how teachers can provide opportunities for students to experience the literacy practices and how students will apply these practices, so they may become an innate part of life across the disciplines and beyond school. This resource aims to bring more clarity around what these practices look like in action.

While *Composition in the Classroom* primarily serves English/language arts teachers and their students, *Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines* attends to the needs of all teachers and their students. Because of its widespread classroom use already, the developers chose to begin the expansion with a focus on Writing to Learn (October 2023), a professional learning space that will hopefully both affirm and stretch educators' practices. The second release added Writing to Demonstrate Learning (March 2023) and the final release will include Writing for Publication (September 2023).

Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines provides what *Composition in the Classroom*, alone, does not. While *Composition in the Classroom* provides general characteristics of each type of writing (Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication) and examples of strategies teachers can implement to engage students in each of the types of writing, this expansion includes a more disciplinary, or specialized, look at writing. *Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines* intends to show more precisely how to ensure opportunities for students to engage in discipline-specific literacies or learning that uses reading and writing skills specific to each field to teach or demonstrate content knowledge and for publication purposes as well. The sample tasks in *Text-Based Writing Across Disciplines* represent some of the types of reading and writing experts in each field (e.g., economists, biologists, literary scholars, mathematicians, etc.) might authentically engage in to deepen their own expertise.

Text-Based Writing TO LEARN Across Disciplines

Writing to Learn, as previously described, is an instructional strategy used to promote student learning. Teachers utilize this instructional strategy to help deepen students' understanding of the subjects they are studying, to engage students in thinking, to provide opportunities for applying, extending and developing skills, and to help students reflect on their learning. Typically, Writing to Learn is informal writing with the student as the primary audience. Rather than emphasizing formal composition skills, Writing to Learn helps students obtain content knowledge and build capacity to analyze, synthesize, comprehend and express their thinking in writing. Most simply stated, Writing to Learn is any writing students engage in that promotes learning. Therefore, Writing to Learn Across Disciplines refers to using Writing to Learn in English/language arts as well as other disciplines, such as math, science, social studies and visual and performing arts. The first section of this expansion, Writing to Learn Across Disciplines, provides samples of Writing to Learn tasks for each discipline. Explicit reading-writing connections are intentionally present throughout the sample tasks, requiring students to read and think deeply about text, or "anything that communicates a message," as defined by the *KAS for Reading and Writing.* Throughout the sample tasks, readers engage in passages, videos, graphs, data sets, experiments or other forms of communication while processing and documenting their learning through writing.

Text-Based Writing TO DEMONSTRATE LEARNING Across Disciplines

Writing to Demonstrate Learning, as previously described, is necessary in every classroom for teachers to ascertain how well students are understanding the content, skills or concepts taught. Teachers use this type of writing to provide students opportunities for applying and demonstrating the content, skills, or concepts they have learned in class and for assessing students' understanding of the subjects they are studying.

Regularly asking students to think and write about text at the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (i.e., analysis, synthesis, evaluation) can help students not only think through the content but also reveal the depth of their knowledge. Though this kind of writing certainly can promote

learning, it is especially used to help teachers understand how well students are learning. Typically, Writing to Demonstrate Learning takes the form of an academic exercise with the teacher as the primary audience and, thus, would not be suitable for publication. When students Write to Demonstrate Learning, their responses may be graded, marked or scored with a rubric to provide feedback to both the teacher and the student on their progress towards mastery. While feedback may focus on compositional or technical skills as a writer, teacher feedback usually focuses on content and conceptual understandings. Most simply stated, Writing to Demonstrate Learning is any composition intended to serve as a measurement of the student's depth of learning.

While students may demonstrate their learning through paragraphs or essays, at all ages, student composition should not be limited to traditional formats or restricted to writing on paper or drafting in a word processing document. Instead, students should have numerous opportunities to use digital resources to create individual or shared products and to take advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically. This may even require students to incorporate a variety of communication methods into one Writing to Demonstrate Learning composition.

Like Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning Across Disciplines refers to using Writing to Demonstrate Learning in English/language arts as well as other disciplines such as math, science, social studies, and visual and performing arts. The first section of this expansion, Writing to Learn Across Disciplines, provides samples of Writing to Learn tasks for each discipline. The Writing to Demonstrate Learning section is the second of three sections that will make up the complete expansion and provides samples of Writing to Demonstrate Learning. Explicit reading-writing connections are intentionally present throughout the sample tasks, requiring students to read and think deeply about text, or "anything that communicates a message," as defined by the *KAS for Reading and Writing*. Throughout the sample tasks, readers engage in passages, videos, graphs, data sets, experiments or other forms of communication while processing and documenting their learning through Writing to Demonstrate Learning.

Text-Based Writing FOR PUBLICATION Across Disciplines

Writing for Publication, as previously described, allows students to share their learning with audiences beyond the classroom and school community. Writing for Publication is preceded by intentional opportunities for students to Write to Learn and Write to Demonstrate Learning. The primary difference between Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication is the *audience*: whereas teachers are the primary audience of Writing to Demonstrate Learning, publication is for the world beyond the school community.

"Publication" indicates writing will be shared with an intended audience and approximates writing done in a variety of real-world settings, such as in a career or academic setting or in response to civic duty. Pieces for publication are produced for an authentic audience and purpose and are also directly relevant to students' learning. Ideally, students make decisions about audience, purpose and/or form based on their interests, experiences or inquiry. These pieces of writing are more successful when the writers pay careful attention to success criteria for writing. Teacher and/or student created rubrics may address audience/purpose, idea development, organization, word choice and conventions as well as the content of the subject matter.

Authentic Writing for Publication is writing for authentic audiences and purposes that has been taken through the complete writing process. Draper & Siegert (2010) define Writing for Publication as tasks that allow students "to negotiate (e.g., read, view, listen, taste, smell, critique) and create (e.g., write, produce, sing, act, speak) texts in discipline-appropriate ways or in ways that other members of a discipline (e.g.,

mathematicians, historians, artists) would recognize as 'correct' or 'viable.'"[1] Thus, Writing for Publication must include both reading complex disciplinary text and then writing about what is learned as a disciplinary expert might write.
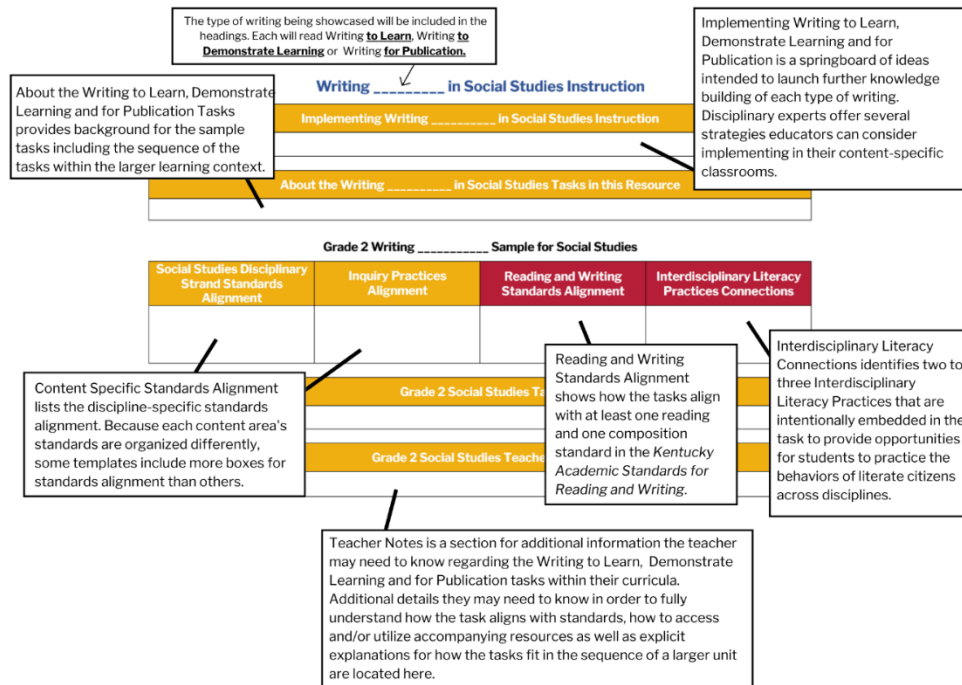
When students Write for Publication, they become subject matter experts who communicate their learning to the world, requiring them to make considerations for the needs of their audience. In addition to the content and skills of the discipline, many students may also require instruction or support in using technological tools, communication platforms or technical writing/communication strategies used in professional or career settings. Consider opportunities to collaborate with professionals outside of the field of education to provide feedback or serve as the authentic audience to prepare students to Write for Publication. For example, the grade 4 visual art sample task included in this resource asks students to write biographies of fellow student artists prior to presenting the art in a community show. Teachers may collaborate with local gallerists or artists to discuss why this type of writing matters in the field of visual art. In the high school physics sample task, students write a proposal to improve local energy infrastructure. Teachers may collaborate with local energy experts or engineers to share knowledge about their field as well as provide feedback on student proposals.

At the heart of Writing for Publication is **Interdisciplinary Literacy Practice 10: Develop a literacy identity that promotes lifelong learning.** Indeed, as students access complex texts across disciplines and apply their learning from those texts to real world problems, educators can create an environment where students are empowered as lifelong learners able to think for themselves and effectively propose solutions to complex problems. When students have opportunities to engage with relevant issues through the texts they read and write, they can engage more deeply in inquiry and ultimately can take stronger ownership of their learning.

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[1] Draper, R.J., & Siebert, D. (2010). Rethinking texts, literacies, and literacy across the curriculum. In R.J. Draper, P. Broomhead, A.P. Jensen, J.D. Nokes, & D. Siebert (Eds.), *(Re)imagining content-area literacy instruction* (pp. 20–39). New York: Teachers College Press.

How to Read the Templates

Each content area template begins broadly with a compilation of possible Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning and Writing for Publication strategies that experts in the field deem especially applicable to learning that discipline's content. The remainder of each template provides authentic content-specific sample tasks, organized into elementary and secondary levels. These sample tasks can help educators recognize the presence or absence of Writing to Learn, Writing to Demonstrate Learning or Writing for Publication instructional strategies within their adopted high-quality instructional resource (HQIR), equipping them with the knowledge to identify when the curriculum does not include adequate opportunities for students to engage in both types of writing. Because the types of texts involved in reading and writing vary across disciplines, each sample contains discipline-specific approaches each type of writing.

The type of writing being showcased will be included in the headings. Each will read Writing **to Learn**, Writing **to Demonstrate Learning** or Writing **for Publication.**

About the Writing to Learn, Demonstrate Learning and for Publication Tasks provides background for the sample tasks including the sequence of the tasks within the larger learning context.

Implementing Writing to Learn, Demonstrate Learning and for Publication is a springboard of ideas intended to launch further knowledge building of each type of writing. Disciplinary experts offer several strategies educators can consider implementing in their content-specific classrooms.

Writing _____ in Social Studies Instruction

Implementing Writing _____ in Social Studies Instruction

About the Writing _____ in Social Studies Tasks in this Resource

Grade 2 Writing _____ Sample for Social Studies

Social Studies Disciplinary Strand Standards Alignment	Inquiry Practices Alignment	Reading and Writing Standards Alignment	Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices Connections

Content Specific Standards Alignment lists the discipline-specific standards alignment. Because each content area's standards are organized differently, some templates include more boxes for standards alignment than others.

Grade 2 Social Studies Ta

Grade 2 Social Studies Teache

Reading and Writing Standards Alignment shows how the tasks align with at least one reading and one composition standard in the *Kentucky Academic Standards for Reading and Writing.*

Interdisciplinary Literacy Connections identifies two to three Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices that are intentionally embedded in the task to provide opportunities for students to practice the behaviors of literate citizens across disciplines.

Teacher Notes is a section for additional information the teacher may need to know regarding the Writing to Learn, Demonstrate Learning and for Publication tasks within their curricula. Additional details they may need to know in order to fully understand how the task aligns with standards, how to access and/or utilize accompanying resources as well as explicit explanations for how the tasks fit in the sequence of a larger unit are located here.

Writing to Learn in Reading and Writing Instruction

Writing is an expectation of English/language arts classrooms beginning in kindergarten and becoming progressively more sophisticated as the grade levels increase. Some Writing to Learn strategies may work just as well for kindergarteners as they do high schoolers while others may not be as appropriate for five- and six-year-old learners as they are for teenagers. This resource provides a clearer picture of what implementing Writing to Learn strategies in reading and writing classrooms may look like across grade levels.

Teachers must intentionally provide opportunities for students to write daily and in all content areas. Some educators may think Writing to Learn is not appropriate for kindergarten students since this age group is still learning to write; however, this is a misconception. Young children are often enthusiastic writers, so the more opportunities they are given to write, the better. Conrad (2008)[2] emphasizes that, at the word level, writing can reinforce phonological, orthographic and morphological awareness and promotes higher quality word representations in memory, improving both spelling and reading skills. The Institute for Education Sciences What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide for *Teaching Elementary Students to Be Effective Writers*[3] recommends devoting 30 minutes of kindergarten instructional time to writing and developing writing skills. For older students, the Institute for Education Sciences What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide for *Teaching Secondary Students to Write Effectively*[4] recommends engaging students in Writing to Learn to promote intentional, strategic thinking that ultimately improves writing. For elementary students, Writing to Learn builds the foundation for reading, spelling and communicating in writing, while secondary students can leverage Writing to Learn to improve their strategic thinking and, in turn, their ability to communicate effectively.

Writing in kindergarten and first grades may be drawing and/or forming letters to make words, even if the spelling is invented (words have extra or omitted vowels and consonants). Early in kindergarten, Writing to Learn may begin with prewriting motor skills such as large arm movements in the air or on the carpet and tracing or drawing shapes. These types of activities build spatial awareness and directionality, skills that help young writers produce and remember letter forms. Writing at this level also includes whole class writing experiences led by the teacher for the purpose of learning letter formation or writer's craft, followed by instances of varying combinations of teacher and students and peers sharing the responsibility and then, finally, students independently Writing to Learn (e.g. forming letters, forming words, crafting text). This process continues into first and second grades with the teacher typically being able to release more responsibility to

[2] Conrad, N. (2008). From reading to spelling and spelling to reading: Transfer goes both ways. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 100*(4), 869-878.

[3] Graham, S., Bollinger, A., Booth Olson, C., D'Aoust, C., MacArthur, C., McCutchen, D., & Olinghouse, N. (2012). *Teaching elementary school students to be effective writers: A practice guide* (NCEE 2012- 4058). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/ wwc/publications_reviews.aspx#pubsearh

[4] Graham, S., Bruch, J., Fitzgerald, J., Friedrich, L., Furgeson, J., Greene, K., Kim, J., Lyskawa, J., Olson, C.B., & Smither Wulsin, C. (2016). *Teaching secondary students to write effectively* (NCEE 2017-4002). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from the NCEE website: http://whatworks.ed.gov.

Implementing Writing to Learn in Reading and Writing Instruction

students and sooner than was possible in the previous grade. Some Writing to Learn strategies that may work well in the earliest years, even kindergarten and are likely included in comprehensive High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs), include, but are not limited to:

- Drawing shapes to reinforce letter formation (early kindergarten)
- Tracing letters in trays of sand, in whipped cream, or on sandpaper (early kindergarten)
- Handwriting:
    - Printing all upper and lowercase letters and numerals (kindergarten)
    - Legibly printing all upper and lowercase letters and numerals with correct form (Grade 1)
    - Introductory formation of all upper and lowercase cursive letters (Grade 2)
    - Legibly forming cursive letters, words and sentences with accepted norms (Grade 3)
- Reading response journals
- Lists
- Simple Graphic Organizers
- Cloze writing

Other suggested Writing to Learn strategies for reading and writing classrooms across all grade levels include:
- Learning Journal, Learning Log, Class Journal
- Double-Entry Journal/Split-Page Journal
- Reading Response Journal or Reading Responses to text-dependent questions
- Bellringers and Exit Slips either handwritten or digital via a survey or forms tool such as Google Forms
- Annotations on documents or texts (on paper and via digital forms such as Perusall or Hypothesis)
- Graphic organizers on paper and via digital forms
- Answering questions on paper or through digital means such as PearDeck, Padlet, or shared Google Docs or Slides
- Collaborative writing or documentation of thinking on graphic organizers, chart paper or through digital means

About the Writing to Learn Tasks in this Resource

The sample elementary and secondary tasks have Writing to Learn embedded in each and address RL.2 (determining theme) and C.2 (supporting an informative or explanatory claim with evidence). Reading Literature Standard 2 is intentionally chosen as the aligned reading standard for these sample tasks in order to demonstrate how Writing to Learn is one way to address the language of the standard in grades K-3, "…from a summary…".

The Grade 1 sample is from Domain 3, Lesson 5B in *CKLA*, a free, online, open-source product that earns green ratings on EdReports. In this domain, students are introduced to three themes in folktales that have been told to children for generations, using variations from different lands or countries. By listening to these stories, students will increase their vocabulary and reading comprehension skills, be exposed to different places and cultures from around the world, and learn valuable universal lessons.

In the Grade 1 example below, Writing to Learn occurs after the students have heard a folktale read aloud, seen the story's pictures and heard a summary of it read aloud. The teacher leads students through an oral discussion of the story's lesson and prompts them to recognize the key details within the summary that support the folktale's lesson. Once students engage in the oral discussion, they are prepared to use Writing to Learn to capture their thinking and deepen their understanding. Grade 1 students an opportunity to practice the skill of determining theme and citing textual evidence through explanation with an informal writing experience.

The Grade 3 example provided provides the text summary to students. Students do not need to be familiar with the full text because the summary alone has enough implicit and explicit details to determine a possible theme. In other instructional settings, the summary may be written by the class, in collaboration with the teacher or peers or even independently. Of course, in those cases, students would need to be familiar with the full text. In any case, allowing students to experience a variety of opportunities to create and respond to summaries (some written by them and some not) with special attention to the theme is encouraged. The built-in scaffolds embedded in Reading Literature Standard 2 through grade three are intended to prepare students for the demands of the standard in fourth grade and beyond when there is an intentional shift for students to analyze theme using a text rather than from a summary of the text.

The Grade 8 sample task comes from *CKLA*, a free, online, open-source product that earns green ratings on EdReports. In this unit, students explore "The Genius of the Harlem Renaissance" using a variety of informational and literary texts. The sample task models how Writing to Learn can serve as a scaffold to support students with determining and analyzing themes based on concrete textual evidence. This particular task includes three Writing to Learn opportunities through text-dependent questions, a graphic organizer and paragraph composition.

Grade 1 Writing to Learn Sample for Reading and Writing

Reading and Writing Standards Alignment	Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices Connections
RL.1.2 With prompting and support, recognize key details from a summary to demonstrate understanding of the author's message, lesson learned and/or moral.	**ILP 4:** Utilize receptive and expressive language arts to better understand self, others and the world.
RL.1.3 Describe characters, settings and major events in a story, using key details in order to make meaning of the story development.	**ILP 5:** Apply strategic practices, with scaffolding and then independently, to approach new literacy tasks.
C.1.2 Compose informative and/or explanatory texts, using a combination of drawing, dictating, writing and digital resources, to establish a topic and provide information about the topic.	

Grade 1 Reading and Writing Task

From *CKLA* Grade 1, Domain 3, Lesson 5B: *Different Lands, Similar Stories: Thumbelina* After listening to a read-aloud of the folktale "Thumbelina," students discussed its similarities to a previously studied folktale, "Tom Thumb." Additionally, literal, inferential and evaluative questions guide the students to discuss the basic elements of a story as well as how characters in different stories from around the world might have similar conflicts (or problems) that they must deal with.

The following remainder of the lesson is to be completed "later in the day."

Provide an oral summary of both folktales, "Tom Thumb" and "Thumbelina." Make a T-chart on paper, an electronic board or whiteboard as a model to compare them (see sample below). Students will also have their own T-charts to write along with the teacher. Write "Tom Thumb" on the left column and "Thumbelina" on the right. Have students describe and scribe the various adventures of each and write down what they say. The sample below provides possible student answers. Then, ask students some ways the plots are similar and some ways they are different.

Finally, explain to the students that folktales often teach lessons just like fables do. Is there a lesson, or something we can learn and use in our own lives, in this folktale? (Even small people, like children, can do great and wonderful things.) Write this down at the bottom of the T-chart in a single box that spans both sides so students can see how the lesson is the same for both folktales.

Sample T- Chart for "Tom Thumb" and "Thumbelina"

"Tom Thumb"	**"Thumbelina"**
-hides in a mouse hole	-kidnapped by a toad
-tricks a robber band	-lives on her own
-sleeps in a hayloft	-finds shelter with field mouse
-swallowed by a cow	-nurses a swallow back to health
-trapped in a wolf's mouth	

Lesson: *Even small people, like children, can do great and wonderful things.*

Grade 1 Teacher Notes

The original lesson from *CKLA* Grade 1, Domain 3, Lesson 5B: *Different Lands, Similar Stories: Thumbelina Different Lands, Similar Stories: Thumbelina* tasks only the teacher with completing a T-chart to demonstrate similarities and differences among the two folktales while students orally recognize details and supply information. While that aligns with the *Kentucky Academic Standards for Reading and Writing* in Kindergarten, RL.K.2 and C.K.2, it is imperative that we increase the rigor to align with the *KAS for Reading and Writing* in Grade 1. This is accomplished by having students actively recognize the key details from the summaries and pictures and then providing those in the Writing to Learn task.

Grade 3 Writing to Learn Sample for Reading and Writing

Reading and Writing Standards Alignment	Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices Connections
RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions, and make and support logical inferences to construct meaning from the text. **RL.3.2** Identify and cite relevant implicit and explicit information from a summary to determine theme, lesson learned and/or moral, including but not limited to fables, folktales and myths from diverse cultures. **RL.3.3** Describe characters in a story, including but not limited to their traits, motivations, actions or feelings, and how they affect the plot. **C.3.2** Compose informative and/or explanatory texts, using writing and digital resources, to examine a topic and provide information.	**ILP 2:** Employ, develop and refine schema to understand and create text. **ILP 5:** Apply strategic practices, with scaffolding and then independently, to approach new literacy tasks.

Grade 3 Reading and Writing Task
From *EL Education* Grade 3: Module 1 Unit 1: Lesson 5 Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Rain School* **How this lesson builds on previous work** In Lesson 4, students read *Rain School* for gist and to recount the story using their Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story Note-Catcher. In this lesson, they complete a close read to better understand how the central message, lesson, or moral is conveyed through the details in the text.

Close Reading: *Rain School*, **Pages 5–13**

- Remind students that in the previous lesson, they read *Rain School* for gist and to recount what happens in the story.
- Invite students to retrieve their copy of *Rain School* and their **Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story Note-Catcher:** *Rain School*.
- Move students into predetermined pairs and invite them to label themselves partner A and partner B.
- Explain that students are going to recount the story to their partner using their note-catcher. Give them 2 minutes to look through their book and note-catcher and to think silently.
- Tell students that each partner will have 1 minute to recount the story and that partner B will go first.
- Invite partner B to begin sharing.
- After 1 minute, invite students to switch roles.
- Refocus students whole group.
- Invite students to Think-Pair-Share, leaving adequate time for each partner to think, ask the question to their partner, and partner share:
  - **"What message or lesson do you think the author wants you to learn or take away from this story? What details make you think that?"** (Responses will vary, but may include: **Education and learning are important enough for students to build a school to be able to learn.**)
- If productive, use a Goal 1 Conversation Cue to encourage students to expand the conversation about the message and how the details convey it:
  - **"Can you say more about that?"** (Responses will vary.)
- Invite students to revisit the lesson or message that they underlined on their **Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story Note-Catcher** in the previous lesson.
- Distribute the **Close Read Note-Catcher:** *Rain School* and read aloud each of the boxes.
- Focus students on the message recorded in the box at the top and explain that throughout this close read, they will identify details from an excerpt of the text that help to convey, or communicate, this message. Tell students that they will record notes on this note-catcher, and that notes help them remember their thinking and do not have to be full sentences.
- Tell students you are going to guide them through this close read. Some of the questions will be discussed as a whole group, and others will be discussed with a partner.
- Guide students through the close read using the **Close Reading Guide:** *Rain School* **(for teacher reference)**.

Reading for Gist and
Recounting the Story: *Rain School*

(Example, for Teacher Reference)

RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3

Overcoming Challenges in _____*Rain School*_____(text) Author _____*James Rumford*_____	
Somebody … (character)	*Thomas*
in … (setting)	*Chad*
wanted … (motivation)	*to go to school to learn*
but … (challenge)	*There was no school.*
so … (solution)	*The teacher and children built the school as part of their learning before they learned to read and write.*

1. **Message/Lesson/Moral: What is one idea the author wants you to take away from this book?** Underline the answer you think best answers the question.

   A. <u>When working to overcome challenges, we can learn new things.</u>

   B. Rain can destroy buildings that took a long time to build, and it takes a long time to build them again.

   C. Older children should always work harder than younger children.

Close Read Note-catcher: *Rain School*

(Example, for Teacher Reference)

RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3

Lesson/message/moral: When working to overcome challenges, we can learn new things.	
Detail from the text	**How does it help communicate the lesson/message/moral?**
1. The teacher tells them they will build the school and that will be the first lesson.	*By calling it a lesson, the teacher is explaining that they will learn something.*
2. Thomas learns to make mud bricks and dry them in the sun.	*Thomas is learning building skills while overcoming the challenge.*
3. Thomas learns to build mud walls and mud desks.	*Thomas is learning building skills while overcoming the challenge.*
4. Thomas learns to build a roof from grass and saplings.	*Thomas is learning building skills while overcoming the challenge.*

Grade 3 Reading and Writing Teacher Notes

Students complete a close read of pages 5–13 of *Rain School* to better understand the challenges faced and how they were overcome (RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3). Continue to ensure students understand that although these are the challenges faced by Thomas and some students in Chad, not all children in Chad have the same experience. There is an option for students to use manipulatives such as play-dough and drinking straws to build a model school with a roof during the close read.

The close reading in this lesson is mostly teacher-led, so all students work at the pace the teacher sets, with support where necessary. Consider inviting students who need an extension opportunity to be peer coaches.

Recall that this story is set in Chad, it isn't a fable, folktale, or myth from another culture.

Grade 8 Writing to Learn Sample for Reading and Writing

Reading and Writing Standards Alignment	Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices Connections
RL.8.2: Determine themes of a text, and analyze how they are developed through relationships of characters, setting and plot, citing textual evidence, paraphrasing or summarizing. **C.8.2:** Compose informative and/or explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts and information through the selection, organization and analysis of relevant content.	**ILP 5:** Apply strategic practices, with scaffolding and then independently, to approach new literacy tasks. **ILP 9:** Apply high level cognitive processes to think deeply and critically about a text.

Grade 8 Reading and Writing Task

From *Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)* Grade 8, Unit 4, Lesson 3: The Genius of the Harlem Renaissance

How this lesson builds on previous work:

Grade 8 Reading and Writing Task

In Lesson 2, students read "On Passing—How Some African Americans Dealt with Life in Segregated America" and "The Paradox of Color" by Walter White. Students were asked to cite examples from these texts to describe instances of racial prejudice from both the past and present. This reading and text-based writing engaged students in **RI.8.1** as well as **RI.8.9** while also building essential knowledge to read excerpts from the novel *Passing* by Nella Larsen.

Three Writing to Learn Supports within the Lesson:

The text below represents a summary of this lesson. To access each writing task, open CKLA Grade 8, Unit 4 materials. CKLA is a green-rated, open-source high-quality instructional resource. Given the qualitative complexity of the text, the materials provide three opportunities for students to Write to Learn:

1. **Text-Dependent Questions:** As students read *Passing* by Nella Larsen, they are asked to write responses to text-dependent questions including, but not limited to, the following:

    a. How was passing potentially different for men and women?

    b. What does Clare's sitting room suggest about her life?

    c. Given what you know about the historical context, what do you think about Irene's decision not to tell Jack she's Black?

2. **Graphic Organizer:** Once students have finished reading the text and engaging with text-dependent questions, students are given an opportunity to Write to Learn more critically. The T-chart below asks students to cite evidence from the passage to informally engage with a broader thematic question: "What are the advantages and disadvantages of passing?" See the excerpt from CKLA's materials below as an example.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

3.3 ACTIVITY PAGE

Advantages and Disadvantages of Passing

Complete the T-chart below. On one side, list advantages of passing, and on the other side, list disadvantages. Use what you read in Passing to complete the chart.

Advantages	Disadvantages

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3. **Paragraph Composition:** Once students have had an opportunity to explore the theme of passing more broadly, they are given an opportunity to Write to Learn in a composed paragraph consolidating their thinking from the text-dependent questions and graphic organizer by responding to the following prompt: "Write one or two paragraphs about Larsen's portrayal of racial passing. What overall statement does Larsen seem to make?"

Grade 8 Reading and Writing Teacher Notes

CKLA is free, online, open-source product that earns green ratings on EdReports. Because of the complexity of the included texts, the resource provides three opportunities for students to Write to Learn about *Passing* by Nella Larsen. The knowledge demands of racial interactions in the 1920s and 1930s along with the language demands of a text written in 1929 demonstrate a need for students to have multiple supports. Therefore, students have three informal writing tasks to work towards understanding the complexity of the themes within the text (RL.8.2).

Note that all students deserve access to complex, grade-level texts and content. Writing to Learn through text-dependent questions, graphic organizers and paragraph composition provides students multiple scaffolds to comprehend and analyze a complex text (ILP 5). Additionally, as each task becomes progressively more analytical and cognitively challenging, students have more opportunities to refer back to previous Writing to Learn tasks to check, modify or consolidate their thinking about the themes presented. Note that none of the Writing to Learn tasks change the complexity of the text itself; instead, each task serves as a bridge to support students with content, comprehension and analysis.