



Understanding the Standards – Types of Writing

Argumentative: This category has been given special emphasis in the standards because of its importance in college and career readiness. Argument requires the writer to present a claim or point of view, logically with strong evidence. In elementary grades, students are asked to state their opinion and then give reasons for it. In upper grades, students are required to present both sides of the argument and then explain why their position is the superior one. Argument is often confused with persuasion, which uses a variety of appeals to try to convince an audience to agree with the writer. An appeal to emotion is often a tool used in persuasive writing. Persuasion is a type of argumentative writing, but the focus of the standards is the scholarly application of argument, rather than that of persuasion.

Informative/Explanatory: The purpose of these two types is to help a reader understand a topic. In the elementary grades, this might include answers to “Why” questions, such as “Why do animals hibernate?” In upper grades, this category includes expository writing, the purpose of which is to expose meaning. The list below includes some of the other types of informative/explanatory writing.

- Compare/contrast
- Cause-and-effect
- Problem/Solution
- How-to
- Summary
- Expository
- Research
- Technical writing

Narrative: Narrative is another word for “story” and can be either fiction or non-fiction. This writing always tells a story and always includes the concept of time passing. The list below includes some examples of narrative writing:

- Short story
- Novel
- Biography
- Autobiography
- Folklore (legend, myth, folktale, fable)
- Personal narrative

For more information, see http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf