

## WRITING A BUSINESS RELATED THEME

(May be used with the assessment developed for Standard 3A.I)

### Performance Standard 3B.I

Each student will write a theme on a business related topic chosen by the teacher or selected through a class activity such as brainstorming. The paper will be graded for organization, content and mechanics using the ISAT Writing Rubric; and the results will be totaled to determine the student's performance accordingly:

- *Focusing the paper:* develop an opening (may or may not include specific preview) through the use of effective strategies (e.g., anecdotes, quotations, definitions, personal appeals); develop the Focus inductively; write purposefully; maintain logic throughout; develop effective closing which relates to the opening and unifies the writing (e.g., invite exploration, raise relevant questions).
- *Supporting major points:* develop and support points through specific detail; use multiple strategies (e.g., explanation, evidence and example); enhance specificity through word choice.
- *Organizing the paper:* organize structure in a clear, appropriate and effective manner; organize paragraphs appropriately and purposefully\*; demonstrate coherence and cohesion with effective and varied devices; present and interrelate points; produce cohesion through varied sentence structure and word choice.
- *Using conventions:* demonstrate mastery of sentence construction, basic subject/verb agreement and basic punctuation and capitalization; use few invented spellings of uncommon words; evidence few major errors in proportion to amount written.
- *Developing a well-integrated paper:* develop for grade level; develop Focus; develop Support; identify and develop lines of reasoning throughout.

### Procedures

1. ***In order to compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences (3B)***, students should experience sufficient learning opportunities to develop the following:
  - Use writing process of prewriting, drafting, revision, editing and publication to produce work.
  - Compose a clear thesis/claim that contains the main idea in an essay.
  - Defend word and/or technique choice appropriate for specific audiences.
  - Evaluate and use figurative language.In the business world, it is very important that all communication is written concisely using proper spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure. This assessment meets the Illinois Workplace Skills D4 (Communicating on the Job/Prepare written communication) and K1 (Demonstrating Technological Literacy/Demonstrate basic keyboarding skills). This assessment also meets the Administrative Support occupational skill standard #58 (Information Processing Activities/Key, process, print and store text and data information using integrated software) and #66 (Word Processing/Key, print and store business reports and manuscripts from legible longhand or edited rough draft).
2. Have students review and discuss the assessment task and how the rubric will be used to evaluate their work.
3. Each business student will be familiar with the rules of grammar and their application to written English, particularly as they are applied under the ISAT Writing Rubric.
4. Each business student will be familiar with the techniques of editing and proofreading.
5. Each student will be familiar with the format for the finished document.
6. Prior to the assessment, each student will have written several practice themes to develop familiarity with drafting, editing/proofreading and formatting techniques.
7. Assign the writing of a persuasive/expository theme. The topic may be teacher-selected, the class may brainstorm a topic or the sample topic (included) may be used.
8. Each student will be given time to revise, proofread and edit his/her work before submitting it for evaluation.
9. Evaluate each student's performance using the ISAT Writing Rubric. Add each student's scores to determine the performance level.

**Examples of Student Work**

- [Meets](#)
- [Exceeds](#)

**Time Requirements**

- One class period for writing the draft of the theme
- One class period to revise, edit and format it

**Resources**

- Writing materials, including available technology
- Copies of the writing prompt
- Writing Rubric

## THE CONTRACT DISPUTE

### Sample Writing Prompt:

Select one of the court cases we have recently studied relative to a contract dispute. In this assessment you are to analyze a contract dispute between parties. What you are looking for is the subject of the contract dispute, the position of each person and any points which each one raised in defense of his/her position. Begin by listing the details here:

NAMES OF PARTICIPANTS:

SUBJECT OF THE CONTRACT DISPUTE:

POSITION OF THE FIRST PLAINTIFF:

POSITION OF THE SECOND DEFENDANT:

NUMBER OF OBSERVERS:

NAMES OF ANYONE WHO JOINED THE DISPUTE AND THEIR POSITION ON THE ISSUE:

Now write your description of the contract dispute, citing the information you recorded above in the appropriate places so your reader can clearly understand the reason(s) for the dispute, the respective positions of the plaintiff and defendant and the outcome of the case. Your conclusion should identify disposition of the case and why the judge made that decision. If you have any information about the consequences or results of the dispute, it should be included to give the reader a good idea of the final outcome.

## THE CONTRACT DISPUTE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

- Exceeds standard (must receive 28 – 32 total points)       Approaches standard (must receive 15 – 20 total points)  
 Meets standard (must receive 21 – 27 total points)       Begins standard or absent (receives 6 – 14 total points)

	FOCUS	SUPPORT	ORGANIZATION	CONVENTIONS	INTEGRATION
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective opening (may or may not include specific preview) which displays sophistication through the use of anecdotes, quotations, definitions, personal appeals or other effective strategies; may develop the focus inductively.</li> <li>Writing is purposeful with logic maintained throughout.</li> <li>Effective closing which relates to opening and unifies the writing (may invite exploration, raise relevant questions or use other devices/ideas).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All major points fully developed and supported evenly by specific detail throughout the paper.</li> <li>Extensive, in-depth development of support using multiple strategies (e.g., explanation, evidence and example).</li> <li>Word choice enhances specificity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is clear, appropriate and effective.</li> <li>All paragraphs are appropriate and purposeful.*</li> <li>Coherence and cohesion are demonstrated throughout with effective and varied devices.</li> <li>All points logically presented and interrelated.</li> <li>Varied sentence structure and word choice produce cohesion.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully developed for grade level.</li> <li>Clear and purposeful focus; in-depth, balanced support; lines of reasoning identified and developed coherently and cohesively throughout.</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly sets purpose of paper through thematic introduction, specific preview or successful, more sophisticated introduction; may develop the focus inductively.</li> <li>Maintains clear position/logic throughout that advance purpose of paper.</li> <li>Effective closing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All major points developed evenly by specific detail (to the same degree of specificity).</li> <li>Most support developed through multiple strategies (e.g., explanation, evidence and example).</li> <li>Word choice enhances specificity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is clear and appropriate to purpose.</li> <li>All points are appropriately paragraphed.*</li> <li>Coherence and cohesion are demonstrated by effective and varied transitions and/or other devices.</li> <li>All points are logically presented and interrelated.</li> <li>Varied sentence structure and word choice produce cohesion.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed for grade level.</li> <li>All features are developed but not equally well developed throughout.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly sets purpose of paper through thematic introduction or specific preview.</li> <li>May attempt a more sophisticated introduction (with varying degrees of success).</li> <li>If previewed, paper develops only previewed points.</li> <li>Maintains clear, logical subject/position.</li> <li>Clear closing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most major points developed by specific detail.</li> <li>All key points supported, some key points may be more developed than others (not even or balanced).</li> <li>Word choice may enhance specificity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is clear.</li> <li>Most major points appropriately paragraphed.*</li> <li>Coherence (paragraph to paragraph) and cohesion (sentence to sentence) demonstrated with appropriate transitions and/or other devices; a variety of transitional devices may be present in more developed essays.</li> <li>Most points logically presented and organized.</li> <li>Some varied sentence structure and word choice produce cohesion.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bare-bones-developed paper for grade level.</li> <li>Simple and clear, presents nothing more than the essentials.</li> <li>Limited depth.</li> </ul>

	<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>SUPPORT</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<b>INTEGRATION</b>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject/position (or issue) identified by only brief, general opening statement or established somewhere in the paper.</li> <li>If previewed, paper develops more or fewer points than previewed.</li> <li>Minor focus drift or lapses in logic (not really separate ideas – repetitious).</li> <li>Closing is absent or only a verbatim reiteration of the introduction.</li> <li>Lacks sufficiency to demonstrate a developed focus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some main points are developed by specific detail (e.g., second-order ideas beyond major point), some may be general.</li> <li>Some elaboration of key points but lacks depth.</li> <li>Lacks sufficiency to demonstrate developed support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is evident.</li> <li>May have inappropriate or intrusive transitions that disrupt the progression of ideas (e.g., “Firstly,” “Secondly,” “Lastly” used within paragraphs).</li> <li>Some major points appropriately paragraphed.*</li> <li>Has coherence but lacks cohesion.</li> <li>May have a minor digression.</li> <li>May lack sufficiency to demonstrate developed organization.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially developed.</li> <li>Some (or one) of the feature(s) may not be sufficiently formed, but all are present.</li> <li>Inference is usually required.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject/position is vague or prompt-dependent; may launch with no unifying statement anywhere or repeats prompt or a portion of it as the only focusing statement.</li> <li>Unrelated or illogical ideas that drift from focus; paper may consist mostly of repetitions and redundancies.</li> <li>Off-mode response that does NOT serve persuasive/expository purpose.</li> <li>Multiple subjects/positions without a unifying umbrella statement.</li> <li>May be insufficient writing to determine that subject/position (or issue) can be sustained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most support is general or consists of repetition/redundancy.</li> <li>Simple list of specifics that may have some extensions.</li> <li>May be insufficient writing to determine that the support can be maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is noticeable, but the reader must infer it.</li> <li>Limited evidence of appropriate paragraphing.*</li> <li>Little structure within paragraphs (e.g., little purposeful ordering of sentences).</li> <li>Lacks appropriate persuasive or expository structure.</li> <li>May have a major digression.</li> <li>May be insufficient writing to determine that organization can be sustained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mastery of sentence construction.</li> <li>Very few run-ons or fragments in proportion to amount written.</li> <li>Mastery of verb tense and subject/verb agreement.</li> <li>Correct use of pronouns.</li> <li>Mastery of punctuation/capitalization.</li> <li>Few minor and very few major errors in proportion to amount written.**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempts to address the assignment, but only rudiments of techniques for forming focus, support and organization can be detected.</li> <li>Some confusion and/or disjointedness.</li> <li>Lacks appropriate persuasive or expository structure.</li> <li>May be insufficient writing to determine that features can be maintained.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject/position (or issue) is unclear.</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support may lack clarity.</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure is attempted; the reader must work hard to infer it.</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfill the assignment, barely deals with the topic or does not present most or all of the features.</li> <li>Insufficient writing to show that criteria are met.</li> </ul>

**Remember: Integration scores are to be doubled when tallying totals.**

\*A well-developed, one-paragraph paper may receive a ‘4,’ ‘5’ or ‘6.’

\*\*Convention scores will be assigned on the basis of ‘2’ for a developed score and ‘1’ for an undeveloped score.

## MAJOR AND MINOR ERRORS

### SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

#### Major Errors

- Incorrect subject/verb agreement
- Run-on(s)
- Fragment(s)
- Omitted words that interfere
- Incorrect usage
- Incorrect use of common words
- Incorrect pronoun reference
- Confusing tense shifts

#### Minor Errors

- Incorrect use of connectors between clauses
- Omitted words that do not interfere

### USAGE

#### Minor Errors

- Commas in a series, for opening or clauses
- Awkward or odd use of words/phrases, but meaning is still clear
- Homonyms (its/it's, there/their/they're, to/two/too)

### SPELLING

#### Major Errors

- Misspelled common words (same word misspelled is considered only once)

#### Minor Errors

- Inventive spellings for unusual or less frequently used words

### PARAGRAPH FORMAT

#### Major Errors

- Using titles to delineate paragraphs
- Numbering paragraphs
- Mixed or incorrect paragraph formats

#### Minor Errors

- Inconsistent separation of paragraphs

### PUNCTUATION/ CAPITALIZATION

#### Major Errors

- Omission of initial caps
- Common proper nouns
- Missing or incorrect ending punctuation
- Missing or misplaced apostrophes

#### Minor Errors

- Missing periods for abbreviations