



The purpose of these sample test materials is to orient teachers and students to the appearance of passages and prompts on paper-based accommodated B.E.S.T. Writing tests. Each spring, students in grades 4–10 are administered one text-based writing prompt for the B.E.S.T. Writing test. Students will respond to either an expository prompt or to an argumentative prompt. An example of a text-based writing prompt for each grade is available for practice. To familiarize students with the response formats, teachers may encourage students to practice with each type of prompt within a grade band.

The following B.E.S.T. Writing sample test materials are available on the Florida Statewide Assessments Portal as shown below:

Elementary Grade Band

Grade 4 - Expository

Grade 5 - Argumentative

Middle Grade Band

Grade 6 - Expository

Grade 7 - Argumentative

Grade 8 - Expository

High School Grade Band

Grade 9 - Argumentative

Grade 10 - Expository

The sample test materials are not intended to guide classroom instruction.

To offer students a variety of texts on the B.E.S.T. Writing tests, authentic and copyrighted stories, poems, and articles appear as they were originally published, as requested by the publisher and/or author. While these real-world examples do not always adhere to strict style conventions and/or grammar rules, inconsistencies among sources should not detract from students' ability to understand and answer questions about the texts.

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Writing Prompt

The arts are different types of creative activity, such as painting, music, drama, literature, and dance.

Write an expository essay about how people use the arts to express themselves.

Your expository essay must be based on this prompt and topic, and it must incorporate ideas and information found in the sources provided.

Use your best writing to complete an essay that

- is focused on your central idea;
- combines evidence from multiple sources with your own elaboration to develop your ideas;
- is organized and includes transitions within and among ideas;
- provides citations for quoted material and source ideas; and
- demonstrates correct use of grammar and language appropriate to the task.

Write your multiparagraph essay to an academic audience in the space provided.

Read the “The Arts” sources.

The Arts

Source 1: The Power of Painting

by Jason Torres

- 1 Painting has a lot of power. People everywhere use it to tell their stories. They communicate their feelings through pictures. Painting can bring together people who don't have the same experiences. It can help them understand what makes them different. It can also show them what they have in common.
- 2 Famous painters usually don't create art to become famous. They paint because it is meaningful to them. They become famous because other people relate to their art. People won't like everything artists make. Most artists think that's okay. Art is a way to express their ideas. Artists share their work hoping others will see those ideas too, or see another idea in the same art. They know it won't always happen. An artist's work may make one person sad and another person happy. As long as it makes someone feel something, it is art.
- 3 Frida Kahlo was a famous Mexican painter. She went through many struggles in her life. Her art helped her understand her difficult feelings. Frida said, “The only thing I know is that I paint because I need to, and I paint whatever passes through my head without any other consideration.” She painted many portraits of herself. Self-portraits can help artists understand and show how different life events make them feel. Art students, **historians**, and many other people spend a lot of time looking at Frida's art. Sometimes they have been through the same events as she painted. Sometimes they haven't. Either way, the paintings communicate emotions.
- 4 Painter Cy Thao also found art to be a helpful tool. He went to an American school but didn't speak English yet. He learned to use drawings to communicate with his classmates. He drew about his thoughts and feelings. This helped the other students have a better understanding of who he was and what was important to him. As Cy got older, he kept making art to relate to people around him. His paintings are not as famous as Frida Kahlo's. Still, they tell his story. His art matters because it brings him closer to others.

- 5 Painting and drawing aren't the only ways to show feelings with art. Art can be written, spoken, or sung. Musicians who write new songs are artists. Actors in plays and movies can be artists. However artists express themselves, their art has the power to connect people in ways that simply talking cannot always do. Art is powerful because it brings people together, and because anyone can be an artist.

Glossary

historians: people who study and write about history

"The Power of Painting" by Jason Torres. Written for educational purposes.

Source 2: A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words . . . and So Are a Dance, and a Song, and . . .

by Annabel Wildrick

- 6 How many ways are there to tell a story? Let's start with two: spoken words and written words. But did you know that stories can also be told through other forms of art? Have you ever heard the expression, "A picture is worth a thousand words"? In fact, many paintings, drawings, and photographs tell stories. . . .
- 7 What about dance? Many dancers tell stories with their bodies. As they move, they can express happiness, pain, sadness, excitement, and any other emotions. Some stories are told by individual dancers. Other stories are told by pairs or groups of dancers performing together.
- 8 With dance usually comes music, which can help tell the story. Of course, music often tells a story on its own. Some music—love songs, for example—have words that make the story obvious. Other music is instrumental, which means it has no words. This kind of music can tell stories just as well as music with words can. As you listen, you can feel the story that the music is telling. The fascinating thing about

instrumental music is that the story can change depending on how you are feeling when you listen to it. The same song might make you feel scared one day and excited another day.

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Source 3: Silent Dance: Dancing with the Deaf

by Nancy Bo Flood

- 9 You don't have to hear in order to dance. Many kids who are deaf love to move, twist, and turn with the music—they feel the beat. Like anyone else, they can become dancers—modern, ballet, or dancing just for the fun of it.
- 10 Zenon Dance Company in Minneapolis, Minnesota, teaches dance to deaf students. Megan Flood, a professional dancer and teacher, explains, ". . . students who are deaf often learn dancing faster than students who hear."
- 11 "Movement is part of the daily language for the deaf," Flood said. "Their talking is physical and visual. They talk with their hands and then watch . . . when the other person answers. When a hearing person starts learning to dance, it is often new and uncomfortable to show what you feel by moving your body. The deaf do this all the time. Also, the deaf watch **intensely**. Their eyes are their . . . windows to the world. . . . These skills are important 'learning to dance' skills."
- 12 So, feel that beat and . . . dance!

Glossary

intensely: carefully

Excerpt from "Silent Dance: Dancing with the Deaf" by Nancy Bo Flood, from *AppleSeeds*. Copyright © 2004 by Carus Publishing Company. Reprinted by permission of Carus Publishing Company via Copyright Clearance Center.

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A large rectangular area containing 25 horizontal lines, intended for writing or drawing.

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