



NEW MEXICO MEASURES
OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND
ACHIEVEMENT

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Released Item Booklet 2021

Writing Prompt

Support Materials

Grade 5

cognia™

In This Released Item Booklet

Writing Prompts

On the New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA) assessment, students in grades 3–8 receive one writing prompt (comprising a passage or passage set, a writing task, and other supporting information and instructions), either narrative, informative/explanatory, or opinion/argument. All three of these purposes for writing will be assessed at every grade level each year. The Common Core State Standard alignment assigned to each released writing prompt is displayed in the booklet.

There are a total of six released writing prompts, one for each of grades 3–8. There is one released item booklet per grade level, each containing one writing prompt. The writing prompts that appear in the released item booklets were among those piloted with a small sample of students in the spring of 2021. Similar writing prompts will appear in future administrations of the assessment. The writing prompts that will appear on future writing assessments may be subject to additional revision (for example, repositioning components of the prompt frame) before they appear in an operational administration and count toward a student’s score.

Stimuli

All NM-MSSA writing prompts are partnered with one to three brief text stimuli. The purpose of these passages is to “set the stage” by introducing a general topic and providing some ideas and information about it that students will draw upon when they write. The text stimuli associated with each of the released writing prompts has been included in the booklet for reference.

Student Responses and Annotations

One sample student response is provided for each possible Production of Writing score point with annotations that explain the reasoning behind the assigned score. It is important to note that the scores in each booklet are likely to have been assigned the designated score that is shown; however, a definitive identification cannot be made at this point because range-finding—the process by which New Mexico stakeholders, in conjunction with Cognia content and scoring specialists, will identify writing samples that establish the lines between score points—has not yet occurred.

If a sample response was not available for one of the score points, an annotation is included to indicate some ways in which a student response could be further developed to exhibit the characteristics of a specified score point in accordance with the scoring rubric. Reviewing the student responses and annotations within a grade band or across all grade levels will provide additional examples and insight into the expectations for student writing on the assessment.

Rubrics

There are six scoring rubrics associated with the writing prompts on the NM-MSSA writing assessment. These are distinct for each grade band (3–5 and 6–8) and purpose for writing (Narrative, Informative/Explanatory, and Opinion or Argument). The released writing prompt in each booklet is shown with its associated rubric.

Similar to the writing prompts, the scoring rubrics that are shown are currently considered provisional and may undergo further refinement prior to use with a later administration.

For questions about the New Mexico writing assessment, additional information is available at https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/11/NM-MSSA_Writing-Assessment-Resources-for-Teachers.pdf

You are now going to read two short passages and respond to a writing task. First, read the following passages about murals.

Passage 1

Murals

What Are Murals?

- 1 A mural is a painting made directly on a wall or building. The word mural comes from the Latin word murus, which means “wall.” The earliest known murals are cave paintings. The murals in Chauvet Cave in southern France were painted in 30,000 BC! Some of the most well-preserved murals are found in the Egyptian tombs. The dry desert climate of Egypt helped preserve the ancient wall paintings.
- 2 Over time, murals have decorated the inside and outside of many buildings, such as palaces, temples, tombs, museums, libraries, and churches. The purpose of murals, whether ancient or new, is to paint a picture of life. That life comes from stories, beliefs, dreams, and the desire to create change in the world.

How Artists Paint Murals

- 3 Artists who paint murals know how to paint on buildings. There are different ways to do this. One method is fresco painting. In fresco, the painter first applies plaster to walls or ceilings. Then the painter mixes water with different colored dyes and paints it on the wet plaster. As the air dries the paint, it causes a chemical change. The dyes become “fixed” into the plaster.
- 4 Other paints that are used in mural paintings include tempera, oil, and acrylic. Many different tools can be used to apply the paint, including brushes, rollers, airbrushes, and spray cans. Sometimes murals are given a coat of varnish, which is a clear, hard liquid that protects the paint from the sun’s rays and surface damage.
- 5 Artists are now using digital techniques to create mural paintings. These murals are either painted or printed onto plastic and then attached to a surface.

Why Murals Are Important

- 6 Murals help make neighborhoods beautiful places in which to live or to visit. Murals add color to the buildings and walls that would otherwise go unnoticed. They bring new local businesses and attract tourists. Murals encourage people to slow down and take in the beauty of their surroundings. They also create important conversations and can make us think. They can create discussion around a subject or community issue through what they show. Murals are important because they bring art to the public and make people more aware of art.

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Carol M. Highsmith / Library of Congress

"Murals" © 2020 Cognia, Inc.

Passage 2

A Mural for the Community

- 1 The city council of Silver City, New Mexico, wants to have a mural painted on the side of a local building on the town’s main street. They are considering two ideas.
- 2 The first idea was developed by local businesses. The mural would look like a giant postcard with the message “Greetings from Silver City.” The words “Silver City” would be printed in large letters. Pictures would be placed inside the letters. The pictures would show the amazing things that can be found in Silver City and New Mexico. The mural would be part of a series of postcard murals that is being created across the United States.
- 3 The mural would be similar in style to the Albuquerque postcard mural. The Silver City pictures would highlight the Gila National Forest, Billy the Kid, Old West settlers, Native American people, the yucca, red and green chiles, the Gila River, pancake cactus, and the roadrunner. The city council thinks the postcard idea will help local businesses by attracting tourists to the downtown area.



Patrik Urban / Alamy Stock Photo
Postcard mural in Albuquerque

- 4 The second idea was developed by a local after-school program. The mural would be a tree with handprints for the leaves. Every young person in the community would have the opportunity to put their handprint on the mural. The handprints would be in lots of different colors. A message written under the tree would say, “These hands hold the future.”

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- 5 The members of the after-school program think the tree idea would draw attention to the need for hope in the community. It would also allow young people to be a part of the mural. The mural would bring color to the downtown area. Families and others would travel to see the mural, which would help local businesses.



National Geographic Image Collection / Alamy Stock Photo

Example of a tree mural

"A Mural for the Community" © 2020 Cogna, Inc.

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Alignment
Standard: W.05.01

1. Now read the writing task and draft a response. As you write, think about what makes your writing the best it can be.

My Best Writing

Stays on topic and pays attention to all parts of the writing task
Includes details and examples to support ideas
Is clearly organized
Makes word choices that are well suited to the task
Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences with correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

Writing Task

You have just read an article about murals and an article about a city council decision regarding two murals.

Suppose the city council of Silver City will hold a town meeting to decide which mural, the postcard mural or the tree mural, should be painted on the side of a downtown area building. The council is inviting students to help make the decision.

Write a letter to the Silver City city council giving your opinion about which mural would be a better fit for the community and why. Use ideas from what you read, along with your own ideas, to support your opinion.

Today you will be writing an opinion text. When you write an opinion, you

- tell others your opinion about a topic.
- gather and present reasons for your opinion.
- use specific facts, examples, and details to support those reasons.

After you have read the passages, and before you begin writing, think about

- what ideas in the passages you read led you to your opinion about the mural.
- what you already know about the topic that supports your opinion.
- how you might respond to ideas that support a different opinion.

Now write your response in the space provided.

Production of Writing: NM-MSSA Opinion Writing Rubric (Grades 3-5)			
	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2
Development/ Content	<p>The Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that fully addresses the topic. Substantially supports the opinion with consistently pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. Establishes and consistently maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are consistently grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic clearly and provides a concluding statement or section consistently related to the opinion presented. Consistently demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that generally addresses the topic. Generally supports the opinion with mostly pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. Establishes and generally maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are generally grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section generally related to the opinion presented. Generally demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. Often uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that partially addresses the topic. Partially supports the opinion with some pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. Attempts to establish and partially maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are only sometimes grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section partially related to the opinion presented. Sometimes demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. Sometimes uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons.
Organization/ Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that fully addresses the topic. Substantially supports the opinion with consistently pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. Establishes and consistently maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are consistently grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic clearly and provides a concluding statement or section consistently related to the opinion presented. Consistently demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that generally addresses the topic. Generally supports the opinion with mostly pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. Establishes and generally maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are generally grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section generally related to the opinion presented. Generally demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that partially addresses the topic. Partially supports the opinion with some pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. Attempts to establish and partially maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are only sometimes grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section partially related to the opinion presented. Sometimes demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that only minimally addresses the topic or does not explicitly express an opinion. Minimally supports the opinion with few pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. May attempt to establish but does not maintain an organizational plan; related ideas are rarely grouped/not grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. May be missing an introduction and/or a concluding statement or section that is related to the opinion presented. Rarely demonstrates/does not demonstrate any effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. Rarely uses/does not use precise language or varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons.

Use of Conventions: NM-MSSA Conventions Rubric (Grades 3-8)		
	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
Score Point 3		
The Writing:		
Grammar/ Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English grammar and usage.
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have minor or infrequent errors that do not interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors or patterns of errors that somewhat interfere with meaning or confuse the reader.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English grammar and usage. Demonstrates little command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors that interfere with meaning or confuse the reader.

Grade 5

Score Point 3+;3

Dear Council of Silver City,

Do you know what a mural is painted for? Well, a mural is painted to show tourists and local people in the community something that you believe in, you dream of, and the desire to create a change in the world. You can paint anything you want to show the community. I think you should paint a picture of something that tells something like a story. The mural I think you should paint, is the giant post card.

I think you should paint the postcard mural because you can add important pictures inside of the giant letters.. Since we are in New Mexico, I think you should paint Billy the Kid (one of the most famous New Mexican outlaws), the Gila National Forest and river, the Zia Symbol, red and green chile strings, the Saguaro cactus, the roadrunner, Native Americans, Old West settlers and pancake cactus. You should paint these symbols because they are important to New Mexico.

Another reason I think you should paint the postcard mural is because it can become a ``tourist trap`` and small and local businesses can get more business. I think the mural will attract tourists to the community to admire the mural and to give more businesses more customers. The mural can be a little thing with a large impact and meaning.

The last reason I think the postcard mural would be the best one is because it can tell a very important story. Each letter can have a different picture painted inside of them and each picture will tell a different story about a different part of history. For example, if there is a picture of Billy the Kid, that could tell the story of one of the most famous New Mexican outlaws and the story of the Lincoln county war in the mid to late 1800's.

So, in conclusion, I think the postcard mural is the best painting because you can add important pictures, it can be a ``tourist trap`` and help the community, and the pictures can tell the story of your community and/or state. Although this is my choice for the mural it doesn't mean that it has to be other people's choices.

ANNOTATIONS

Production of Writing: 3+

An engaging introduction clearly states the opinion; however, the concluding paragraph is not as focused as it could be. It clearly restates the reasons for the writer's opinions (which is one way to conclude an opinion piece), but then ends with a differing point of view rather than a strong concluding statement. Some of the language in the response engages the audience ("The mural can be a little thing with a large impact and meaning.") and transitions logically to move the reader through the letter. However, paragraphs two and four are too similar. The idea of "important pictures" is developed with the inclusion of relevant details but is not further elaborated. Overall, the response generally supports an opinion about the postcard mural in a generally organized letter.

Use of Conventions: 3

The response shows general command of standard English grammar and usage. Minor errors (such as "people's choices") do not negatively affect meaning. A variety of punctuation skills (including use of quotation marks around 'tourist trap' and using the punctuation in "and/or") and sentence structures are shown.

A response with a score of 4 for Production of Writing should achieve a level of development with clearly stated support that substantially addresses the opinion with evidence of some more consistent or varied organizational techniques. The support might extend more by connecting some of the passage(s) ideas with the student's own thoughts, engaging the reader with more thoroughly developed reasons for selecting a mural. This would also give more opportunity to assess aspects such as vocabulary, transitions and quality of details. Although addressing an opposing opinion is not required at this grade level, if used, it should not detract from the overall effect of the letter. A sense of completeness, whether through organization, consistency in language, and/or quality of support, is often demonstrated in 4-level writing.

Grade 5

Score Point 2;2

Dear Silver City Council,

My vote is for the postcard mural. I think it should be the postcard mural because I think it would say alot about Silver City in that one mural because they said, "Pictures would be placed inside the letters. The pictures would show the amazing things that can be found in Silver City and New Mexico." As you can hear it will provide the culture of not only Silver City itself but New Mexico. Another reason I think it should be the postcard mural is because it will attract tourists. As we all know when you visit or go to a new city you are attracted to art, stores, and many more things. So most likely if there is a new guest or a person in Silver City they would be attracted to the area where there is a very big, bright, and beautiful mural. Which, that would be very good for many buisness's in that area.

So that is the reason I think it should be the postcard mural. - M

ANNOTATIONS

Production of Writing: 2

This response introduces a clear opinion in the first sentence and partially provides supporting details in later sentences, while maintaining the letter format. It attempts to integrate evidence from one of the passages with original ideas to support the opinion. Language such as "a new guest" and "very big, bright, and beautiful mural" contributes variety and precision to the response, while repeated use of the pronoun "it" and phrases like "many more things" and "would be very good" are less vivid. The response is brief and does not provide many opportunities to demonstrate logical grouping of ideas, but it does effectively cluster and link the sentences about the mural appealing to tourists.

Use of Conventions: 2

This response demonstrates partial command of standard English grammar and usage. There is some variety of sentence structure, such as "As we all know when you visit or go to a new city you are attracted to art, stores, and many more things." Although commas between clauses are lacking, other punctuation is consistent and demonstrates partial command of conventions.

Grade 5

Score Point 2;2-

Dear, Silver City Council In my opinion I think the postcard Mural should be painted on the side of the downtown area building because there is a lot of animals and plants in New Mexico. And there is a lot in the word that already tell's you about New Mexico. It also show's some of New Mexico's plants and animals. And I personally love it because it will tell vistors that New Mexico is a beatiful place, that has a lot of land and kind people who care about you. It would look great on the side of the building!! It would say Greetings from New Mexico. In big word's and it would look fantastic on the wall. It would also show the care and love from other businesses to you. The tree would look great to but it just doesn't have enough power as the postcard mural. And it represents a serios of postcard murals being created across the United State's.

ANNOTATIONS

Production of Writing: 2 (low)

This response begins as a letter but does not really sustain the letter form through the conclusion. The opinion is clearly stated in the first sentence and is sustained, if only partially supported, throughout. The organization relies on a list-like format, with reasons following a few formulas: "And I," "It would," etc. There are few specific details that provide elaboration of and support for ideas ("there is a lot of animals and plants in New Mexico"). However, the brief descriptions of the mural and the supporting reasons are connected to the opinion. The response does address a different position by considering the tree mural and even attempts to elaborate on it, though this elaboration is only partial. This response sits just above a 1 score in its attempt to integrate ideas from the passages with the opinion about the merits of a postcard mural.

Use of Conventions: 2 (low)

The response shows partial command of standard English grammar and usage. The writing contains few distracting errors. Apostrophe errors (tell's, word's, State's) appear throughout, but most other punctuation is correct. Many sentences begin with "And," showing less control than a higher-scoring response. There are also fragments, such as "In big word's and it would look fantastic on a wall." However, there is subject-verb agreement and just enough variety in sentence construction to reach a low 2.

Grade 5

Score Point 1;1

I think that they should put the tree mural up because it adds more color than a postcard, it can get people to take care of trees, and in the passage it says "Murals are important because they bring light to a problem or subject.". It allows everyone to be a part of it by putting their handprint on it, so that is why I think they should paint the tree mural.

ANNOTATIONS

Production of Writing: 1

This response expresses an opinion about the tree mural and supports it with reasons but does not provide details or support. Although stating reasons is an important step in supporting an opinion, elaboration is necessary for an opinion to be substantive and engaging. Furthermore, there is little in the response that shows control in using language to clearly advance the opinion. The response does not specify a reader ("they should"), relies heavily on the pronoun "it," and uses a repetitive structure ("I think," "it adds," "it can," "it says," "It allows," "I think"). Additionally, the response is too short to provide opportunities to demonstrate meaningful organization. Although the response has identified relevant reasons, none is developed sufficiently to demonstrate the ability to group supporting details logically.

Use of Conventions: 1

The response demonstrates little command of standard English grammar and usage. Although the spelling is accurate and there is some command of punctuation, the response is too brief to demonstrate sustained control of conventions.

Grade 5

Score Point

I think that they should put it on the downtown building because it will attract more people because I know there will be some poeple coming through there and , BOOM! They'll see it.

ANNOTATIONS

This response does not receive a score in Production of Writing or Use of Conventions. It is an insufficient amount of writing to determine its connection to the task; there is no opinion given about which mural to include, even if there is some evidence the student has read the passage(s) or prompt. In this case, the writing is also so minimal it does not begin to show awareness of letter/writing response composition as required by the task.