Evaluating and Improving Student Writing

Examining the Georgia Milestones Extended Constructed-Response Item & Resources
Module Objectives

• Explore characteristics of the extended constructed-response (narrative) item on the Georgia Milestones English Language Arts assessment

• Review the scoring philosophy for constructed response items on Georgia Milestones

• Navigate Georgia Milestones narrative writing resources
Georgia Milestones
Assessment of the Georgia Standards of Excellence

The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summative assessment that measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards.

The extended constructed-response item on the ELA test assesses a student’s ability to write a narrative. The expectation to write a narrative is reflected in standard ELAGSEW3 across all grade levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades 3-5</th>
<th>Grades 6-8</th>
<th>Ninth Grade and American Literature and Composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELAGSEW3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.</td>
<td>ELAGSEW3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</td>
<td>ELAGSEW3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</td>
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</tbody>
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Richard Woods, Georgia’s School Superintendent | Georgia Department of Education | Educating Georgia’s Future
Narrative Writing Expectations
In the Classroom and on Georgia Milestones

In the Classroom
• Multi-day writing process
• Write across content areas throughout the day
• Dynamic writing practice

On Georgia Milestones
• On-demand writing
• Time limitation
• In response to a passage-based prompt

Students are expected to write for a variety of purposes and audiences in class and on Georgia Milestones.
Extended Constructed-Response (ECR) Item

Characteristics and Scoring Philosophy
Extended Constructed-Response Item
Characteristics of the Narrative Item

• Worth four points in the Writing and Language domain
• Scored using a Four-Point Holistic Rubric
• Prompts may be based on one of the following
  • Literary passage
  • Informational passage
  • Paired passage set
Extended Constructed-Response Item

Characteristics of the Narrative Item

• Prompts vary depending on stimulus text

Examples of what students may be asked to write:
  • Write a new **beginning** or **ending** to a literary story
  • Write an **original story** based on information from an informational text
  • **Rewrite a scene** from a specific point of view
  • Write a **journal entry** describing your experience during a historical event

Note that this is not an exhaustive list of the types of prompts included on Georgia Milestones.
## Extended Constructed-Response Item

### Narrative Prompt Stimulus Passage Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade/Course</th>
<th>Assessment Guide</th>
<th>Study Guide</th>
<th>Narrative Item &amp; Scoring Sampler</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 29-30, 37)</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 28, 33)</td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL</strong> (pp. 3-21)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL PAIR</strong> (pp. 50-51, 53)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL</strong> (pp. 18-19, 23)</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 28-29, 34)</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY PAIR</strong> (pp. 3-24)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 31-32, 37)</td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL PAIR</strong> (pp. 51-52, 54)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 30-31, 37)</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 28-29, 33)</td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL PAIR</strong> (pp. 3-25)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL</strong> (pp. 55-56, 59)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY PAIR</strong> (pp. 29-30, 36)</td>
<td><strong>LITERARY</strong> (pp. 29-30, 33)</td>
<td><strong>INFORMATIONAL</strong> (pp. 3-25)</td>
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<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>INFORMATIONAL (pp. 18-19, 24)</td>
<td>LITERARY (pp. 28, 33)</td>
<td>LITERARY/INFORMATIONAL PAIR (pp. 3-25)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LITERARY (pp. 32-33, 39)</td>
<td>INFORMATIONAL (pp. 55-57, 62)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>LITERARY (pp. 30-31, 38)</td>
<td>LITERARY (pp. 28-29, 33)</td>
<td>INFORMATIONAL (pp. 3-26)</td>
</tr>
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<td>INFORMATIONAL PAIR (pp. 57-58, 61)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ninth Grade Literature</td>
<td>INFORMATIONAL (pp. 28-29, 33)</td>
<td>LITERARY (pp. 34, 37)</td>
<td>INFORMATIONAL (pp. 3-25)</td>
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<td>INFORMATIONAL PAIR (pp. 66-68, 70)</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Literature</td>
<td>LITERARY (pp. 27-29, 35)</td>
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Scoring Student Writing
Georgia Milestones Assessment Philosophy

• Students are awarded credit for what they do well.
• Students are not penalized for errors unless they permeate the response and impact or interfere with overall understanding.
• Student responses are to be viewed as first drafts and are not expected to be polished papers.
• For narrative writing, students use the text(s) as a stimulus or “launch pad” to complete their narrative response, thus allowing for individual creativity.
Two distinct narrative writing resources are available which can be used in a variety of ways during teaching and learning.

Four-Point Holistic Rubric

- In the classroom, could be used by students during peer review and utilized by teachers to assign a score to student work
- On Georgia Milestones, used by raters to score the extended constructed-response (narrative) item
- **Not available to students during the assessment**

Genre Specific Writer’s Checklist

- In the classroom, could be used by students to guide and support development of high-quality work and utilized by teachers during instruction and student conferencing
- On Georgia Milestones, used by students to compose ECR and essay responses
- **Available to students during the assessment**
Narrative Writing Resource

Four-Point Holistic Rubric
Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Purpose

• It may be utilized by teachers as an assessment tool in the classroom to score student writing throughout the year
• Acts as a guide to promote student peer reviews
• Supports and enhances teacher/student writing conferences
• Used to score narrative writing on the Milestones ELA assessment
Four-Point Holistic Rubric Characteristics

The four-point holistic rubric used to score narrative writing on the Milestones ELA assessment is comprised of a single scale.

This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on text that has been read.
Four-Point Holistic Rubric Characteristics

• The holistic rubric contains a single point scale ranging from zero to four.
• Each point value represents a qualitative description of the student’s work.
• Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content.
• The majority of the response should align to the rubric description for the score being given; however, aspects of the response may align to an adjacent score point description.
Four-Point Holistic Rubric, Grade 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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</table>
| The student’s response is a well developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus. | 4 | - Effectively establishes a situation and introduces a narrator and/or characters
- Organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally
- Effectively uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop rich, interesting experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations
- Uses a variety of words and phrases consistently to signal the sequence of events
- Uses concrete words, phrases, and sensory language consistently to convey experiences or events precisely
- Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events
- Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively
- Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning* |
| The student’s response is a complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus. | 3 | - Establishes a situation and introduces one or more characters
- Organizes events in a clear, logical order
- Uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue and description, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations
- Uses words and/or phrases to indicate sequence
- Uses words, phrases, and details to convey experiences and events
- Provides an appropriate conclusion
- Integrates some ideas and/or details from source material
- Has a few minor errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning* |
| The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on text as a stimulus. | 2 | - Introduces a vague situation and at least one character
- Organizes events in a sequence but with some gaps or ambiguity
- Attempts to use a narrative technique, such as dialogue or description, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations
- Uses occasional signal words to indicate sequence
- Uses some words or phrases inconsistently to convey experiences and events
- Provides a weak or ambiguous conclusion
- Attempts to integrate ideas or details from source material
- Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with meaning* |
| The student’s response provides evidence of an attempt to write a narrative based on text as a stimulus. | 1 | - Response is a summary of the story
- Provides a weak or minimal introduction of a situation or a character
- May be too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events
- Shows little or no attempt to use dialogue or description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations
- Uses words that are inappropriate, overly simple, or unclear
- Provides few, if any, words that convey experiences or events
- Provides a minimal or no conclusion
- May use few, if any, ideas or details from source material
- Has frequent major errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning* |
Four-Point Holistic Rubric, Grade 5

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- Uses a variety of words and phrases consistently to signal the sequence of events
- Uses concrete words, phrases, and sensory language consistently to convey experiences or events precisely
- Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events
- Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively
- Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning* |

The criteria within the holistic rubric can be categorized in three ways:

- Narrative elements
- Use of source material
- Writing conventions
**Holistic Rubric**

**Characteristics**

A four-point holistic rubric is used to score narrative writing on the Milestones ELA assessment.

- Comprised of a single scale
- Rater matches the entire piece of student work to one description on the scale
Offering a holistic education to each and every child in our state.

Narrative Writing Resource

Writer’s Checklist
Writer's Checklist (Narrative)

Purpose

• Acts as a quick guide for students to monitor their individual writing effort
• Is intended to be a broad overview of student expectations and not a comprehensive list
• Includes guidance for scoring based on the holistic rubric
• May be used as a writing tool in the classroom throughout the year
Writer’s Checklist (Narrative), Grade 5

Be sure to:

- Write a narrative response that develops a real or imagined experience.
- Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- Organize events in a clear and logical order.
  - Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to sequence the events.
- Use dialogue, description, and/or pacing to:
  - develop events.
  - show how characters respond to situations.
- Use concrete words, phrases, and sensory details to describe the events.
- Include a conclusion.
- Use ideas and/or details from the passage(s).
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
The criteria within the writer’s checklist can be categorized in three ways:

- **Narrative elements**
- **Use of source material**
- **Writing conventions**
Holistic Rubric & Writer’s Checklist, Grade 5
Narrative Elements Alignment

Holistic Rubric

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Writer’s Checklist

• Write a narrative response that develops a real or imagined experience.

• Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters.

• Organize events in a clear and logical order.
  • Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to sequence the events.

• Use dialogue, description, and/or pacing to:
  • develop events.
  • show how characters respond to situations.

• Use concrete words, phrases, and sensory details to describe the events.

• Include a conclusion.
Writer’s Checklist

Students should consult the writer’s checklist before, during, and after writing.

BEFORE
- Plan for writing

DURING
- Remember what to keep in mind while responding

AFTER
- Verify essential aspects of the writing have been clearly addressed
Conclusion

On Georgia Milestones,

• constructed responses are deemed first drafts.
• students are awarded credit for what they do well and are not penalized for errors unless they permeate the response or interfere with understanding.
• students craft a narrative in response to a passage-based prompt. Students use the text as a launch-pad to write a narrative.
• when the narrative item is included in a paired passage set, the prompt may ask students to refer to just one of the passages or both passages.
• narratives are scored using a holistic rubric.
• a checklist is available to assist students with narrative writing.
Additional Support

Resources & Professional Learning
Georgia Milestones Assessment System Resources

• Assessment Guides
• Study Guides
  ➢ Comprehensive Writing Unit inclusive of Narrative Writing
• Item & Scoring Samplers
  ➢ Stand-alone Narrative Sampler
• Writing Rubrics
• Writer’s Checklists
  ➢ Narrative Genre
English Language Arts Curriculum & Instruction Resource

Narrative Writing Professional Learning

Participants will explore resources for both interpreting and teaching the narrative writing standard.

Presenters: English Language Arts Team, Georgia Department of Education - Curriculum and Instruction

The learning can be accessed at GeorgiaStandards.org.