“What should good student writing at this grade level look like?”

The answer lies in the writing itself.

The Writing Standards in Action Project uses high quality student writing samples to illustrate what performance to grade level standards looks like—in action.

Grade 6
English Language Arts

Opinion / Argument
(Essay Written as a Spring Benchmark Sample)

Pros and Cons of Technology
Writing Sample Title: Pros and Cons of Technology

Text Type and Purpose: Opinion / Argument

Grade level/Content area: Grade 6 English Language Arts

Type of Assignment: Essay Written as a Spring Benchmark Sample

Standards Addressed: (W.6.1), (W.6.4), (W.6.9), (RI.6.1), (L.6.2), (L.6.3), (L.6.6)

See descriptions of these standards in the right column of the next page.

Highlights:

This sample of student work meets grade level standards. It demonstrates the following attributes of effective writing.

The sample:

• Organizes reasons and evidence logically to arrive by inductive reasoning at a clear claim
• Supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence
• Offers independent reasoning based on relevant evidence
• Demonstrates clear and coherent writing appropriate to the task and purpose
• Includes strategically placed rhetorical questions
• Provides a concise, effective conclusion that states the writer’s claim and hints at a course of action based on that claim
• Maintains an effective style and tone

STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

The student writing sample that follows includes standards-based commentary. The commentary found in this column describes how the writing meets the standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy (2017) and other content frameworks when applicable.

Understanding the Standards-Based Commentary

1. Grade-specific standards addressed are:
   • Listed in the column to the right of student work by strand, grade, and number (or number and letter, where applicable)
   • Marked by a colored block with a letter code, also in the column to the right of student work

   EXAMPLE: A

2. Colored arrow blocks beneath each standard in the right column:
   • Are of the same color and letter code as the block that marks the standard being addressed
   • Mark standards-based commentary related to the standard being addressed
   • Appear in alphabetical order

   EXAMPLE: A1

3. Corresponding colored arrow blocks within the text:
   • Set off sections of student work to which commentary applies
   • Do not necessarily appear in alphabetical order—but where evidence of a particular standard exists

   EXAMPLE: (begin) A1 section A1 (end)
Instructional Practices:
Unknown

Assignment Description:
This is a spring benchmark sample of the writer’s ability to produce an effective opinion/argument essay. The teacher-provided prompt asked students to consider whether advances made by modern technology have been, on the whole, helpful or harmful. Students developed and defended positions on this question, in part aided by research articles furnished by the teacher.

Intended Audience:
Teacher, parents

Time:
Unknown

Writing Process:
Unknown

Materials:
Pre-writing planning template divided into “pro” and “con” columns, pertinent research articles (not submitted with this writing sample)

Writing Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 1 (W.6.1)
Write arguments (e.g., essays, letters to the editor, advocacy speeches) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
EXAMPLE: A B C

Writing Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 4 (W.6.4)
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
EXAMPLE: D

Writing Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 9 (W.6.9)
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support written analysis, interpretation, reflection, and research, applying one or more grade 6 standards for Reading Literature or Reading Informational Text as needed.
EXAMPLE: B

Reading Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 1 (RI.6.1)
Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what a text states explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, quoting or paraphrasing as appropriate.
EXAMPLE: B

Language Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 2 (L.6.2)
Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
EXAMPLE: E

Language Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 3 (L.6.3)
Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.
EXAMPLE: E F G

Language Standards:
Grade 6, Standard 6 (L.6.6)
Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; independently research words and gather vocabulary knowledge.
EXAMPLE: G
OPINION / ARGUMENT

In this sample...

The writer uses an inductive strategy to make an effective argument and to acknowledge opposing points of view. Considerable coherence and clarity make the progression of ideas largely easy to follow. Precise general academic and domain-specific language and varied sentence constructions clarify complex ideas and create a style and tone that reflect the writer’s knowledge of the topic and enthusiasm for the claim. The sample concludes with a concise statement of the claim that crystallizes the argument and gives the claim added impact. Notwithstanding some awkward transitioning among ideas and incorrect spellings, this sample is an effective effort at persuading the reader of the wisdom the writer’s claim.

Pros and Cons of Technology

What if you were able to go up into space to see our whole world? Would you think it was big or small? Without a doubt I think you would be astonished by how huge it is! But is our world really that big? With modern technology you are able to communicate with anyone on planet earth, from India to Italy. This

Writing, Grade 6, Standard 1

A W.6.1.a

Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly in paragraphs and sections.

A1 Examples: 1 · 2

The writer exceeds grade level standards by acknowledging counter claims (Although, I will admit that technology has helped our world in so many different ways... Technology is faster, easier, and more convenient in a lot of ways).

A2 Examples: 1

The writer arrives at the sample’s claim inductively, introducing it in the final paragraph of the sample (Technology is faster, easier, and more convenient in a lot of ways, but I don’t see how it is worth hurting children).
is a common recourse that could be helpful to anyone, but is most assistaming to businessed that must communicate internationally.

Is an easier way to communicate really worth risking childrens lives to obesity and diabetes? I think its not worth it! In 2004 16% of children between the ages of 6 and 19 were obese, a number that has tripled since 1980 because of technology use. A study in Standford shows that 20% of your calorie intake per a day is in front of the TV. When you're eating many lipids while plopped on the couch, it is most likely that you are not going to burn them off. Often life threatening health concerns tag along with obesity such as, high cholesterol, asthma, social discrimination, and so much more! Are all these diseases really worth watching the final episode of
Shark Tank? Technology can't just hurt kids in health ways, but it can also play a role in doing poorly in school. When kids are used to multi-tasking all the time with Facebook open, while listening to music, while playing Temple Run, how do you think they are able to focus on school work? Technology may help academics in some ways, but I think its opened up a new world of apps and music for kids. When you are doing schoolwork on the computer, I bet it is tempting to go onto a different website to play games or check your emails. It could also be hard for you to not look up answers on Google or use a calculator. That's the problem, the we start to rely on it, and we rely on it to much.

Have you ever come face to face with the choices of hanging out with your family or texting one of your friends? Sadly...
many kids would rather text than hang out with their family.  

4 -6 year olds were asked if they rather watch TV or hang out with their dads. 54% of them said they would rather watch TV. I might be part of that 54%! The average parent only spends 3 ½ minutes a week having a meaningful conversation with their kids! That is unbelievable! This is because technology has taken over the lives of the human race!

“Bam! Bam! Boom!” Do these noises sound familiar to you? These are the sounds of a seven year old trying to murder someone on a video game. Little children are exposed to fake weapons way to much, and this could lead to bad things. A survey says at A.C. Neilson Company that once a child has finished elementary school they have encountered 8,000 murders! Believe it or not this
violence doesn’t stop there! In the USA 20-25 [murders] are shown on children shows each hour. Then, we wonder why kids are so aggressive. Although, I will admit that technology has helped our world in so many different ways from killing diseases to entertainment it has also created many problems. For example, a huge problem for kids is cyberbullying. When it is so easy to communicate with people it is hard not to encounter this. Cyberbullying is a easy way to hurt someone without getting in trouble. This is becoming a huge problem in the US. From ipads to iphone Apple is making more ways to use technology by the minute, but there is alway an expense to new things. All these devices cost a lot of money, and are very fragile.

Is an easier way to communicate really worth risking childrens lives to obesity and diabetes? I think its not worth it! In 2004 16% of children between the ages of 6 and 19 were obese, a number that has tripled since 1980 because of technology use. A study in Standford shows that 20% of your calorie intake per a day is in front of the TV... As a kid you are able to look up anything on Google. This could be a good thing and a bad thing. This can help kids get answers fast, but it could also give them wrong information and it could expose them to very inappropriate things.)
If you don’t have a case on your phone you are bound to break it! Also, overtime the speed of your device will go down. As a kid you are able to look up anything on Google. This could be a good thing and a bad thing. This can help kids get answers fast, but it could also give them wrong information and it could expose them to very inappropriate things.

Technology is faster, easier, and more convinent in a lot of ways, but I don’t see how it is worth hurting children! Its almost as if technology is setting up kids to become monsters! Are we going to let this monster be created or are we going to put a stop to it?