WRITING PROGRAM K - 12

The New Hope-Solebury School District has placed strong emphasis on the teaching of and practice of WRITING. With that philosophy and the support of our strategic plan, the Reading, English, and Language Arts Committee recommended to the Board of School Directors in the winter of 2001 that the district formalize the adoption of a writing program K-12. The Board of School Directors supported this recommendation. A new writing program developed by the GREAT SOURCE Education Group was implemented for the 2001-2002 school year. More information regarding the program can be found by accessing www.thewritesource.com.

The writing program supports both the Pennsylvania and national standards on writing and follows the philosophy of writing process. The writing program also coordinates well with the school district's reading and literature program.

Guiding Principles of the Writing Program:

- Writing is a process of exploration and discovery.
- Students need to develop fluency, clarity, and accuracy.
- Students need opportunities to write for a variety of reasons.
- Students need real audiences for their work.
- Students need positive models of good writing.
- Students can benefit greatly from daily writing.
- Students need to learn about the craft of writing.
- Writing is an important tool for learning in all subject areas.

Writing Framework of the Writing Program

The following forms of writing are stressed and developed from K -12:

**Personal Writing**
Personal writing is a lifelong skill that helps students gain confidence as writers. Journal writing provides students with the freedom to express their ideas naturally, which helps them improve their reading and writing fluency. Units on writing personal essays and autobiographies allow students to reflect upon their own experience and feelings as they become more fluent writers.

**Subject Writing**
After students have written about personal experiences, they are prepared to write about the world around them. Units devoted to subject writing range from writing news stories and eyewitness accounts to writing case studies and interview reports.

**Creative Writing**
Creative writing units allow students to use their natural storytelling abilities to write stories and poems. Poetry writing units encourage students to use language in special ways while sharing an experience or feeling.

**Persuasive Writing**
Persuasive writing units, such as writing persuasive essays, require students to research facts about a specific subject and to share that information in a written
Writing position papers and editorials helps students develop the skills to assert and defend an opinion.

**Workplace Writing**

Writing business letters, instructions, proposals, and resumes helps students appreciate the importance of clear, concise writing.

*In addition, there is a strong emphasis on narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive forms of writing from K - 12!*

**Basic Skills: Mechanics, Usage, and Grammar**

The writing program teaches basic skills - mechanics, usage, and grammar- in the context of writing. Students are given ample opportunities to practice proofreading and editing skills. The writing program, *Write Source*, emphasizes the importance of editing as part of the writing process. Teachers will link grammar instruction to writing as much as possible and use students' writing as the context for teaching grammar skills.

**Highlights of the Writing Program by Grade Level: Synopsis only!**

**Grade 1**

- The process of writing
- The forms of writing (research, story, and poetry writing)
- Reading and word study
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing

**Grade 2**

- The process of writing (traits of good writing)
- The forms of writing (research, story, and poetry writing along with rhyming poems)
- The tools of learning (using the library, using a computer, reading graphics, using graphic organizers, and taking tests)
- The Proofreader's Guide (using punctuation, checking mechanics, checking your spelling, using the right word, and checking your sentences)
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing

**Grade 3**

- The process of writing (traits of good writing re-emphasized)
- The forms of writing (research writing, writing stories and plays, and writing poems)
- The tools of learning (using the library, using the internet, using graphic organizers, taking tests)
- The Proofreader's Guide (using punctuation, checking mechanics, checking your spelling, using the right word, understanding our language)
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing
Grade 4 and 5

- The process of writing (traits of good writing re-emphasized)
- The forms of writing (multimedia computer reports, story writing, play writing, and poetry writing)
- The tools of learning (finding information using the Internet, using the library, reading and spelling skills, speaking, viewing and listening skills, thinking skills, and learning skills)
- The Proofreader's Guide (marking punctuation, editing for mechanics, checking your spelling, and using the right word)
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing

Grade 6, 7 & 8

- The process of writing (the basic elements of effective writing and the art of writing)
- The forms of writing (creative writing and workplace writing)
- The tools of learning (searching for information, using the Internet, using the library)
- Reading to learn (study-reading skills and understanding literature)
- Proofreader’s Guide
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing

Grades 9 & 10

- The process of writing
- The forms of writing (writing the research paper-MLA, writing responsibly, citing sources, sample research paper, APA research guide, and workplace writing)
- The tools of learning (searching for information using the Internet and the library, reading skills, speaking, viewing, and listening skills, and study skills)
- The Proofreader's Guide (marking punctuation, checking mechanics, using the right word, and understanding our language)
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing

Grades 11 & 12

- The writing process
- The basic elements of good writing internalized and used on a consistent basis
- All the forms of writing fully developed
- The research center for writing a research paper for high school and college, writing responsibly, MLA Documentation Style, APA Documentation Style, searching efficiently and effectively for information, using electronic sources.
- The tools for learning (taking tests, building college-level vocabulary, speaking effectively, and succeeding in college)
- The Proofreader’s Guide
- The Student Almanac and its use in writing
Assessment and Instruction

Educational research has found that learning to be a good assessor is one of the best ways to become a strong writer. In order to assess well, students must learn to recognize good writing. Students learn to assess by going through three key steps:

- Learning about the traits of effective writing. **The six traits of effective writing are: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.**
- Applying these six traits to assess a wide variety of written texts.
- Applying these six traits to their own work, first assessing for strengths and weaknesses, then revising.

Students will also be encouraged to evaluate their writing based on **rubrics.** Students' performance in writing on the **PSSA** is assessed through a specific set of rubrics. Students will be encouraged, at all levels of instruction, to use this rubric to improve their writing, whether it is narrative, persuasive, or expository.

The new writing program makes frequent use of the grade level handbooks. Each **Write Source handbook** provides instruction to help students:

- Draft, revise, and format with a computer.
- Research information on the Internet (including guidelines for citing Internet sources).
- Write e-mail messages.
- Publish on the Web.

**Support On the Web:**

**Students can also find additional support for their writing on the Write Source Web site.**

www.writesource.com

**This site includes:**

- **Writing Topics**: a grade-level specific collection of topics including ideas for writing essays, paragraphs, or journal entries.
- **Research Links**: some of the best sites on the Internet for homework help and research information.
- **Judging Sources**: helpful guidelines for evaluating the wide range of sources available on the Internet.
- **Electronic Sources**: includes both MLA Style and APA Style, with a sample APA research paper. Since the style for citing electronic sources is constantly evolving, students should refer to these pages for the latest information.
- **Publish It!**: an invitation for students to submit their work for possible publication.
- Student Models: student models of various forms of writing including longer works not in the student handbooks.
- **Multimedia Reports**: student information on planning multimedia reports.
- **Web Design**: helpful advice about how to get started building a Web site.