



North  
Cross  
School

# More Success in Writing

WRITING PROGRAM · GRADES K – 12



**At North Cross School,** we are proud of our students' success in writing. From the earliest language arts classes and continuing throughout their school years, our students are instructed in correct grammar, mechanics, and usage, and are encouraged to express their ideas effectively in well-supported compositions. We see excellent results not only in the quality and range of compositions students write for classes, but also in evidence of their success when measured against a broader field. In Lower School and Middle School, ERB scores indicate a successful level of competence in writing skills. In Upper School, many students choose AP English courses for their junior and senior years, with a high percentage qualifying for college credit and many earning the highest possible scores on the AP exams.

The English Department is fully committed to providing quality instruction in composition. It is not our goal to force creative ideas into strait-laced formulas, but to give our students command of the rules that empower them to express their ideas effectively. Instruction in composition is supported by a challenging reading curriculum which includes the 100 Books Initiative in Lower School, Summer Reading for all grades, and a wide range of assigned readings in class. It is our belief that students who read excellent works are more likely to become excellent writers.

The following pages offer an overview of our vertical plan for developing effective writing skills.

# Curriculum Components

**1 Components of Composition** identifies the grade level at which each particular component is introduced. Once introduced, each continues to be emphasized in later instruction.

**2 Modes of Discourse/Types of Composition** gives an overview of the specific types of compositions currently assigned at each grade level.

**Instruction in grammar, mechanics, usage, vocabulary, and reading** also support the development of writing skills.

## Course of Study

**Lower School** • Primary Curriculum for Grades 1 – 5: *Sadlier, Grammar Workshop, 2021*

GRADE	COMPONENTS OF COMPOSITION		MODES OF DISCOURSE/TYPES OF COMPOSITION	
K	Sentence Types		Narrative	Draw stories, identify story elements (setting, character, plot)
	Word Order in Sentences			
	Parts of Speech	Nouns, verbs		
1	Parts of Speech	Nouns (singular, plural, common, proper), verbs (present, past tenses)	Narrative	Personal narrative, identify story elements
	Paragraph Structure/Development	Main idea, time order, spatial order	Descriptive	Sensory words
2	Paragraph Structure/Development		Persuasive	Stating and supporting opinions
	Sentence Structure	Complete, simple	Narrative	Personal narrative, story
	Sentence Parts	Subject, predicate	Descriptive	Comparison/contrast
	Parts of Speech	Irregular verbs; forms of be, do, have; types of pronouns; adjectives and adverbs	Expository	Comparison/contrast, cause and effect
3	Paragraph Structure	Detail sentences	Persuasive	Paragraphs, fact/opinion
	Sentence Types	Run-ons, fragments	Narrative	Personal narrative, story (good beginning, strong ending, dialogue)
	Parts of Speech	Verbs (linking, helping, future tense)	Expository	Directions, report
	Paragraph Structure/Development	Concluding sentence, unity, transition words	Persuasive	Paragraphs, fact/opinion
4	Pre-writing Strategies	Outlining, note-taking	Descriptive	
	Parts of Speech	Types of adjectives, conjunctions	Narrative	Personal narrative
	Sentence Parts	Predicate adjectives, independent and dependent clauses	Descriptive	Focus on spatial order and sensory words
	Paragraph Structure/Development	Unity	Expository	Direction, book reviews, cause and effect
	Pre-writing strategies	Freewriting	Persuasive	Paragraphs, fact/opinion
5	Proofreading and Revising	Clarity, coherence, organization		
	Sentence Parts	Indirect objects, comparison/contrast, prepositions and their objects, verbs (transitive and intransitive)	Narrative	Personal narrative
	Paragraph Structure/Development	Cause and effect	Descriptive	Focus on sensory words
			Expository	Summary, essays, cause and effect

# Course of Study *continued*

**Middle School** • Primary Curriculum for Grades 6 – 8: *Prentice Hall Writing Coach*, 2012.

GRADE	COMPONENTS OF COMPOSITION		MODES OF DISCOURSE/TYPES OF COMPOSITION	
6	Sentence Parts	Independent/dependent clauses with subordinators, conjunctions, and relative pronouns	Narrative	Focus on setting, character, plot
	Parts of Speech	Pronouns (reflexive, intensive)	Expository	Directions/instructions, report, summary, essays, focus on introductions and conclusions
	Paragraph Structure/Development	Topic sentence/main idea, detail sentences, concluding sentences	Persuasive	Paragraphs, advertisements
7	Sentence Structure	Complex, compound/complex	Narrative	Story, biographical sketches, focus on good beginning, strong ending and dialogue
	Sentence Parts	Verbs (active/passive voice, perfect tenses), verbals (participles, gerunds, infinitives)	Descriptive Expository	Description, comparison/contrast Directions, report, summary, essays, comparison/contrast, cause and effect, focus on introductions and conclusions
8	Sentence Structure	Compound/complex, fragments/run-ons, diction/vocabulary	Descriptive Expository	Sensory detail/creativity Journals, summary, literary analysis, comparison/contrast
	Sentence Parts	Predicate adjectives, predicate nouns, conjunctions/conjunctive adverbs	Persuasive	Thesis statements, focus on stating and supporting opinions, fact/opinion, persuasive language
	Paragraph Structure	Transition words, unity/clarity/coherence		MLA-style research paper; focus on research process and note-taking, effective introductions and conclusions, using quotes effectively, proper documentation of sources (parenthetical citations, Works Cited page)
	Prewriting	Outlining, notecards, freewriting		
	Revising	Clarity (for audience, peer response), coherence, unity, organization		

**Upper School** • Primary Curriculum for Grades 9 – 12: *Prentice Hall Writing Coach*, 2012.

GRADE	COMPONENTS OF COMPOSITION		MODES OF DISCOURSE/TYPES OF COMPOSITION	
9	Sentence Parts Review	Focus on phrases/clauses	Introduce Modes of Discourse	Identify modes and recognize differences (narration, description, exposition, persuasion)
	Parts of Speech	Pronouns (reflexive, intensive)	Expository	All composition assignments (instruction focuses on audience, tone, mood, diction, difference between analysis and opinion), interpretation of literary works, compare/contrast, cause and effect, MLA-style research report
	Paragraph Structure	Focus on body paragraphs (topic sentence, supporting evidence, explanation of evidence, conclusion/transition)		
	Prewriting	Thesis recognition, outlining		

**Continued on back**

# Course of Study *continued*

**Upper School** continued • Primary Curriculum for Grades 9 – 12: *Prentice Hall Writing Coach*, 2012.

GRADE	COMPONENTS OF COMPOSITION		MODES OF DISCOURSE/TYPES OF COMPOSITION	
10	Sentence Parts Review	Focus on verbals	Expository	Literary analysis (relationship between meaning and style)
	Structure/Style	Clarity of expression, precise diction, avoiding awkward phrasing		
	Paragraph Structure	Introductory paragraph (effective thesis, various approaches), concluding paragraph (various approaches)	Persuasive	Introduce rhetorical appeals and strategies, literary interpretation (problem solution, logical flow), MLA-style research report
	Refining	Focus on self-editing		
11*	Structure/Style	Tone	Expository	Literary analysis (focus on character motivation, relationship meaning and structure)
	Paragraph Structure	Fully supported topic, cohesion	Persuasive	Literary interpretation (identify values on which claim is based, adequate support/multiple evidence), MLA-style research report
	Refining	Identifying weaknesses in argument, independent editing		
12*	Paragraph Structure	Fully supported topic, logical flow	Expository	Literary analysis (focus on plot development, impact of imagery)
			Persuasive	Literary interpretation (focus on methods of characterization), MLA-style research report (accuracy of citation and format)
	Prewriting	Clarity of thesis, full survey of possible support	Persuasive	Thesis statements, focus on stating and supporting opinions, fact/opinion, persuasive language
	Refining	Identifying weaknesses, self-editing before submission		

## Upper School: Advanced Placement (AP) English Language and Composition\*

GRADE	COMPONENTS OF COMPOSITION		MODES OF DISCOURSE/TYPES OF COMPOSITION	
11/12*	Rhetorical Skills	Appeals and strategies, types of evidence	Expository	Analysis of rhetorical essays
			Persuasive	Rhetorical essays

## Upper School: AP English Literature and Composition\*

GRADE	COMPONENTS OF COMPOSITION		MODES OF DISCOURSE/TYPES OF COMPOSITION	
11/12*	Literary Strategies		Expository	Analysis of prose and poetry, interpretation of literary works
	Interpretive Skills		Persuasive	Interpretive essays

\* Some students take AP English Language and Composition or AP English Literature and Composition in grades 11 and 12. Admission to the AP courses is partially based on evidence that the student has exhibited a high level of proficiency in composition through grade 10.



**North  
Cross  
School**

4254 Colonial Avenue  
Roanoke, VA 24018  
(540) 989-6641 • Fax: (540) 989-7299  
[www.northcross.org](http://www.northcross.org)