



Statewide Comparison of FCAT Writing¹ Mean Scores² Grades 4, 8, and 10 2000-2010

Grade 4											
Category/Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Writing to Explain	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.8	4.0	NA
Writing to Tell a Story	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.8
Grade 4 Combined ³	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.8

Grade 8											
Category/Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Writing to Explain	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.1
Writing to Convince	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.3	NA
Grade 8 Combined ³	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.1

Grade 10											
Category/Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Writing to Explain	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.8	NA	3.9	NA
Writing to Convince	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.9
Grade 10 Combined ³	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9

¹ FCAT Writing is formerly known as FCAT Writing+, Florida Writes!, and the Florida Writing Assessment Program (FWAP).

² While the Department and other experts have certified the validity of the 2010 FCAT Writing results, comparisons to previous years' writing scores should be avoided. This caution is given for two reasons. First, in 2010, each essay was scored by one rater. In previous years, two raters were used and the scores were averaged. A student could have received a half-point score, such as 4.5, whereas in 2010 no half-point scores are possible. Second, in 2010, each student within the same grade level was required to write an essay using the same mode of writing (narrative, expository, or persuasive). In previous years, there were two modes assessed at each grade level with half of the students responding to each mode. For example, the 2010 Grade 4 FCAT Writing required all students to write a narrative essay. In 2009, half of the students wrote a narrative essay, and half of the students were required to write an expository essay.

³ Mean essay score combined is the result of combining the mean scores for each mode of writing assessed. Prior to 2010, with the exception of grade 10 in 2008, two modes were assessed per grade level. In 2010, one mode was assessed per grade level.

FCAT Writing Holistic Rubrics

Description of Grade 4 Writing Scores

- 6.0:** The writing focuses on the topic, is logically organized, and includes ample development of supporting ideas or examples. It demonstrates a mature command of language, including precision in word choice. Sentences vary in structure. Conventions are generally correct.
- 5.0:** The writing focuses on the topic with adequate development of supporting ideas or examples. It has an organizational pattern, but lapses may occur. Word choice is adequate. Sentences vary in structure. Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are generally correct.
- 4.0:** The writing generally focuses on the topic, but it may contain extraneous information. An organizational pattern is evident, but lapses may occur. Some supporting ideas contain specifics and details, but others are not developed. Word choice is adequate. Sentences vary somewhat in structure, though many are simple. Knowledge of conventions is demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly.
- 3.0:** The writing generally focuses on the topic, but it may contain extraneous information. An organizational pattern has been attempted, but lapses may occur. Some of the supporting ideas or examples may not be developed. Word choice is adequate but limited. Sentences vary somewhat in structure, though many are simple. Knowledge of conventions is demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly.
- 2.0:** The writing may be slightly related to the topic or offer little relevant information and few supporting ideas or examples. There is little evidence of an organizational pattern. Word choice may be limited or immature. Sentences may be limited to simple constructions. Frequent errors may occur in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- 1.0:** The writing may only minimally address the topic because there is little or no development of supporting ideas or examples. Unrelated information may be included. No organizational pattern is evident. Ideas are usually provided through lists, and word choice is limited or immature. Frequent errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and sentence structure may impede communication.
- U:** The writing is unrelated to the assigned topic or cannot be read.

Description of Grade 8 Writing Scores

- 6.0:** The writing focuses on the topic, is logically organized, and includes substantial development of supporting ideas or examples. It demonstrates a mature command of language, including precision in word choice. Sentences vary in structure. Conventions are generally correct.
- 5.0:** The writing focuses on the topic with ample development of supporting ideas or examples. It has an organizational pattern, though lapses may occur. Word choice is mature and precise. Sentences vary in structure. Conventions are generally correct.
- 4.0:** The writing generally focuses on the topic, but it may contain extraneous information. An organizational pattern is evident, but lapses may occur. Support is adequate, but development may be uneven. Sentences sometimes vary in structure, though many are simple. Conventions are generally followed.
- 3.0:** The writing generally focuses on the topic, though it may contain extraneous information. An organizational pattern has been attempted, but lapses may occur. Some of the supporting ideas or examples may not be developed. Word choice is adequate. Sentence structure may vary, though many sentences have simple constructions. Knowledge of conventions is usually demonstrated.
- 2.0:** The writing is related to the topic but offers little relevant information and few supporting ideas or examples. There is little evidence of an organizational pattern. Word choice is limited or immature. Sentences may be limited to simple constructions. Frequent errors may occur in conventions.
- 1.0:** The writing may only minimally address the topic because there is little or no development of supporting ideas. Unrelated information may be included. An organizational pattern may not be evident. Ideas are provided through lists, and word choice is limited or immature. Frequent errors in sentence structure and conventions impede communication.
- U:** The writing is unrelated to the assigned topic or cannot be read.

Description of Grade 10 Writing Scores

- 6.0:** The writing focuses on the topic, is logically organized, and includes substantial development of supporting ideas or examples. It demonstrates a mature command of language with freshness of expression. Sentences vary in structure. Few, if any, errors occur in conventions.
- 5.0:** The writing focuses on the topic, is logically organized, and includes ample development of supporting ideas or examples. It demonstrates a mature command of language. Sentences vary in structure. Conventions are generally correct.
- 4.0:** The writing focuses on the topic, though it may contain loosely related information. An organizational pattern is apparent. Support is consistently developed, but it may lack specificity. Word choice is adequate. Sentences vary in structure. Conventions are generally correct.
- 3.0:** The writing generally focuses on the topic, though it may contain loosely related information. An organizational pattern is demonstrated. Development of the supporting ideas may be uneven. Word choice is adequate. There is some variation in sentence structure. Usage, punctuation, and spelling are generally correct.
- 2.0:** The writing addresses the topic, but it may lose focus by including extraneous information. An organizational pattern is demonstrated. Development of the supporting ideas may be nonspecific. Word choice may be limited. Errors may occur in the basic conventions.
- 1.0:** The writing addresses the topic, but it may lose focus by including extraneous and loosely related ideas. The organizational pattern is weak. Ideas are presented through lists and limited or inappropriate word choice. Frequent errors may occur in sentence construction, usage, punctuation, and spelling.
- U:** The writing is unrelated to the assigned topic or cannot be read.