

DRAFT 8/3/2009

Virginia's  
General Educational Development  
Content Standards  
Curriculum Frameworks  
*DRAFT*

**FRAMEWORKS WRITING TEAMS**

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# Language Arts, Writing

**TOPIC: USAGE****LAW.1**

The learner will apply the subject and verb number agreement rules to:

- a) choose the correct subject and verb when they are separated by a phrase or clause.
- b) choose the correct subject and verb when the verb precedes the subject in a sentence.
- c) choose the appropriate verb for a collective noun.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Some sentences have phrases or clauses that come between the subject and the verb.
- Sentences can have verbs preceding their subject.
- A collective noun usually takes a singular verb.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Identify the correct subject and verb of the sentence and make them agree in number.
- Understand that the interrupting structure does not affect the agreement rules between subject and verb.
- Recognize that inverted sentence order does not change the rule for subject/verb agreement.
- Recognize that nouns that stand for a group generally take a singular verb.

**TOPIC: USAGE****LAW.2**

The learner will apply the verb tense rules to:

- a) recognize and correct errors in verb tense.
- b) select tense using context clues.
- c) recognize and correct errors in regular and irregular verb forms.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- The verb tense indicates when in time an action takes place, either past, present, or future.
- Usually all the verbs in a sentence are in the same tense; however, different tenses must be used to indicate that actions occur at different times.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Recognize the need to use the appropriate tense of the verb to show when the action occurs.
- Understand how to use tense correctly to indicate past, present, and future actions within the context of the sentence.
- Recognize and use the correct forms of regular and irregular verbs.

**TOPIC: USAGE****LAW.3**

The learner will apply pronoun rules to:

- a) recognize and choose the correct pronouns.
- b) recognize and choose the correct subject and object pronouns.
- c) recognize and correct vague pronoun references.
- d) recognize and correct faulty agreement between pronouns and antecedents.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Pronouns stand for nouns and, like nouns, can be the subject of a verb or the object of a verb.
- Pronouns should agree with the antecedent in both number and gender.
- The antecedent of each pronoun must be clearly understood.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Choose the correct pronoun according to its function in the sentence.
- Use the pronoun that reflects the number and gender of the noun to which it refers.
- Demonstrate knowledge of pronoun and antecedent agreement.
- Correct unclear pronoun references.

**TOPIC: MECHANICS****LAW.4**

The learner will apply the capitalization rules for:

- a) proper nouns and proper adjectives.
- b) days of the week, months of the year, and seasons.
- c) titles.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Proper nouns and adjectives derived from proper nouns are always capitalized.
- General nouns such as seasons, directional words, school subjects, and titles when not connected to a name are not capitalized.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Recognize the difference between general and proper nouns and adjectives.
- Apply the rules of capitalization to determine when and when not to capitalize.

**LAW.5**

The learner will apply comma usage rules to:

- a) separate a list of items in a series.
- b) separate independent clauses joined by a conjunction.
- c) separate introductory elements from the rest of the sentence.
- d) separate non-essential appositives and parenthetical expressions from the rest of the sentence.
- e) eliminate unnecessary commas.
- f) separate nouns of direct address.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a list of three or more items joined by <i>and</i> or <i>or</i>, commas should be used between the items in the list.</li> <li>• Independent clauses joined by a conjunction require a comma before the conjunction.</li> <li>• Introductory elements, which can be single words, phrases, or dependent clauses, are usually separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.</li> <li>• Introductory phrases can be prepositional, adjectival, or adverbial.</li> <li>• An appositive is a word or phrase that renames a noun.</li> <li>• A parenthetical word or phrase interrupts a sentence but is not essential to its meaning.</li> <li>• Commas should be used only when required by a rule or when needed for clarity.</li> <li>• A word or phrase that directly addresses someone requires commas to separate it from the rest of the sentence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correctly place commas in any series of three or more items.</li> <li>• Understand the difference between dependent and independent clauses.</li> <li>• Recognize introductory elements that require the use of a comma.</li> <li>• Recognize the difference between essential and non-essential words, phrases, and clauses.</li> <li>• Demonstrate proper use of commas.</li> </ul>

**TOPIC: MECHANICS****LAW.6**

The learner will apply spelling rules to:

- a) spell singular and plural possessive nouns with the appropriate use of an apostrophe.
- b) spell possessive pronouns.
- c) identify correct use of apostrophes and contractions.
- d) differentiate between or among frequently confused homonyms.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Singular nouns and plural nouns not ending in *s* require 's to form the possessive.
- Plural nouns ending in *s* require an apostrophe to form the possessive.
- Possessive pronouns do not use apostrophes.
- When words are combined to form a contraction, an apostrophe is used to show where letters have been removed.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Spell possessive nouns and pronouns correctly using the apostrophe appropriately.
- Form contractions correctly using the apostrophe to indicate missing letters.
- Choose the correct homonym to fit the context of the sentence.

**TOPIC: SENTENCE STRUCTURE****LAW.7**

The learner will apply modifier rules to:

- a) recognize and correct fragments.
- b) recognize and correct run-ons.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- A sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence, lacking a subject or a verb, or not expressing a complete thought.
- A run-on sentence is two or more independent clauses joined together without the correct punctuation.
- Dependent clauses are not complete sentences and cannot stand alone.
- An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Correct sentence fragments by making the additions to complete the thought.
- Correct run-on sentences by use of the appropriate punctuation and/or coordinating conjunctions.

**TOPIC: SENTENCE STRUCTURE****LAW.8**

The learner will apply modifier rules to:

- a) recognize and correct misplaced modifiers.
- b) recognize and correct dangling modifiers.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- A misplaced modifier is wrongly placed within the sentence.
- Adjective modifiers will always modify the noun or pronoun to which it is closest.
- A dangling modifier has no word or phrase in the sentence that it describes.
- A dangling or a misplaced modifier seems to be describing a word or phrase other than the one it is intended to describe.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Recognize misplaced modifiers and use strategies to correct them.
- Recognize and correct a dangling modifier by rewriting the sentence so that the modifier has a noun or phrase to describe.

**TOPIC: SENTENCE STRUCTURE****LAW.9**

The learner will apply parallelism rules to:

- a) recognize and correct items in a list that lack parallel structure.
- b) recognize and correct items in a list when combinations of words, phrases and clauses are used together.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- A sentence has parallel structure when items in a list or joined by a conjunction are in the same grammatical form.
- Parallel items can be words, phrases, or clauses.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Construct items listed in a sentence or joined by a conjunction into the same grammatical form.

**TOPIC: ORGANIZATION****LAW.10**

The learner will recognize paragraph structure rules to:

- a) identify the main idea and supporting details.
- b) properly place a topic sentence in a paragraph.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- A paragraph is a group of sentences containing one main idea and a number of supporting details.
- The main idea is stated in a topic sentence, which is usually the first or last sentence in the paragraph.
- The topic sentence is general enough to address all the details in the body of the paragraph.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Write a paragraph that demonstrates an understanding of effective topic development.
- Identify the topic sentence in the paragraph.
- Place the topic sentence where it is most effective in the paragraph.

**TOPIC: ORGANIZATION****LAW.11**

The learner will recognize paragraph development rules to:

- a) determine proper placement of transitions to maintain logical flow or ideas, sentences or paragraphs.
- b) remove, revise, or edit sentences that do not contribute to the coherence of the paragraph.
- c) combine related ideas into one effective paragraph.
- d) divide documents into appropriate paragraphs.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Ideas in a paragraph must be in a coherent order.
- Details in a paragraph must support the main idea or topic.
- Transitions within the paragraph show the relationship among the ideas that support the main topic.
- A new paragraph must be begun when a different main idea is introduced.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Create a unified and logical flow of ideas within a paragraph.
- Use effective transitions to show how the details relate to each other within the paragraph.
- Eliminate or remove ideas that do not support the topic of a paragraph.
- Demonstrate an understanding of when to effectively combine or divide paragraphs.

**TOPIC: ESSAY****LAW.12**

The learner will use pre-writing strategies to:

- a) generate ideas for writing.
- b) organize ideas for writing.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Organization at the pre-writing level is an effort to select the topics the writer wishes to use to develop the essay prompt or topic.
- Pre-writing strategies are used to gather and organize ideas.
- Pre-writing strategies may include such techniques as brainstorming, outlining, or mindmapping.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Demonstrate the ability to use idea-gathering and organizing strategies.
- Recognize and use the strategies that work best for the writer's individual thinking style.

**TOPIC: ESSAY****LAW.13**

The learner will organize ideas for writing to:

- a) present a main idea that addresses the prompt.
- b) develop supporting ideas.
- c) establish a clear and logical organization.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- The main idea of the essay comes from the prompt or assigned topic.
- The writer organizes and develops the supporting ideas he has selected for the essay.
- The supporting ideas should be presented in a logical sequence so that the reader can readily follow the writer's flow of ideas.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Generate a strong main idea statement (thesis statement) that can be effectively and adequately developed into an essay.
- Write an essay that develops an assigned topic using a variety of effective supporting ideas.
- Demonstrate the understanding of when to move ideas within the essay to strengthen and more effectively organize the topic.

**TOPIC: ESSAY)****LAW.14**

The learner will develop a well-balanced essay using substantial and concrete support to:

- a) incorporate personal observations.
- b) include relevant explanations.
- c) provide specific details/examples.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- A well-balanced essay will have a number of supporting ideas that have been adequately developed.
- Supporting ideas are most effective when they are specific and personal.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Write an essay in which the supporting ideas are effectively developed.
- Demonstrate when to develop supporting ideas by example, personal experience, or relevant general knowledge.

**TOPIC: ESSAY****LAW.15**

The learner will write an essay to:

- a) demonstrate control of sentence structure.
- b) observe the conventions of Edited American English.
- c) exhibit varied and precise word choices.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- The conventions of Edited American English include: using complete sentences, spelling words correctly, using correct punctuation, and using correct grammar.
- A well-written essay incorporates a variety of sentence structures.
- Good writing requires choosing the appropriate and precise word to make the writer's point.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Write an essay using a variety of sentence structures.
- Demonstrate appropriate use of precise and effective vocabulary.
- Write an essay that reflects the conventions of Edited American English.