

Writing Curriculum Guidelines 7th-12th Grade

(revised June 2023)

Veritas Academy

Writing checklist and style format

- Have students apply writing checklist to every paper (Require the students to turn in list with papers in 7th-9th grades.).
- Use MLA as preferred style format for all papers in 7th and 8th grades. Use CMOS (Turabian) as preferred style in 9th-12th grade. Other style formats may be used as needed (e.g., APA for data presentations or science papers.)

Grammar review every year

- Review of grammar basics every year, especially 7th-9th. Focused review of particular issues and concepts as needed in 10th-12th.
- Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, phrases, clauses, different types of sentences, inverted elements, commas (Oxford), colons, semi-colons, parentheses, etc.

Composition and style review every year

- Review of principles of composition including paragraph construction, using active voice, preferring positive statements, avoiding needless words, parallel structures, etc.
- Review of principles of style including revising and rewriting, prioritizing nouns and verbs, keeping prose tight and simple, etc.
- See Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*.

Assignments

- Provide detailed instructions in writing (with rubric, expectations, directions, example, etc.) for every major essay or paper that will be typed, submitted, and counted as a paper grade.
- Rubrics will be structured to include criteria and points for the satisfaction of each criterion with the total points adding up to 100 (e.g. Format=20 points, Thesis=20 points, Grammar=20, Organization=20, Argument=20 points). Submitted papers that do not meet minimum page requirements will receive 0 points for formatting and immediately returned to the student giving them one week to resubmit a paper that meets the minimum page requirements. Failure to resubmit a paper that meets the minimum page numbers within one week will result in a 0 on the assignment.
- Formatting for ALL typed assignments shall be 12 point, Time New Roman font, double spaced lines, one-inch margins, on 8.5"x11" paper.
- Through the 10th grade all assignments submitted to the teacher (journals, quizzes, tests, etc. – everything) must be handwritten and in cursive.
- Students should be writing something that will be graded at least once a week.

History Research Papers

- Must include basic instruction about how to find and use research sources (credible sources, using the library system, local library usage, Google Scholar, identifying helpful websites – no Wikipedia, using academic search engines like JSTOR with older students, taking notes, keeping bibliography, etc.).
- 7th grade – 5-6 pages, 3-5 sources (encouragement to use all books, 2 book minimum requirement).

- 8th grade – 6-7 pages, 4-5 sources (minimum of 3 books).
- 9th grade (biography) – 7-8 pages, 5 sources (including minimum of 3 books, one article, and one website).
- 10th grade – 9-10 pages, 6-7 sources (including at least 3 books, one article, and one website).
- 11th & 12th grade history –NO research paper.
- 11th grade (junior thesis) – 12-13 pages, 8-9 source minimum (including at least 4 books, 2 articles, one website)
- 12th grade (senior thesis) – 18-20 pages, 12 source minimum, 15 maximum (at least 5 books and 5 articles)

History writing (General)

- Have students write multiple short paper/essays on a small handful of history topics.
- “Formal” Research paper (1 per year for 7th-10th grade –see above)
- Tests and Exams: All tests and exams should primarily include multiple short essay questions requiring a minimum of 3-5 sentences to answer.
- Starting 2nd semester 7th grade, tests should include some sort of multi-paragraph final essay question.
- By 9th grade, students should be writing several multiple paragraph essays as part of their history tests – incorporating facts, people, dates, and documents to discuss/analyze big ideas/movements.

Literature Papers

- Must do basic instruction on Five-Paragraph essay (extensive instruction and guidance in 6th and 7th grade, significant review in 8th, and less as you go up the grades).

Introduction paragraph that includes basic info and summary of work and ends with three-point thesis, three body paragraphs that each have (usually) two supporting textual quotes, conclusion paragraph that summarizes and extrapolates.

- 7th - Two typed Five-Paragraph essays on books read in class (both should include a graded rough draft before the final)

Use Writing and Rhetoric Curriculum (Classical Academic Press)

The teacher shall assign multiple in class essays.

- 8th – Two or three typed five-paragraph essays on books read in class (at least 2 should include graded rough drafts)

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The teacher shall assign multiple in class essays.

- 9th – Two typed five- paragraph essays per semester on books read in class (at least first one should include a graded rough draft)

Use Writing and Rhetoric Curriculum (Classical Academic Press)

The teacher shall assign multiple in class essays.

- 10th – Two typed 5 paragraph essays per semester on books read in class.

Use Writing and Rhetoric Curriculum (Classical Academic Press)

The teacher shall assign multiple in class essays.

- 11th – roughly one essay per book read in class (at least 2 per semester)

Multiple in class essays (perhaps on poetry/short stories/books read in class but not covered by full typed 5 paragraph essay).

The teacher shall assign multiple in class essays.

- 12th – roughly one essay per book read in class (at least 2 per semester)

Multiple in class essays (perhaps on poetry/short stories/books read in class but not covered by full typed five paragraph essay)

Rhetoric Writing

- Rhetoric I – at least 3 typed and presented speeches (1 first semester, 2 second)
- Rhetoric II – at least two typed speeches, one antithesis paper at the end of first semester, plus an annotated bibliography for thesis

Writing Page Minimum-Maximum per Year (all typed papers, all courses, assuming dbl spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt TNR font)

7th – 15-25 pages

8th – 20-30 pages

9th – 25-35 pages

10th – 30-40 pages

11th – 40-50 pages (including rhetoric speeches)

12th – 50-60 pages (including rhetoric speeches/antithesis)

Writing Rhetoric Levels (Classical Academic Press)

Grade	Writing Rhetoric Book
4 th Grade	Book 2
5 th Grade	Books 3 and first ½ 4
6 th Grade	Books second ½ 4 and 5
7 th Grade	Books 6 and 7 (selections)
8 th Grade	Books 9 (selections)
9 th Grade	Book 10
10 th Grade	Book 11

Oral Presentation Guidelines: Oral presentations of written assignments/papers

7th Grade: One or two brief presentations (2-3 minutes) first semester and one five-minute presentation second semester

8th Grade: One seven-eight-minute presentation per semester

9th Grade: One ten-minute presentation per semester.

10th Grade: One ten to fifteen-minute presentation per semester

11th Grade: One or two fifteen-minute presentations per semester (including junior thesis)

12th Grade: One or two fifteen to twenty-minute presentations per semester (including senior thesis)