

Writing on Demand- Introduction

This unit is intended for seventh grade. However, fifth and sixth grade teachers may want to use some of the following ideas/materials in order to make students familiar with the language and testing protocol they will face in seventh grade. Preparing students to succeed on this assessment requires practice. This unit is intended to offer that practice. This unit can, in no way, teach students all that they need to know about writing in order to demonstrate what they know on any assessment. The only way to provide students with the writing content knowledge they need is to offer consistent, effective writing instruction all year long. The unit is designed to teach students how to take a writing test, not how to write. This unit begins by teaching students the difference between “writing on demand” and authentic writing experiences. Students become familiar with the rules of the assessment and the different modes of writing from which they will have to choose. They will learn to carefully read and analyze prompts to demonstrate they understand what is being asked of them. They then practice writing their own prompts to apply their knowledge. Students learn to “write about what they know” and compile an “expert topic” list. This unit concludes with students choosing a prompt that fits one of their expert topics and writing an unassisted paper.

Link to release PSSA writing prompts:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_assessment_system/20965/p/1395057