



Growing Literacy  
for Every Student

## WriteToLearn in the Classroom



Pearson



# Beginning the School Year with WriteToLearn

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Mrs. Davis is a seventh grade English language arts teacher. She has 117 students in her classroom, 12 of whom are English language learners. With college and career readiness standards firmly in mind, Mrs. Davis is looking for new ways to teach argumentative essays and citation of sources without doubling her grading time.

She's excited to try the proven, research-based online literacy tool her administrators have adopted for the district: WriteToLearn™.

## Automated essay scoring & reporting

In the first few weeks of school, Mrs. Davis assigns an essay prompt to see where her students are and gauge just how much they've forgotten over the summer. Her students each log in to their own accounts and type their essays in the program.

As soon as her students submit their drafts, WriteToLearn provides immediate scores and feedback that support the College and Career Readiness standards. Some students pass after revising their essay just once. Others use all six attempts she's given them as they work towards a passing score.

The overview report tells Mrs. Davis which writing skills she needs to review with her students and gives her an early indication of who might need extra support.



**Cameras in the Classroom -- Student Safety or Invasion of Privacy?**

A decision has been made to equip each classroom in your school with a camera. The rationale for the placement of cameras throughout the building is student safety. Some argue this is an invasion of privacy. Think about whether you think this is a safety issue or a privacy issue. Write an essay in which you create an argument for one of these positions. Provide clear reasons and relevant evidence to support your argument.

**Draft 3** | Spelling | Grammar | Other Tools

**Feedback for Draft 2**  
 Congratulations!  
 You have passed this activity. Great job!

Overall: **3** (Passing)

Task and Focus: **3** [Explore]

Development of Ideas: **3** [Explore]

Organization: **3** [Explore]

Language and Style: **3** [Explore]

Mrs. Davis' student gets personalized feedback and passes her essay assignment in two drafts.

**Reports**

Class Scoreboard | Overview | Progress | Students | Portfolio

Class: Mrs. Davis' Writing Class

Activity: Cameras in the Classroom -- Student Safety or Invasion of Privacy?

Report Date: Fri May 1 2015, 10:45 am

**Cameras in the Classroom -- Student Safety or Invasion of Privacy?**  
 Began: Wed Apr 29 2015

Student Name (Login)	Scores on Last Essay (Max. Possible)					Counts and Error Percentages							
	Overall (4)	Task and Development Focus (4)	Development of Ideas (4)	Organization (4)	Language and Style (4)	Conventions (4)	Word Count (150 - 650)	Spelling Errors	Grammar Errors	Repeated %	Minutes on Task *	Attempts	Passing Attempts
Anderson, Jack (janderson)	3	4	3	3	3	4	463	0	0	0	33	3	1
Berns, Kaylee (kberns)	2	2	2	2	2	2	146	8	6	15	24	2	0
Gonzales, Anna (agonzales)	3	3	3	3	3	4	264	0	0	0	31	2	1
Jeffries, Jon (jeffries)	2	2	1	2	2	1	123	8	6	0	12	1	0
Ramos, Luca (lramos)	1	1	1	1	2	2	62	0	1	0	10	1	0
Smith, Randy (rsmith)	2	2	2	2	2	3	201	4	0	7	18	1	0
<b>Averages</b>	Overall (4)	Task and Development Focus (4)	Development of Ideas (4)	Organization (4)	Language and Style (4)	Conventions (4)	Word Count (150 - 650)	Spelling Errors	Grammar Errors	Repeated %	Minutes on Task *	Attempts	Passing Attempts
Students: 6	2.2	2.3	2	2.2	2.3	2.7	210	3.3	2.2	9.8	21.3	1.7	0.3
With attempts: 6													

Download Text (CSV) Report

Jump to top

The Overview Report shows individual scores and class averages for the assignment.

“I found WriteToLearn to be a great diagnostic tool to determine student weak areas which would pinpoint their specific needs. It was a quick way to allow me to individually help each student improve their writing.”

Deanna Eiland, English Teacher







# Cross-subject content

Mrs. Davis' colleague, Mr. Jones, teaches seventh grade Social Studies in the same school. He will be using WriteToLearn to seamlessly incorporate reading and writing development into his current curriculum.

To capture his students' attention early on, he starts the year by assigning a reading passage on "Foundations of Geography". The students first complete a vocabulary exercise with words from the passage. Then they read the passage and write a summary of what they've read.

WriteToLearn® My Activities

Hello Student5! English

### Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population

Vocabulary Reading Summary

#### Learn Vocabulary

Difficulties in the region include: overcrowding, lack of housing, fresh water, and schools, and inadequate public services.

- inadequate
- agricultural
- economic

Vocabulary Exercises

WriteToLearn® My Activities

Hello Student5! English Log Out

### Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population

Vocabulary Reading Summary

## Population

### Population Distribution

The world's population, or total number of people, lives in uneven clusters on Earth's surface. Some places have many people. Other places are almost empty. Population distribution is the way the population is spread out over an area.

Demography is the science that tries to explain how populations change and why population distribution is uneven. Demographers study rates of birth, marriage, and death. And they ask why people move from one place to another.

Write Summary

Reading Passage

WriteToLearn® My Activities

Hello Student5! English

### Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population

Vocabulary Reading Summary

#### Draft 2

2 Spelling 3 Grammar Other Tools

The article told us how there are a lot of overpopulation in some areas of the world. It also told us how a lot of children and people in Asia and Africa need more basic necessities. It made me glad that I live in this country. I also read about how very many people live in the world. I learned about all the death rates in the world and what causes them. At different times in history, populations have grown at different rates.

#### Feedback for Draft 1

You should improve your summary. Use the bars below to see where to focus your effort.

Poor Fair Excellent

Overall

Hint

Summary Scoreboard

# Tracking Student Progress and Differentiating Instruction

Among the teachers' new students are Jack Jones and Anna Gonzales. Jack is excited to be back in school. But when it comes to writing, he has a hard time organizing his ideas. He didn't pass the first essay assignment right away. The student scoreboard and writing tips made it easy for him to see how he could improve his essay, and he passed on the third attempt.

With its personalized activities page, WriteToLearn feels like the computer games Jack's mom let him play over the summer. When he logs in, he can see what he's been assigned, whether his teachers have added any comments, and how close he is to completing his assignments. Each time he works in WriteToLearn he tries to beat his personal record.



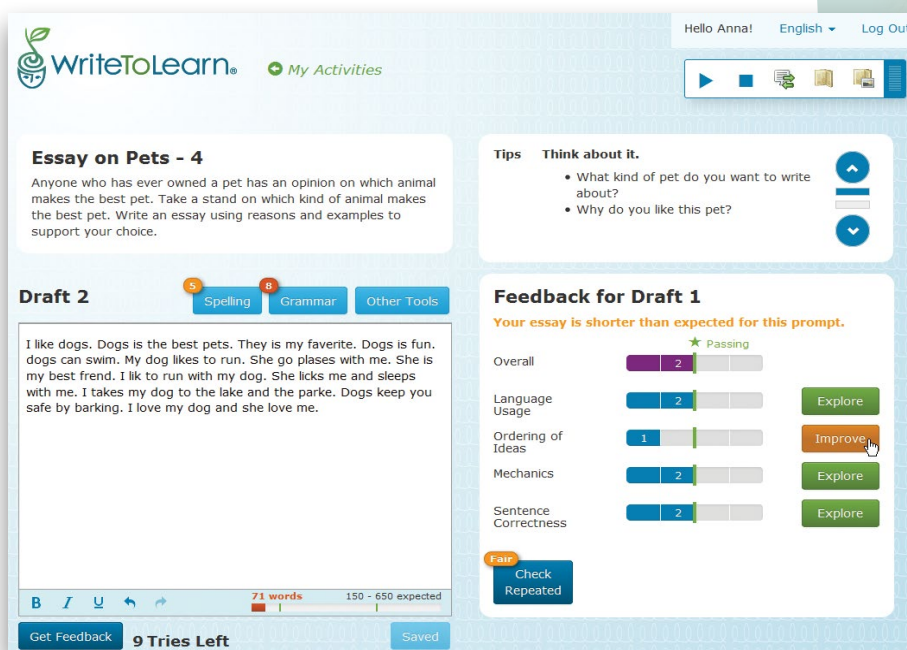
Jack's Activity Page shows that he passed his essay and has a summary assignment to begin.



## Support for struggling students

Anna is one of Mrs. Davis' English language learners. She's quiet and rarely participates in class discussions. She struggled with the first writing assignment of the year, but after Mrs. Davis started using the ELL rubric for her and showed her all of the language tools in WriteToLearn, Anna knows that she's improving.

If she doesn't understand part of Mr. Jones' summary passages or instructions, the text-to-speech function reads it aloud to her. Or she can use the spot word translation if she runs into an unfamiliar word. The vocabulary exercises before the summary activities also help her learn new words before she reads them in the passage and improve her reading comprehension.



The screenshot shows the WriteToLearn interface. At the top, it says "Hello Anna! English Log Out". Below that is a navigation bar with "My Activities". The main content area is titled "Essay on Pets - 4" and includes a prompt: "Anyone who has ever owned a pet has an opinion on which animal makes the best pet. Take a stand on which kind of animal makes the best pet. Write an essay using reasons and examples to support your choice." Below the prompt is a "Draft 2" section with a text area containing the text: "I like dogs. Dogs is the best pets. They is my favorite. Dogs is fun. dogs can swim. My dog likes to run. She go plases with me. She is my best frend. I lik to run with my dog. She licks me and sleeps with me. I takes my dog to the lake and the parke. Dogs keep you safe by barking. I love my dog and she love me." To the right of the draft is a "Feedback for Draft 1" section. It shows a "Passing" star and a table of scores: Overall (2), Language Usage (2), Ordering of Ideas (1), Mechanics (2), and Sentence Correctness (2). Each score has a corresponding bar chart and an "Explore" button. There is also an "Improve" button for the Ordering of Ideas score. At the bottom of the interface, there is a "Get Feedback" button, "9 Tries Left", and a "Saved" button.

Select essay prompts are designed specifically for English learners and provides essay writing advice to help English learners focus on the fundamentals of writing.

“I really like it a lot—my favorite thing about it is that they can have their writing read back to them. The kids like this, too. I often ask them to read it to themselves.”

Kristina Kitler, Teacher,  
Seacoast Charter Academy, Jacksonville, Florida





## Less time grading, more time teaching

Halfway through the year, Mrs. Davis is amazed by the amount of writing her students have done. Each student has written a total of 11 essays and summaries, more than they did all year last year.

Instead of spending all her time grading, Mrs. Davis logs in regularly to see how each student is doing and provides comments to encourage each student and tell them what she wants them to work on next time.

At parent-teacher conferences, the student reports make it easy to show parents all of the assignments their children have completed to date, the progress they've made so far, and the areas where they need to focus on to improve their overall scores.

## Easy curriculum integration

As he completes his Social Studies lesson plans, Mr. Jones is pleased to find a healthy mix of reading passages, some from Pearson imprints he's used before. The variety makes it easy for him to choose passages that align to his curriculum.

Also, the Lexile and Reading Maturity Metric information for select passages allow him to steadily increase the complexity of the texts he assigns throughout the year and even personalize assignments based on student skill levels.



Example Teacher Example School Help Log Out

WriteToLearn® Teacher Menu

Reports

Class Scoreboard Overview Progress **Students** Portfolio

Class: World Studies

Student: Five, Student5 (2 activities)

Report Date: Fri May 1 2015, 11:15 am

Reading: Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population  
 Began: Tue Apr 28 2015  
 Student Highlighting: 125 words

Preferred Length: 150 - 350 words

Last feedback: Fri May 1 2015, 9:54 am

**Scoreboard**

	1	2	3 (attempts)
Population Distribution			
Population Density			
Birthrates and Death Rates			
The Challenges of Population Growth			
Length			258 words

Goal: 150 - 350 words

**Counts**

Minutes on Task *	32
Words, First Attempt	83
% Copied	13 %
Words, Last Attempt	258
% Copied	0 %
Attempts	3
Passing Attempts	1
Copied Content Checks	0
Spell Checks	0
Grammar Checks	0

Mr. Jones Help Log Out

The printer-friendly feature makes it easy for both teachers to use reports in parent-teacher conferences.

WriteToLearn® Teacher Menu

Tools

Classes Assignments Prompts Settings

Class: Mr. Jones' 7th Grade Social Studies

Select Type, Grade, and Subject and click "Find".

Type: All Essay: ELL Summary: ELD

Grade: 5 6 7 8 9

Subject: User Authored History Language Arts Science Social Studies

View Class Assignments Find

117 activities match your selections. To assign an activity, click the checkbox in the "Assigned" column.

Hidden fields: Author Assigned Feedback Bus Type Course Documents Spring Type

Assigned	Title	Subject	Topic	Grade Level	Length (words)	Reading Maturity	Lexile	Common Core Grade Band	Hints or Tips	Vocabulary	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population	Social Studies	World Studies	6-8	1187	6.1	880L	2-5	Hints	Vocab	Population distribution, density, and growth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Africa: 1.2 Climate and Vegetation	Social Studies	World Studies	6-8	1564	5.5	1000L	2-5	Hints	Vocab	The variety of climate and vegetation in Africa and its influences on health.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Africa: 1.3 Resources and Land Use	Social Studies	World Studies	6-8	953	6.7	1210L	4-5	Hints	Vocab	The agricultural resources of Africa and what the countries are doing to improve their economic health.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Africa: 4.1 Egypt: A Nation on the Nile	Social Studies	World Studies	6-8	991	5.7	950L	2-5	Hints	Vocab	The influence of Islam on Egyptian culture and the daily life in Egypt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Africa: 5.2 Ghana	Social Studies	World Studies	6-8	1000	5.5	1000L	2-5	Hints	Vocab	The variety of climate and vegetation in Africa and its influences on health.

Mr. Jones chooses from a large selection of summary activities available in his subject and grade-range.

"This is great! I spend my life grading essays, told other teachers in the department 'it will change your life!'"

Rob Rose, Teacher,  
 River City Science Academy



# Improving Learning Outcomes for All Students

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In the Spring, Mrs. Davis and Mr. Jones meet to discuss the effectiveness of WriteToLearn. They are astonished to realize just how much reading and writing their students have done—and how much more time they have to focus on teaching.

## How WriteToLearn's automated scoring adds up<sup>1</sup>:

**117** students

**22** essays and summaries assigned per student

**6** submissions per assignment

**15,444** drafts evaluated with feedback

**1,930** days to grade drafts by hand, 2 hours per day

**3,890** hours saved by using WriteToLearn





In addition to the number of assignments, the reports show that with all this reading, writing, and vocabulary practice students are making significant progress in their literacy skills through the year. This progress is easy to see when the teachers compare an individual student's essays from August and February.

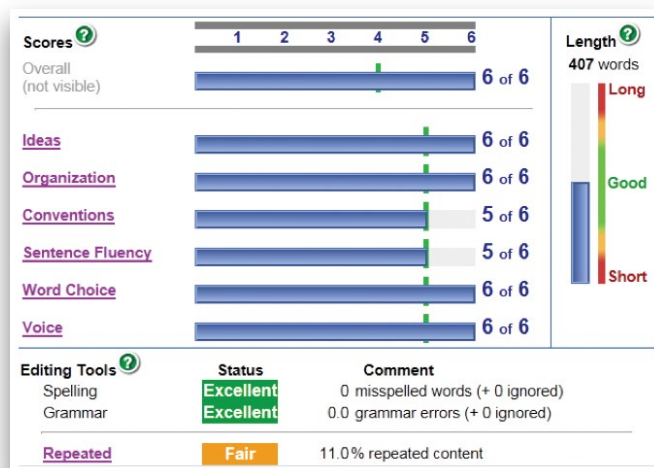
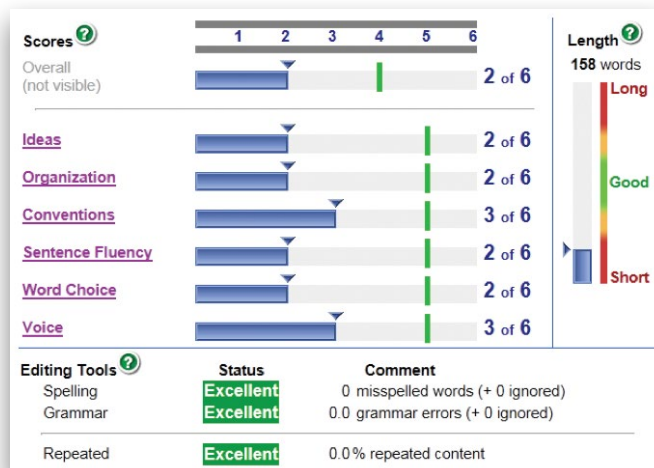
## State assessments results

As testing season gets closer, Mrs. Davis assigns essay prompts, similar to those on the state assessment, and adjusts the settings so that her students have three attempts to pass an essay instead of six. Then, a few weeks before the test, she assigns a new essay with one attempt, and turns off the support tools to mimic the testing experience.

On test day, Jack, Anna, and their classmates are comfortable with the state assessment format, because the experience is just like the essay assignments they've done all year round in WriteToLearn.

When the scores come in, student performance on state writing assessments reflects their WriteToLearn progress reports. Overall, the school's seventh-grade scores improved by 23% in the first year of using WriteToLearn.<sup>2</sup>

WriteToLearn's comprehensive literacy approach has been a key tool to help these teachers improve student learning outcomes—better readers become better writers and better writers become better readers.



Scoreboards show the progress one real-life student made from August to February.<sup>1</sup> The August attempt (top) was with multiple feedbacks and the spelling, grammar, and repeated content check turned ON. The February attempt was with only one feedback and all helps turned OFF.

**“Before WriteToLearn, I had never seen a student get a perfect score on the state writing exam. In 2013, 13 out of my 52 seventh graders earned them. That’s a quarter of the class!”**

Terri Dalsted, Middle School Writing Teacher

<sup>1</sup> While Mrs. Davis and Mr. Jones are fictional teachers, this data comes from the 2012-2013 school year of WriteToLearn customer Jeff Pence, a 7th grade English language arts teacher from Dean Rusk Middle School in Canton, GA.

<sup>2</sup> While Jack, Anna, and their classmates are fictional characters, this data comes from the 2011-2012 student test results of Washington state middle school teacher Terri Dalsted, a real-life WriteToLearn customer.



# Contact Us

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