

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

Kindergarten

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
6.1	Program includes a wide range of authentic writing opportunities .	The Simplify Writing® curriculum incorporates writing across the content areas, with units at each grade level that focus on science, social studies, and literature-related topics. It also includes authentic writing such as letter writing and narrative storytelling.
6.2	Program includes text-based tasks that require students to write about the topic and use the vocabulary and language appropriate for their grade-level.	Throughout the Simplify Writing® units, students will respond to text, using content knowledge to support their thinking in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided in some units as a source for building background knowledge, with word bank resources for students to include content-related vocabulary. These skills are modeled explicitly using a mentor text, with opportunities for the student to apply the skill in their own writing.
6.3	Program includes explicit handwriting instruction in letter formation.	Explicit lessons on writing posture, pencil grip, paper positioning, and letter formation are included in the Simplify Writing® curriculum starting in Kindergarten. Additional letter formation and handwriting practice resources are provided for additional support and practice. Students progress from writing on blank paper, to using scaffolded dotted lines, and finally regular lined paper.
6.4	Program includes explicit instruction in idea generation and oral storytelling , that leads to narrative composition.	Kindergarten units begin with oral storytelling, with mini-lessons that focus on generating ideas through the use of discussion, questioning, and building background knowledge. Opportunities for sharing ideas orally are built into every unit, with scaffolds to bridge from oral ideas to written ideas.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

1st Grade

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
7.1	Program includes a wide range of authentic writing opportunities .	The Simplify Writing® curriculum incorporates writing across the content areas, with units at each grade level that focus on science, social studies, and literature-related topics. It also includes authentic writing such as letter writing and narrative storytelling.
7.2	Program includes text-based tasks that require students to write about the topic and use the vocabulary and language appropriate for their grade-level.	Throughout the Simplify Writing® units, students will respond to text, using content knowledge to support their thinking in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided in some units as a source for building background knowledge, with word bank resources for students to include content-related vocabulary. These skills are modeled explicitly using a mentor text, with opportunities for the student to apply the skill in their own writing.
7.3	Program includes explicit handwriting instruction in letter formation.	Explicit lessons on writing posture, pencil grip, paper positioning, and letter formation are included in the Simplify Writing® curriculum starting in Kindergarten. Additional letter formation and handwriting practice resources are provided for additional support and practice. Students progress from writing on blank paper, to using scaffolded dotted lines, and finally regular lined paper.
7.4	Program includes explicit instruction in idea generation and oral storytelling , that leads to narrative composition.	Units begin with oral storytelling, with mini-lessons that focus on generating ideas through the use of discussion, questioning, and building background knowledge. Opportunities for sharing ideas orally are built into every unit, with scaffolds to bridge from oral ideas to written ideas.
7.5	Program includes explicit instruction in grade-level appropriate skills (e.g., sentence construction, basic punctuation, etc.)	Starting in Kindergarten, students learn to produce and expand sentences, with explicit instruction on the components and various types of complete sentences, as well as mechanics (capitalization & punctuation). Grammar resources are provided for specific sentence-level writing skills such as compound/complex sentences, subjects/predicates, parts of speech, and more.
7.6	Program includes opportunities to write in multiple genres for different purposes.	Every writing genre is covered throughout the Simplify Writing® program, with units on narrative, informational, explanatory, and opinion/argumentative writing. Students will produce both simple and extended writing pieces, writing to share stories and opinions, inform or explain about specific topics, or respond to a piece of literature.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

2nd Grade

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
6.1	Program includes a wide range of authentic writing opportunities .	The Simplify Writing® curriculum incorporates writing across the content areas, with units at each grade level that focus on science, social studies, and literature-related topics. It also includes authentic writing such as letter writing and narrative storytelling.
6.2	Program includes text-based tasks that require students to write about the topic and use the vocabulary and language appropriate for their grade-level.	Throughout the Simplify Writing® units, students will learn research skills, incorporating evidence from outside texts to support their thinking in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided in many units as a source for building background knowledge, as well as citing evidence through quotes or paraphrasing. These skills are modeled explicitly using a mentor text, with opportunities for the student to apply the skill in their own writing.
6.3	Program includes explicit instruction in idea generation and planning , that leads to narrative composition.	Every Simplify Writing® unit begins with mini-lessons that focus on generating ideas through the use of discussion, questioning, and building background knowledge. Multiple planning days are included for every writing piece, with graphic organizers to scaffold the planning process as students learn to organize their ideas in preparation for writing.
6.4	Program includes explicit instruction in grade-level appropriate skills (e.g., grammar).	Students learn to produce and expand sentences, with explicit instruction on the components and various types of complete sentences, as well as mechanics (capitalization & punctuation). Grammar resources are provided for specific sentence-level writing skills such as compound/complex sentences, subjects/predicates, parts of speech, and more.
6.5	Program includes opportunities to write in multiple genres for different purposes.	Every writing genre is covered throughout the Simplify Writing® program, with units on narrative, informational, explanatory, and opinion/argumentative writing. Students will produce both simple and extended writing pieces, writing to share stories and opinions, inform or explain about specific topics, or respond to a piece of literature.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

3rd Grade

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
6.1	Program includes a wide range of authentic writing opportunities .	The Simplify Writing® curriculum incorporates writing across the content areas, with units at each grade level that focus on science, social studies, and literature-related topics. It also includes authentic writing such as letter writing and narrative storytelling.
6.2	Program includes text-based tasks that require students to write about the topic and use the vocabulary and language appropriate for their grade-level.	Throughout the Simplify Writing® units, students will learn research skills, incorporating evidence from outside texts to support their thinking in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided in many units as a source for building background knowledge, as well as citing evidence through quotes or paraphrasing. These skills are modeled explicitly using a mentor text, with opportunities for the student to apply the skill in their own writing.
6.3	Program includes explicit instruction in idea generation and planning , that leads to narrative composition.	Every Simplify Writing® unit begins with mini-lessons that focus on generating ideas through the use of discussion, questioning, and building background knowledge. Multiple planning days are included for every writing piece, with graphic organizers to scaffold the planning process as students learn to organize their ideas in preparation for writing.
6.4	Program includes explicit instruction in grade-level appropriate skills (e.g., paragraph construction, grammar).	Students learn to produce and expand sentences, with explicit instruction on the components and various types of complete sentences, as well as mechanics (capitalization & punctuation). Grammar resources are provided for specific sentence and paragraph-level writing skills such as compound/complex sentences, subjects/predicates, parts of speech, paragraph organization, transitions, and more.
6.5	Program includes opportunities to write in multiple genres for different purposes.	Every writing genre is covered throughout the Simplify Writing® program, with units on narrative, informational, explanatory, and opinion/argumentative writing. Students will produce both simple and extended writing pieces, writing to share stories and opinions, inform or explain about specific topics, or respond to a piece of literature.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

4th Grade

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
5.1	There are opportunities for students to gain familiarity and practice with a wide range of authentic writing processes (e.g., taking notes, brainstorming, creating outlines, revising, incorporating multimedia components, publishing).	Every Simplify Writing® unit covers the writing process from brainstorming to publishing, with mini-lessons that guide students through each step using a variety of graphic organizers, outlines, and checklists. Digital student pages are offered to allow students practice with the technological components of writing.
5.2	There are opportunities for students to gain familiarity and practice with a wide range of authentic writing products (e.g., writing summaries, writing short-answer responses, writing formal essays of various genres) that include multimedia component (e.g., graphics, sounds) and visual displays when appropriate to enhance ideas.	Students will produce both simple and extended writing pieces, writing to share stories and opinions, inform or explain about specific topics, or respond to a piece of literature. At the end of each unit, students will have produced a published printed or digital product for a specific writing genre, including formats such as formal essays, digital slideshows, with opportunities to extend publishing by including visual displays or presenting ideas orally.
5.3	There are opportunities for students to use text-based tasks (e.g., analyzing, synthesizing, citing textual evidence accurately) that require them to present well-defended claims about the text, provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details, and use grade-level language, conventions, and vocabulary.	Text-dependent writing is a cornerstone of the Simplify Writing® program. Every informational and opinion unit includes text-based tasks, with students incorporating evidence from outside sources to support their ideas in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided for students to analyze and respond to in writing.
5.4	There are opportunities for students to gain familiarity and practice with writing in a variety of genres for a variety of purposes, contexts, and audiences .	The Simplify Writing® curriculum incorporates writing across the content areas, with units at each grade level that focus on science, social studies, and literature-related topics. Mini-lessons which focuses on purpose for writing and pinpointing a unique audience are included throughout the grade-level units.
5.5	Materials include graphic organizers to generate organizational structures in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose and to promote executive functioning.	A variety of graphic organizers, outlines, and student templates are used to scaffold the writing process throughout each unit. Organizers specific to each genre are vertically aligned, growing in complexity throughout the grade-levels.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

4th Grade Continued

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
5.6	Lessons include explicit instruction in idea generation and planning that leads to opinion/argumentative compositions, informative compositions, and narrative compositions; there are multiple opportunities for students to practice planning and composing independently.	Every Simplify Writing® unit begins with mini-lessons that focus on generating ideas through the use of discussion, questioning, and building background knowledge. Multiple planning days are included for every writing piece, with mini-lessons to model the writing process and encourage independence during student work time.
5.7	Lessons include explicit instruction in idea generation and planning that leads to research papers and/or projects; there are multiple opportunities for students to practice the research process extensively including conducting research independently, drawing on several sources, assessing the credibility and accuracy of sources, and incorporate the sources by paraphrasing and summarizing.	Throughout the Simplify Writing® units, students will learn research skills, incorporating evidence from outside texts to support their thinking in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided in many units as a source for building background knowledge, as well as citing evidence through quotes or paraphrasing. These skills are modeled explicitly using a mentor text, with opportunities for the student to apply the skill in their own writing. Supplemental units for teaching the research process are provided, including lessons on quoting and paraphrasing text, finding credible sources, and writing bibliographies.
5.8	Lessons include explicit instruction in grade-level appropriate skills (e.g., conveying ideas concisely, constructing simple, compound, and complex sentences with appropriate punctuation, constructing paragraphs, applying grammatical conventions etc.) and provide multiple opportunities for students to practice using grade-level grammar and language conventions .	Students learn to produce and expand sentences, with explicit instruction on the components and various types of complete sentences and paragraphs, as well as mechanics (capitalization & punctuation). Grammar resources are provided for specific sentence and paragraph-level writing skills such as compound/complex sentences, subjects/predicates, parts of speech, paragraph organization, transitions, and more.
5.9	The program provides guidance on how to use assessment data (curriculum embedded and/or alternatives) to provide small group, differentiated instruction on writing based on students' needs and progress, including suggestions for the small group's composition and tasks as well as ideas for independent student practice activities to be implemented when the teacher is engaged in small group instruction.	The Simplify Writing® program includes a full training course for teachers that guides the pre-assessment process, allowing teachers to gather data to inform instruction. Guidance is provided for using rubrics, exemplars, and other formative assessments to implement small groups. Training modules on small group instruction, writing conferences, and differentiation for a wide range of student needs are also included, with full libraries for intervention and modification resources.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

5th Grade

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
5.1	There are opportunities for students to gain familiarity and practice with a wide range of authentic writing processes (e.g., taking notes, brainstorming, creating outlines, revising, incorporating multimedia components, publishing).	Every Simplify Writing® unit covers the writing process from brainstorming to publishing, with mini-lessons that guide students through each step using a variety of graphic organizers, outlines, and checklists. Digital student pages are offered to allow students practice with the technological components of writing.
5.2	There are opportunities for students to gain familiarity and practice with a wide range of authentic writing products (e.g., writing summaries, writing short-answer responses, writing formal essays of various genres) that include multimedia component (e.g., graphics, sounds) and visual displays when appropriate to enhance ideas.	Students will produce both simple and extended writing pieces, writing to share stories and opinions, inform or explain about specific topics, or respond to a piece of literature. At the end of each unit, students will have produced a published printed or digital product for a specific writing genre, including formats such as formal essays, digital slideshows, with opportunities to extend publishing by including visual displays or presenting ideas orally.
5.3	There are opportunities for students to use text-based tasks (e.g., analyzing, synthesizing, citing textual evidence accurately) that require them to present well-defended claims about the text, provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details, and use grade-level language, conventions, and vocabulary.	Text-dependent writing is a cornerstone of the Simplify Writing® program. Every informational and opinion unit includes text-based tasks, with students incorporating evidence from outside sources to support their ideas in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided for students to analyze and respond to in writing.
5.4	There are opportunities for students to gain familiarity and practice with writing in a variety of genres for a variety of purposes, contexts, and audiences .	The Simplify Writing® curriculum incorporates writing across the content areas, with units at each grade level that focus on science, social studies, and literature-related topics. Mini-lessons which focuses on purpose for writing and pinpointing a unique audience are included throughout the grade-level units.
5.5	Materials include graphic organizers to generate organizational structures in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose and to promote executive functioning.	A variety of graphic organizers, outlines, and student templates are used to scaffold the writing process throughout each unit. Organizers specific to each genre are vertically aligned, growing in complexity throughout the grade-levels.

Virginia Curriculum Review Rubric & Evidence

5th Grade Continued

	Writing Criteria	Evidence
5.6	Lessons include explicit instruction in idea generation and planning that leads to opinion argumentative compositions, informative compositions, and narrative compositions; there are multiple opportunities for students to practice planning and composing independently.	Every Simplify Writing® unit begins with mini-lessons that focus on generating ideas through the use of discussion, questioning, and building background knowledge. Multiple planning days are included for every writing piece, with mini-lessons to model the writing process and encourage independence during student work time.
5.7	Lessons include explicit instruction in idea generation and planning that leads to research papers and/or projects; there are multiple opportunities for students to practice the research process extensively including conducting research independently, drawing on several sources, assessing the credibility and accuracy of sources, and incorporate the sources by paraphrasing and summarizing.	Throughout the Simplify Writing® units, students will learn research skills, incorporating evidence from outside texts to support their thinking in writing. Reference texts or paired passages related to content areas are provided in many units as a source for building background knowledge, as well as citing evidence through quotes or paraphrasing. These skills are modeled explicitly using a mentor text, with opportunities for the student to apply the skill in their own writing. Supplemental units for teaching the research process are provided, including lessons on quoting and paraphrasing text, finding credible sources, and writing bibliographies.
5.8	Lessons include explicit instruction in grade-level appropriate skills (e.g., conveying ideas concisely, constructing simple, compound, and complex sentences with appropriate punctuation, constructing paragraphs, applying grammatical conventions etc.) and provide multiple opportunities for students to practice using grade-level grammar and language conventions .	Students learn to produce and expand sentences, with explicit instruction on the components and various types of complete sentences and paragraphs, as well as mechanics (capitalization & punctuation). Grammar resources are provided for specific sentence and paragraph-level writing skills such as compound/complex sentences, subjects/predicates, parts of speech, paragraph organization, transitions, and more.
5.9	The program provides guidance on how to use assessment data (curriculum embedded and/or alternatives) to provide small group, differentiated instruction on writing based on students' needs and progress, including suggestions for the small group's composition and tasks as well as ideas for independent student practice activities to be implemented when the teacher is engaged in small group instruction.	The Simplify Writing® program includes a full training course for teachers that guides the pre-assessment process, allowing teachers to gather data to inform instruction. Guidance is provided for using rubrics, exemplars, and other formative assessments to implement small groups. Training modules on small group instruction, writing conferences, and differentiation for a wide range of student needs are also included, with full libraries for intervention and modification resources.