
Grade 3 Cluster Order Rationale

Grade 3

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC

Supplemental Support System for Existing RLA Core Curriculum

Why the Clusters Are Ordered This Way

The Writing Academy is a Supplemental Support System for an existing RLA core curriculum. Clusters may be used independently or in full in their aligned order. Using them independently allows teachers to use them in whatever order best matches their core curriculum. When used in sequence, the clusters follow a deliberate progression that builds writing complexity one layer at a time.

The Progression

Cluster PREPARE: Preparing to Write: Choosing the Writing Job, Genre, and Plan

The PREPARE cluster precedes all numbered clusters. It establishes the foundational writing habit: deciding what a piece of writing needs to do before beginning.

Cluster 1: Single Constructed Response (SCR) with the SCR Ladder

Cluster 1 introduces the SCR, the simplest constructed-response format. The three-sentence ladder gives students a manageable entry point before the extended responses that follow.

Cluster 2: Extended Constructed Response (ECR) with the TREE Framework

Cluster 2 moves students from the three-sentence SCR to the multi-paragraph ECR. The TREE metaphor scaffolds the structure, and CSI teaches evidence evaluation.

Cluster 3: ECR with the TREES Structure

Cluster 3 formalizes the TREES acronym and introduces poetry and drama as passage genres.

Cluster 4: ECR: The Craft of the ECR

Cluster 4 zooms into individual sentences. MICE develops inferential thinking, and GET SET builds the introduction sentence by sentence.

Cluster 5: Paired Passage ECR: One Answer, Two Texts

Cluster 5 raises complexity by requiring evidence from two passages. The RRR conclusion and mirror-pattern complete the ECR structure.

Cluster 6: Argumentative ECR: Claim, Reasons, and Rebuttal

Cluster 6 introduces argumentation. CREATURES provides the complete argument path, and Module 4 bridges to correspondence (TEKS 12D).

Cluster 7: Poetry: Voices That Inspire Change and Service

Cluster 7 broadens writing beyond constructed responses. LEAVES provides an analytical framework for poetry.

Cluster 8: Research: How Communities Grow

Cluster 8 is the capstone, synthesizing every skill from the year into an original research paper.

Summary

Cluster	What It Builds	Key Frameworks
Cluster PREPARE	Preparing to Write: Choosing the Writing Job, Genre, and Plan	TRAILS; HABIT (Habitual Actions Build Independent Thinkers)
Cluster 1	Single Constructed Response (SCR) with the SCR Ladder	Three Shapes; TRACKS; DOT Reading Habit; GRADUATE
Cluster 2	Extended Constructed Response (ECR) with the TREE Framework	TREE/TREES; CSI; TRACKS; DOT; Three Shapes; GRADUATE
Cluster 3	ECR with the TREES Structure	ECR (TREES); Three Shapes; TRACKS; CSI; DOT; GRADUATE
Cluster 4	ECR: The Craft of the ECR	MICE; GET SET; TRACKS; Three Shapes; DOT; GRADUATE
Cluster 5	Paired Passage ECR: One Answer, Two Texts	Paired Passage HABIT; HOW-Preposition Thesis; RRR; Color-Coding; GET SET; TRACKS
Cluster 6	Argumentative ECR: Claim, Reasons, and Rebuttal	CREATURES; Magnifying Process; TRACKS; Three Shapes; SET; TREES; RRR
Cluster 7	Poetry: Voices That Inspire Change and Service	LEAVES (L=Lines, E=Emotion, A=Artistic Language, V=Voice, E=Experience, S=Significance)
Cluster 8	Research: How Communities Grow	SET Introduction; R-E1-E2 Body; R1-R2-R3 Conclusion; Q/P (Quotation/Paraphrase)