

YEAR 4

Year 4 NAPLAN Guide

Is Your Child Ready for Advanced Writing? A Practical Guide for Families.

About NAPLAN Writing

NAPLAN (National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy) is a national assessment conducted annually for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. While Year 4 students do not sit NAPLAN, the skills developed in Year 4 are directly assessed in Year 5. This guide helps families understand what to expect and how to prepare.

What Does NAPLAN Writing Assess?

- ✓ Audience — writing that engages and is appropriate for the intended reader.
- ✓ Text Structure — writing that follows the conventions of the genre.
- ✓ Ideas — content that is relevant, imaginative and elaborated.
- ✓ Character & Setting (narrative) or Persuasive Devices (persuasive).
- ✓ Vocabulary — precise, varied and effective word choices.
- ✓ Cohesion — smooth flow of ideas across sentences and paragraphs.
- ✓ Paragraphing, Sentence Structure, Punctuation and Spelling.

NSW Stage 2 Writing Expectations

By the end of Year 4, students working at or above the Stage 2 standard are expected to:

Structure & Organisation

- Produce well-organised paragraphs with a clear topic sentence.
- Write texts with a clear beginning, middle and end (narratives) or logical sequence (factual texts).
- Use paragraphing deliberately to organise ideas.

Language & Vocabulary

- Use a wide range of vocabulary, including topic-specific terms.
- Use figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification) in creative writing.
- Select language for effect, considering audience and purpose.

Grammar & Conventions

- Apply correct subject-verb agreement and tense consistency.
- Use a variety of sentence structures: simple, compound and complex.
- Apply punctuation accurately: full stops, commas, apostrophes, speech marks.

Ideas & Content

- Develop ideas with detail and elaboration — not just list facts.
- In persuasive writing, support opinions with reasons and evidence.
- In narratives, create believable characters and engaging settings.

Academic Vocabulary Benchmarks

Strong vocabulary is one of the clearest markers of academic writing ability. By Year 4, students should be expanding their use of:

Category	Examples
Cause & Effect	consequently, therefore, as a result, due to, this leads to
Addition & Contrast	furthermore, however, in contrast, on the other hand, additionally
Sequence & Time	subsequently, simultaneously, prior to, eventually, following this
Evaluation	significantly, remarkably, evidently, arguably, it is clear that
Technical / Topic Vocab	Using subject-specific terminology accurately in context

Common Areas of Weakness in Year 4 Writing

■ Underdeveloped Ideas

Students list ideas rather than elaborating. Encourage your child to ask 'why?' and 'what does this look, feel, sound like?'

■ Inconsistent Tense

Switching between past and present tense within a piece of writing. Practise editing specifically for tense consistency.

■ Repetitive Vocabulary

Over-reliance on simple words like 'said', 'nice', 'good', 'got'. Build a vocabulary wall at home.

■ Weak Paragraph Structure

Opening sentences that don't introduce the paragraph's main idea. Practise writing topic sentences.

■ Limited Punctuation Range

Using only full stops and commas. Introduce colons, semicolons and dashes in context.

■ Rushing to Write

Not planning before writing leads to disorganised pieces. Encourage 3–5 minute planning time.

Preparing for Years 5–6 Writing Demands

Year 5 represents a significant step up in writing expectations. Students are required to:

Years 5–6 Writing Expectations

- ✓ Produce extended pieces of writing across multiple text types with sophistication.
- ✓ Write under timed conditions for NAPLAN and scholarship assessments.
- ✓ Demonstrate control over complex sentence structures and punctuation.
- ✓ Use a wide range of vocabulary with precision and effect.
- ✓ Plan, draft, edit and proofread their own writing independently.
- ✓ Interpret and respond to unseen stimulus material in exam conditions.

Home Strategies to Support Literacy Growth

1. Read Together Daily

15–20 minutes of reading aloud or shared reading builds vocabulary and comprehension naturally.

2. Discuss What You Read

Ask: 'Why did the author write this? How do you know? What would you change?' to develop critical thinking.

3. Weekly Vocabulary Practise

Introduce 5 new words per week from their reading. Use them in conversation and writing.

4. Journal Writing

Encourage 10 minutes of free writing 3–4 times a week to build fluency and confidence.

5. Model Good Writing

Share examples of quality writing from books and newspapers. Talk about what makes it effective.

6. Editing Practice

Give your child a piece of writing with deliberate errors to identify and correct.

7. Oral Rehearsal

Ask your child to explain their ideas verbally before writing — this reduces cognitive load.

Book a Free Academic Assessment — Valued at \$150
Personalised writing, reading and literacy feedback for your child.