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## Writing Without Audiences: A Comprehensive Survey of State-Mandated Standards and Assessments

James E. Warren

*University of Texas at Arlington*, [jewarren@uta.edu](mailto:jewarren@uta.edu)

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### Cover Page Footnote

Helen Hernandez provided invaluable research assistance during her time in the McNair Scholars Program.



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## **Writing Without Audiences: A Comprehensive Survey of State-Mandated Standards and Assessments**

James E. Warren, *University of Texas at Arlington*

As I was drafting this introduction, I received an email notification from NCTE alerting me to a new position statement entitled *Writing Instruction in Schools*. The statement asserts that Generation Alpha (and Gen Z) should be “making important and intentional decisions about writing for authentic audiences” (2022, para. 4). As writing teacher educators know, all professional literacy organizations recommend that students learn to size up rhetorical situations and adapt their writing to the needs of specific audiences. For example, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2016) asserts that “it is important that students have experiences within school that teach them how writing differs with purpose, audience, and other elements of the situation” (para. 3). In a joint statement, the Council of Writing Program Administrators, NCTE, and the National Writing Project (2011) stress that students must acquire the “ability to analyze and act on understandings of audiences, purposes, and contexts” (p. 1). Number two on the list of “Principles of Sound Writing Instruction,” published by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (2015), is student writing that “considers the needs of real audiences.” The advice that students learn to write for specific audiences represents a field consensus.

One strength of the 2017 TEKS is

Despite this consensus, there is reason to believe that state-mandated assessments of writing fail to measure students’ ability to adapt their writing to the needs and expectations of specific audiences. In our home state of Texas, for example, the state-mandated standards require that students demonstrate grade-appropriate proficiency in writing for specific audiences from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (TEA, 2017b). However, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) that students take after 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades (the only grades in which writing is assessed) do not require students to write for specific audiences. Instead, students are instructed to produce compositions that meet “objective” criteria, implying that writing can function outside the context of actual audiences.

Are those of us who train K-12 teachers to teach writing rhetorically at odds with the dominant model of writing instruction in U.S. schools? To answer this question, we conducted a comprehensive survey of state-mandated writing standards and assessments for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. We determined how many states' standards require that students learn to write for specific audiences, and perhaps more significantly, how many states *actually test* students' ability to write for specific audiences. If state curricula do not require students to adapt their writing to specific audiences, or if assessments do not measure students' ability to adapt their writing to specific audiences, then writing teacher educators must navigate a situation in which best practices conflict with state requirements.

### **Why Students Need to Write for Specific Audiences**

To understand why it is essential that students learn to write for specific audiences, we might consider the question from the perspective of learning transfer, which has concerned educational researchers for decades (Perkins & Salomon, 1992). Learning transfer occurs when knowledge acquired in one context is applied in a different context—a process that is made difficult by the structure of formal education itself. Unlike apprenticeship or internship models, in which learners receive on-the-job training in settings similar to those for which they are being trained, formal education operates as a series of discrete levels far removed from the settings to which knowledge is supposed to transfer. Students in one grade learn in isolation from the next grade, students at one educational stage learn in isolation from the next stage, and formal education itself operates independently of the professional world. In such a system, each educational level runs the risk of becoming self-contained: knowledge and skills acquired and used to complete tasks at one level may not be usable at the next level. This is one reason educators pay so much attention to vertical alignment and college and career readiness standards.

In more recent years, literacy researchers have begun to study learning transfer as it pertains to writing (Beaufort, 2007, 2012; Driscoll & Wells, 2012; Nowacek, 2011; Robertson, Taczak, & Yancey, 2012). In particular, researchers have examined the problem of writing-related learning transfer through the lens of “well-structured” and “ill-structured” problems (King & Kitchener, 1994; Wardle, 2013). Put simply, a well-structured problem has a single right answer. For example, the answer to the problem  $2 + 2$  is 4, has always been 4, and will always be 4. Whether one is a kindergartener or a nuclear physicist, when confronted with the problem  $2 + 2$ , the correct answer is 4. In contrast, ill-structured problems have no single right answer and may be solved effectively in a number of different ways. Writing problems are almost always ill-structured. Consider two students who score 100% on a math test. We can assume they came up with the

same answers to the same problems. If those two students both score 100% on an essay in English class, however, it is not because they have written the exact same essay. Rather, they have solved a problem in different but equally effective ways. Furthermore, an essay that scores 100% in English class may score lower in history class because the purpose and intended audience are different.

Well-structured problems are solved by applying rigid rules, algorithms, formulas, and principles that are valid in every context. Once learned, these operations can be used to solve problems of the same type in a variety of different situations. As a result, procedures for solving well-structured problems tend to transfer well. For example, once students learn the principles of addition and subtraction, they can successfully add and subtract numbers in any number of contexts, including in more advanced mathematics classes. Ill-structured problems, on the other hand, can only be solved by applying flexible strategies that are adapted to the constraints of particular situations. A strategy that works when solving one ill-structured problem may not work with a similar problem in a different context. Consequently, learning transfer in fields that deal with ill-structured problems tends to be relatively low. Consider, for example, the field of teaching. A joke that elicits laughter with one class may produce blank stares in the next, and an example that unlocks a tricky concept for one group of students may simply confuse a different group. The reason teachers must always be on their toes is that they lack the luxury of formulas that always work.

Teaching for transfer in subject areas that deal with ill-structured problems is always difficult, but it becomes nearly impossible when students are taught to treat ill-structured problems *as if they were well-structured*. The temptation to do so is great because, after all, it is far simpler to teach students an unchanging set of rules and procedures than it is to teach them flexible strategies that must always be adapted to the particularities of a given problem. For example, English teachers often find that student writers use too many first-person pronouns or use first-person pronouns inappropriately. The simplest solution to this problem is to treat it as if it were well-structured and program students with a rule: never use first-person pronouns in academic writing. This solution may work in one class, at least in the sense that students no longer misuse first-person pronouns, but it poses problems for transfer. Students who have internalized the prohibition of first-person pronouns may transfer this rule to academic writing situations in which it no longer applies. As Graff and Birkenstein (2018) have pointed out, sophisticated college writing tasks often ask students to differentiate their own positions from those of others, and this maneuver is made unnecessarily difficult when students believe they must avoid first-person pronouns at all costs (p. xxi). What are students to think when they have been taught by one teacher to avoid first-person pronouns, only to find that a different teacher encourages the use of first-person pronouns? For students

who have been trained to think of writing as a well-structured problem that operates according to rules, the most logical conclusion is that one teacher must be right and the other must be wrong. But whose rules are right and whose rules are wrong? The reason for this confusion is that writing, an ill-structured problem, does not lend itself to fixed rules at all. Students who believe it does have a distorted understanding of writing altogether

Instead of rules for writing, what students need, according to transfer researchers (Beaufort, 2012; Boone, Chaney, Compton, Donahue, & Gocsik, 2012; Wardle, 2007, 2012), is the flexibility to adapt their writing to the specific demands of different audiences. To demonstrate what such flexibility looks like, consider the real-world equivalents of a writing task that appeared on the tenth-grade STAAR test in 2017. Students were presented with the following prompt: “Write an essay stating your opinion on whether a person can choose to be happy” (TEA, 2017a, p. 2). If a student were writing to a friend who is unhappy, it would be perfectly appropriate to write in an informal style that draws heavily on colloquialisms and personal experience and that addresses the audience directly. If the student were writing a research paper in school, they might want to establish a more detached persona, adopt a more formal style, and cite academic research in order to address a broad audience of academics. If the student were writing a testimony to be delivered in church, they might draw on personal experience in the church, cite scripture, adapt the text for oral delivery, and appeal directly to the congregation’s values and faith tradition. None of these approaches is any more right or wrong than another, and in fact the “rules” that apply to one situation would be entirely out of place in a different situation. But students who wrote on this topic for the STAAR test were given no intended audience or situation; the task was presented as if it were a well-structured problem, suggesting to students that there was a single “right” way to write the essay.

### **Why Students Do Not Write for Specific Audiences in School**

The tendency to require students to write with no audience in mind has a long history that predates standardized tests. Although the field of rhetoric traces its roots to Aristotle, who famously prioritized the role of audience in public discourse because, in public speaking situations, the “someone addressed” is “the objective of the speech” (trans. 1991, p. 47), the Aristotelian tradition eroded during the Enlightenment with the emergence of the “autonomous text” (Olson, 1977). The autonomous text represents an ideal in which meaning is represented fully and explicitly by the words on the page, thus making meaning equally available to all and making the question of the intended audience irrelevant. According to Olson, the autonomous text emerged as an ideal during the Enlightenment for two reasons. First, the invention of the printing press meant that texts could reach a more diverse

readership than ever before, so writers increasingly attempted a style that would not require readers to share similar background knowledge. Second, the growth of science in the seventeenth century required a type of writing that would establish and consolidate objective scientific knowledge, preserving it and making it available to all readers for all time. This early form of academic writing, then, represented a conscious attempt to construct texts that were fully explicit, avoiding culturally-specific assumptions and appeals to specific audiences.

It should come as no surprise to literacy professionals that scholars have long since dismissed the autonomous text as “a driving myth” (Geisler, 1994, p. 26), an aspirational goal that is impossible to reach, even for scientists, who apply a vast store of contextual knowledge in their reading and writing (Cazden, 1989). Still, even if the autonomous text is a fiction, it has proven to be a *useful* fiction in formal education. For example, researchers (e.g., Armbruster, 1984; Beck, McKeown, Sinatra, & Loxterman, 1991; Davison & Kantor, 1982; Geisler, 1994; Haas, 1994; Olson, 1981) have noted that texts designed to teach academic content in elementary and secondary schools present themselves as autonomous. Since the purpose of these texts is to present “the authorized version of society’s valid knowledge” (Olson, p. 108), they adopt a style of writing that seems “to originate in a transcendental source” (p. 109). This default style of academic writing has become one to which students aspire, making the specification of an intended audience seem superfluous.

### **Why the Absence of Audience in High-Stakes Testing Matters**

The tradition of the autonomous text combined with large-scale, high-stakes assessments of writing leads to a situation in which students may never learn to write for specific audiences, even when that skill is included in content standards. To be sure, research suggests that mandated standards significantly influence teachers’ classroom writing instruction (Brownell, 2017; Handsfield, Crumpler, & Dean, 2010; Kane, Owens, Marinell, Thal, & Staiger, 2016; McCarthy & Mkhize, 2013; McCarthy & Ro, 2011; McCarthy & Woodard, 2018; McCarthy, Woodard, & Kang, 2014). In a typical study, McCarthy and Woodard (2018) conducted interviews and observations of 20 teachers across 4 districts in the same state and found that only 4 teachers rejected district-mandated curricula based on state standards. We might conclude that when state standards codify best practices for the teaching of writing, such as the practice of requiring students to write for specific audiences, students will be taught in accordance with those recommendations.

Education standards cannot be viewed in isolation, however, when they are paired with assessments of those standards. Theoretically, standards-based education clearly defines the content students must learn and the performance level

they must achieve in a given year. End-of-year assessments should align with these standards and thus provide a valid measure of student progress. In such a model, standards drive curriculum and instruction and summative assessments are merely a natural outgrowth of what students have been learning all year. The structure of standards-based education in the U.S., however, puts serious strains on the model. Students spend more than 1,000 hours in school each year (U.S. Department of Education, 2008) but only about 10-15 hours on assessments that will be used for state and federal accountability requirements (Council of the Great City Schools, 2015). In other words, relatively brief assessments must attempt to measure a vast amount of student learning. It seems reasonable to assume, then, that at least in some subject areas, state standards are more extensive than what can be reasonably tested. In such cases, even the very best content standards may not be enough to ensure that students are acquiring all the content knowledge they need.

What happens when curricular standards are not assessed, when content that teachers are supposed to teach does not actually appear on the test? A sizable body of research suggests that, at least in terms of writing instruction, standards that are not tested tend to be neglected or ignored in classroom instruction (Albertson, 2007; Hillocks, 2002; McCarthy, 2008; National Academy of Education, 2009; O’Neill, Murphy, Huot, & Williamson, 2006; Scherff & Piazza, 2005). For example, in a survey of more than 600 high school teachers in three different states, O’Neill, Murphy, Huot, and Williamson (2006) found that the vast majority of writing teachers had adapted their classroom teaching to meet the specific demands of state-mandated tests. The extent of these adaptations—and teachers’ unhappiness about them—was made clear in teachers’ responses to open-ended survey questions. A respondent in California wrote of the state-mandated test: “Oh yes, it’s caused panic. Soon we’ll be teaching directly to the test I’m afraid” (p. 99). Such “teaching to the test” seemed to be the norm already in Georgia and Kentucky. A respondent from Georgia wrote that the test “forces us to practice the five-paragraph essay in order to better prepare our students for the test” (p. 101), while a respondent from Kentucky wrote that “vast amounts of time are spent on practice testing” (p. 101). What is significant about these responses is that they suggest that test content narrows the curriculum and drives instruction, even when teachers believe test content is not what they *should* be teaching. Rather than curricula determining assessment measures, then, it appears that the assessment is driving curriculum. In such an environment, inclusion in state standards might not be enough to ensure that content is taught—it must also be tested.

## **Method**

State standards for all 50 states and the District of Columbia were retrieved from each state’s education agency website. The English Language Arts standards for grades



9-12 in each state were analyzed for requirements that students learn to adapt their writing to different audiences. Analysis was limited to secondary school standards for three reasons. First, some limitation was necessary to keep the project within a manageable scope. Second, the ability to adapt one's writing to different audiences is a sophisticated skill, so some states might choose not to enact this standard until high school. Third, state standards have the stated goal of making students "career and college ready." Since high school is the final level of schooling before students are considered ready to enter higher education or the workforce, it is most important that they practice this vital real-world skill immediately prior to being graduated.

After education standards were reviewed, state-mandated essay tests for grades 9-12 in each state were retrieved. In some states, the education agency releases tests that were administered to students in previous years. In other states, the education agency releases sample tests that were never administered but that represent the exact type of question and instructions that test-takers receive. A handful of states release neither tests that have been administered nor sample questions but provide detailed descriptions of the writing portion of the test and the assessment rubrics used to grade student responses. By drawing on one of these three sources, all mandated high school essay tests from all 50 states and the District of Columbia were collected and analyzed for whether they required students to adapt their writing to a specific audience.

## **Results**

### **State Standards**

The task of examining state standards was made simpler by the fact that 45 states and the District of Columbia have officially adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or borrow language directly from the CCSS. These standards, as well as those adopted in Florida, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, and Virginia all stipulate in multiple places that high school students should learn to write for specific audiences.

### **Common Core State Standards.**

The CCSS writing standards center on 10 "anchor standards" from which detailed, grade-specific standards are derived. Anchor standard number 4 stipulates that students should learn to "produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience." A "note on range and content in student writing" that appears at the end of the anchor standards asserts that students need to learn that "a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an . . . audience." The standards for grades 11-12 are even more specific, as students are expected to produce writing that "anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases."

The writing process students are expected to master should focus on “addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.”

### **Other state standards.**

The 5 states that have developed standards that are entirely independent of the CCSS also emphasize that students must learn to write for specific audiences. Florida’s writing standards for 11<sup>th</sup> grade require students to “create and export quality writing tailored to a specific audience,” and as part of the process of producing such writing, students should focus on “revising to address the needs of a specific audience.” Nebraska’s 12<sup>th</sup>-grade standards expect students to develop writing “appropriate to the purpose and intended audience” and to practice writing “for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.” Oklahoma’s anchor standards expect “students will write for varied purposes and audiences in all modes,” and in 9<sup>th</sup> grade students use “a variety of media forms to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence for diverse audiences.” In Texas, students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and beyond are expected to “plan a piece of writing appropriate for various purposes and audiences” and “publish written work for appropriate audiences.” And in Virginia, K-12 writing standards are introduced by the statement that “proficiency in written communication is achieved through frequent opportunities to apply skills for a variety of purposes and audiences,” with students in 12<sup>th</sup> grade expected to “apply components of a recursive writing process . . . to address a specific audience and purpose.”

### **State Tests**

For school year 2020/2021, 12 states (24%) were scheduled to administer writing assessments that required students to write for a specific audience. Because some states test students in multiple high school years and/or require students to write multiple essays for a single assessment, the total number of essay tests scheduled to be administered was 69. Of these, 14 (20%) asked students to write for a specific audience. Below we include a more detailed description of these 69 essays.

### **Essays that do not specify an audience.**

#### ***Textual analysis.***

Of the 55 state-mandated essay tests that do not require students to write for a specific audience, 23 (42%) ask students to read a text and write an essay that analyzes it. For some of these tests, students are expected to conduct a rhetorical analysis of a non-literary text. For example, the SAT Essay test, which is mandatory in 10 states, requires rhetorical analysis:

As you read the passage below, consider how Paul Bogard uses

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims.
- reasoning to develop ideas and to connect claims and evidence.
- stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed.

[passage appears here]

Write an essay in which you explain how Paul Bogard builds an argument to persuade his audience that natural darkness should be preserved. In your essay, analyze how Bogard uses one or more of the features in the directions that precede the passage (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage. Your essay should not explain whether you agree with Bogard’s claims, but rather explain how Bogard builds an argument to persuade his audience. (College Board, n.d.)

For other tests, students are asked to write a literary analysis of a work of fiction.

A question of

this type can be found on the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments:

Now that you have read and answered questions about the passages from *Quicksand* and *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, write an essay in which you identify a theme that is similar in both passages and analyze how each author uses the characters, events, and settings in the passages to develop the theme. (NJSLA, n.d.)

### ***Non-source-based essays.***

Twenty-nine percent of state-mandated essay tests that do not specify an audience are what we categorize as non-source-based essays. In these tests, students are asked to write an informational or persuasive essay that draws on knowledge they already possess rather than on information presented in the test itself. The ACT Test with Writing, which is required in 8 states, is typical of this type of essay question:

Write a unified, coherent essay about the increasing presence of intelligent machines. In your essay, be sure to

- clearly state your own perspective on the issue and analyze the relationship between your perspective and at least one other perspective
- develop and support your ideas with reasoning and examples

- organize your ideas clearly and logically
- communicate your ideas effectively in standard written English

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of those given, in partial agreement, or completely different. (ACT, n.d.)

### ***Source-based essays.***

In 20% of essay tests that do not specify an audience, students are asked to write an essay that draws on outside sources included with testing materials. For example, in the sample test below, which is from the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program, students are provided with two sources and the following instructions:

Both the Google Loon project and the Ivanpah power plant work toward solving an important problem. Write a multiparagraph essay to describe the problem each new technology is solving, how it is solving the problem, and what challenges each faces in becoming successful. Use information from **both** passages to develop and support the ideas in your essay. (MCAP, n.d.)

### ***Creative fiction.***

Finally, 9% of state-mandated essay tests that do not specify an audience ask students to compose a brief work of creative fiction. For example, the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program asks high school students to complete a task like the following:

At the end of the passage from *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Bathsheba seems to want to know more about Farmer Boldwood. Based on what you have learned about Bathsheba, write a third-person narrative that continues this story and tells what happens next between Bathsheba and Farmer Boldwood. (LEAP, n.d.)

## **Essays that specify an audience.**

### ***Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.***

Of the 12 states that administer a high school writing test that requires students to write for a specific audience, 8 (Arizona, California, Hawai'i, Idaho, Oregon, South Dakota, Vermont, and Washington) use the test created by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), which was formed to construct standardized tests that would align with the CCSS. In the SBAC essay test for high school, students are presented with four sources on a common topic and a hypothetical rhetorical situation like the following:

After completing your research, you share your findings with your teacher, who suggests that you write an argumentative essay for the upcoming school board meeting.

Today, in preparation for the school board meeting, you will write a multi-paragraph argumentative essay in which you take a stance on the topic of financial literacy courses. (SBAC, n.d.)

Furthermore, students are presented with the criteria by which their essay will be assessed, which includes the following question:

How well did you clearly state ideas in your own words using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose?

***Other state tests.***

The 4 remaining states that require students to write for a specific audience use assessments that are quite similar to the SBAC test. The Florida Standards Assessment presents students with three sources and a rhetorical situation similar to following:

You have been asked to write an argumentative essay for your school's blog in which you support or oppose the use of an artist's music in advertising. Use information from the "Should Musicians Change Their Tune?" passage set in your essay. (FSA, n.d.)

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test presents students with two sources and a prompt like the following:

Next month, your congressperson will be voting on an environmental protection bill. Based on *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story* and *High Tech Trash*, write a letter to your congressperson explaining the harmful effects of plastic waste and e-waste. Also, explain what immediate actions should be taken and why those actions are necessary. Be sure to use evidence from **both** excerpts to develop your letter. (MCAS, n.d.)

The Wyoming Test of Proficiency and Progress provides students with three sources and a rhetorical situation like the following:

Write a letter to your state senator in which you argue in favor of keeping the Electoral College or changing to election by popular vote for the president of the United States. Use the information from the texts in your essay. (WY-TOPP, n.d.)

Finally, the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress is administered to students in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades. This is a new assessment, and as of this writing no released tests or sample tests were available. However, a published description

of these tests includes the following:

A specific audience is identified in each assignment so that students have sufficient information to address their writing to that audience and thus make their writing as effective as possible. (ISASP, n.d.)

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The most promising result we found is that all 50 states and the District of Columbia have adopted content standards that require students to write for specific audiences. Unfortunately, only 24% of states actually test this skill. Given the well-documented phenomenon of tests driving curriculum, it seems reasonable to conclude that many writing teacher educators are preparing pre-service teachers for an environment in which students are not expected to write for specific audiences.

One reason literacy professionals are so troubled by standardized tests of writing is that these tests warp the very nature of what we teach. No test can measure all the content students are required to learn, but in most subject areas, this simply means that some content is omitted. We all remember study sessions in which we crammed our heads full of information, only to find that much of what we memorized did not appear on the test. The *absence* of content, however, is quite different from the *distortion* of literacy. When high-stakes assessments ignore the NCTE (2014) recommendation that writing be assessed “over a substantial period of time” (para. 3) and “from initial through to final drafts” (Applications section, para. 3), students learn that writing need not involve complex composing processes across multiple drafts. When assessments “ask students to form and articulate opinions about some important issue . . . without time to . . . read on the subject” (Guiding Principle 1, para. 2), students learn that their knowledge of a topic is less important than the production of clean, well-organized prose. And when assessments fail to ask students to write “for a range of audiences” (Guiding Principle 2), students learn that the purpose of writing is to construct artifacts that are rated but not really read. Of all the ways in which standardized tests fall short as valid measurements of authentic writing, their failure to ask students to write for specific audiences might be the most egregious. A generous evaluation of large-scale testing might conclude that we sometimes write on a deadline in our personal and professional lives, and in that way timed writing tests replicate authentic writing tasks. Similarly, we do sometimes confront real-world situations in which we must write on topics we know or care little about, which is analogous to having students write on pre-selected topics. But it is difficult to imagine a writing situation outside educational settings in which we write with no audience in mind.

High-stakes, large-scale tests of writing will be with us for the foreseeable future. Literacy professionals in Texas literacy were encouraged recently when the Texas Education Agency conducted a two-year pilot study of portfolio-style

assessment, but despite teachers reporting “more intentional and focused writing instruction” and “stronger student engagement,” the fate of the program was sealed in a single sentence: “the costs of administering a statewide, authentic writing assessment would be prohibitive” (2018, p. 21). Even if we are stuck with testing, however, this should not stop us from promoting better tests. Every state in the country has adopted standards that require students to write for specific audiences. Those of us who work in one of the 38 states that do not test for this standard should advocate for tests that do. The test itself might continue to lack validity, but inclusion of a writing-for-audiences standard increases the chances that this essential skill will be taught. In the meantime, writing teacher educators should prepare pre-service teachers to navigate writing curricula that conflict with best practices for writing instruction.

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