Achieve
macmillan learning

Writing Tools Implementation Guide

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Contents

Introduction to Macmillan Learning's Writing Tools

Welcome to the Writing Tools in Achieve, developed by Macmillan Learning in partnership with teachers of writing from all over the United States. These writing tools, built on leading scholars' work on writer development (See the section Further Reading for a collection of resources that informed the design of the tools), put student writers and their writing at the center of your course and personalize the writing process for each writer on your roster.

You may find your students have varying levels of comfort with course technology and a wide range of experiences with writing, review, and revision. Indeed we know that *instructors* have varying levels of comfort with course technology and teach a wide range of courses in varying contexts and driven by different teaching philosophies. Achieve assumes that most teachers of writing want deeper visibility into their students' writing processes so that they can target feedback to help student writers grow and develop across drafts, across assignments, and across courses.

A flexible assignment building tool allows instructors to assign ready-made writing prompts or to create their own. Powerful analytics, viewable in an elegant teacher dashboard, offer teachers a window into student progress and facilitate lessons that are specifically tailored to students' needs. A clear assignment journey that involves response, reflection, and revision leads to a concrete action plan for each student writer and fosters independent learning. Finally, peer review tied to clear and specific goals helps writers build a vocabulary about writing and become critical readers of both their own work and that of their peers.

At Macmillan Learning, our authors, editors, developers, and directors, steeped in composition history and practice, are committed to you and your students. The experiences and insights of over one hundred instructors have been part of an extensive co-design effort to develop feedback and revision tools that address some key values at the heart of teaching writing. Throughout the development of these tools, we've tried to foreground values that instructors told us were important and represented an ideal use of technology in their writing courses, including

- Putting revision at the core of the writing course
- Offering insights into revision in order to foster effective feedback practices
- Connecting the writing that students do with resources to help them put feedback into practice
- Building student success through a focus on reflection and metacognition
- Delivering just-in-time remediation through content that is trusted and targeted at individual student needs
- Supporting a flexible range of pedagogical approaches and teaching practices

This implementation guide offers some basic support and suggestions for successfully using these tools with your students. We look forward to hearing about your experiences with these tools as we continue to improve them!

Creating your first writing assignment in Achieve

Finding and using prebuilt writing assignments

Your Achieve course includes a collection of prebuilt writing assignments that are designed to give you a head start on creating writing assignments and aligned with the approach of the core instructional content in that product. Before creating assignments from scratch--especially for the first time--we recommend that you take some time to explore the prebuilt assignments. Even if you decide not to use them, they will help you familiarize yourself with the elements available in Achieve's writing tools and demonstrate strategies for designing writing assignments in Achieve.

You can easily find the full list of prebuilt writing assignments in your course by selecting the Browse tab and selecting the Content Type filter "Writing Activity" at the bottom of the browse panel. From here, you can explore the full list of assignments. If you find one you want to use in your course, you can edit any of the elements for that assignment prior to adding it to your Course Plan. Read on to learn more about the elements of Achieve writing assignments.

Resource Type   Hide

- [ ] Adaptive Quiz
- [ ] Assessment
- [ ] Diagnostic
- [ ] File
- [ ] Link
- [ ] Reading
- [x] Writing Assignment

Assignment idea. Achieve's Writing Tools will introduce students to a powerful framework for receiving and giving feedback, but at the same time the framework will be one with which students are unfamiliar. Consider using the pre-built First Day of Class assignment, "Your Strengths as a Writer," to familiarize your students with the drafting, commenting, and content features in Achieve's writing tools, or develop your own assignment. If possible, discuss this assignment with them in class and give them a tour of the different areas of the assignment page.

Creating a new writing assignment

Achieve allows you to create and customize writing assignments that communicate clear expectations to student writers and that live side-by-side with the students' writing space. Creating your first writing assignment in Achieve will be a snap if you think of it as just *creating a writing assignment*--something you've done perhaps more than a few times.

When you create a writing assignment from scratch, you will see an empty assignment page that you can freely customize with a combination of your own as well as publisher-provided content.

Elements of Achieve writing assignments

Assignment title. Your first step is to give your writing assignment a title. The default title is "Untitled Writing Activity," which you can change by selecting "Edit" and filling in the title area. You have 140 characters, and you don't have to be clever, but you might want to use more clarity and personality than "Assignment 1." What type of writing are you assigning (Genre Analysis, Argument Essay)? What is your theme or goal for the first part of the course (The American Consumer, Understanding our Literacy Heritage)? Is the assignment based on a specific reading selection, speech, or other text (*Nickel and Dimed* Response, "March for Our Lives" Reflection)?

Assignment prompt. You can compose assignment prompts in Achieve or copy and paste them from a Word doc, Google doc, or a PDF. The text editor allows you to compose using familiar elements to style and format your assignment--color, size, boldface, bullets, and numbering. In addition to what you say in class about the assignment, the prompt is your students' key resource for understanding and completing the assignment. They will return to the prompt to check expectations as they draft--expectations about genre, length, deadlines, purpose, audience, documentation style, and process. The assignment prompt of course gives you the opportunity to communicate small details--due dates and such--but it also functions as a moment in which you can connect the specific assignment to the larger theme of the course or to other writing/reading/thinking on which the current assignment builds or for which the current assignment serves as preparation. In this way, the assignment prompt looks both backward and forward in the course and keeps students on track.

Final rubric. A rubric lets you communicate expectations about an assignment and can act as a scoring guide if it includes descriptions of multiple levels of success. Achieve includes ready-made publisher-provided rubrics for common first year writing assignments, such as argument essays and annotated bibliographies, but these tools are customizable. You can alter phrasing and vocabulary to match your own definitions of successful writing and the language you use in class; you can also add different criteria if you don't want to use the five or six criteria provided within the product. You may also choose to include no rubric or to create a rubric completely from scratch. Achieve is flexible and embraces the may way in which instructors assign and evaluate student writing. If you do not use rubrics as part of your practice for evaluating student writing, you may select "No rubric" for the assignment. Students will only see the elements you have chosen to include in the assignment.

Source Check settings. You can enable Source Check to allow students to scan their papers for plagiarism prior to and during submission. Additionally, you can customize the Source Check settings to scan for specific match types and elements of student writing. You can save these settings for use in additional assignments and set them as the default.

Number of drafts, draft goals, and draft instructions. Much of the research in composition suggests that completing writing assignments in multiple drafts--with specific goals and with time for feedback and reflection--leads to stronger writing (See: Further Reading). Achieve

allows you to specify the number of drafts you are expecting for an assignment, give specific instructions for each draft, and tie specific writing goals to each draft. Most 14-week writing courses allow for two drafts each of four assignments, but you may assign more or less writing or require a different number of drafts depending on your teaching context. Whereas the rubric gives the bigger picture of success within a set of expectations, the draft goals--or specific goals for each draft--lets you communicate up to six specific focus areas to your writers. You can choose from a menu of pre-written draft goals specific to each draft. You may, for example, want students to focus on "introduction," "paragraph development," and "content/ideas" in a first draft, for example, but then add "thesis," "evidence," and "style/voice" for a final draft. In this way, you can make assignments more manageable for writers, for peer reviewers, and for yourself. You may also edit existing draft goals or create new ones from scratch that are tailored to specific elements of your assignment. If you have enabled Source Check, you can adjust draft-specific settings. Finally, if you have specific instructions for each draft, Achieve includes a space for those.

Revision plan. Achieve allows you to enable or disable the revision plan tool when you create an assignment. If you enable the revision plan, students will be required to use instructor and peer feedback to prioritize revisions for the next draft. Once students have created a revision plan for a draft, their task list will be easily available to them in the right-hand menu as they work on their next draft, and they can check off tasks as they complete them. As an instructor, you can review students' revision plans as you prepare to give them feedback on the next draft. (More on this in [Using the Revision Plan to center revision in students' writing processes](#).)

> **Teaching tip.** If you conference with students between drafts, consider having them complete revision plans prior to their conference. Use the revision plan as a starting point to discuss students' strategies for improving their next draft.

Reflection. Reflecting on writing challenges and accomplishments can help a student writer carry learning from one draft to the next, one assignment to the next, and one course to the next. Achieve supports reflection pedagogy and allows you to build reflection prompts into your writing assignments. When you create your first writing assignment, think about the kinds of reflection you may have asked students to do in the past. What were the benefits? Were there any drawbacks? Achieve includes a selection of pre-written reflection starters for you to choose from--a mix of polling and free response questions--that either ask students to say whether they understood the criteria for the assignment, focus reviewers on a part of the draft, acknowledge a challenge, or plan for a future draft. You will also be able to create your own reflection questions. (See more in [Designing assignments to foster reflection and metacognition](#).)

Managing writing assignments in Achieve

Tips for editing writing assignments

There are basic rules for when a writing assignment can and cannot be edited.
- ✓ A writing assignment **can be edited** from the Content Library or My Content tabs before it has been added to the course.
- ✓ Once it has been added to the course, a writing assignment **can be edited** in the Course Plan as long as it is set as **Private, hidden from students**.
- 🚫 An assignment **can no longer be edited** if it is set as:
    - **Available to students, but not assigned**
    - **Assigned to students**
- 🚫 An assignment **can no longer be edited** if it has ever been opened by a student.

If a writing assignment is edited:
- Edits made to the assignment in the Course Plan will be reflected in that assignment when opened from the Content Library or My Content tabs.
- Edits made to the assignment in the Content Library or My Content tabs will be reflected in that assignment when opened from the Course Plan.

How do I--
[Create a writing assignment?](#)
[Edit the rubric for a writing assignment?](#)
[Add my own rubric to a writing assignment?](#)
[Assign a revision plan?](#)
[Edit the draft goals for a writing assignment?](#)
[Add my own reflection questions to a writing assignment?](#)
[Manage all elements of writing assignments from a central library?](#)

Designing assignments to foster student reflection and metacognition

Writers who think about their own writing processes and writing decisions generally make greater gains than those who don't. Most students, however, don't come from high schools in which they've been asked to do a great deal of reflection about their processes and decisions, their skills and habits as writers, or their successes and challenges as they move from one piece of writing to the next. They, more typically, have been asked to complete one assignment, submit it, complete another assignment, submit it, repeat, repeat.

When you make the time for reflection connected to a writing assignment, your students benefit in the following ways:
- They learn to identify strengths and weaknesses in their writing
- They come to understand their own writing processes so that they can make adjustments to be more successful
- They can more easily transfer what they've learned about writing from one draft to the next and from one assignment to the next
- They develop a vocabulary related to writing
- They become not only better writers but also better thinkers about writing
- They assume ownership of their progress in the course

Achieve is built on reflection pedagogy and allows you to include reflection questions as part of each assignment and even as part of individual drafts within assignments.

> You can choose to poll students with questions such as this.
> I know the criteria that will be used for giving me feedback.
> _ strongly agree _ agree _ neutral _ disagree _ strongly disagree
>
> Or you can ask them to respond to a free response prompt with a response starter, such as one of the following.
> One idea I want to develop further is . . .
> The most challenging part of this assignment was . . .
>
> Or you can create your own reflection question.

The built-in prompts ask students to pause to think through their level of understanding of the expectations as well as their effort and their execution on the particular draft they're working on. Upon reflection, students may see patterns, see connections, and begin to understand their own skills and habits enough to make changes and initiate improvements. In this way, they become more engaged and independent learners who are more likely to take the lessons of the writing course into other contexts, which will allow them to apply what they've learned about themselves as writers to other situations in which they are asked to write.

Reflection gives students a personal scorecard, of sorts--a way of saying, for their own benefit, *here's what I've tried, here's what I do well, and here's where I'm still facing some challenges.*

In addition, tying your feedback to draft goals across drafts and assignments provides students with more explicit criteria for success, and, in addition, students become more comfortable and familiar with reviewing their own (and their peers') writing using terminology specific to analyzing writing.

> **Teaching tip.** Consider using the same reflection questions (particularly polling questions) across drafts and across assignments in order to track trends in student reflection. For example, as students progress in the course and become more familiar with the writing tools, is there an increase in students' reviewing feedback prior to submitting? Do they report an increased understanding of the criteria you are using to give them feedback?

How do I--
[Add my own reflection questions to an assignment?](#)

Introducing your students to the writing tools

You teach a course in which you assign writing, and no doubt your students have completed writing assignments before. You may not find a single student who has never completed an academic writing assignment. What you may find, however, is that you have students with varying levels of experience and comfort with revising, reflecting, and engaging in peer review. What's more, your students may lack confidence in the idea that these activities will help them to become better college writers.

> **Teaching tip.** Within the Browse tab, you will find a welcome unit for your Achieve course. This folder contains a number of links you can add to the Course Plan and assign in order to ensure that students have easy access to support as they begin using Achieve.

The writing tools in Achieve, built on leading scholars' work on writer development, put student writers and their writing at the center of your course. Here's how to create enthusiasm for the tools and the process.

1. *Start your course with a candid discussion.* Explain--from your own perspective or your department's philosophy--the WHYs behind multiple drafts, reflection, and peer review, and ask students about their own experiences with these practices. You might even have them write a low-stakes response as preparation for this important class discussion.

   > **Teaching tip.** We often describe students as digital natives and assume their comfort level with technology is beyond instructors'. However, comfort with technology is context-specific, and students who may be whizzes with Instagram filters, iMovie, or Soundcloud, may be adrift if course technology is not carefully introduced to them. Couple unfamiliarity with course technologies with students' grade anxiety, and you may find that students approach course technology with caution. Try to incorporate specific references to the features of the course technology when you introduce assignments to students.

2. *Introduce Achieve as a tool that makes expectations clear.* First, each assignment sits side-by-side with a rubric, a grid that describes expectations for a successful final paper. Show students your first assignment and the accompanying rubric so that they know what skills they're shooting for right from the beginning. Second, each draft of an assignment will have very specific goals, which you decide. The draft goals allow you to scaffold the instruction and help writers to focus their efforts. Show students an example of the draft goals you've created for your first assignment, emphasizing that the tool will help you and other reviewers to give writers very specific, manageable, actionable feedback.

   > **Teaching tip.** Walk through an assignment page with students so that they understand where information about your expectations lives in the context of the

course space. Try an FDOC assignment to increase student familiarity with the elements of the writing tools early in the course.

3. *Introduce Achieve as a tool that will support students before, during, and after they write.* A clear assignment, an accompanying rubric, and draft goals help writers get started. Make sure students also know that as they write, they will have access to trusted content about strong thesis statements, useful evidence, ways to integrate sources, models for editing comma mistakes, and more--connected to the writing tools so that they never have to scramble to find answers. Show students how easy it is to search the e-book. Use a scavenger hunt, and make a game out of it! Finally, a self-directed revision plan puts students into action, helping them to prioritize and accomplish revision tasks with a familiar *to do list* type of tool.

4. *Introduce Achieve as a tool that teaches them how to reflect on their writing* for the purpose of improving their writing. Reflecting on the challenges and accomplishments of writing is critical to transferring knowledge about writing to other situations in which we're expected to write. Research shows us that this is so. With every assignment, students will be invited to reflect with starter sentences such as "The most challenging part of this assignment was . . ." and "One idea I want to develop further is . . .," which serve as valuable models for how students can begin to carry their learning from one draft to the next and one assignment to the next.

5. *Introduce Achieve as a tool that makes peer review easier, more concrete, and less awkward.* Since you create peer review groups, students don't have to fumble to find partners. What's more, since peer review comments are tied to draft goals, peer reviewers are never at a loss; instead they're engaged in a concrete task of assessing drafts with a set of specific expectations. And since drafts and comments live in the product, students don't have to worry about finding attachments, keeping track of hard copies, or deciphering (or defending!) scribbly handwriting. Conveniently, Achieve helps students to focus on global concerns such as organization and main ideas--and helps you to promote the value of rethinking over fixing for early drafts. Because students use the same tools as their instructors to review their peers' writing, instructors have the opportunity to model for students best practices for giving feedback, further scaffolding peer review to increase the usefulness of peer feedback.

   Teaching tip. One of the most powerful features of Achieve's Writing Tools is that students use the same interface to provide feedback to their peers that their instructors use to give feedback to students. Use the feedback tools to model for students what good feedback looks like, and when you introduce peer review to students, remind them of the purpose of Draft Goals so that they are well-equipped to focus on meaningful elements of the peers' writing.

   Teaching tip. After you've finalized your writing assignments, consider browsing the Content Library for resources that align with the Draft Goals for your assignments.

Even if you don't want to assign these resources to students, you can add units to your Course Plan that provide students with additional instruction on the Draft Goals.

How do I--
[Introduce my students to Achieve writing assignments?](#)
[Familiarize students with the steps to submit a writing assignment?](#)

Using the feedback tools: first time tips

There's no doubt about it: Providing student writers with useful and specific feedback is one of the most labor-intensive parts of teaching. Research suggests a meaningful relationship between feedback and learning, however. In many ways, responding to student writers and their writing, in the words of Nancy Sommers, "extends the work of the classroom" and invites a dialogue about writing that is sometimes not present in classroom interactions.

When students submit drafts in Achieve, you will use powerful feedback tools to respond to your writers and their writing.

Preparing to provide feedback. When you start your review of a student's draft, you see the draft itself in the large text editor in the center of the screen, but you also have access to additional information that may be useful as you provide feedback. First, you can view the draft goals, which can help you remember to make your feedback specific to the goals that you have set for the draft, whether it's an earlier draft or a later draft. Second, you see the student's reflection, which gives you a sense of how he or she is feeling about the draft and whether or not the student has a firm grasp of your expectations.

Using the feedback tools to respond to the draft. It's always a good idea to read a draft through once before writing any feedback. This way, you get a sense of the arc of the draft and the scope of the student's thinking.

> **Teaching tip**. More feedback doesn't necessarily equal better feedback. Remember that establishing goals for each draft is designed to help students avoid cognitive overload by encouraging them to focus on only a few areas. You may want to try adding only a few comments to early drafts in Achieve. As you and your students become more familiar with the tools, you will eventually find the right formula for providing feedback that balances thoughtful critique with evident application of that critique in students' revisions.

Instructors can leave three types of feedback in Achieve:
- Tie a comment to a **Draft Goal**. When you connect your feedback with specific success criteria for the draft, students are better able to organize their revisions around specific issues rather than addressing feedback as if it was disconnected from the outcomes of the assignment. In addition, when students review feedback aligned with draft goals, they will also be able to access related resources to help them develop greater proficiency with the topic.
- Use **Editing Marks** to mark surface-level errors.
- Leave an **open comment**.

Commenting on student writing in Achieve is easy.

1. Choose a type of feedback you would like to give.

2. Choose a category for the feedback--a draft goal, an editing mark, or an open comment.
3. Choose a level. Leveling comments will help students look past any subjectivity present in the language of the comment and help them overcome confusion about what feedback they need to prioritize. In addition, leveling determines the color coding for the highlight (green for "Nice Job!" and orange for "Needs Work" and "Needs Extensive Revision"), making it easy for students scan their drafts and prioritize the feedback they add to their revision plans. (Editing marks are not leveled because they are intended to help speed up the process of giving quick, corrective feedback.)
4. Add a comment. Remember that your comment is supported by additional scaffolding present in the tool. For editing marks, you may wish to forego a comment in favor of relying on the definition of the error already provided as well as the additional resource links that will help the student further investigate how to address the error.

As you save your comments, you can see them line up alongside the student's draft.

You have the option to leave an end comment. When students review your feedback, they will see this end comment at the top of their draft (similar to how instructors are first presented with students' reflections). The end comment can therefore be a useful tool to provide feedback to the student's personal reflection about the assignment or feedback on an overall question such as whether the student took a risk that paid off, whether a student seem to struggle or excel with this particular draft, or whether a student might adjust a habit (notetaking, brainstorming, re-reading) before revising.

> **Teaching tips**. To make the most of the tool and the subsequent dialogue with students, consider these useful tips:
> - Be sure your feedback is appropriate to the stage of drafting (comments will probably be more developmental/global in an earlier draft and more tuned in to specific evidence and editing concerns in a later draft).
> - Be sure your feedback is connected to the draft goals that you've established. Not only will students benefit from being able to see patterns across categories of feedback, but draft goals are connected to recommended content that will help students develop strategies for revision.
> - Acknowledge what's going well or already strong in addition to what needs strengthening.
> - Acknowledge the student's answers to the reflection questions.
> - Use your student's first name in at least one comment.
> - When there's an opportunity to use language your student would recognize from class, take it.
> - Don't spend time teaching grammar or punctuation lessons through open comments; use the editing marks, conveniently provided in Achieve.

How do I--
Change a student's grade on a writing assignment?
Create and modify editing marks?

Score a rubric?

Add an end comment?

Return feedback to students?

Enable students to resubmit a draft?

Centering revision in students' writing processes

Students come from all different kinds of K-12 contexts featuring a wide range of writing pedagogies. Although many high schools in the US use some form of a writing process, you may have students who have little or no experience with real revising--a deep rethinking of one's claim and evidence, one's organization, or one's overall rhetorical approach. Students often come to college used to fixing mistakes but unsure about how to think about their writing more globally.

Achieve helps student writers to focus on global writing concerns with assignment scaffolding that prioritizes goals such as thesis, content development, reasoning, organization, and use of sources. Achieve also guides students in reflecting on comments they receive from instructor or peer reviewers and in creating a revision plan.

> **Teaching tip.** Foreground the revision plan feature by referring to it explicitly in your assignment prompts and draft instructions. If you demonstrate that you as an instructor find this feature meaningful, students are more likely to engage with it seriously.

As part of their review of a draft, students click on feedback flags--coded green for a positive comment or orange for "needs work" or "needs extensive revision"--to read comments tied both to specific areas of the draft and to the draft goals established for the assignment. Each feedback flag includes, in addition to a comment, links to helpful pages in the e-book and--if the revision plan has been enabled for the draft--an invitation to create a "Note to self." These notes allow a student to reflect on the feedback and then become action items in a student's revision plan. For example, a student might see an orange feedback flag related to the draft goal *Evidence*, which reads:
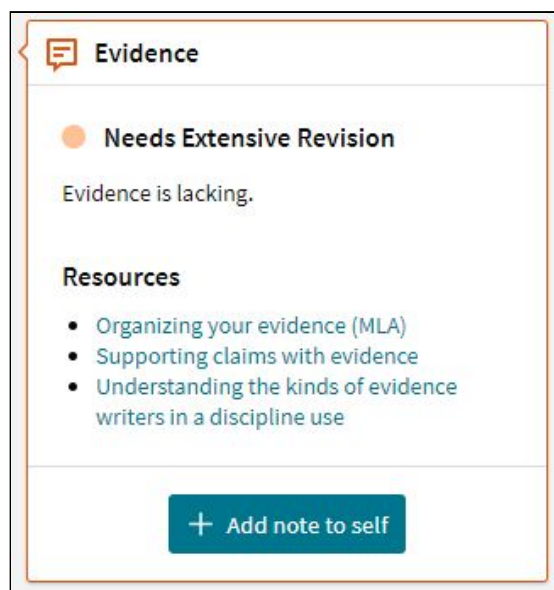
When a **student** adds a "note to self", the student can then review the draft goal, level, comment, and related content and add strategies for addressing the feedback in the next draft:

Once a student chooses to start the final draft, the revision plan sits side-by-side with the space in which students write and functions as a checklist to move students through the revision. The revision plan keeps the student's focus on the draft goals.

> **Teaching tip.** If you conference with students between drafts, consider having them complete revision plans prior to their conference. Use the revision plan as a starting point to discuss students' strategies for improving their next draft.

Achieve's student-directed revision plan helps writers take ownership of their writing process, identify their personal areas of strength and challenge, and make progress on high-priority rhetorical revisions--all of which foster the transfer of writing skills from one assignment to the next.

As students work on additional drafts, they are able to access previous drafts and all feedback on those drafts. When students review prior submissions as they draft, they are able to keep prior feedback in the front of their minds and try strategies for working with that feedback.

How do I--

[Add instructor and peer feedback to my revision plan (for students)?](#)

[Edit my revision plan (for students)?](#)

[See a student's revision plan?](#)

Incorporating Source Check to teach and reinforce ethical scholarship

Many students and instructors are familiar with using plagiarism detection software. It is often an appealing feature of a campus Learning Management System. However, the perception of these tools among teachers of writing is often that they focus on "catching" plagiarism so that it can be appropriately punished instead of addressing the underlying issues of *why* a student might have plagiarized.

Writing instructors know that students plagiarize for any number of reasons--from mechanical issues to patchwriting to insufficient paraphrase. Those reasons often stem from students' lack of familiarity with the rules of scholarship. The Source Check feature integrated into Achieve aims to uncover instances of potential plagiarism while providing students with more information about the possible issues present in their writing. Instructors can allow students to scan their papers for potential plagiarism *before* they submit them for review, creating opportunities for students to learn how to be ethical scholars in the context of their own writing.

Using Achieve, you can incorporate Source Check into timely lessons on academic integrity and responsible use of sources, core topics in the writing classroom.

Set up Source Check for a writing assignment. When you build or customize a writing assignment in Achieve, you will see an option to enable Source Check for that assignment. When Source Check is enabled, you can create global settings for that assignment. You can adjust the types of matches Source Check scans for and choose to include or exclude certain elements of a student's writing (e.g., direct quotations). You can also designate whether you want students to be able to run a Source Check on their drafts prior to submission. By default, students can run up to two scans before they submit their drafts for review . Upon submission, you can require an additional scan.

Adjust the settings for specific drafts. For any draft, you can decide whether or not you want to override your global settings for pre-submission and post-submission scans. For example, if you only want to scan on submission for the final draft of an assignment, you can adjust the settings on earlier drafts to disable scans for all drafts prior to the final.

Reviewing Source Check data on a student's draft. When a draft includes a scan on submission, the results of that scan will be integrated into the draft when you open it for review. On the review screen, you will see high-level information on the results of the Source Check scan:
- **The Similarity Analysis score.** This is the overall percentage of the student's draft that was flagged for potential issues with plagiarism.
- **The Match Category breakdown.** Source Check scans for three categories of match. Exact Match flags verbatim language from another source. Close Wording

flags nearly identical wording. Close Structure identifies areas where a student may have replaced another writer's language with synonyms while maintaining the underlying sentence structure.
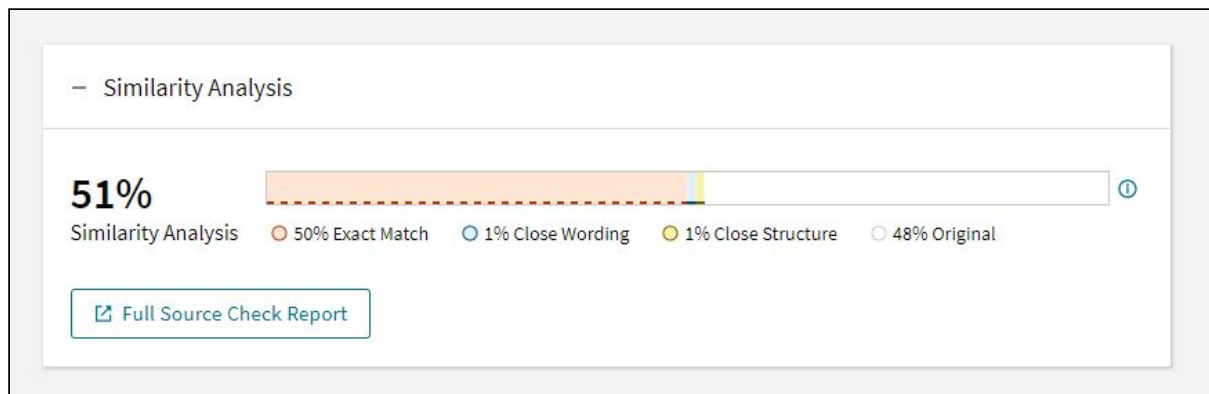
Clicking "Full Source Check Report" will open a new tab that presents the student's drafts with areas flagged by Source Check highlighted. The full Source Check report looks the same for instructors and students. The right-hand panel will show sources from the web and the Source Check database that triggered the flag. You can expand these sources to review them side-by-side with the student's draft.

The right-hand panel will also include a section titled "How Can I Avoid Potential Plagiarism?" This section recommends resources from Achieve that students can review as they determine how to address any issues in their draft. Resources are curated to correspond with common reasons why students might have triggered a particular match type, making it easier for students to understand different root causes that might be evident in their writing.

Teaching tip. Enabling Source Check prior to submission is intended to help you turn potential plagiarism into a learning opportunity for students. Consider adding reflection questions to your assignments that invite students to discuss what they're learning about ethical scholarship from reviewing Source Check reports. Use of reflection can help surface additional areas where students may be unclear on how to avoid plagiarism.

How do I--
Set up Source Check on a writing assignment?
Understand the information in a Source Check report?

Using peer review to model giving and receiving feedback

When we empower students to seek feedback from and offer feedback to one another, we invite them to be *writers* and not just students of writing. Opening such a dialogue in our classes promotes learning and, as Nancy Sommers has said, "[t]he more students read of one another's work, the more they learn; the more they learn, the better they write."

The writing tools in Achieve allow you to create assignments that include peer review as part of the process. In the past you may or may not have had luck with peer review; Achieve helps facilitate this tested and trusted pedagogy:

- Since you create peer review groups, students don't have to fumble to find partners or awkwardly match themselves up with classmates.
- Since peer review comments are tied to draft goals, peer reviewers are never at a loss; instead they're engaged in a concrete task of assessing drafts with a set of specific expectations.
- Since drafts and comments live in the product, students don't have to worry about finding attachments, keeping track of hard copies, or deciphering (or defending!) scribbly handwriting.

   Teaching Tip. Familiarize students with the requirements of peer review before you begin the peer review assignment. Students will be unfamiliar with the functionality, and an explicit walkthrough will better prepare them to work with the peer review tools. Here are some points you may want to cover:
   1. In the Assignments list, you will see two dates for peer review. The first is the date and time by which you must **submit** your draft for review. The second is the date by which you are expected to have completed **reviewing** your peers
   2. You must review every person in your group.
   3. If the peer review draft includes Draft Goals, remind students that they should give their peers feedback on those areas of their writing. Students often rely heavily on open comments when they don't understand the purpose of the Draft Goals or if they lack confidence that the feedback tied to those goals is relevant.
   4. For online and asynchronous peer review, students may worry when peers appear not to do their work. Assure students that you will monitor the work as it progresses. You can remove students from groups if they are holding up other students' progress.

Conveniently, Achieve helps students to focus on global concerns such as organization and main ideas--and helps you to promote the value of rethinking over fixing for early drafts. Because students use the same tools as their instructors to review their peers' writing, instructors have the opportunity to model for students best practices for giving feedback, further scaffolding peer review to increase the usefulness of peer feedback. Students do not have access to the editing marks menu, which encourages them to leave aside surface-level comments, which may introduce confusion over grammatical rules and which don't translate to better writing.

Teaching Tip. If you typically have first drafts due and conduct peer review in class on the same day, your draft order sequence should be:

Draft 1: Peer review
Draft 2: Instructor review

In Achieve, you cannot currently conduct peer review and instructor review simultaneously, so if you're used to doing so with pen and paper submissions, the suggested sequence above will mean that students submit their papers for peer review, review peers, review peer feedback and build a revision plan (if enabled), and then submit another version of their draft for your review. You will set a separate due date for this draft based on how soon after completing peer review you want students to submit drafts for your review.

Evaluating students as peer reviewers

From the writing assignment submissions view, you can easily track students' peer review submissions. If you click the icon on "View," you'll be taken to a screen that will present you with an aggregated view of all comments that a student has left on every draft their peers have submitted. You can use this screen as peer review progresses to quickly assess the quality of peer feedback. If you like, you can leave students a comment on that aggregate page to praise their feedback or offer an intervention for next time.

Teaching Tip. You can leave students comments on their peer review at any point during the process, not just after peer review has concluded. Try using this feature to offer nudges to students to improve the quality of the feedback they're giving.

Tips for managing peer review

When you manage peer review in Achieve, you will want to consider how flexible you need your groupings to be in order to accommodate common peer review scenarios such as student absence or lack of preparation. Follow these tips to ensure peer review proceeds smoothly.

How do I create groups?
- Create a group set in the People tab of Achieve. Add students to groups within the group set.
- Before the start of peer review, associate the group set with your assignment by clicking "..." next to the assignment and selecting "Edit Activity Details." Many instructors find it beneficial to wait until closer to the start of peer review to set up groups.

What happens when students are absent, unprepared, or negligent?
- *For face to face peer review:* When you set up your peer review groups, we recommend you create an extra group to serve as a "parking lot" for students who are absent or unprepared. This will allow students to complete peer review in class, and you can require any absent or unprepared students to complete peer review as homework.
- When you assign a draft for peer review, you will give it two due dates. The first due date dictates when the students should submit their draft for peer review. The second due date is the date you want students to have completed reviews of their peers.
- *Before the peer review due date has passed,* students will not be able to move on to the next draft of the assignment until they have reviewed **and** been review by all members of their group.
- *After the peer review due date has passed,* all students will be able to move on to the next draft, regardless of whether they have completed all tasks required for peer review. Students who have incomplete peer review tasks can always return to the peer review phase to continue their work on peer review.

➢ **Adapting for online peer review.** If peer review is online and asynchronous, consider that until the peer review due date is passed, students may be blocked from proceeding if they or members of their groups have incomplete peer review tasks. We recommend setting the due dates for peer review with that in mind.

How do I--
Create and edit peer review groups?
Manage student progress on peer review when another student has not completed all peer review tasks?
Give feedback to peers on a writing assignment (for students)?

Using the Reports and Trends & Insights tabs to reflect on your teaching and feedback practices

Achieve is a learning tool for your students, but it also functions as a teaching tool that affords you opportunities to reflect on your own teaching and feedback practices. Both the Performance Dashboard--available from the main course page--and the Trends & Insights tab--available within an individual assignment--can provide actionable information about how your students are responding to course expectations.

The Insights Snapshot and Reports Dashboard
From the My Course tab, you can access an insights snapshot, which will give you information about whole-class performance.

The first insight available is called a *reflection snapshot*, which will give you a sense of your students' level of confidence in understanding the most recent assignment and the criteria that will be used to evaluate their submissions. Research has shown a high correlation between students' understanding of how they will be evaluated and their success on an assignment. This insight will surface the number of students who indicate they **do not** understand the criteria that will be used to give them feedback.
- A rating of, for example, 0% to 30% would tell you that most of your students have understood the expectations for the assignment and have understood specific criteria for success on the draft.
- If the rating is higher, you have an opportunity to think about how to clarify the language of the assignment or the evaluation criteria so that students feel more confident as they submit drafts through Achieve.

A second insight on the My Course tab provides data on the top Draft Goals for which students have created revision tasks. This insight will help you see at a glance whether students are
- On track in building their revision plans
- Focusing on important areas for their next draft or assignment.

If you click the Reports tab on the left-side menu, you will see a number of additional reports on course performance, including one that will inform you whether students are reviewing your feedback. It's no doubt that you've spent time reading students' writing and offering feedback against the goals of the assignment for the purpose of helping students strengthen their writing; so you want to make sure students are making time to read the feedback before and as they revise.
- Any categories where **no** students have reviewed your feedback will be shaded pink so that you can easily tell which topics students are missing out on as they plan for revision.
- If you've left feedback related to evidence 14 times within a set of drafts and you see that 12 or 13 of the comments were reviewed, you can tell that students are, in general, embracing the writing process and seeking to strengthen their writing.

- If you see that the "Reviewed by student" number is fairly low--0 to 7--you can plan to have a class conversation about the purposes and advantages of feedback.

You might even take the time in class to show students the dashboard that you can see and make clear your expectation that they will review all of the feedback on a draft before they revise or move on to the next assignment.

The Trends & Insights Tab

Once you have assigned a draft and gathered submissions from your students, you can see trends and insights related to that particular assignment. Within an assignment, scroll past the prompt and the rubric, and then look for a bar with three links: Drafts, Student Submissions, and Trends & Insights. Once you choose Trends & Insights, you are able to toggle among several drafts or between a draft and final paper.

 For one or more drafts
- The first row of information lets you see how many students are making progress on the assignment. In a class of 20 students, for example, you may see that 2 students have not started the assignment, 2 have drafts that are in progress, 8 have submitted drafts which you have not reviewed, and 8 have submitted drafts that you have already reviewed. While it's an easy way to see students' progress, it's also, conveniently, a way to see your own progress in reading and responding to drafts!
- The Student Reflection Responses will indicate the degree to which students understand the assignment criteria. The value is given as a percent who strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, or are neutral about the statement "I know the criteria that will be used for giving me feedback." A high confidence value, according to research, can often predict success on an assignment. You can click on the individual reflection questions to see how individual students responded. For free response reflections, the Student Reflection Responses area also shows the average length of students' responses to the assigned reflection questions. If you drill further into this report, you will see a word cloud based on the frequency of terms used on students' reflections. You can also see a list of response length for each student, arranged from longest to shortest.
- The Draft Goals area lets you know for each goal the number of comments added at each level. For example, you may discover that for the draft goal "Paragraph development," you have added 3 "Nice job" comments, 4 "Needs work" comments, and 1 "Needs Extensive revision" comment. This information helps you to see which topics you may need to review in class or in conferences. Clicking on a specific draft goal gives you an at-a-glance list that shows how individual students performed on that goal, in case you can't remember which writers earned the "Nice job" comment!
- The Editing Marks area summarizes your comments by editing topic and can be helpful for making adjustments to classroom instruction or for deciding which additional practice activities could be assigned in Achieve. Again, clicking on the specific editing mark can give you a snapshot of which students' drafts were lacking in that area.

For a final paper

- See the previous section for advice on how to read the Progress Bar, Student Reflection Responses, and Editing Marks information.
- For a final paper, Achieve's Trends & Insights tab allows you to see Rubric Scores at a glance. This area of the tab shows you how the class as a whole has performed against the rubric you've established for the assignment. You will see numerical data paired with goals for the assignment; for example, you might see that the class average was 3.0/4.0 for Organization, which indicates that on average, the class "Meets expectations" for that goal. (A 1.0 indicates"Falls below expectations"; a 2.0 indicates "Nearly meets expectations"; and a 4.0 indicates "Exceeds expectations.") Having access to this information across a class can help you set goals for the next assignment and can indicate where you might make adjustments in your lesson plans, class activities, or course readings in the coming weeks. (Note: if you have altered the scale of the rubric, the scale in the Trends & Insights tab will reflect your customizations.)

  If you chose *no rubric* when setting up the assignment, the Rubric Scores panel will not appear.

How can I use the Reports tab and Trends & Insights reports to inform my teaching and feedback practices?

The reports in Achieve are especially powerful because they are based on *instructor feedback.* Your own feedback practices drive what appears in these reports, which means you can use them to develop and inform your own instructional practices. Here are some questions you might consider investigating using the reports provided in Achieve.

- *How is student performance distributed across the scales of my rubric?* If you use the rubric report to dig deeper into each criterion, you may find patterns that help you think about interventions for particular groups of students.
- *How should I be grouping students for peer review?* The reports in Achieve (in particular the draft goals and rubric reports) may inform how you group students with complementary needs or abilities.
- *Am I overcommenting (or undercommenting) on certain areas?* Achieve will aggregate the number of comments you're leaving by Draft Goal or Editing Mark, making it easy for you to reflect on the number of types of comments you're leaving on student drafts.
- *Are there patterns of error present that require intervention?* If you notice an abundance of editing marks tied to particular topics, you might consider assigning additional content in Achieve to provide opportunities for students to practice prior to handing in the next draft. Are you using diagnostics? You might use the Reports Tab to track whether students whose writing shows certain patterns of error are making progress in their study plan.

How do I--

[Find Trends & Insights for a writing assignment?](#)

Further Reading

The Power of Feedback

Perhaps no single piece of research is more fundamental to the creation of Achieve's Writing Tools than, "The Power of Feedback," by John Hattie and Helen Temperley. We wish we could reproduce the article and republish it here, but we cannot. Please make the effort to find it on the Internet or through Sage publishing.

This article provides a conceptual analysis of feedback and reviews the evidence related to its impact on learning and achievement. This evidence shows that although feedback is among the major influences, the type of feedback and the way it is given can be differentially effective. A model of feedback is then proposed that identifies the particular properties and circumstances that make it effective, and some typically thorny issues are discussed, including the timing of feedback and the effects of positive and negative feedback. Finally, this analysis is used to suggest ways in which feedback can be used to enhance its effectiveness in classrooms.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). "The Power of Feedback." *Review of Educational Research,* 77(1), 81-112.

Responding to Student Writers

Dr. Nancy Sommers has been teaching and researching at Harvard University for over three decades. Her experience as the principal investigator of the Harvard Study of Undergraduate Writing and her work with future teachers of English guide her understanding of how to effectively respond to student writers. It would be impossible to highlight all the points of intersection between Achieve's Writing Tools and her research because of how aligned the two are. This handbook is a must have for teachers who want a practical, experienced-based, approach to responding to student writers. We cannot recommend this book enough to teachers who want to understand how to respond effectively to student writers in ways that will help them grow as writers.

Purchase it here

Read perspectives on the text

From Objectives to Feedback

This book is a valuable resource for understanding the link between the instructional objectives a teacher creates and a student's probability of learning. Achieve's Writing Tools helps this process be seamless with the way assignments are built and the ongoing support. From Chapter 1:

"Being in a classroom without knowing the direction for learning is similar to taking a purposeless trip to an unfamiliar city. Teachers can set objectives to ensure that

students' journeys with learning are purposeful. When teachers identify and communicate clear learning objectives, they send the message that there is a focus for the learning activities to come. This reassures students that there is a reason for learning and provides teachers with a focal point for planning instruction. Providing feedback specific to learning objectives helps students improve their performance and solidify their understanding."

Classroom Instruction That Works, by Ceri B. Dean, Elizabeth Ross Hubbell, Howard Pitler and Bj Stone. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Read Chapter 1 and learn more about this book here.

Cognitive Load Theory

A key feature of Achieve's Writing Tools is the limit on the number of instructional objectives a teacher can populate in the tools for any given assignment. This feature is based on the research (provided in the link below) on cognitive overload and its impact on instructional design. At an intuitive level, we all know that it is difficult to learn many things simultaneously; we apply that concept to teachers providing feedback to students: too many writing skills to focus on means too few skills get sustained feedback. Pass, Renkl, and Swiller published this research in the journal, Educational Psychologist.

Students and Their Views on Feedback

From the introduction: This article seeks to examine the notion of written feedback on assignments and argue that this feedback process is more complex than is sometimes acknowledged.

Despite its importance, the literature on feedback reveals that students are often dissatisfied with the feedback they receive, in terms of lacking specific advice to improve being difficult to interpret and confidence or having a potentially negative impact on students' self-perception.

NCTE Beliefs about the Teaching of Writing

This document provides a clear foundation for all teachers of writing. Achieve's Writing Tools support each of the beliefs both in the formative process described and in the challenges that must be met by both teacher and learner. The underlying belief in the capacity of teachers to improve student writing in critical. Access this belief statement on the NCTE site.

Article by the Writing Study Group of the NCTE Executive Committee, November 2004

Organic Writing Assessment: Dynamic Criteria Mapping in Action

In this book, Kelly Gallagher argues convincingly that the role of the writing teacher must evolve to meet the demands of today's students. Consistent with Achieve's Writing Tools, the author suggests how to be more effective in giving feedback to students. He also distinguishes between craft and editing and how teachers should teach and provide feedback to students. We think this book is indispensable to today's thoughtful writing teacher.

You can find more about this book on [Amazon](#).

Messy Editing Marks and Other Obstacles to Productive Feedback

Teachers rely on a combination of written comments and conferences to provide feedback and guidance with student work-in-progress, but White conducted research to challenge the productiveness of this effort. Finding included that written comments make it too easy to mark every element that needs work rather than highlight a few key points for the student to focus on. Teachers often struggled to limit comments and to avoid overloading students and making feedback ineffective, as this research other composition studies show. Students get overwhelmed by extensive comments.

White, Edward M. 2006. *Assigning, Responding, Evaluating: A Writing Teacher's Guide*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

[Download this book](#) for free on our English Community site.

The Disconnect Between Feedback and Revision
Clements (2006) suggests that the disconnect between feedback and revision is complicated by a number of factors, including the legibility of handwriting and editing symbols which sometimes read more like chicken scratch than a clear message. Students usually did their best to interpret the comment rather than ask for clarification. Other times, students made revision decisions based on a formula that weighed the amount of effort in relation to the grade they would receive. In other words, feedback that was easier to address gained priority, and feedback that required deep thinking and a great deal of cognitive work was dismissed. Sometimes these decisions were made out of sheer laziness. Other times students' lack of engagement with feedback was a strategic triage move to balance the priorities of school, work, and home life. These findings motivated us to find more effective ways to provide feedback that students could understand and apply to improve their work.

Clements, Peter. 2006. *Teachers' Feedback in Context: A Longitudinal Study of L2 Writing Classrooms*. PhD diss., University of Washington.
Access Restricted Version
https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/handle/1773/9322

Writing in the Social Studies Classroom and Across the Curriculum

The importance of written communication cannot be overstated. Writing is an important tool for clarifying and organizing ideas. It is a process, one that can bring order to confusion, give shape to intuition, and provoke unexpected connections. Through writing, we can better plumb our desires, manifest our memories, consolidate knowledge, and relate to a larger world. Good writing skills are an integral part of being an effective communicator, and essential to one's academic and career success. In this master's project, Phillip J. Sloan provides a concise literature review and analysis of the urgent call to improve the teaching of writing in Social Studies classes 6-12.

A Master's Project by Philip J. Sloan

Reclaiming Assessment

Chris Gallagher articulates a vision for assessment that sees the information (data) as a tool to guide instruction. In the model of informative assessment, this vision suggests the opportunity to treat assessment as a necessary part of the feedback process teachers should implement in the classroom. The author is NOT suggesting more standardized tests, but rather a systematic way to provide an understanding of what students know and can do that should drive curriculum and instruction.

[Find it at Amazon here](#).

How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students

Susan Brookhart describes a range of strategies for giving effective feedback, including strategies for feedback to students about their writing (Chapter 3). This book approaches the topic from a hands-on, classroom approach. Achieve's Writing Tools facilitate the approach she describes and seeks to help teachers be more effective and efficient implementing her strategies.

You can learn more about this book by visiting ASCD [at this link](#).

Assessment as Learning, Lorna Earle

Lorna Earle's thinking about assessment challenges us to do better with what we already do. She argues that as we more carefully and purposefully create assessments, we transform the assessment model into one of exploration and definition. Particularly applicable to Achieve's Writing Tools, chapter 3 of her book defines and examines the differences among assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning. For educators seeking to redefine how they implement their curriculum, define meaningful learning targets, and create instructional goals this book is a great resource.

You can read portions of this book [HERE](#).