

PLATO Course ACT WorkKeys—Writing—Leveled

Course Overview

The development of PLATO Course ACT WorkKeys—Writing—Leveled aligns Plato Courseware with the strands and topics assessed on the ACT WorkKeys Test for Writing. The course is divided into five levels based on the complexity of the concepts covered. The modules within each level target the essential concepts as assessed on the ACT WorkKeys Test for Writing. Each level in this course is divided into 2 sections—Grammar and Mechanics and Writing Strategies. This course focuses on developing skills like critical thinking and problem-solving techniques, which apply to day-to-day situations. In this course, you will find a variety of lessons and activities to improve your knowledge of these areas.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will:

- Match verbs with their subjects.
- Add missing forms of "be" and "have" when they are missing from a sentence.
- Match verbs with compound subjects.
- Discover how to fix double negatives.
- Choose correctly between "good" or "well" and "bad" and "badly."
- Capitalize names of places, events, and titles.
- Understand how to use a possessive to show ownership.
- Use commas in dates, places, and addresses.
- Think through a writing assignment to be sure you understand what it is asking and think about your audience when you write.
- Choose your words correctly and replace repeated words and phrases with good substitute words.
- Organize your thoughts into paragraphs, find topics and separate them into paragraphs, and create a complete paragraph about each topic.
- Use a map to organize and generate ideas.
- Explore how to use a checklist to proofread your work.
- Write conclusions that summarize your main ideas.
- Find and fix repeated sentence lengths in your writing.
- Study parts of verbs, irregular verbs, verb tenses, and learn to choose the correct tense.
- Learn about concrete nouns, abstract nouns, and collective nouns.
- Practice what you know about plurals.

- Discover pronouns and their types.
- Study adverbs, adjectives, and their types.
- Understand sentences and types of sentences.
- Explore negative words and use them correctly in a sentence.
- Understand confusing verbs and choose the correct verb form to use in a sentence.
- Study when to use and when not to use “-ly” modifiers and fix misplaced modifiers.
- Study how to use commas and quotation marks correctly in a sentence.
- Write for assignments that don’t specify an audience.
- Determine your thesis and add details to it.
- Take notes to develop your ideas in writing and link your ideas with the help of transition words.
- Write essays in a formal style and avoid emotional and opinionated writing.
- Label evidence that supports your argument.
- Identify pronouns and use them as subjects, direct objects, and predicate nominatives.
- Study regular and irregular verbs and use them to form six verb tenses.
- Correct sentence fragments and run-on sentences.
- Explore synonyms, antonyms, and homophones.
- Explore the three rules of spelling and the rules of spelling and forming plurals and possessives.
- Correctly use end punctuations in a sentence.
- Study what verb forms to use with “each” and “every.”
- Correctly use “among” and “between” and pair “or” with “either” and “nor” with “neither.”
- Write strong introductions.
- Combine sentences so that your writing flows well.
- Identify perspectives that are different from your own and handle them fairly.
- Study strategies for using examples in order to clarify your ideas.
- Understand how nouns and pronouns agree in gender and number.
- Recognize a prepositional phrase and use it in a sentence.
- Use articles, adjectives, and adverbs correctly in a sentence.
- Choose the verb that agrees in number with the subject of a sentence, and choose a pronoun that agrees with the noun it refers to.
- Discover possessive pronouns and adjectives and comparative adjectives and adverbs.
- Study clauses and their types.
- Capitalize scientific and computer terms.
- Discover topic sentences and unnecessary sentences.
- Study paragraph development and organization.
- Emphasize your ideas using parallel structures.
- Use a checklist to proofread your work.
- Identify and rewrite inflated language,
- Review phrases and clauses.
- Correct inappropriate language and word choice errors.
- Use figures of speech in your writing.
- Avoid predicate-subject mismatch.
- Choose the correct word between amount/number, capitol/capital, and imply/infer.

- Review your own work to write stronger introductions and conclusions.
- Support your arguments with additional evidence.
- Illustrate your ideas with visual aids.
- Vary your sentence structure and proofread for college.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Complete basic operations with presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Docs presentation.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- pencils or ink pens
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Course Structure

Writing – Level 1

Summary

This level focuses on basic grammar skills. It starts with teaching you about nouns and verbs and their kinds. You will learn about sentences, plurals, unusual plurals, and the use of capital letters. Further, you will understand the basics of punctuations and match regular and irregular verbs with their subjects. When “be” and “have” are missing from sentences, you will learn to add them in their various forms. The modules in this level will teach you how to match verbs with subjects and compound subjects. You will fix double negatives and learn to choose between good/well and bad/badly. You will study how to capitalize. You will also learn to show ownership by using the possessive combination of an apostrophe and an s, as well as learn when to use commas in dates, places, and addresses.

Writing – Level 2

Summary

This level starts with teaching you about regular, irregular verbs, and tenses. You will study concrete, abstract, and collective nouns; along with what you already know about plurals. You will learn about personal pronouns, personal pronouns with ownership, and the other types of pronouns. Further, you will also study adjectives and adverbs, and ways to form and use possessives. You will then move on to studying the parts and kinds of sentences, and recognize sentences from other groups of words. You will use negative words and quotation marks correctly in a sentence. The modules in this level will teach you about the three pairs of confusing verbs, such as lie/lay, sit/set, and rise/raise, and choose the correct verb form to use in a sentence. Along with this, you will also practice what you already know about capital letters. You will learn to use and –ly modifiers correctly, and fix misplaced modifiers. In the latter part of the level, you will study when to use “who” and when to use “that” in a sentence and write words like “should’ve” correctly. You will understand when to use a comma before connecting words and fix sentence fragments. You will write an assignment, figure out the purpose of writing an assignment, and also develop and support arguments that do not specify an audience. You will determine your thesis, come up with a thesis, and add details to thesis that is too general. This level will make you understand how taking notes can help you develop ideas to use in writing. You will also learn the use of transition words to help you clearly link your ideas and help your readers to find out where you are going. Additionally, you will write essays in a formal style to avoid emotional and opinionated writing. Finally, you will label the evidence that supports your argument.

Writing – Level 3

Summary

This level commences with teaching you about nouns, their types, and how to use them properly. You will identify pronouns and select the correct personal or possessive pronoun to replace a noun and use pronouns as subjects, direct objects, and predicate nominatives. Additionally, you will study regular and irregular verbs and form six verb tenses using them. You will identify the subject of a sentence, which includes compound subjects. You will learn how subjects and verbs, and collective nouns and verbs work together in sentences. You will learn to find and correct sentence fragments and run-on sentences. In addition to these, you will study synonyms, antonyms, and homophones. Further, you will understand the three rules of spelling and the rules of forming and spelling plurals and possessives. You will know when to use periods, question marks, and exclamation points as end punctuations in a sentence. Additionally, you will learn about the correct usage of comma, and how to correctly punctuate sentences using semicolons, colons, dashes, hyphens, and quotation marks. You will study what verb forms to use with “each” and “every,” and what verb forms to use with phrases involving “or” and “nor”. You will study the difference between words in pairs, such as “It’s/Its”, “accept/except”, and “than/then.” Through the activities in the unit, you will study the “-ly” modifier and how to fix a mismatch between a modifier and the subject of a sentence. You will study how to use “among” and “between,” and pair “or” with “either” and “nor” with “neither.” You will also study when to use verbs in the past tense consistently.

The second part of this level starts with teaching you to write strong introductions that interest readers in your subject. You will study how to explain ideas and information from source material using your own words. Further, you will study how to combine sentences so that your writing flows well and write effective transitions that link the end of each paragraph with the beginning of the next. You will also identify perspectives that are different from your own and handle them fairly. Finally, you will study ways to arrange ideas for a paper into categories to see how to structure it and study strategies for using examples in order to clarify your ideas.

Writing – Level 4

Summary

This level also focuses on the usage of grammar. You will start with studying how nouns and pronouns agree in gender and number. You will then learn to recognize a prepositional phrase and their correct usage in a sentence. Moving on, you will study how to use articles and identify adjectives and adverbs in a sentence. You will recognize three kinds of verbal phrases, such as participle phrases, gerund phrases, and infinitive phrases. You will also learn about three pairs of confusing verbs—lie/lay, sit/set, and rise/raise—along with learning to choose the correct verb form to use in sentence. Further, you will choose the verb that agrees in number with the subject of a sentence,

and choose a pronoun that agrees with the noun to which it refers. You will learn about possessive pronouns and adjectives, and about comparative adjectives and adverbs. You will study the phrases and clauses, and their types. You will study ways to link your ideas. Additionally, you will learn about run-on sentences and sentence fragments. Then you will learn about dependent and independent clauses. You will also use commas with appositives and with linking words like “because.” Along with that, you will also learn to punctuate quotations. In the latter part of the level, you will learn to choose between confusing words, such as whose/who’s, lay/lie, sit/set, borrow/lend, and all ready/already. Finally, you will also capitalize scientific and computer terms.

The second part of the unit talks predominantly about sentences and paragraphs. It starts with teaching you about topic sentences and unnecessary sentences. You will learn about the order of sentences in paragraphs, transitional devices in paragraphs, and improving structures in paragraphs. You will also study the paragraph development and organization. You learn to anticipate counterarguments and write precisely. Further, you will emphasize your ideas using parallel structures. You will learn to proofread your work using a checklist, and identify and rewrite inflated language. Finally, you will monitor your thesis.

Writing – Level 5

Summary:

This level focuses on advanced grammar concepts. In the initial parts of the level, you review phrases and clauses, as well as correct inappropriate language and word choice errors. You will learn effective writing and to use figures of speech in your writing. You will learn about parallel sentence structures within sentences and awkward sentence structures. Also, you will use singular verbs with subjects that look plural, and use the subjunctive verb form “were.” Additionally, you will learn to avoid predicate-subject mismatch, and choose between amount/number, capitol/capital, and imply/infer. Further, you will learn to review your own work and write stronger introductions and conclusions. You will learn to support your arguments with additional evidence and learn to illustrate your ideas with visual aids. Finally, you will vary your sentence structures and proofread for college.