
Appendix F: CSAP Writing Sub-Scale Trends

CSAP incorporates the philosophy of multiple measures of a construct. All CSAP assessments are composed of multiple item types. CSAP Writing assessments consist of a mixture of multiple-choice (MC) and constructed-response (CR) items measuring the total writing proficiency and skills at various content and sub-content areas (e.g., Write Using Conventions, Paragraph Writing, Extend Writing, Grammar and Usage, etc.). CR items in CSAP take different forms and solicit varying response lengths. Compared to other statewide Writing assessments, e.g., single-prompt extended writing, the CSAP Writing assessment taps into a variety of writing skills using various item formats.

In addition to providing an overall measure of writing ability, CSAP provides sub-scores at various content standards and sub-content areas to provide more diagnostic information on the examinee's writing ability. The sub-scores are derived based on the examinee's performance on subsets of items, typically composed of a mixture of MC and CR items of various lengths. One exception is the Extended Writing sub-content area, which is measured only by a small number of CR items. It has been observed historically that the Extended Writing sub-content area is volatile and unstable across administrations. That is, the historical trends on this sub-content area have fluctuated more radically than the overall construct, the other content standards and sub-content areas. Furthermore, the trends on the sub-content area did not coincide with those on the overall test or other sub-content areas.

At the request of the CSAP TAC, a study in English Writing was conducted to explore the volatility in trends of the Extended Writing sub-content area. Writing Grade 3 does not include the Extended Writing sub-content area so the study was conducted on Grades 4-10. To conduct this study, the Paragraph Writing (SA5) and Extended Writing (SA6) sub-content areas were combined. That is, a new sub-content area was formed by collapsing the two sub-content areas and the items contributing to them. Scores for this new combined SA5/SA6 sub-content area were generated for the past 5 years (2002-2006). The results in mean and median scale scores are presented in Table F-1. Median scores were examined because sub-content scores tend to be affected unduly by extreme scores. Median scale scores are also presented in Figures F-1—F-7.

The Extend Writing/Paragraph Writing combined is more stable with the total and other sub-content median scale score trends. Due to the increased number of items in the combined sub-content area, the stability of the sub-content is improved considerably. Furthermore, the fluctuation in difficulty for the Extended Writing sub-content area has been stabilized.

**Table F-1. Mean and Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas:
Paragraph Writing and Extended Writing**

Grade	Year	N	Paragraph Writing (SA5)			Extended Writing (SA6)			Combine SA5 and SA6		
			Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD
4	2002	55488	489.1	491	72.8	504.3	486	99.3	487.6	485	60.3
4	2003	55108	486.0	479	73.5	497.4	479	91.7	486.4	486	64.7
4	2004	54546	492.4	490	65.9	516.7	505	107.6	491.9	489	59.5
4	2005	54339	493.9	486	74.3	504.1	516	98.6	490.3	488	64.8
4	2006	55640	485.6	488	66.1	509.8	495	109.6	485.9	484	60.3
5	2002	56398	503.1	503	66.0	517.8	503	105.8	501.5	501	60.4
5	2003	56822	502.6	504	72.3	530.6	500	121.1	503.6	503	65.3
5	2004	55946	505.1	500	73.5	525.4	508	107.7	506.5	505	66.4
5	2005	55191	512.4	509	70.5	542.6	525	130.2	510.1	506	65.5
5	2006	55800	513.2	511	72.7	533.2	484	114.2	513.5	511	69.4
6	2002	55632	518.3	518	76.1	527.9	529	95.2	518.2	518	68.4
6	2003	56674	521.0	521	71.2	548.7	524	123.8	522.5	523	67.5
6	2004	56744	522.7	522	73.7	558.8	547	134.6	524.2	521	70.1
6	2005	56200	531.8	527	82.8	535.7	496	106.2	529.3	528	74.0
6	2006	56097	530.6	526	82.9	541.6	490	116.2	529.0	526	76.5
7	2002	54338	543.5	541	79.8	557.7	542	106.0	543.3	541	70.3
7	2003	56609	544.3	546	78.9	580.0	554	141.4	546.9	548	73.9
7	2004	57016	546.1	543	94.4	574.4	557	147.7	545.1	542	85.5
7	2005	57201	550.7	546	90.2	552.3	503	113.6	547.7	545	82.7
7	2006	57323	550.3	548	91.5	576.9	577	145.3	549.6	549	83.8
8	2002	53466	553.9	551	85.9	585.9	586	124.3	557.5	557	76.0
8	2003	54894	555.0	556	82.4	589.7	592	136.5	557.8	558	79.4
8	2004	56410	556.1	555	90.1	575.5	583	142.1	553.9	553	84.4
8	2005	56821	558.9	557	87.4	572.1	558	127.7	558.0	555	82.1
8	2006	58095	560.1	558	87.6	556.5	552	125.0	556.2	556	83.1
9	2002	52972	563.1	563	92.0	580.6	637	121.7	564.1	564	87.2
9	2003	55540	572.1	570	98.0	610.8	593	157.0	572.9	569	90.9
9	2004	56588	571.2	569	94.8	580.1	545	94.6	571.6	572	79.7
9	2005	57703	569.2	569	96.1	576.3	524	104.9	567.9	564	84.8
9	2006	58795	569.5	570	96.1	568.4	536	105.2	566.8	561	88.0
10	2002	49009	586.8	588	96.7	606.0	580	138.4	585.9	585	88.8
10	2003	49658	591.0	583	107.6	640.6	590	185.8	588.7	583	100.0
10	2004	50756	584.0	577	96.7	588.0	537	117.2	580.6	578	84.8
10	2005	51638	579.8	576	97.5	582.0	529	111.0	577.7	575	88.2
10	2006	53754	583.6	581	101.2	586.4	523	112.1	580.8	578	91.1

Figure F-1. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 4.

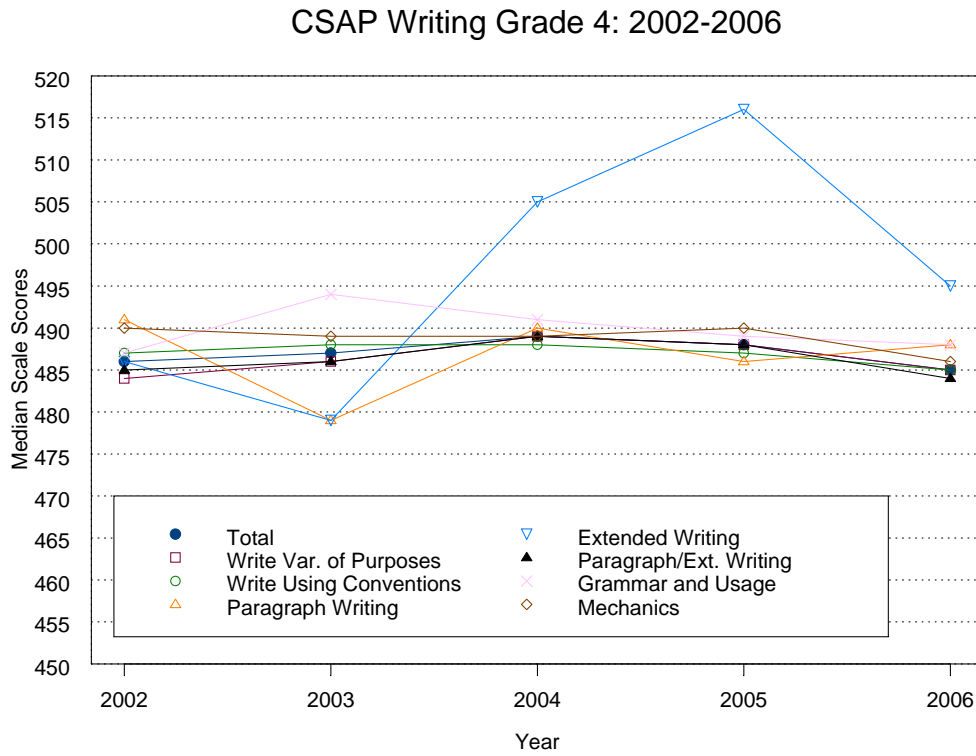


Figure F-2. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 5.

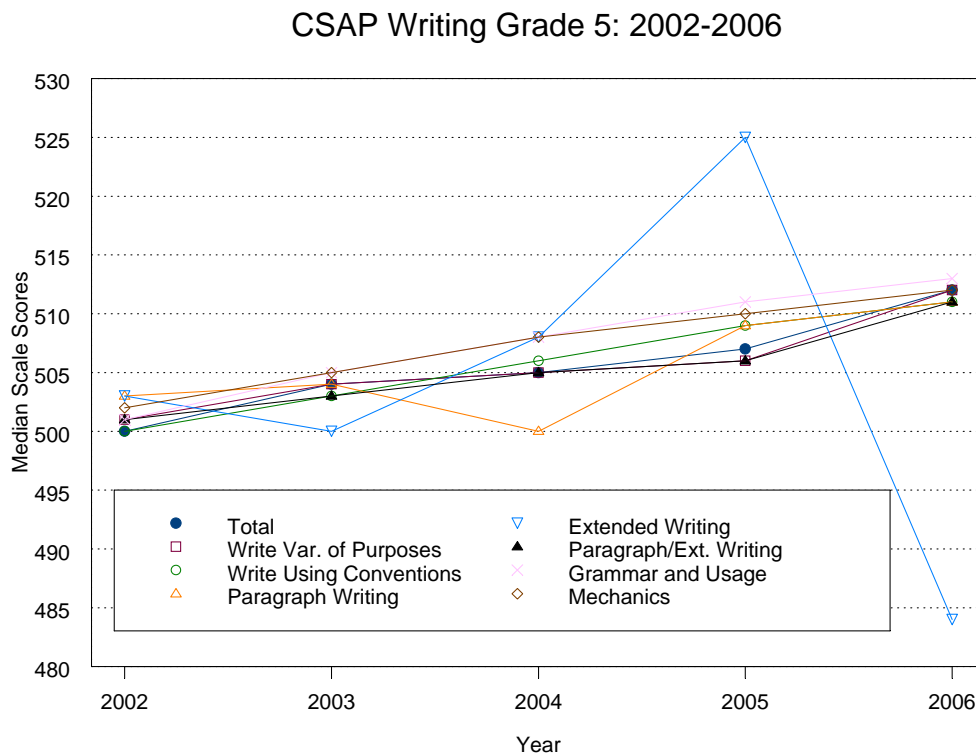


Figure F-3. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 6.

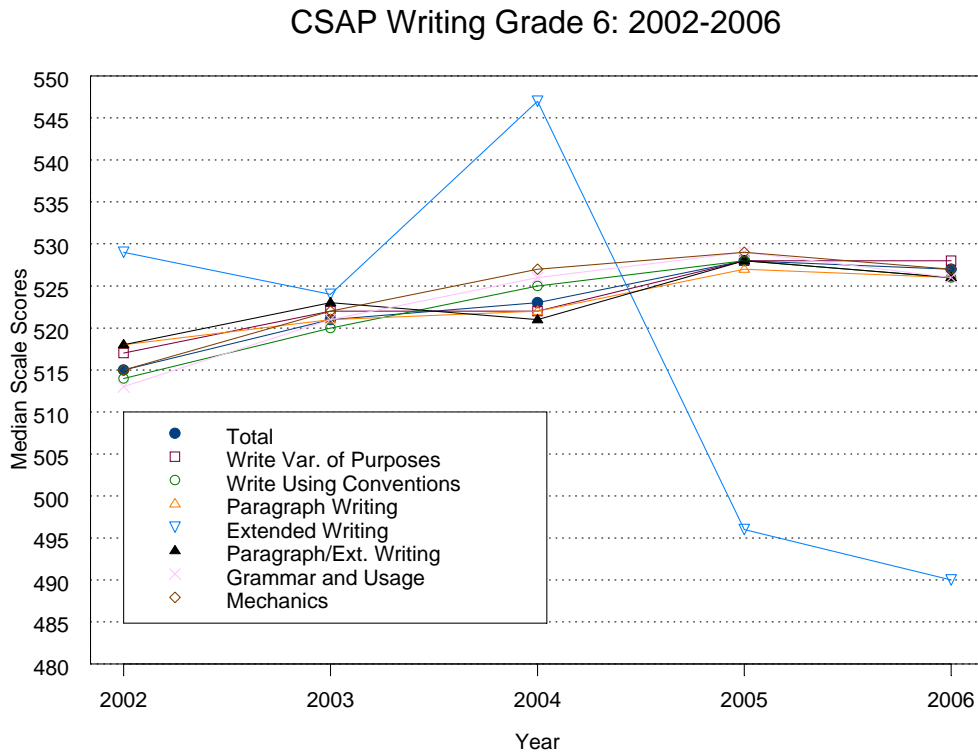


Figure F-4. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 7.

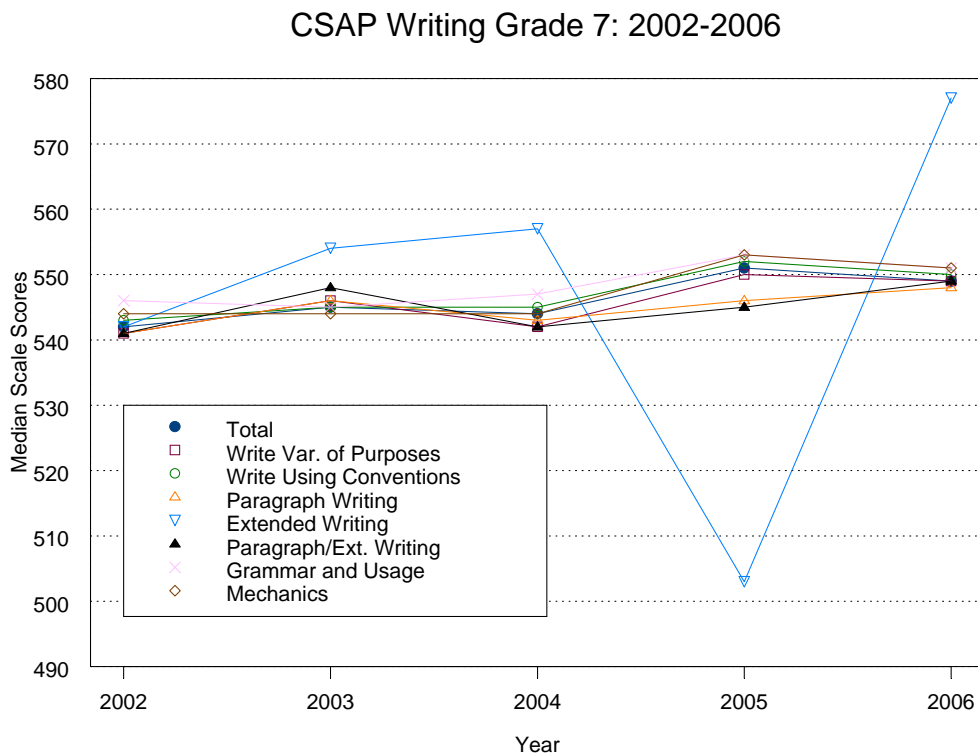


Figure F-5. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 8.

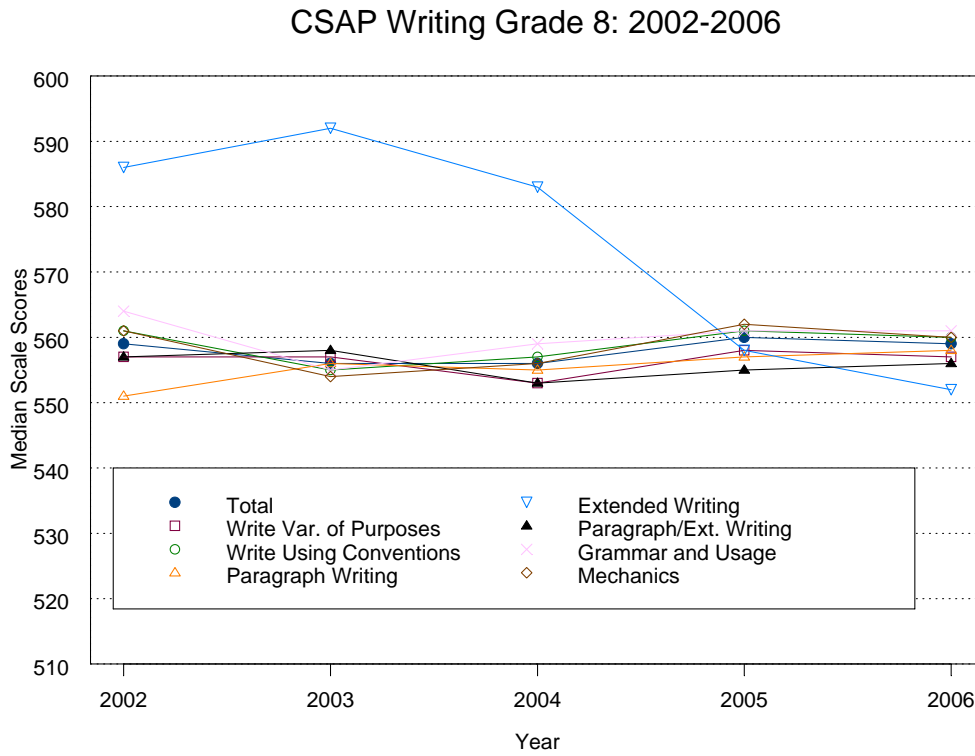


Figure F-6. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 9.

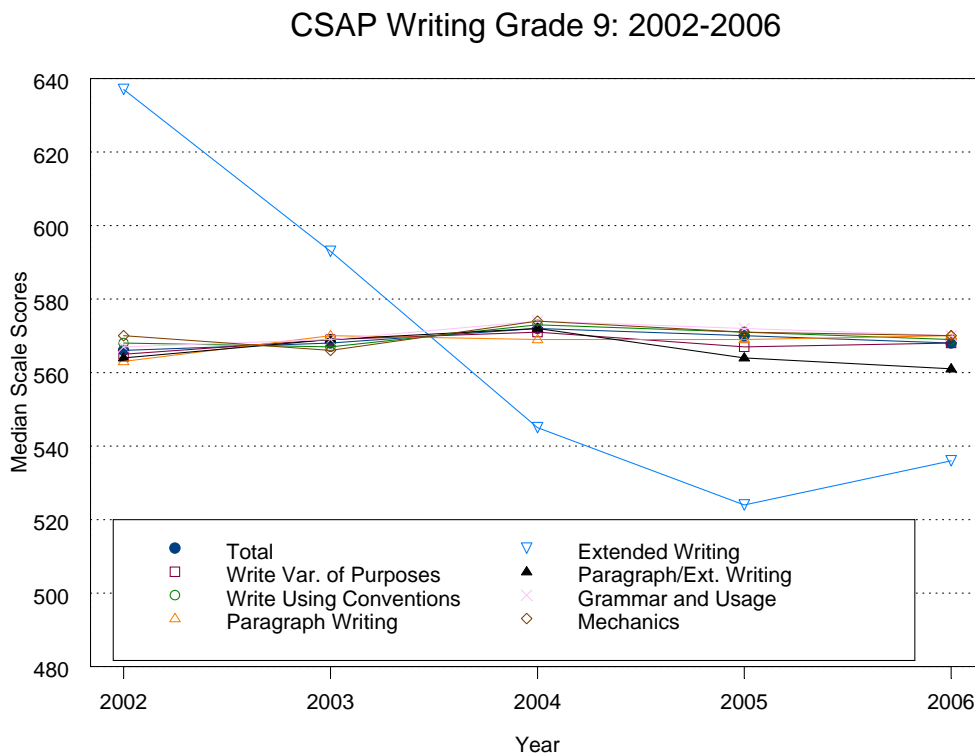


Figure F-7. Median Scale Scores by Year for Writing Sub-content Areas: Grade 10.

