

## Writer User Guide

Writer is a powerful new tool to improve student writing by offering targeted feedback at key factors in the writing process. This feedback encourages student practice and revision to achieve writing success. The data provided by Writer also gives teachers better insight into students' strengths, as well as areas for improvement.

It is important to note that Writer IS a writing process tool designed as an instructional aid for teachers and students to create focused, differentiated instruction. It is NOT designed as an essay grader and does NOT take the place of the valuable interaction and assessment given by the teacher to the student. Think of Writer as your “assistant coach”.

Writer can be selected at the school, enrollment, or student level; it is disabled by default. In the **Schools Settings** tab, go to **Permissions**. There are two settings you can toggle (see explanation below):

WRITER	
Spelling and Grammar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Scoring	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="button" value="Save"/>	

Writer functionality can also be turned on or off when creating or editing the student, and when enrolling a student in a course.

### Spelling and Grammar:

The **Spelling and Grammar** functionality of Writer can be used for almost all written assignments, the exceptions being our Foreign Language and CTE courses. This feature can be used independently of the scoring aspect of Writer. Once a student submits his or her essay, the spelling and grammar suggestions appear in-line. Like a word processing tool, right-click the word or phrase to show the possible suggestions. Resubmitting shows if further revisions need to be made. As with any spelling and grammar tool, the suggestions must be weighed against the context. The student and teacher can work together to decide if any of the suggestions should be ignored.

### Scoring:

Writer's scoring capabilities apply to many of the paragraph and essay assignments for grades 4-12; these assignments then include the scoring matrix. If an assignment does not support Writer scoring, the matrix does not appear.

**Question #5** Paragraph Default Skip Don't Skip

Help Reassign Points Possible: 10 Points Received: 0 Update 0%

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**Answer Key**

Answers will vary, but they should reflect the fact that the student has grasped the basic concept.

**In a paragraph of no less than 125 words, describe how using active listening at work can help you be a better employee.**

WRITER

Scoring

Word Count: 0 of 125

Grade Level:

Readability:

Topic Agreement:

Writing:

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**Overall Score:**

Topic Word List

barriers

barrier

active listening

In the teacher view we have added a word count to the teacher answer key and student instructions. The Writer scoring matrix appears alongside the enlarged writing area.

All Writer prompts show word count, grade level, readability, writing, and overall score. In addition, some of our essays include a topic word list; in those cases you also see a topic agreement meter.

**Scoring Meters:**

At any point in the writing process, the student can submit an answer to see his or her progress in the scoring matrix based on the following criteria:

**Word Count:** Counts the number of words submitted by the student against the expected word count.

**Grade Level:** A curriculum-driven setting based on course level appropriateness of vocabulary and sentence complexity.

**Readability:** A comparison of student writing sample against established writing styles appropriate to that age and grade level.

**Topic Agreement:** Checks the student's writing assignment against both the word list for that specific assignment and an overall course word list. The students does not see the topic word list (a check against their understanding of the material from which the list was gleaned); it is visible in the teacher view.

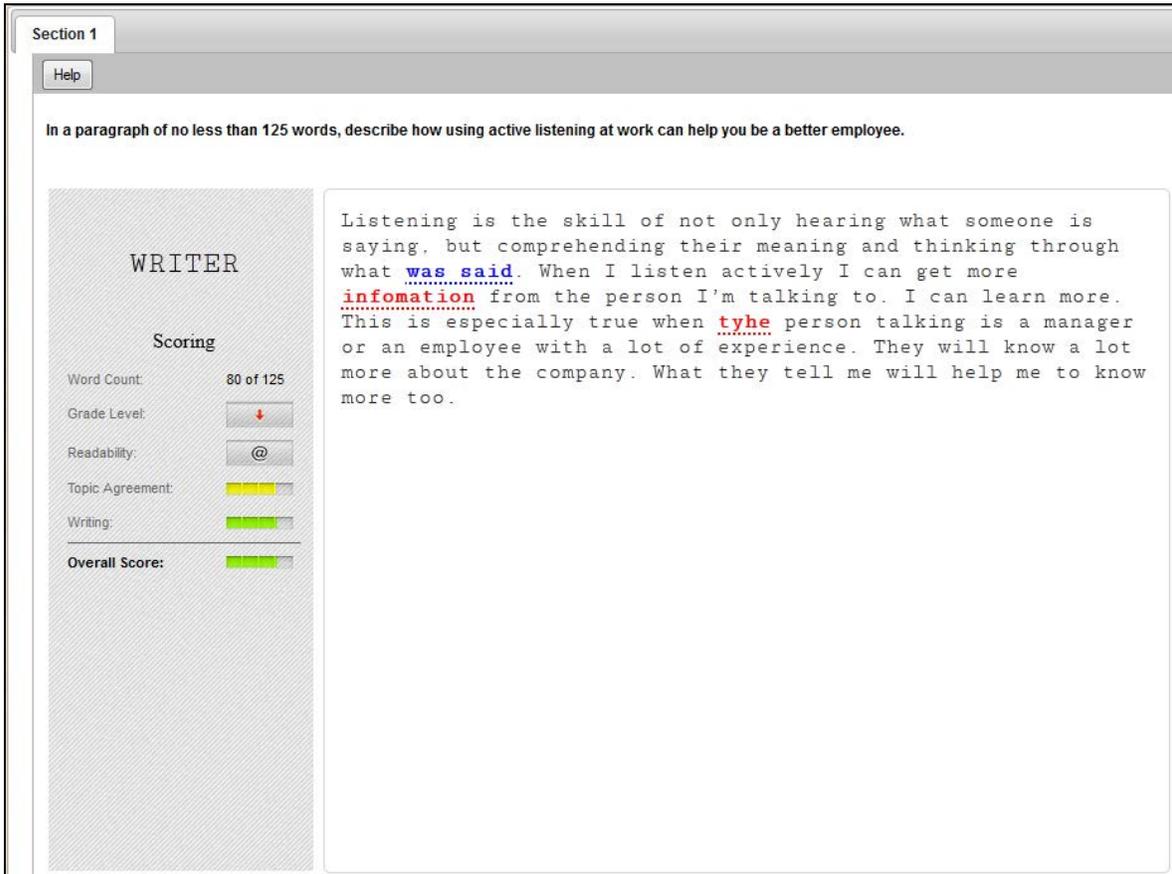
**Writing:** Writing scores are based on six well-researched writing indices (efficacy from published research and hand scored grade level anchor essays), level-set against the expected grade level of the assignment. This meter also takes into account overall word and sentence count, polysyllabic vs. monosyllabic words, frequency of complex words and paragraph length vs. word and sentence count.

**Overall Score:** A holistic score drawn from the active scoring elements.

After making changes, the student can re-submit and the scoring matrix evaluates the new material and adjusts the score accordingly. This revision-based feedback (both from the scoring matrix and the teacher) is a key factor to successfully using Writer.

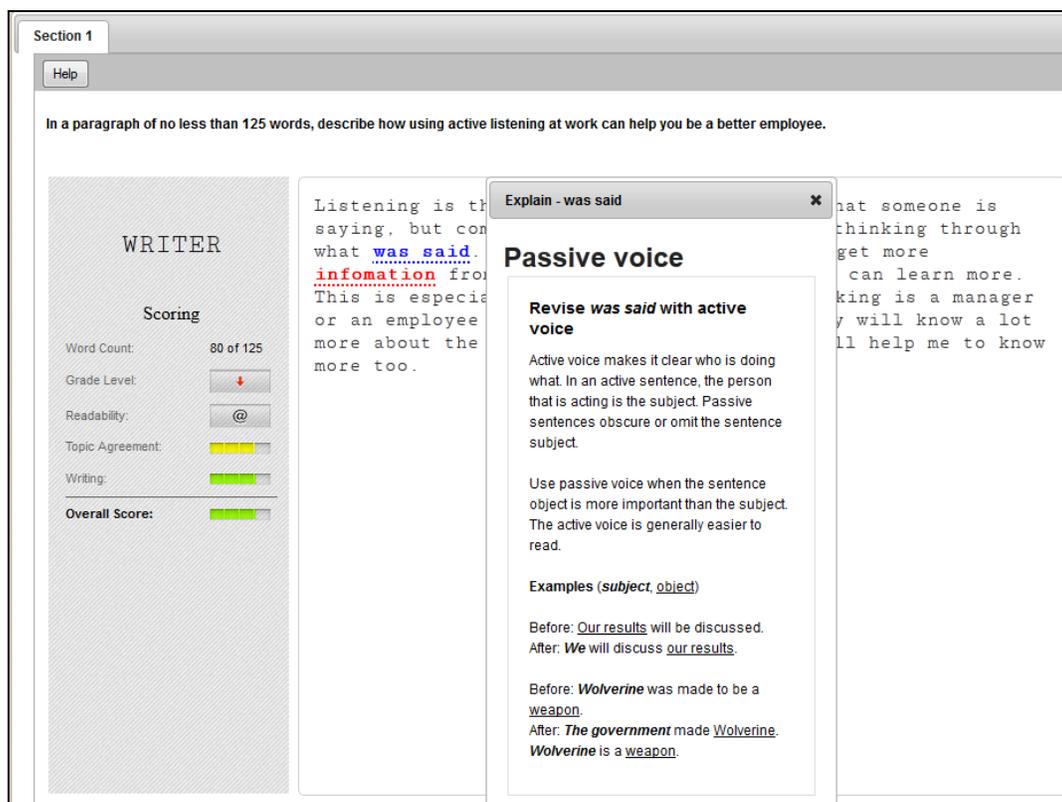
In this example the student completed his or her first draft and submitted the answer.

**Note:** If the Writer question is the last one answered in the assignment the system asks if the student is ready to submit the lesson; the student should answer no until he or she finishes all revisions (if the lesson is accidentally submitted, the teacher can reassign it).



The screenshot shows the 'Section 1' interface of the Ignitia Writer. At the top, there is a 'Help' button. Below it, a prompt reads: 'In a paragraph of no less than 125 words, describe how using active listening at work can help you be a better employee.' The main area is split into two columns. The left column, titled 'WRITER', contains a 'Scoring' section with the following metrics: 'Word Count: 80 of 125', 'Grade Level: [down arrow]', 'Readability: @', 'Topic Agreement: [yellow bar]', 'Writing: [green bar]', and 'Overall Score: [green bar]'. The right column contains the student's handwritten text: 'Listening is the skill of not only hearing what someone is saying, but comprehending their meaning and thinking through what was said. When I listen actively I can get more infomation from the person I'm talking to. I can learn more. This is especially true when tyhe person talking is a manager or an employee with a lot of experience. They will know a lot more about the company. What they tell me will help me to know more too.'

In this example, both **Spelling and Grammar**, and **Scoring** have been enabled. The spelling and grammar suggestions appear in-line (**red** for spelling, **blue** for grammar). Right-click a spelling error to see a list of suggested alternatives, including the option to ignore the suggestion. Right-click a grammar suggestion to display the grammar rule, ignore the suggestion, and the explain function. Choosing **Explain** gives an explanation of the rule and an example of a correction.



The screenshot shows the Ignitia Writer interface. On the left, a 'WRITER' sidebar displays 'Scoring' metrics: Word Count (80 of 125), Grade Level (indicated by a downward arrow), Readability (indicated by an '@' symbol), Topic Agreement (yellow bar), Writing (green bar), and Overall Score (green bar). The main text area contains a prompt: 'In a paragraph of no less than 125 words, describe how using active listening at work can help you be a better employee.' Below the prompt, a student's text is shown with a spelling error 'infomation' (underlined in red) and a grammar error 'was said' (underlined in blue). A right-click context menu is open over the grammar error, showing the title 'Explain - was said' and the rule 'Passive voice'. The rule text explains that active voice is clearer and easier to read, and provides examples of how to revise passive sentences into active ones.

Writer evaluates the submission and the scoring meters reflect the student's current level in each category.

**Grade Level** and **Readability** are based on the grade level set for that assignment. Our grade levels are categorized as follows:

When a writing sample is submitted, Writer scores the submission and calculates the actual grade level, which is checked against the expected grade level.

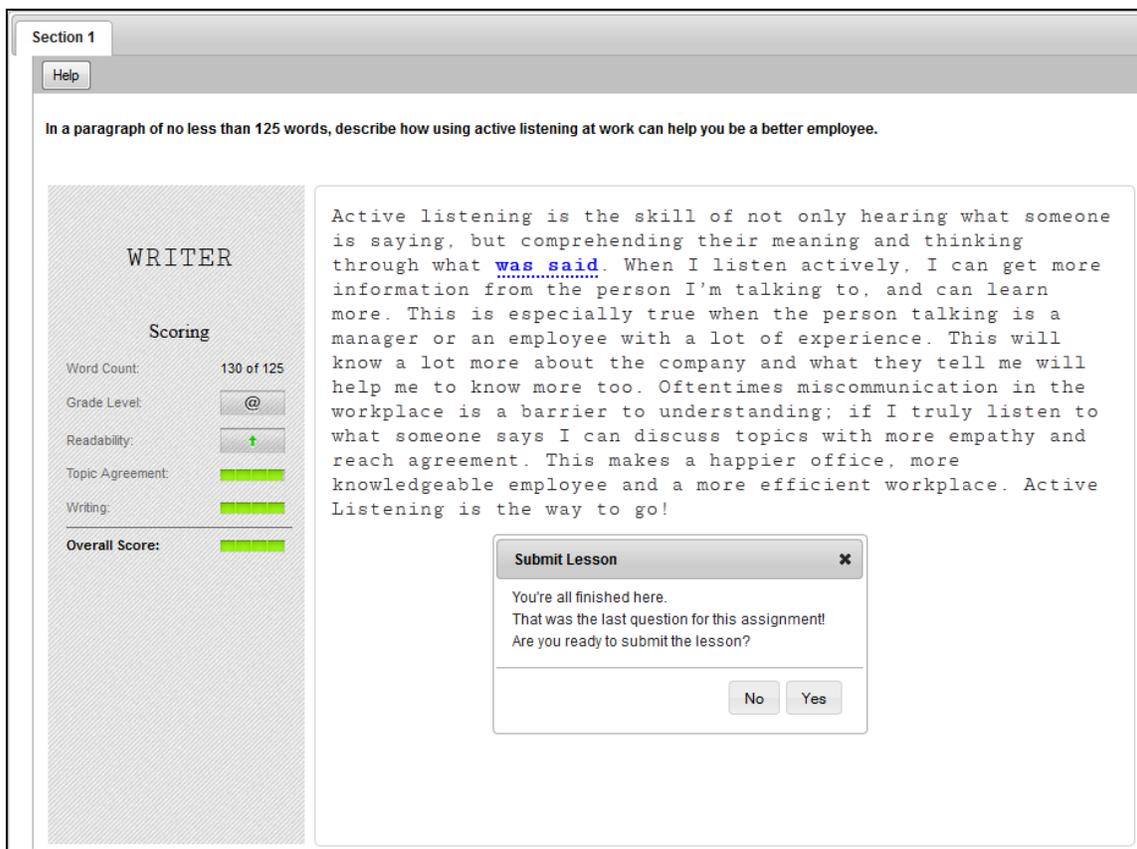
Grade level	Category
12+	Post-Secondary
9-12	High School
7-8	Middle School
4-6	Upper Elementary
K-3	Lower Elementary

Students see an icon showing them whether they have met the grade level expected, written above or below expectation but stayed within their category, or exceeded or fallen below that category. (See chart on previous page for categories.)

**Topic Agreement, Writing, and Overall Score** are displayed on a meter that fills from left to right as the student improves in each category, moving from red to yellow to green.

	Exceeds Grade Level category
	Above Grade Level but within category
	Meets Grade Level
	Below Grade Level but within category
	Below Grade Level category

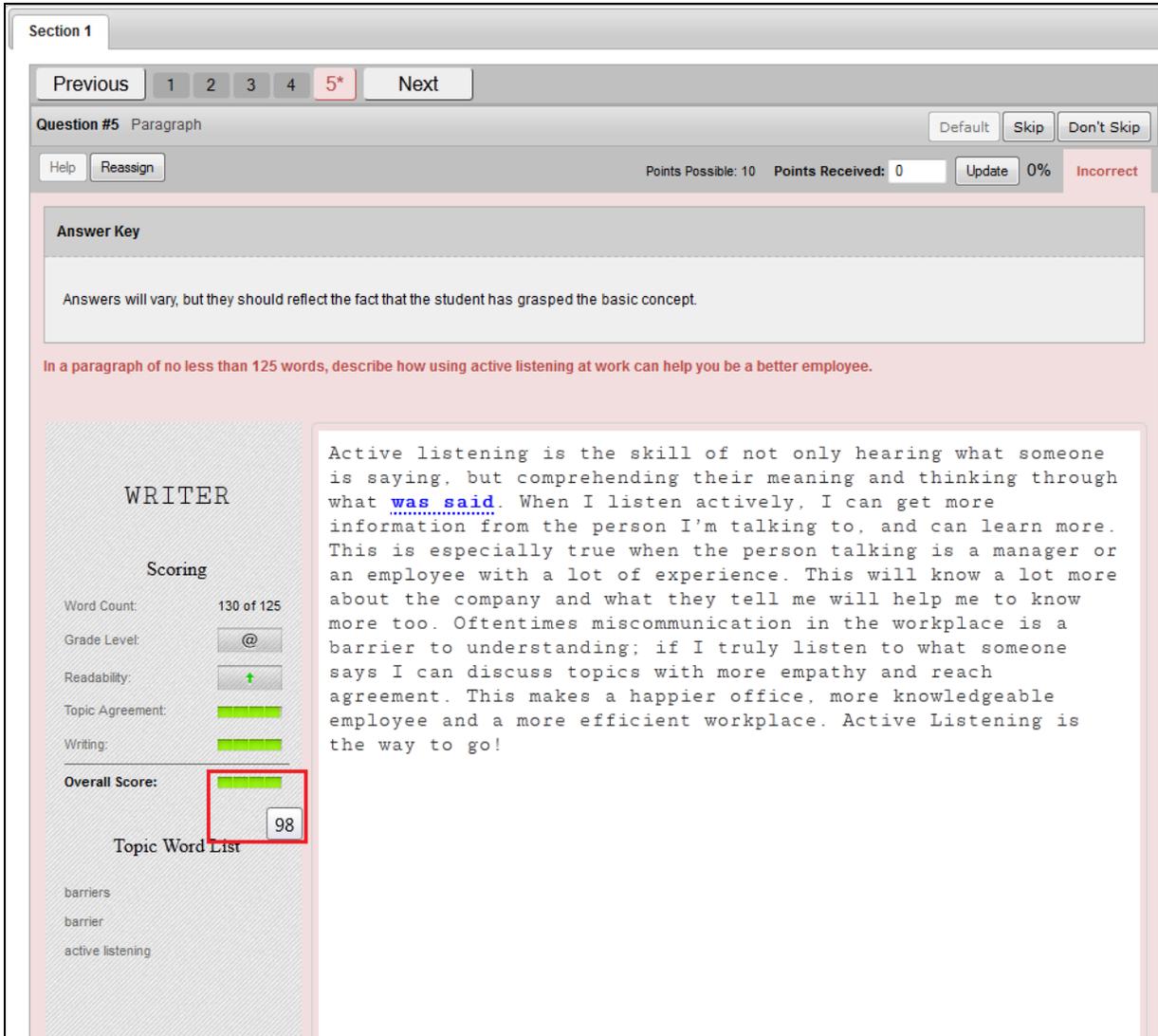
At any point after the first submission, teachers can go to the **Gradebook** and see the student's progress. This is a great opportunity to use the **Help** button to offer suggestions.



The screenshot shows the 'Section 1' interface. At the top left is a 'Help' button. Below it is a writing prompt: "In a paragraph of no less than 125 words, describe how using active listening at work can help you be a better employee." The main writing area contains a paragraph of text with the word "was" underlined in blue. On the left is a 'WRITER' sidebar with a 'Scoring' section. The scoring section includes: Word Count (130 of 125), Grade Level (displaying '@'), Readability (displaying a green up arrow), Topic Agreement (a green progress bar), Writing (a green progress bar), and Overall Score (a green progress bar). A 'Submit Lesson' dialog box is open in the bottom right, with the text: "You're all finished here. That was the last question for this assignment! Are you ready to submit the lesson?" and 'No' and 'Yes' buttons.

When the student and teacher feel the assignment is ready, the student submits the lesson and a request for manual grading is sent to the teacher.

In Teacher mode, hover your mouse over a meter to see a numeric score comparable to the score seen in the meter. **Grade Level** and **Readability** meters show the expected and actual grade levels. The teacher can evaluate the writing sample using his or her own interaction with the student as well as the feedback provided by Writer and enter a grade for the student.



The screenshot displays the 'Section 1' interface for 'Question #5 Paragraph'. The question is marked as 'Incorrect' with a score of 0 out of 10 possible points. The 'Answer Key' section states: 'Answers will vary, but they should reflect the fact that the student has grasped the basic concept.'

The writing prompt is: 'In a paragraph of no less than 125 words, describe how using active listening at work can help you be a better employee.'

The student's response is: 'Active listening is the skill of not only hearing what someone is saying, but comprehending their meaning and thinking through what was said. When I listen actively, I can get more information from the person I'm talking to, and can learn more. This is especially true when the person talking is a manager or an employee with a lot of experience. This will know a lot more about the company and what they tell me will help me to know more too. Oftentimes miscommunication in the workplace is a barrier to understanding; if I truly listen to what someone says I can discuss topics with more empathy and reach agreement. This makes a happier office, more knowledgeable employee and a more efficient workplace. Active Listening is the way to go!'

The 'WRITER' scoring panel on the left shows the following metrics:

- Word Count: 130 of 125
- Grade Level: @
- Readability: ↑
- Topic Agreement: [Green bar]
- Writing: [Green bar]
- Overall Score: [Green bar] 98

The 'Topic Word List' includes: barriers, barrier, active listening.

We hope you find Writer a helpful addition in creating differentiated instruction and encouraging students to do their literary best!