

Writing Continuum

Preconventional

- Uses pictures to tell stories or ideas
- Knows that letters are used to make words and stories
- Draws pictures and writes a word or two about the pictures
- Writing begins to look more like conventional letters
- Writes a few letters to make words
- Tells about own writing

Emergent

- Uses pictures and words as stories
- Copies names and some words
- Knows that each sound has a letter or letters
- Prints with mostly upper case letters
- Uses one, two or three letters to write a word
- Uses the beginning and ending sounds to make words
- Can almost read what he/she writes
- Takes risks with writing (write new things, spells words independently)

Developing

- Writes names and favorite words
- Writes short sentences
- Thinks of ideas to write about
- Uses patterns and ideas from books
- Sometimes uses spaces between words
- Writes from top to bottom, left to right, front to back
- Mixes upper and lower case letters together
- Matches letters to their sound
- Uses the sounds of words when spelling
- Uses beginning, middle and ending sounds to write words
- Can read own writing sometimes

Beginning

- Writes short sentences
- Writes using some descriptive words
- Uses ideas and language from books
- Adds more to writing with help
- Edits for ending marks with help
- Makes letters neatly
- Writes pieces that he/she can read as well as others
- Uses creative spelling when writing alone
- Uses capitals and periods correctly some of the time

Expanding

- Writes with a main idea
- Writes with complete sentences
- Often writes pieces with a clear beginning, middle and end
- Puts ideas in the right order
- Sometimes adds details
- Sometimes uses interesting language
- Listens to other people's ideas about writing and gives other people suggestions
- Sometimes uses other people's suggestions to make compositions better
- Revises by adding descriptions and details with help
- Edits for punctuation, spelling and correct English in final drafts with help
- Spells many words correctly
- Uses capital letters and periods correctly
- Writes so people can read his/her writings
- Writes differently depending on who will read the writing (sense of audience)
- Talks about what he/she does well as a writer and sets goals with help

Bridging

- Writes about feelings and opinions
- Writes pieces with a clear beginning, middle and end
- Sometimes uses paragraphs to organize ideas
- Uses a thesaurus or lists of words to make writing better (with help)
- Makes writing more interesting by adding description and detail
- Uses strong verbs (action verbs) and interesting language (with help)
- Experiments with people talking in stories
- Asks for help and suggestions about writing
- Revises writing to make sense (with help)
- Improves editing, spelling, punctuation and correct English
- Spells more words correctly by using how a word looks, spelling rules and word parts
- Uses commas and apostrophes correctly
- Tries different types of writing (like reports, letters, stories and poems) with help
- Reads own writing and thinks about how to make it better with help

Fluent

- Writes paragraphs that make sense by using reasons and examples
- Tries writing different types of sentences
- Tries different types of leads and endings
- Uses descriptions and similes
- Uses dialogue in stories
- Sometimes writes stories with plot that builds to an exciting part
- Organizes non-fiction writing with help
- Uses different ways to get ideas for writing (character webs, brainstorming)
- Uses people's suggestions about writing
- Replaces ordinary words with interesting words
- Takes out words or sentences that aren't necessary when revising
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- Writes better and edits more accurately for spelling, punctuation and correct English
- Uses editing tools (like dictionary, list of words or spell checker)

- Uses different strategies when spelling hard words
- Tries different kinds of writing (reports, letters, stories, poems) independently
- Thinks about writing and sets personal goals

Independent

- Writes pieces that flow and have depth
- Chooses language to create vivid mental pictures
- Weaves dialogue naturally into writing
- Uses strong characters, settings, plot and mood effectively
- Writes independently with ease and confidence
- Writes accurate and fluent non-fiction
- Uses the writing process independently
- Writes freely on many different topics
- Sticks with complex writing projects
- Analyzes, evaluates and works to improve the effectiveness of personal writing