

Conventions of Writing Developmental Scale

from Kid Writing in the 21st Century, p. 147

The Conventions of Writing developmental scale is used to assess children's overall early writing development and to provide appropriate developmental instructional guidance. Therefore, it is both summative and formative. It may be administered at the end of a grading period, or it may be consulted any time during individual conferencing to inform instruction. It is typically used during kindergarten through second grade.

As an assessment tool, this scale reflects what the child knows and is able to do without teacher assistance. It documents progress made by children in writing workshop and in writing across the curriculum. It guides teachers toward logical next steps for their students and provides documentation for parents and administrators. It is typically used once each reporting period, with the previous year's level serving as the baseline for the following year.

As children move the higher levels, districts may add a rubric based on a six-trait model (ideas, content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions) or one compatible with state standards to reflect children's learning of the craft elements of writing. This rubric is most appropriate beginning when first graders have accomplished Level 5 or beyond.

The Conventions of Writing developmental scale offers flexibility in ways that it may be used, whether in individual classrooms, across grade levels within a school, or across a district. When mandated by school districts, writing prompts are usually used for periodic assessment. Teachers also use the writing scale for ongoing informal assessment to further guide their instruction.

Look at the reduced-size Conventions of Writing developmental scale shown on the following pages. This scale incorporates phase levels based on empirical research. Research labeling of phases isn't always consistent in the literature. For example, the terms "emergent" and "transitional" have been used in some studies and among educators to refer to different phases. To avoid confusion, we have provided information that aligns our Conventions of Writing developmental scale with the following research-based phase labeling: pre-communicative, pre-phonetic, semi-phonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional, as reported in studies such as Ehri and Wilce (1987), Gentry (2000z, 2004), Ouellette (2006), and Ouellette and Senechal (2008).

Conventions of Writing Developmental Scale

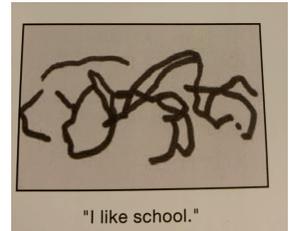
Name: _____ Date: _____

Grade: _____ Level: _____

Match the paper being scored with the anchor papers that are examples of writing at each level. Show which descriptors have been met and when they were met. For levels with more than one descriptor, all descriptors must be evident.

Level 1 – Emerging (Pre-Communicative)

_____ Makes uncontrolled or unidentifiable scribbling.

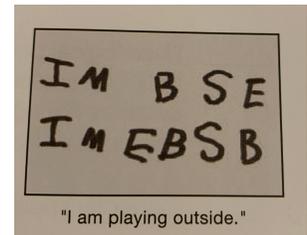


Level 2 – Pictorial Plus Writing (Pre-Communicative)

_____ Imitates writing.

_____ Draws somewhat recognizable picture.

_____ Tells about picture.

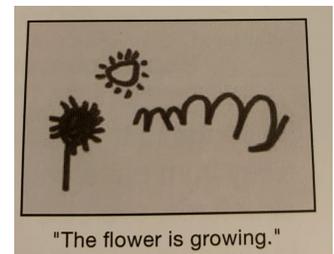


Level 3 – Pre-Phonetic

_____ Writes to convey a message; attempts to read it back.

_____ Uses letter-like forms, letters, or random letter strings.

_____ Prints own name or occasional known word.



Level 4 – Partial Phonetic (Semi-Phonetic)

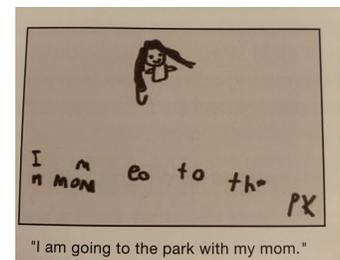
_____ Sometimes uses one letter to write a word.

_____ Correctly uses some letters to match sounds (a few consonants and vowels, such as *e* followed by random letters or *eg* for *eagle*).

_____ Usually writes left to right (may reverse some letters) and top to bottom.

_____ Spells some high-frequency words correctly.

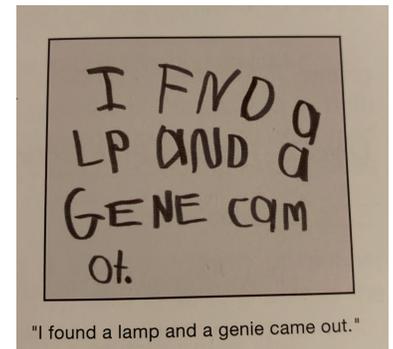
_____ Writes phrases (as in *a flock of butterflies*) or writes the substance of one sentence (a meaningful thought) even though it may not be accurately punctuated.



Level 5 – Partial Phonetic 2

End of Kindergarten Benchmark

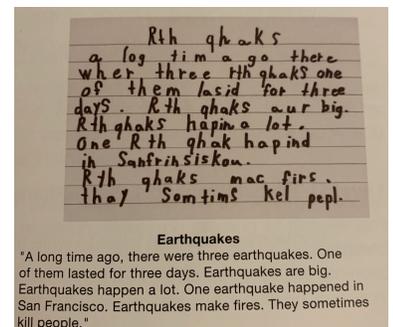
- _____ Usually represents sensible beginning and ending consonant sounds.
- _____ Includes some vowels (often not correct ones).
- _____ Writes left to right and top to bottom in a linear format.
- _____ Spells some high-frequency words correctly.
- _____ Writes the substance (meaningful thoughts) of two or more sentences on a related topic even though it may not be accurately punctuated.
- _____ Separates words with spaces. At this level, spacing may vary.



To bridge to the next level, the child should move away from patterned writing to using varied sentence structures, even though they may not be accurately punctuated.

Level 6 – Phonetic (Full Phonetic)

- _____ Uses logical phonetic spelling with most sounds usually represented, including vowels in most syllables (though they may not be correct ones). Example: *egl* for *eagle*.
- _____ Correctly spells many high-frequency words
- _____ Writes the substance (meaningful thoughts) of three or more sentences on a related topic even though they may not be accurately punctuated.
- _____ Capitalizes names and the pronouns *I*.
- _____ Simple sentences are usually punctuated correctly.
- _____ A variety of sentence structures and lengths are evident, though they may not be accurately punctuated.
- _____ Usually uses lowercase letters appropriately.

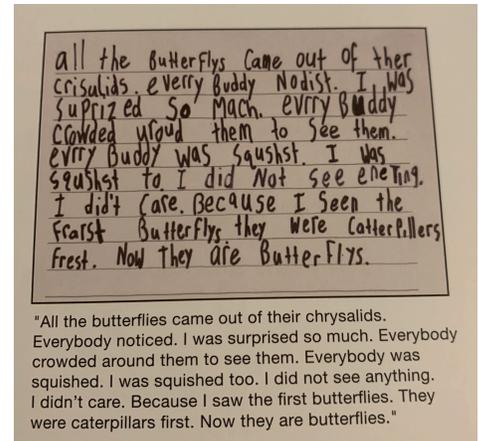


Level 7 – Conventional 1 (Transitional, Consolidated-Alphabetic)

End of First-Grade Benchmark

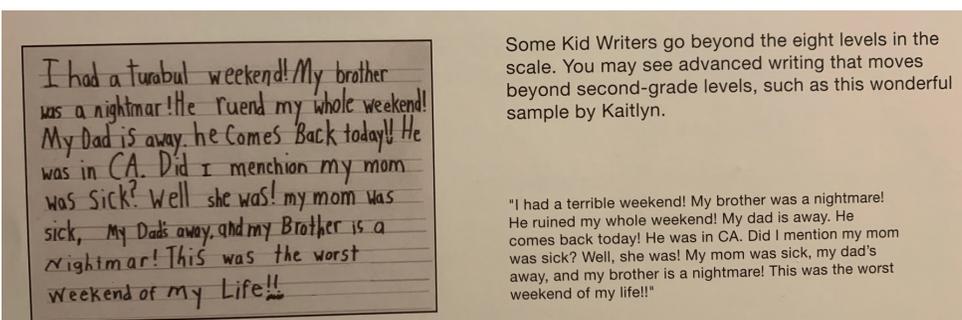
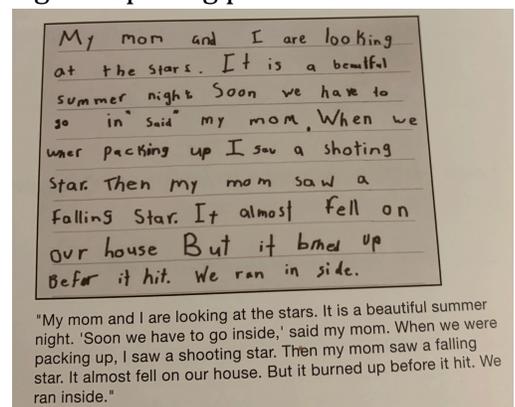
- _____ Uses larger correctly spelled vocabulary; may use phonetic spelling for advanced words.
- _____ Uses some conventional spelling patterns in spelling unknown words (as in *egul* for *eagle*; *YOUNIGHTED* for United States).
- _____ Correctly spells previously studied high-frequency words.

- _____ Writes the substance (a meaningful thought) of four or more sentences on a related topic, even though they may not be accurately punctuated.
- _____ Simple sentences are usually punctuated correctly.
- _____ Uses more varied and complex sentence structures, including conjunctions, prepositional phrases, and relative clauses.
- _____ Spaces words appropriately.
- _____ Uses subject-verb agreement most of the time.
- _____ Usually uses lowercase letters appropriately.



Level 8 – Conventional 2
End of Second-Grade Benchmark

- _____ Produces writing with previously studied high-frequency words spelled correctly.
- _____ Spells words correctly based on previously studied regular spelling patterns.
- _____ May use logical invented spelling for unfamiliar or advanced words.
- _____ Uses a rich and descriptive written vocabulary.
- _____ Writes the substance (meaningful thoughts) of five or more sentences on a related topic.
- _____ Uses a variety of sentence structure and length,
- _____ Uses correct end punctuation and capitalization in simple sentences.
- _____ Usually uses advanced print conventions appropriately (*i.e.* quotation marks, commas, apostrophes, exclamation marks, contractions, and possessives), though they may be inconsistent.
- _____ Uses regular verb endings (*e.g.* -ed, -ing, -d, -es).



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