

# Writing

DOMAIN: Language Development and Communication

CLAIM: Students can acquire the written communication skills that empower students to express their ideas, opinions, and knowledge for a range of purposes and audiences.

## **RATIONALE**

“One of the best predictors of whether a child will function competently in school and go on to contribute actively in our increasingly literate society is the level to which the child progresses in reading and writing” (Neuman et al., 2004, p. 1). As children write for everyday, school, and subject- or task-specific purposes, they learn to express ideas, experiences, interests, and emotions and simultaneously have opportunities to learn the conventions of written language. The skills and performance descriptors within this progression include writing to convey meaning, writing with a purpose, and intention to communicate to an audience.

Writing itself is a cognitive process that enables children to explore and to articulate their thoughts, ideas, opinions, and knowledge. From a young age, they demonstrate approximations of appropriate written language genres (Donovan & Smolkin, 2006), such as storybooks (Sulzby, 1985) and informational genres (Donovan, 2001; Kamberelis, 1999). In addition to paying attention to different genres, children also need to consider the content and goals of what they will write. Throughout this progression, children’s genre writing is demonstrated as they express their ideas and choose how to share their thinking (i.e., by labeling a drawing, telling a story, and relating learned content to others). Over time, they learn how to communicate their ideas to an audience, utilizing attention to conventions (such as structure, patterns, style, and word choice).

The mechanics of writing (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) are not included within this progression. Mechanics are the things that do not exist in oral language. This construct progression focuses specifically on children’s understanding that writing conveys meaning and the connection that what is produced orally is translated to writing as they learn to communicate for a specific audience.

## **ALIGNMENT TO NC STANDARDS**

### **NC Foundations for Early Learning & Development**

LC-13 Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes.

LC-15 Children use writing skills and writing conventions.

### **NC Standard Course of Study (Common Core & Essential Standards)**

#### **KINDERGARTEN**

W.K.1 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., *My favorite book is ...*).

W.K.2 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

W.K.3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

W.K.5 With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

W.K.6 With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

L.K.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

#### **GRADE 1**

W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

W.1.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

W.1.5 With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

W.1.6 With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

## CONSTRUCT PROGRESSION

L.1.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

### GRADE 2

W.2.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

W.2.5 With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

L.2.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

### GRADE 3

W.3.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

W.3.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

W.3.5 With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

W.3.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

L.3.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

## RESOURCES USED

Clay, M. M. (2001). *Change over time in children's literacy development*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Donovan, C. A. (2001). Children's development and control of written story and informational genres: Insights from one elementary school. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 394-447.

Donovan, C. A., & Smolkin, L. B. (2006). Children's understanding of genre and writing development. *Handbook of Writing Research*, 131-143.

Kamberelis, G. (1999). Genre development and learning: Children writing stories, science reports, and poems. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 33, 403-460.

McGee, L., & Richgels, D. (2004). *Literacy's beginnings: Supporting young readers and writers* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Neuman, S. B., Copple, C., & Bredekamp, B. (2004). Learning to read and write: *Developmentally appropriate practices for young children: A joint position statement of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children*. Accessed: [http://www-tc.pbs.org/teacherline/courses/rdla155/pdfs/c2s2\\_5devapprop.pdf](http://www-tc.pbs.org/teacherline/courses/rdla155/pdfs/c2s2_5devapprop.pdf)

Sulzby, E. (1985). Children's emergent reading of favorite storybooks: A developmental study. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 20(4), 458-481.

Temple, C., Nathan, R., Burris, N., & Temple, F. (1988). *The beginnings of writing* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

**WRITING** CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

UNDERSTANDING: Children understand that writing conveys meaning, has a purpose, and expresses the intention of the writer to communicate to an audience.

A. Communicates thoughts for an adult to write.	B. Communicates using drawings and symbols or letters.	C. Writes single words or phrases to label drawings or express ideas.	D. Uses drawings and writing to compose a variety of short messages.	E. Writes imitating conventions (such as repeated lines, patterns, author styles).	SKILLS
<p>Jerome has finished a picture at the easel. When he comes to tell the teacher that he is finished with his painting, she asks him to tell her about his painting. The teacher takes an index card and writes as Jerome dictates, "My family went to the beach. We are playing in the sand."</p> <p>Katayana has age appropriate motor skills, and is capable of producing written products. However, putting thoughts into written products is difficult. Katanya uses a technological recording device to dictate her story. A teacher then transcribes it for Katanya.</p>	<p>Abby has used markers to draw a picture about fairies. At the bottom of her picture, she has used a pencil to write some letter-like forms and a few recognizable letters, linked together in one linear progression. Abby tells the teacher a story about a fairy princess and her Mushroom Palace. Abby asks the teacher, "Please read my story to me."</p> <p>Susan and her family have been living abroad for the past three years. Susan's family elected to send her to a Chinese school rather than an English school so she could learn the Chinese language. Although she speaks English fluently, when asked to write a short passage describing what she did during the summer, Susan writes a mix of English and Chinese symbols.</p> <p>Tomas's family has recently immigrated to the United States. He is gaining command of the English oral language, but continues to write using drawings and symbols to communicate in print.</p>	<p>After Max has finished painting a pumpkin at the easel, he gets a piece of paper from the writing center and copies the word "pumpkin" from a book in the reading center. When the painting is dry, he asks his teacher to hang the picture and to hang the word "pumpkin" below it.</p> <p>Sally is interested in the study of insects. In her science journal, she draws a picture of the spider and labels the parts.</p> <p>Deon uses the blocks to build Part-Part-Whole diagrams. It's the end of the day, and he is unable to finish his task. Deon makes a sign with a message asking that no one touch his project.</p>	<p>Faye has had an argument with her best friend, Lily, and she is crying. Ms. Dotson notices that Faye is upset, and after she has helped Faye calm down and asked her what she might do to help the situation, Faye decides to write a note to Lily. She draws a big heart and writes, "I'm sorry. I lv U" inside the heart.</p> <p>Jane draws a picture of herself in a car for her story of going to Grandma's house. After conferring with her teacher, Jane goes back to her seat and adds details to show that her car is on a winding road, traveling up a mountain. She adds dotted lines on her road, trees and hills, and a sky with clouds and a yellow sun shining.</p> <p>The class discusses the importance of each staff member at Glyndale Elementary School. Each child writes a thank-you note to someone who works at the school. Patrice draws a picture of Mr. Thomas, the custodian, and composes a note thanking him for cleaning the classroom each night.</p>	<p>Mrs. Schultz has posted a piece of chart paper with three patterned sentence beginnings. One of the patterned sentences is "At the farm we saw: ..."</p> <p>Remy writes on his paper: "At the farm we saw horse.</p> <p>At the farm we saw trcturs.</p> <p>At the farm we saw a hay rid."</p> <p>Shelly writes a poem using repeated lines like the book "When I Was Young in the Mountains." Her poem is called "I Like." She writes five lines all beginning with "I like," followed by ellipses, and ending with the things she likes.</p> <p>Naomi writes a story stating reasons that bike riding is good for our health and the environment. She organizes her paper using a structured pattern of <i>One reason ... Another reason ... A third reason ...</i></p>	<p>PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS</p>

**WRITING** CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

UNDERSTANDING: Children understand that writing conveys meaning, has a purpose, and expresses the intention of the writer to communicate to an audience. (continued)

SKILLS	<p><b>F. Writes a series of generally related ideas or events, beginning to use the conventions of writing (such as repeated lines, patterns, author styles).</b></p>	<p><b>G. Writes about an event or topic, choosing a structure that considers audience.</b></p>	<p><b>H. Writes with an introduction, related content, and a sense of closure.</b></p>	<p><b>I. Adapts writing to provide clarity to the reader by doing things, such as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing to build knowledge about a topic.</b></li> <li>• <b>Writing using descriptive details (i.e., character, setting and events, academic vocabulary).</b></li> <li>• <b>Writing with attention to the conventions of writing (i.e., word choices, phrasing, sentence structure, length of sentences and paragraphs).</b></li> <li>• <b>Writing and making changes to strengthen readability &amp; understanding.</b></li> </ul>
PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS	<p>Diamond is taking ballet lessons after school two days a week. After her first lesson, she draws a picture of herself in a tutu and writes, "My frst dance lesion was the bst thing evr in my lif. The bst thing, the bst thing, the vey bst thing. Do you like pizza, too?" She tells her teacher that she thinks the second sentence will really make people pay attention.</p> <p>Tamera writes a narrative about a time when she went on a picnic. Her focus is on preparing for the picnic, but she writes only one paragraph on the actual picnic. She gets off topic at the ending when she begins writing about playing games at home.</p> <p>As the culmination of a research project on sharks, Frances writes an acrostic poem to inform her classmates about sharks. Frances writes the following:</p> <p><i>Swims slowly in deep water</i>  <i>Hears better than humans</i>  <i>Are found in all the Earth's oceans</i>  <i>Rarely pose a threat to humans</i>  <i>Keeps shedding its teeth</i>  <i>Sleeps while swimming</i></p>	<p>Cabell's class is engaged in a project where they are exploring different versions of familiar fairy tales by having the stories read to them, acting them out, and watching videos of some stories. Cabell calls the stories "once-upon-a-time stories" and writes his own version of "Jack and the Beanstalk," called "Cabell and the Pumpkin Vine." The story begins with "Once upon a time," and includes Cabell going up the pumpkin vine and coming back with treasure from his favorite video game.</p> <p>Steve has been given the assignment of writing an informational book. He decides to write a book titled "All About Cats." He includes a table of contents and five pages. The pages are "The History of Cats," "How to Care for Your Cat," "What to Feed Your Cat," "How to Groom Your Cat," and "What Cats Like to Do."</p> <p>Isabella begins to write a report about space travel. She reports on the pros and cons of the subject. She jots down information about space travel and what people have said about the advantages and challenges. Isabella begins to write her claim about space travel, including a chart about what would be good about traveling in space and what would be challenging about space travel.</p>	<p>In her daily reading-outloud time with the class, Ms. Rouser has been choosing stories with a clear beginning, middle, and end, and has been pointing out these parts of each story when she reads them. Juanita writes three simple sentences about going with her family to the farmers' market and shows Ms. Rouser that her writing has a beginning, where they get in the car to go, a middle, where they visit the market, and an ending, when they come home and cook the vegetables they bought at the market.</p> <p>When given a writing assignment "Write about a time you were excited," Ronnie writes a story about bear hunting with his dad. He uses a story map to write his ideas. He writes a short beginning and moves the action through specific details and elaboration focused on the main event. His ending reads, "We had fun!"</p> <p>Ruth's class is planning a field trip to the science museum. Ruth decides to write a letter to the principal in order to convince him that even though it will be an all-day field trip, the time spent at the museum will be fun and educational for her class. Ruth organizes her letter using sequencing words (next, then, after, finally) to persuade Mr. Pollack to approve the field trip.</p>	<p>As the concluding activity of a fairy tale project, each student in a class is asked to write and illustrate a fairy tale book. Cabell's illustration for the cover of his story includes the setting, the characters, and an event from the story, and he includes an introduction page with a list of the characters and a description of the setting.</p> <p>During a "My Hero" writing assignment, Dan writes a story about his older brother who is on the football team. In his writing he shares that his brother is the team's shining star and runs as fast as a cheetah, with the heart of a lion.</p> <p>Tamara's teacher talks to her class about using "big school words" in their writing. The teacher has discussed with the class the pitfalls of using the same words too often. Tamara knows she frequently uses the words "said" and "good" in her writing. Prior to beginning to write, she lists other words for "said" and "good," so she has a variety of word choices to include in her writing.</p>

## SITUATION: *Writing Within a Project*

Selecting Learning Target(s)	Understanding: Children understand that writing conveys meaning, has a purpose, and expresses the intention of the writer to communicate to an audience.				
	<b>A. Communicates thoughts for an adult to write.</b>	<b>B. Communicates using drawings and symbols or letters.</b>	<b>C. Writes single words or phrases to label drawings or express ideas.</b>	<b>D. Uses drawings and writing to compose a variety of short messages.</b>	<b>E. Writes imitating conventions (such as repeated lines, patterns, author styles).</b>
	<b>F. Writes a series of generally related ideas or events, beginning to use the conventions of writing (such as repeated lines, patterns, author styles).</b>		<b>G. Writes about an event or topic, choosing a structure that considers audience.</b>	<b>H. Writes with an introduction, related content, and a sense of closure.</b>	<b>I. Adapts writing to provide clarity to the reader.</b>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content-related materials for introducing and demonstrating the topic of study (e.g., photographs, magazines, news articles, historical books, props)</li> <li>• Writing utensils</li> <li>• Notebook, journal, or paper</li> <li>• A risk-free classroom environment that allows for teacher-student or student-to-student interaction through questioning, guided practice, and reflection</li> </ul>				
General Description	<p>The teacher reviews the directions for the project, including a writing component. Students work independently on the project, using content and writing materials. The teacher moves around the room, conferring with students, providing guidance, and taking notes on students' written work products. The teacher concludes by providing time for students to share and reflect on the work completed thus far and to consider how they have met their personal writing goals.</p>				
Eliciting Evidence of Learning	<p>The teacher sets the purpose for the social studies project and reviews the directions and expectations for the project, including a writing component.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content-specific information (e.g., change over time, multiple perspectives through historical narratives)</li> <li>• Information about choices for writing utensils and materials and places in the room to write</li> <li>• Information about the use of materials (e.g., "On your tables, you will find ...." "Electronic devices are available for ....")</li> <li>• Information related to the process of students independently working to complete the assigned activity (e.g., "As you think about getting started ...." "While you are working, you may consider ...." "When you complete the activity, you may choose to ....")</li> </ul> <p>Before releasing the students to work, the teacher asks the students to identify/recall their current learning goal(s) as it relates to writing (e.g., use pictures and words; write for a particular audience; include an introduction). As the students work, the teacher moves around the room and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confers with students to support their writing goals as well as the overall project</li> <li>• Uses questions and probes to support increases in content knowledge and to understand what the student knows and is able to do</li> <li>• Reminds students of classroom writing support tools (anchor charts, story starters, graphic organizers, classroom library resources, including dictionaries, thesaurus, etc.)</li> <li>• Takes notes on the written work products and any appropriate content-related goals</li> </ul> <p>The teacher concludes with the students sharing their writing (e.g., Author's Chair, with a partner) and providing feedback to one another about the project content and how the content is communicated through written form (e.g., provide two positive feedback comments and one suggestion for improvement; use an exemplar to compare to see how one is achieving his/her writing goal[s]).</p> <p><u>Suggested Probes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What graphic organizer might help you get started?</li> <li>• Would a review by a peer help you move to the next step in your writing?</li> <li>• What have you used before that you can use today to help you?</li> <li>• Look at your visual checklist/visual cues. What do you need to do next?</li> <li>• Reread your work. Can you identify a way to help make it clearer?</li> <li>• If you imagine one of your favorite authors, will that help you create good sentences?</li> <li>• As you reread, can you add any information to help it stay connected and flow from beginning to end?</li> <li>• Does it help your writing to think who may be reading this?</li> <li>• How could sequencing support your writing?</li> </ul> <p><u>Probes to Avoid:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why aren't you working?</li> <li>• Why are you not able to complete the activity?</li> <li>• Can't you remember the components of good writing?</li> <li>• Your sentences are too short; you need to add more words.</li> </ul>				

Interpreting the Evidence	<p><b>Observation:</b> Raymond chooses and researches about a famous environmentalist. He creates a report on why the rainforest should be preserved. His accommodations include using a technological recording device for writing activities. A peer later transcribes for him so his work can be displayed in the hall with the rest of the class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression: A. Communicates thoughts for an adult to write.</u></li> </ul> <p><b>Observation:</b> Umberto chooses to conduct research about the rainforest. He creates a report on why the rainforest should be preserved. His report has a drawing and one sentence on each page, each beginning with the same pattern:</p> <p><i>The rainforest should be preserved because it has a lot of animals.</i>  <i>The rainforest should be preserved because it has many trees.</i>  <i>The rainforest should be preserved because we can make medicine from plants. (etc.)</i>                  Some pages have a few labels for the drawings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression: E. Writes, imitating conventions (such as repeated lines, patterns, author styles).</u></li> </ul> <p><b>Observation:</b> Mandi draws a picture of a one-room schoolhouse and a few horses tied to a tree outside the school. Below that picture, she draws another picture of her current school with the cars outside in the parking lot. Mandi writes:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><i>in old daz kidz wnt to 1 rom.</i></td> <td style="width: 50%;"><i>(In old days kids went to one room.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>now we go to skol in a bg blgg.</i></td> <td><i>Now we go to school in a big building.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>thay ust to rid hrs.</i></td> <td><i>They used to ride horses.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>now we rid crz.</i></td> <td><i>Now we ride cars.)</i></td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression: F. Writes a series of generally related ideas or events, beginning to use the conventions of writing (such as repeated lines, patterns, author styles).</u></li> </ul>	<i>in old daz kidz wnt to 1 rom.</i>	<i>(In old days kids went to one room.</i>	<i>now we go to skol in a bg blgg.</i>	<i>Now we go to school in a big building.</i>	<i>thay ust to rid hrs.</i>	<i>They used to ride horses.</i>	<i>now we rid crz.</i>	<i>Now we ride cars.)</i>
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<i>now we rid crz.</i>	<i>Now we ride cars.)</i>								
Adapting/ Responding to Learning Needs	<p>Once the evidence is interpreted and the learning status is identified on the construct progression, continue to adapt and respond to the learning needs of the student, addressing the same learning target if the student hasn't met it. If the student has met the learning target, work with the student to select a new learning target for teaching and learning.</p>								
Observational Opportunities	<p>There are times throughout the day and across content areas when a teacher can observe students' writing. For example, a teacher can learn about their students' writing skills as they work on/in: a fictional story, a thank-you note, a poem, a nonfiction informational report or story, science observation jotted in their science journals, day books, a note in block center, labeling art work or a diagram, or a letter to a pen pal.</p>								