# **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:

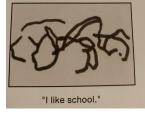
Match the paper being scored with the anchor papers that are examples of writing at each level. Show which descriptors have been met and when they were met. For levels with more than one descriptor, all descriptors must be evident.

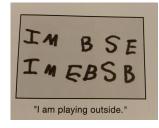
## Level 1 – Emerging (Pre-Communicative)

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



"The flower is growing."

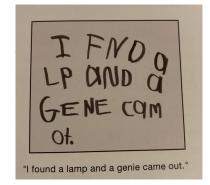
### Level 5 – Partial Phonetic 2

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.



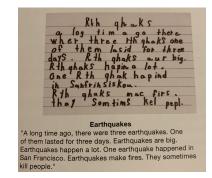
\_\_\_\_\_ Separates words with spaces. At this level, spacing may vary.

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) or 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 <i>egul</i> for <i>eagle</i> ; <i>YOUNIGHTED</i> for United States.
 Correctly spells previously studied high-frequency words.

 Writes the substance (a meaningful thought) of four or m	ore sentences on a related topic
even though they may not be accurately punctuated.	
 Simple sentences are usually punctuated correctly.	all the butterflys came out of ther crisulias. every buddy Nodist. I was suprized so Mach. every Buddy could would than a see then
Uses more varied and complex sentence structures,	PVITY Buddy Was saushist I Was
 including conjunctions, prepositional phrases, and relative clauses.	Saushest to I did Not see ene ting. I did't care because I seen the Ecarch Butterfly, they were catterfillers.
	Frest. Now they are Butter Flys.
 Spaces words appropriately.	"All the butterflies came out of their chrysalids. Everybody noticed. I was surprised so much. Everybody
 Uses subject-verb agreement most of the time.	crowded around them to see them. Everybody was squished. I was squished too. I did not see anything. I didn't care. Because I saw the first butterflies. They were caterpillars first. Now they are butterflies."
 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.	My morn and I are looking at the stars. It is a beauter summer night Soon we have to so in said my more. When we	
 Uses a rich and descriptive written vocabulary.	wher pecking up I sow a shoting Star. Then my mom saw a	
 Writes the substance (meaningful thoughts) of five or more sentences on a related topic.	Falling Star. It almost fell on ovr house But it brad up befor it hit. We ran in side.	
 Uses a variety of sentence structure and length,	"My mom and I are looking at the stars. It is a beautiful summer night. 'Soon we have to go inside,' said my mom. When we were packing up, I saw a shooting star. Then my mom saw a falling star. It almost fell on our house. But it burned up before it hit. We ran inside."	
 Uses correct end punctuation and capitalization in simple sentences.		
 Usually uses advanced print conventions appropriat apostrophes, exclamation marks, contractions, and p inconsistent.		

Uses regular verb endings (*e.g.* –ed, -ing, -d, -es).

I had a turabul weekend! My brother us a nightmar! He ruend my whole weekend! My Dad is away. he comes Back today!! He was in CA. Did I menchion my mom was Sick? Well she was! my mom was sick, My Dads away, and my Brother is a rightmar! This was the worst weekend of my Life!! Some Kid Writers go beyond the eight levels in the scale. You may see advanced writing that moves beyond second-grade levels, such as this wonderful sample by Kaitlyn.

"I had a terrible weekend! My brother was a nightmare! He ruined my whole weekend! My dad is away. He comes back today! He was in CA. Did I mention my mom was sick? Well, she was! My mom was sick, my dad's away, and my brother is a nightmare! This was the worst weekend of my life!!" ©2015; Feldgus, Cardonick, and Gentry.

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