

Traits of Writing Scoring Guide

Kindergarten

(from scribbles to sentences)



Kindergarten



Grade 1

My favri p+rtin wawatt
at the capitoll was +he
put +ings.

Grade 2

A snow Wolf is a wild animal
that has white fur. They hide
in the forest in
winter. Their white fur helps
them blend in with their
surroundings so they can hunt
for food.

Ideas

The piece's content: Its central message and details that support that message.

Established

3

3. The writing makes sense and is understandable without help from the writer.

- The text makes sense even without pictures.
- The writing has a focused, specific idea.
- There is simple elaboration through one or more details.

Expanding

2

2. The writing makes sense in a general way with some explanation needed for the reader to understand the writer's message.

- Pictures and words combine to create the idea.
- The idea of the piece is fairly general, though understandable.
- There is an attempt at detail and elaboration in the pictures and/or text; for instance, there may be labels to clarify pictures.

Emergent

1

1. The writing does not make sense without an explanation by the writer.

- The pictures and words/letters are not understandable on their own.
- The piece may be a random collection of pictures and/or letters.
- The writing and/or pictures are not developed; the piece may be too short.

Voice

Voice: The tone and tenor of the piece, the personal stamp of the writer, which is achieved through a strong understanding of purpose and audience.

Established

3

3. The writing has energy and is engaging.

- The pictures and/or words show original, interesting thinking.
- The pictures and/or words connect with the reader.
- The pictures and/or words have a distinctive tone.

Expanding

2

2. The writing attempts to communicate something personal or of interest but doesn't offer a fresh perspective.

- There is a moment in pictures and/or words and sentences when the writing is more than expected.
- The pictures and/or words and sentences make a predictable connection with the reader.
- The tone of the pictures and/or words and sentences is pleasant but expected.

Emergent

1

1. The writing is impersonal and feels flat.

- There are no writing risks in pictures or words that work.
- The reader is not engaged with the pictures or writing.
- The writing does not have a discernible tone because it is not developed or there are not enough pictures or writing on the paper.

Sentence Fluency

The way the words and phrases flow through the piece. It is the auditory trait because it's "read" with the ear as much as the eye.

Established

3

3. The writing has sentences that read aloud with smooth phrasing.

- The sentences are formed correctly and show variety in structure
- When read aloud, the reader does not stumble.
- The sentences begin in different ways.

Expanding

2

2. The writing demonstrates simple, basic sentence understanding.

- The writing has sentences that are mostly grammatically correct.
- There are places where the sentences read smoothly and other places where they do not.
- The sentences begin in the same way or use the same structure throughout.

Emergent

1

1. The writing does not have sentences.

- The words, if present, do not form grammatical correct sentences.
- There is great difficulty "reading" the pictures and or letters aloud.
- Random letters and letter combinations do not show sentence sense.

Presentation

The physical appearance of the piece: A visually appealing text provides a welcome mat. It welcomes the reader in.

Established

3

3. The writing is neat and easy on the eye; letters are formed carefully and consistently.

- The piece has a pleasing appearance and shows care that welcomes the reader.
- Letters are formed correctly and consistently.
- Effective use of spacing and white space; the letters/words sit on the line correctly.

Expanding

2

2. The writing is readable, but not a clean, finished copy that shows care.

- The piece is readable, but has some issues with cross outs, smudges, or the general appearance does not feel finished.
- Letters are not consistently formed, though readable; the pictures are recognizable, but not carefully done or detailed.
- Control over spacing between words and how the letters sit on the lines is inconsistent.

Emergent

1

1. The writing is challenging to read, almost illegible. It's messy.

- The writing and drawing are hastily done making the piece difficult to read.
- The letters are hastily formed and illegible in many places.
- There is no control over spacing or where letters should be placed on the lines.



Beginning Writers Continuum: **Ideas**

The piece's content—its central message and details that support that message.

6 Exceptional

HIGH

5 Established

4 Extending

MIDDLE

3 Expanding

2 Exploring

LOW

1 Emergent

- A. Finding a Big Idea:** The writer shows understanding of the topic through personal experience or research. The big idea is clear, coherent, and original.
- B. Focusing on the Big Idea:** The writer gets at the heart of the topic and writes about it using original and complex thinking. The big idea is narrow and specific.
- C. Staying With the Big Idea:** The writer creates meaning for the reader by elaborating with details that develop the big idea. Pictures (if present) enhance that idea but aren't necessary for comprehension.
- D. Using Juicy Details:** The writer anticipates what the reader might want to know by providing details that clarify the big idea. He or she has carefully selected details to create meaning for the reader and show what is important.
- A. Finding a Big Idea:** The writer explains a simple idea or tells a simple story with words and pictures. His or her topic is clear, but may not be original.
- B. Focusing on the Big Idea:** The writer remains true to his or her topic, but in a general way. His or her piece may be too broad, fuzzy, and/or predictable.
- C. Staying With the Big Idea:** The writer offers clear thinking, but the information he or she provides is incomplete or irrelevant. He or she fails to flesh out the big idea or veers into a new topic without realizing it.
- D. Using Juicy Details:** The writer provides details, though not consistently. He or she settles for the simplest way to convey information or tell the story, rather than reaching for details that create a clear picture in the reader's mind.
- A. Finding a Big Idea:** The writer conveys little information in text or pictures; at most, only the beginning of an idea comes through. An oral reading by the writer is needed to identify the topic.
- B. Focusing on the Big Idea:** The writer provides text, pictures, and other elements that are so unrecognizable or random that the reader can't pinpoint the big idea. What matters to the writer about this topic is not clear.
- C. Staying With the Big Idea:** The writer does not extend a clear message. Letter strings indicate that he or she is trying to express something about the topic, but the reader cannot discern precisely what it is.
- D. Using Juicy Details:** The writer must read his or her writing aloud and explain the drawings for the reader to understand what he or she has to say about the topic. He or she has left many of the reader's questions unanswered.



Beginning Writers Continuum: Voice

The *lane level* tiered to the *passer*—the personal stamp of the writer, which is achieved through a strong understanding of purpose and audience.

1 Expressing

- A **Expressing a Feeling:** The writer expresses a distinct tone: bitter-sweet, compassionate, funny, frustrated, scared, and so on. He or she uses language that speaks to the intended audience.

- B **Communicating With Sparkle and Fizz:** The writer tries, not fails, to create a truly individual piece of writing. He or she has found an original way to address the topic and satisfy the reader.

- C **Reaching Out to the Reader:** The writer is mindful of the audience and connects purposefully to the audience. Clearly, it matters to the writer that the reader “gets it.”

HIGH

2 Entertaining

- D **Saying Things in New Ways:** The writer expresses him- or herself in unique ways. He or she “owns” the topic by addressing the big idea behind it distinctively.

3 Extending

- A **Expressing a Feeling:** The writer expresses a tone, but it’s general: happy, sad, mad. *Common* feelings, exclamation points, underlining, italics, and pictures are used for emphasis.

- B **Communicating With Sparkle and Fizz:** The writer offers a fresh word, interesting image, and/or unusual detail here and there. But, for the most part, he or she uses routine language.

- C **Reaching Out to the Reader:** The writer connects with the reader informally only. He or she only allows a weak point into what matters, as it is interesting to him or her.

4 Explaining

- D **Saying Things in New Ways:** The writer approaches the topic predictably. What he or she thinks or feels about the big idea shows up in pictures or in an occasional colorful word or phrase.

MIDDLE

5 Copying

- A **Expressing a Feeling:** The writer doesn’t express a tone. He or she has not provided any evidence of how he or she feels about the topic.

- B **Communicating With Sparkle and Fizz:** The writer offers “Plain Jane” letters, words, and/or sentences. The writing feels like it came off an assembly line.

- C **Reaching Out to the Reader:** The writer provides no evidence that he or she has considered the audience; the writing may be copied from another source. He or she writes generically about the topic.

6 Imitating

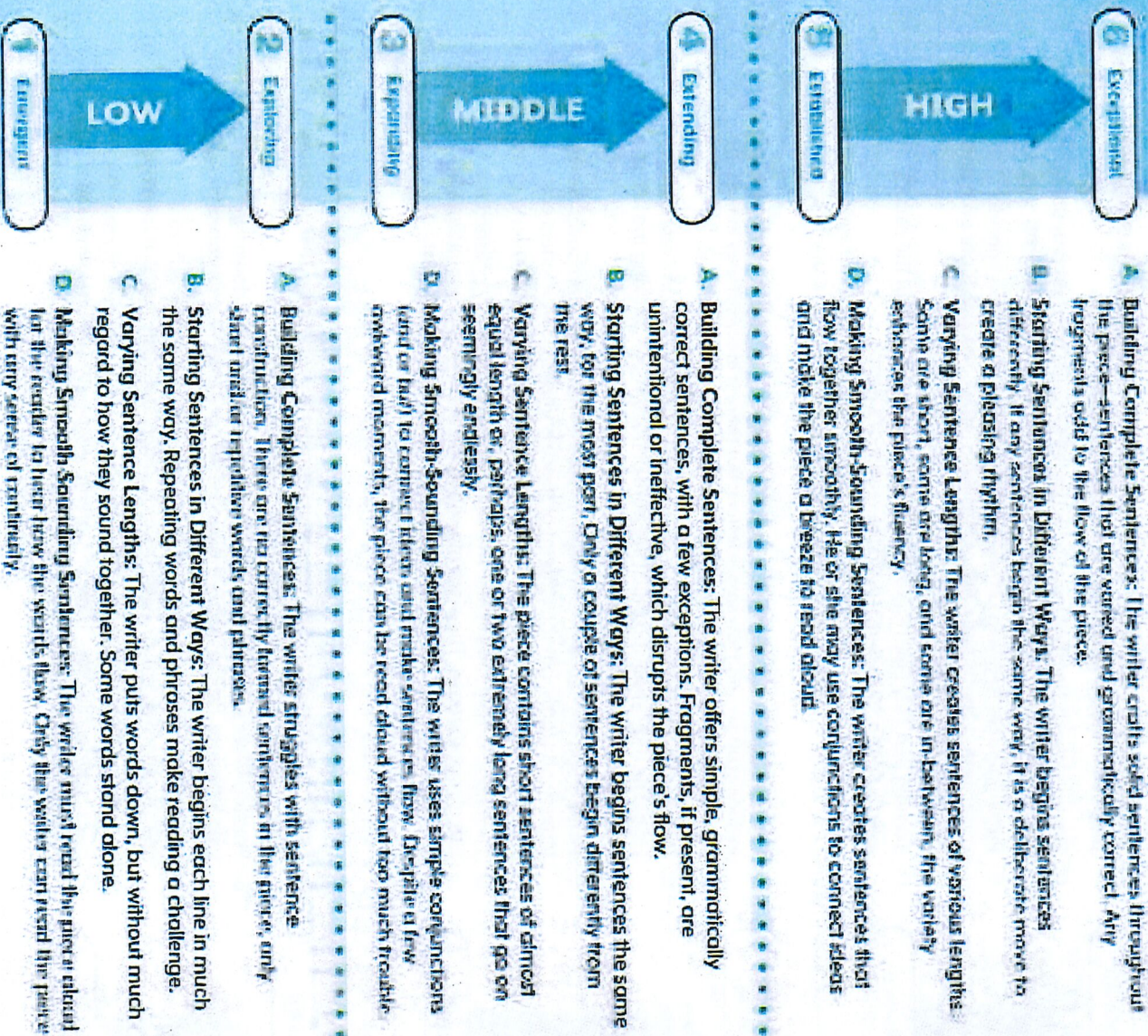
- D **Saying Things in New Ways:** The writer’s work lacks a point of view. He or she produces drawing and/or writing that feels forced, as if responding to a sample question.

LOW



Beginning Writers Continuum: Sentence Fluency

The way the words and phrases flow through the piece. It is the quality that because it's "read" with the ear as much as the eye.





Beginning Writers Continuum: **Presentation**

The physical appearance of the piece. A visually appealing text provides a welcome mat. It invites the reader in.

6 Exceptional

HIGH

5 Established

4 Extending

MIDDLE

3 Expanding

2 Exploring

LOW

1 Emergent

A. **Forming Letters Correctly:** The writer correctly forms letters throughout the piece. Both upper- and lowercase letters are written clearly.

B. **Printing Words Neatly:** The writer is careful to apply the right amount of pressure to create letters that are uniform and pleasing to the eye.

C. **Putting Spaces Between Letters and Words:** The writer uses spacing correctly and consistently. Spaces between letters and words are even and make the piece easy to read.

D. **Turning in a Tidy Final Piece:** The writer has made sure that the piece's overall appearance is inviting to the reader. It's neat.

A. **Forming Letters Correctly:** The writer forms some letters using proper form, including upper- and lowercase letters. But there is inconsistency in the way those letters are formed.

B. **Printing Words Neatly:** The writer creates letters that slant in every direction. He or she may apply too much pressure or not enough, making the letters too bold or too light to read easily.

C. **Putting Spaces Between Letters and Words:** The writer puts spaces between letters and words, but the amount of space is uneven. Some letters and words sit very close to one another, making them difficult to read.

D. **Turning in a Tidy Final Piece:** The writer has not sufficiently polished the piece's appearance. The piece may have a few cross-outs or smudges. It may be wrinkled or torn at the corner. It's readable, but not neat.

A. **Forming Letters Correctly:** The writer forms letters randomly. There appears to be no intentional use of upper- and lowercase letters.

B. **Printing Words Neatly:** The writer puts his or her thoughts down hastily and with little care. Pictures are drawn and letters are formed haphazardly.

C. **Putting Spaces Between Letters and Words:** The writer has not used spacing effectively at all. Letters, words, and pictures are jumbled together.

D. **Turning in a Tidy Final Piece:** The writer has written so carelessly that the piece is almost illegible. It contains many cross-outs, smudges, wrinkles, tears, folds, and so forth.

Scoring Guide: Ideas

The piece's content—its central message and details that support that message.

6

EXCEPTIONAL

- A. **Finding a Topic:** The writer offers a clear, central theme or a simple, original story line that is memorable.
- B. **Focusing the Topic:** The writer narrows the theme or story line to create a piece that is clear, tight, and manageable.
- C. **Developing the Topic:** The writer provides enough critical evidence to support the theme and shows insight on the topic. Or he or she tells the story in a fresh way through an original, unpredictable plot.
- D. **Using Details:** The writer offers credible, accurate details that create pictures in the reader's mind, from the beginning of the piece to the end. Those details provide the reader with evidence of the writer's knowledge about and/or experience with the topic.

5

STRONG

4

REFINING

- A. **Finding a Topic:** The writer offers a recognizable but broad theme or story line. He or she stays on topic, but in a predictable way.
- B. **Focusing the Topic:** The writer needs to crystallize his or her topic around the central theme or story line. He or she does not focus on a specific aspect of the topic.
- C. **Developing the Topic:** The writer draws on personal knowledge and experience, but does not offer a unique perspective. He or she does not probe deeply, but instead gives the reader only a glimpse at aspects of the topic.
- D. **Using Details:** The writer offers details, but they do not always hit the mark because they are inaccurate or irrelevant. He or she does not create a picture in the reader's mind because key questions about the central theme or story line have not been addressed.

3

DEVELOPING

2

EMERGING

- A. **Finding a Topic:** The writer has not settled on a topic and, therefore, may offer only a series of unfocused, repetitious, and/or random thoughts.
- B. **Focusing the Topic:** The writer has not narrowed his or her topic in a meaningful way. It's hard to tell what the writer thinks is important since he or she devotes equal importance to each piece of information.
- C. **Developing the Topic:** The writer has created a piece that is so short the reader cannot fully understand or appreciate what he or she wants to say. He or she may have simply restated an assigned topic or responded to a prompt without devoting much thought or effort to it.
- D. **Using Details:** The writer has clearly devoted little attention to details. The writing contains limited or completely inaccurate information. After reading the piece, the reader is left with many unanswered questions.

1

RUDIMENTARY

Scoring Guide: Voice

The tone and tenor of the piece—the personal stamp of the writer, which is achieved through a strong understanding of purpose and audience.

<div>6</div> <div>↑</div> <div>HIGH</div>	<div>EXCEPTIONAL</div> <p>A. Establishing a Tone: The writer cares about the topic, and it shows. The writing is expressive and compelling. The reader feels the writer's conviction, authority, and integrity.</p> <p>B. Conveying the Purpose: The writer makes clear his or her reason for creating the piece. He or she offers a point of view that is appropriate for the mode (narrative, expository, or persuasive), which compels the reader to read on.</p> <p>C. Creating a Connection to the Audience: The writer speaks in a way that makes the reader want to listen. He or she has considered what the reader needs to know and the best way to convey it by sharing his or her fascination, feelings, and opinions about the topic.</p> <p>D. Taking Risks to Create Voice: The writer expresses ideas in new ways, which makes the piece interesting and original. The writing sounds like the writer because of his or her use of distinctive, just-right words and phrases.</p>
	<div>5</div> <div>STRONG</div>
<div>4</div> <div>↑</div> <div>MIDDLE</div>	<div>REFINING</div> <p>A. Establishing a Tone: The writer has established a tone that can be described as "pleasing" or "sincere," but not "passionate" or "compelling." He or she attempts to create a tone that hits the mark, but the overall result feels generic.</p> <p>B. Conveying the Purpose: The writer has chosen a voice for the piece that is not completely clear. There are only a few moments when the reader understands where the writer is coming from and why he or she wrote the piece.</p> <p>C. Creating a Connection to the Audience: The writer keeps the reader at a distance. The connection between reader and writer is tenuous because the writer reveals little about what is important or meaningful about the topic.</p> <p>D. Taking Risks to Create Voice: The writer creates a few moments that catch the reader's attention, but only a few. The piece sounds like anyone could have written it. It lacks the energy, commitment, and conviction that would distinguish it from other pieces on the same topic.</p>
	<div>3</div> <div>DEVELOPING</div>
<div>2</div> <div>↑</div> <div>LOW</div>	<div>EMERGING</div> <p>A. Establishing a Tone: The writer has produced a lifeless piece—one that is monotonous, mechanical, repetitious, and/or off-putting to the reader.</p> <p>B. Conveying the Purpose: The writer chose the topic for mysterious reasons. The piece may be filled with random thoughts, technical jargon, or inappropriate vocabulary, making it impossible to discern how the writer feels about the topic.</p> <p>C. Creating a Connection to the Audience: The writer provides no evidence that he or she has considered what the reader might need to know to connect with the topic. Or there is an obvious mismatch between the piece's tone and the intended audience.</p> <p>D. Taking Risks to Create Voice: The writer creates no highs and lows. The piece is flat and lifeless, causing the reader to wonder why he or she wrote it in the first place. The writer's voice does not pop out, even for a moment.</p>
	<div>1</div> <div>RUDIMENTARY</div>

Scoring Guide: Sentence Fluency

The way words and phrases flow through the piece. It is the auditory trait because it's "read" with the ear as much as the eye.

<div>6</div> <div>↑</div> <div>HIGH</div>	<div>EXCEPTIONAL</div> <p>A. Crafting Well-Built Sentences: The writer carefully and creatively constructs sentences for maximum impact. Transition words such as <i>but</i>, <i>and</i>, and <i>so</i> are used successfully to join sentences and sentence parts.</p> <p>B. Varying Sentence Types: The writer uses various types of sentences (simple, compound, and/or complex) to enhance the central theme or story line. The piece is made up of an effective mix of long, complex sentences and short, simple ones.</p> <p>C. Capturing Smooth and Rhythmic Flow: The writer thinks about how the sentences sound. He or she uses phrasing that is almost musical. If the piece were read aloud, it would be easy on the ear.</p> <p>D. Breaking the "Rules" to Create Fluency: The writer diverges from standard English to create interest and impact. For example, he or she may use a sentence fragment, such as "All alone in the forest," or a single word, such as "Bam!" to accent a particular moment or action. He or she might begin with informal words such as <i>well</i>, <i>and</i>, or <i>but</i> to create a conversational tone, or he or she might break rules intentionally to make dialogue sound authentic.</p>
<div>5</div> <div>↑</div> <div>MIDDLE</div>	<div>STRONG</div>
<div>4</div> <div>↑</div> <div>MIDDLE</div>	<div>REFINING</div> <p>A. Crafting Well-Built Sentences: The writer offers simple sentences that are sound but no long, complex ones. He or she attempts to vary the beginnings and lengths of sentences.</p> <p>B. Varying Sentence Types: The writer exhibits basic sentence sense and offers some sentence variety. He or she attempts to use different types of sentences, but in doing so creates an uneven flow rather than a smooth, seamless one.</p> <p>C. Capturing Smooth and Rhythmic Flow: The writer has produced a text that is uneven. Many sentences read smoothly, whereas others are choppy or awkward.</p> <p>D. Breaking the "Rules" to Create Fluency: The writer includes fragments, but they seem more accidental than intentional. He or she uses informal words such as <i>well</i>, <i>and</i>, and <i>but</i> inappropriately to start sentences, and pays little attention to making dialogue sound authentic.</p>
<div>3</div> <div>↑</div> <div>LOW</div>	<div>DEVELOPING</div>
<div>2</div> <div>↑</div> <div>LOW</div>	<div>EMERGING</div> <p>A. Crafting Well-Built Sentences: The writer's sentences, even simple ones, are often flawed. Sentence beginnings are repetitive and uninspired.</p> <p>B. Varying Sentence Types: The writer uses a single, repetitive sentence pattern throughout or connects sentence parts with an endless string of transition words such as <i>and</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>or</i>, and <i>because</i>, which distracts the reader.</p> <p>C. Capturing Smooth and Rhythmic Flow: The writer has created a text that is a challenge to read aloud since the sentences are incomplete, choppy, stilted, rambling, and/or awkward.</p> <p>D. Breaking the "Rules" to Create Fluency: The writer offers few or no simple, well-built sentences, making it impossible to determine whether he or she has done anything out of the ordinary. Global revision is necessary before sentences can be revised for stylistic and creative purposes.</p>
<div>1</div>	<div>RUDIMENTARY</div>

Scoring Guide: Presentation

The physical appearance of the piece. A visually appealing text provides a welcome mat. It invites the reader in.

6	EXCEPTIONAL	<p>A. Applying Handwriting Skills: The writer uses handwriting that is clear and legible. Whether he or she prints or uses cursive, letters are uniform and slant evenly throughout the piece. Spacing between words is consistent.</p> <p>B. Using Word Processing Effectively: The writer uses a font style and size that are easy to read and are a good match for the piece's purpose. If he or she uses color, it enhances the piece's readability.</p> <p>C. Making Good Use of White Space: The writer frames the text with appropriately sized margins. Artful spacing between letters, words, and lines makes reading a breeze. There are no cross-outs, smudges, or tears on the paper.</p> <p>D. Refining Text Features: The writer effectively places text features such as headings, page numbers, titles, and bullets on the page and aligns them clearly with the text they support.</p>
5	STRONG	
4	REFINING	<p>A. Applying Handwriting Skills: The writer has readable handwriting, but his or her inconsistent letter slanting, spacing, and formation distract from the central theme or story line.</p> <p>B. Using Word Processing Effectively: The writer uses an easy-to-read font but formats it in a way that makes the piece cluttered and distracting. His or her choice of font style and/or size may not match the writing's purpose. He or she may use color with varying degrees of success.</p> <p>C. Making Good Use of White Space: The writer creates margins but they are inconsistent or ineffective as a frame for the piece. Spacing between letters, words, and lines makes reading difficult at times. An occasional cross-out or smudge blemishes the piece.</p> <p>D. Refining Text Features: The writer includes complex text features such as charts, graphs, maps, and tables, but not clearly or consistently. However, he or she does a good job with less complex features such as the size and placement of the title, bullets, sidebars, subheadings, illustrations, and page numbers.</p>
3	DEVELOPING	
2	EMERGING	<p>A. Applying Handwriting Skills: The writer forms letters and uses space in a way that makes the piece virtually illegible. The handwriting is a visual barrier.</p> <p>B. Using Word Processing Effectively: The writer creates a dizzying display of different font styles and sizes, making the piece virtually unreadable. The misuse of color also detracts.</p> <p>C. Making Good Use of White Space: The writer formats margins inconsistently and uses white space ineffectively, making the piece hard to read. Space between letters, words, and lines is nonexistent, or there is so much space it's distracting.</p>
1	RUDIMENTARY	<p>D. Refining Text Features: The writer does not include features or includes features that are confusing or indecipherable rather than useful to the reader. The paper is seriously marred with cross-outs, smudges, and/or tears.</p>

Free Time Fun

Pick an idea to complete below.

Cross it out as you complete the activity!

Write the letters of the alphabet. Write one word for each letter.	Write your numbers 1-20.	Create a list of 10 rhyming words.
Read a book. Write a sentence about your favorite part.	If you could go on a trip, where would you go? Describe what you would do.	Write & illustrate three word problems.
Draw red, yellow and green stars. Show all the ways to make 10.	Describe what it takes to be a good friend.	How many different words can you make using the words school is fun?
Draw a detailed picture with 10 different colors.	In your best handwriting, write each classmates name. Write something kind about each person.	List your favorite foods. Write two describing words for each food.

Name _____

Lesson Plan
Week 1, Year 200

Things to Do When You're Done Early...



1) Write a biography about a classmate or family member.	2) Read an article from the Wikipedia and at least 3 interesting facts.	3) Make a graph or poster about the history of a famous person or a famous place. Include a drawing and a short story about the person or place.	4) Read a picture book and design a new book jacket for that book.	5) Make a pretend hand teacher. Include a picture on one side and a note on the other.
6) Create a crossword puzzle or word search using at least 10 words listed in your classroom.	7) Write a story or song about your favorite subject in school.	8) Create a "Best Seller" list. List your favorite 10 books that you have read.	9) Write a friendly letter to an author of a book you have enjoyed.	10) Rewrite the ending of a popular story, such as The Little Red Hen.
11) Write about an imaginary interview between someone famous and you.	12) Use your imagination to create a new planet. List at least 5 people, knowledge, and ideas that will be on this planet.	13) Design the perfect habitat for an animal. Include details and labels.	14) Do a little research with 5 facts about 5 famous people.	15) Plan a trip for your family. Include at least 5 sights you would like to see.
16) Make a map from your house to one of your favorite stores.	17) Illustrate a scene from your first day of school.	18) Draw detailed pictures/portraits of 3 of your friends.	19) Draw a diagram of your backyard or favorite playground.	20) Imagine and illustrate a brand new type of transportation for the future.
21) Create and solve 5 math word problems.	22) Write an 8-line poem about yourself.	23) Write a newspaper article for your school paper about something you do in your class.	24) Use a dictionary. Write the definition of 4 words with more than 2 syllables.	25) Brainstorm at least 20 creative uses for a plastic fork.

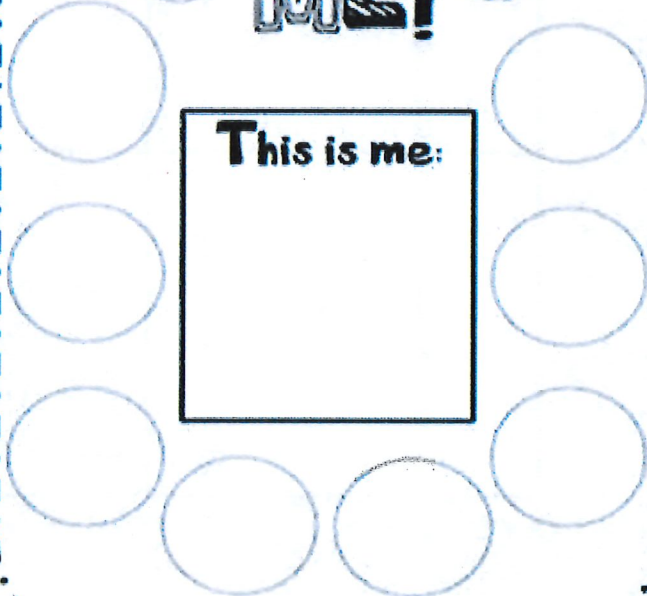
Words that describe



ME!



This is me:



The Key Qualities

Ideas			
1 Finding a Topic	2 Focusing the Topic	3 Developing the Topic	4 Using Details
Organization			
1 Creating the Lead	2 Using Sequence	3 Structuring the Body	4 Ending With a Sense of Resolution
Style			
1 Establishing a Tone	2 Conveying the Purpose	3 Creating a Connection to the Audience	4 Taking Risks to Create Voice
Word Choice			
1 Applying Strong Verbs	2 Selecting Strong Words and Phrases	3 Using Specific and Accurate Words	4 Choosing Words That Deepen Meaning
Sentence Fluency			
1 Creating Well-Built Sentences	2 Varying Sentence Types	3 Copying Smooth and Rhythmic Flow	4 Breaking the "Rules" to Create Fluency
Conventions			
1 Checking Spelling	2 Punctuating Effectively	3 Capitalizing Correctly	4 Applying Grammar and Usage
Presentation			
1 Applying Handwriting Skills	2 Using Word Processing Effectively	3 Making Good Use of White Space	4 Refining Text Features



