

K-2 Writing Development Continuum

Stage 1- Picture Writing/Drawing

- Picture only
- Begin to express thoughts and feelings through picture

Stage 2- Scribbling

- Tells about drawing
- Uses random or more conventional scribbling
- Imitates writing

Stage 3- Letter-Like Forms

- Verbalizes about drawing
- Draws a recognizable picture
- Uses own drawing to convey a message and dictate a word, label, thought, or a complete sentence about a drawing
- Attempts written symbols (circles, shapes, squiggles, or more controlled lines) and may dictate a message
- Attempts to read messages
- Writes own name

Stage 4- Early Spelling/Semi-Phonetic

- Draws a picture and dictates complete sentences or a story in a direct relationship to a picture
- Begins to make connection that written symbols convey a message
- May use strings of numbers and letters
- May use names or parts of names
- May copy words from the environment
- May spell some high frequency words correctly
- May demonstrate limited knowledge of letter-sound relationships and is able to dictate what the letters say
- Knows the direction of print

Stage 5- Phonetic Spelling

- Connects letters and sounds, usually initial and final consonants and some vowels
- Uses phonetic spelling
- Draws a picture and labels in a direct relationship to the picture

- Text may contain incomplete thoughts/simple sentences
- Spells some high frequency words correctly
- Demonstrates spacing between words
- Knows the direction of print
- May begin to use spaces (incorrectly/correctly)
- Sentences begin to make sense
- Short simple sentences (i.e. The ball is red.)
- Most of the text is readable without dictation
- Begins to use capitalization and punctuation (may be used incorrectly)

Stage 6- Transitional Spelling

- Text is readable without dictation
- Begins to develop a sense of story (may have appropriate beginning, middle, end)
- Writes sentences that focus on a topic much of the time
- Composes text that contains basic ideas with some details
- Begins to vary sentence lengths and patterns
- Spells most high, middle and some low frequency words correctly
- Represents most sounds in words (logical phonetic spelling); spells some words conventionally
- Begins to use some correct capitalization and punctuation

Stage 7- Conventional Spelling

- Has a basic sense of story (beginning, middle, end and logical connection of events)
- Composes text that contains basic ideas with several undeveloped details
- Focuses on the topic most of the time
- May attempt to use dialogue
- Uses some describing words/sophisticated vocabulary
- May choose words and phrases that show evidence of literacy language
- Writes many sentences that are correct and varied in length and pattern
- Spells many words conventionally; uses logical phonetic spelling for others
- Uses basic capitalization and punctuation correctly much of the time

Stage 8- Secure

- Composes story that has a definite structure (clear beginning, middle, and end)
- Composes text that contains main idea supported by well-developed details
- Focuses on the topic most of the time
- May express ideas in a creative way or writing may contain original ideas
- May use dialogue effectively
- Includes rich descriptive language
- Writes correct sentences that are varied in length and pattern
- Uses conventional spelling most of the time
- Uses correct capitalization and punctuation most of the time