Amherst County Public Schools

Literacy Program

An articulation of expectations for literacy instruction

Revised 6/2019
Preface

Our children deserve the best possible instruction based on what current research tells us is most effective. This document describes Amherst County Public Schools’ literacy principles and outlines a plan for instruction in ACPS K-5 classrooms.

The plan was developed in the 2009-10 school year by a committee of ACPS teachers and administrators during a series of sessions that included study and discussion of reading research as it applies to our work in our community. The result is a document that will serve as the basis for instructional decision-making throughout the school division, ensuring that the language used to talk about instruction and the expectations for instruction are consistent from school to school.

Every K-5 teacher is expected to understand and follow the core principles and framework outlined in this plan and to consider the expectations for literacy education beyond the K-5 level. Secondary literacy teachers will understand and follow the principles and be familiar with the expectations for literacy instruction at the elementary level. The goal is for teachers to use their knowledge about effective practices to make intentional decisions about what happens in their classrooms.

The demands of a 21st century world are expected to change rapidly, requiring that teachers and students develop new skills. The plan will be reviewed and revised as such information becomes available.

Our task, the grounding vision for our work as educators, is to guide our students in becoming literate individuals able to learn and thrive in a global society.

2009-2010 Committee Members

Julie Rogers, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Marymargaret Cardwell, Title I and K-12 Literacy Supervisor
Jim Gallagher, Supervisor of Student Services
Evelyn Woodruff, Elementary Supervisor
Ashley Wallace, Principal, Amherst Elementary
Cindy Copp, Enrichment Specialist
Kristi Foell, Amelon Elementary
Nancy Kershner, Amelon Elementary
Betty Mosby, Amelon Elementary
Becky Johnson, Amherst Elementary
Susan Cargill, Central Elementary
Judy Walker, Central Elementary
Julianne Albert, Elon Elementary
Vicky White, Elon Elementary
Roberta Parker, Madison Heights Elementary
Ementha Prince, Madison Heights Elementary
Anita Adams, Pleasant View Elementary
Robin Wheeler, Temperance Elementary
Jean Ann Rhodes, Amherst Middle
Charlotte Fluharty, Monelison Middle
Julie McAndrews, Amherst County High
Amherst County Public Schools
Literacy Program

"Literacy is the foundation for all other learning, the means by which youngsters
develop critical thinking skills. It is the vehicle through which humans can make sense
of our world and ourselves." (Raphael, 2000)

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Goal

Amherst County Public Schools shall motivate, inspire, and educate every child, every day by providing appropriate comprehensive literacy instruction.

Honoring Children’s Rights to Excellent Literacy Instruction*: 6 Principles

Amherst County Public Schools is convinced that efforts to improve children’s literacy achievement must begin by recognizing the right of every child to receive the best possible literacy instruction. We have six basic principles to serve as a guide for our professional practice.

1. Children have a right to literacy instruction based on their individual needs as determined by assessment that identifies their strengths as well as their needs and involves them in making decisions about their own learning.

2. Children have a right to classrooms that build both the skill and the desire to read and write increasingly complex materials.

3. Children who are struggling with reading have a right to receive intervention from teachers who are knowledgeable about the teaching of reading.

4. Children have a right to access a wide variety of books, other print materials, and available technology for both independent and instructional reading in classrooms and school libraries.

5. Children have a right to teachers who purposefully involve parents and communities in their academic lives.

6. Children have a right to well-prepared teachers who continue to learn and reflect on their practices, keeping up-to-date through professional development.

* Based on a position statement of the International Reading Association, “Making a Difference Means Making it Different: Honoring Children’s Rights to Excellent Reading Instruction”
Framework for K-5 Reading Instruction

Introduction

The principles outlining children’s right to the best possible reading instruction that are introduced in the preceding section are expanded in this section. The essential components are curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Teacher knowledge and parent involvement, which impact literacy development at all levels, are discussed following the Framework section. The final section is an appendix of required documents and useful resources.

Curriculum

*Virginia’s Standards of Learning as outlined in the English Curriculum Framework (found on the Virginia Department of Education website) is the basis for the literacy curriculum.* The Curriculum Framework details what students are to learn at each grade level. The ACPS pacing guide assigns the curriculum components to nine weeks sections, thus facilitating sequencing of instruction in the classroom. The expectations for reading achievement for each grade are found in the Grade Level Benchmarks in the appendix.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, ACPS will utilize the *Phonemic Awareness: The Skills They Need To Help Them Succeed!* curriculum in grades Pk-1 to supplement core instruction in the area of phonemic awareness. Please refer to the ACPS English Curriculum & Pacing Guide for the timeframe of lessons. (Use this link for corresponding assessments)

*The core of the ACPS literacy program is a set of instructional practices and materials informed by research. The practices that teachers employ to teach the essential knowledge and skills outlined in the Curriculum Framework and ACPS pacing guide are described in this document.*

Assessment

Assessments provide feedback to inform instruction, monitor progress, or form the basis for evaluation. Some assessments (see below) are required for all students and others will be determined by teachers. For example, in addition to the required assessments, teacher-designed assessments evaluate progress in the curriculum on a daily and weekly basis. *This document focuses on division-wide assessments; however, effective classroom teachers and specialists will monitor student progress in a variety of other ways, including authentic and differentiated assessments.* Grade Level
Benchmarks, found in this document’s appendix, outline the expectations for grade-level work.

Types of Assessments

An effective reading program uses four types of assessments:

- **Screening instruments**, administered at the beginning of the school year to all students, indicate which students may have difficulties in reading and may need additional support or intervention or extension.

- **Progress monitoring assessments**, administered to individuals or groups, measure student progress at intervals throughout the school year to determine effectiveness of literacy instruction. Progress monitoring helps ensure that students falling behind receive immediate support.

- **Diagnostic assessments**, administered individually, provide specific information concerning skills, knowledge, and application.

- **Outcome assessments**, usually administered at the end of the school year, provide information about the numbers and percentages of students making gains in reading and reaching grade level benchmarks.

Division-Wide Assessments

Listed below are the state and Amherst County Public Schools literacy assessments administered during the school year. Teachers are encouraged to use additional assessments as needed to inform their instruction. Teachers in grades K-5 are required to complete the ACPS Reading Assessment Summary for their respective grade level.

- **PALS – Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening** is a state reading assessment for grades PK-5 to identify strengths, weaknesses, and progress. PALS will be administered on line three times during the school year, and scores are to be entered on line. (Screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic)

**Timeline:** Must be completed in a two-week window identified by school or division within PALS parameters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August-October</td>
<td>PK-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>PK-all students, K-5- those students reading on or below grade level; all students will take the spelling portion of the PALS assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>PK-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PALS Reminders**

**Kindergarten**

Any child with a firm COW is expected to take the optional word lists and accompanying passage. Teachers must download the oral reading passages from the PALS website. Their running records must be administered using paper/pencil since they cannot use the Online Wizard for this portion of the assessment.

**Grades 1-5**

The word list is what determines what reading passage to use as a running record. See the chart below for the suggested word lists to administer. If a student achieved a perfect score on those word lists in the fall, it is not necessary to administer those lists at mid-year. Start at the first list for which the student did not receive a perfect score. Once the word lists have been given, please refer to the second chart for the appropriate passage to administer.

Please be reminded to follow the PALS Administration and Scoring Guides. Not following testing procedures will result in invalid and unreliable data. ([Use this link for additional information](#))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry Level</th>
<th>First Grade</th>
<th>Second Grade</th>
<th>Third Grade</th>
<th>Fourth Grade</th>
<th>Fifth Grade</th>
<th>Sixth Grade</th>
<th>Seventh Grade</th>
<th>Eighth Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preprimer Word List</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primer Word List</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade Word List</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade Word List</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade Word List</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade Word List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade Word List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Grade Word List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Grade Word List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Grade Word List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling Feature Scores</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level A: Oral Reading in Context**

- Fluency
- Rate
- Comprehension

**Recommended** for the passage that corresponds to the highest word list on which the student read 15 or more words correctly.

**Level B: Alphabatics**

- Alphabet Recognition
- Letter Sounds
- Concept of Word

**Recommended if these tasks were given in the fall.**

**Level C: Phonemic Awareness**

- Blending
- Sound-to-Letter

**Recommended if these tasks were given in the fall.**

- **Running records** are coded notations of text reading on leveled text, administered individually.

  When running records are used as a diagnostic tool, errors are analyzed to determine the reader’s use of meaning, sentence structure, and visual cues. Comprehension questions or a retelling may be a part of the process; however, the error analysis is most useful for diagnostic purposes. A mix of fiction and nonfiction is helpful. For the PALS passages, teachers should use the percentages used by PALS in calculating accuracy (found in the [appendix](#)). ([Progress monitoring, diagnostic](#))
Nine Weeks Benchmark Assessments are administered at the end of each nine weeks based on the skills and content that are delineated in the curriculum and pacing guides for Amherst County Public Schools in English. The assessment results are used as diagnostic tools in designing remediation, intervention, enrichment, and instructional planning. (Progress monitoring)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Standards of Learning (SOL) state assessment will be given according to the state testing guidelines in grades 3-5. (Outcome assessment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Weeks 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Literacy Assessment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First 9 Weeks</th>
<th>Second 9 Weeks</th>
<th>Third 9 Weeks</th>
<th>Fourth 9 Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kindergarten</strong></td>
<td>PALS Quick Checks</td>
<td>PALS Quick Checks</td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>PALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring (recommended)</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring (recommended)</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring (recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First grade</strong></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring or PALS Level C (recommended)</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring or PALS Level C (recommended)</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring or PALS Level C (recommended)</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Progress Monitoring or PALS Level C (recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second grade</strong></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third grade</strong></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
<td>Running record (and PALS Quick Checks if necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fourth grade</strong></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Running record</td>
<td>Running record</td>
<td>Running record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fifth grade</strong></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Running record</td>
<td>Running record</td>
<td>Running record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
<td>Scored Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**
- This chart outlines the *minimum* assessments required; schools and teachers may opt to assess more frequently as needed.
- Recommend alternating fiction and nonfiction passages for running records.
- ACPS uses the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System for the *required* running records, other running records may be taken on any text. A one hundred word passage is all that is necessary.
## Correlation Between Developing Literacy Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept of Word in Text</th>
<th>Writing/Spelling</th>
<th>Spelling Stages/Reading Stages</th>
<th>PALS COW Word List Word Recognition</th>
<th>Decoding Words in Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firm COW</td>
<td>Accurate tracking</td>
<td>Correct short vowels in spelling</td>
<td>Middle Letter Name Speller</td>
<td>Knows most words (7-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudimentary COW</td>
<td>Points to words, self corrects when gets off track</td>
<td>Initial and final consonants</td>
<td>Early Letter Name Speller/Beginning Reader</td>
<td>Knows many words (3-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Points to words says syllables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing COW</td>
<td>Points to words says stressed unit (syllables or word)</td>
<td>Initial consonant</td>
<td>Emergent Speller/Emergent Reader</td>
<td>Few Words known (0-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Left to right directionality but no word awareness</td>
<td>Random letters – Symbol Salad 4RBC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Letter-like symbols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Waves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Words Their Way: Word study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* (2008), from Gill (1992)
Instruction

What We Teach:

The Virginia Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework (found on the Virginia Department of Education website) and the ACPS pacing guide detail the essential knowledge and skills students learn at each grade level. Grade Level Benchmarks, found in this document’s appendix, outline the expectations for grade-level work. The following sections address the key components of reading instruction and the process that students use as they construct meaning from text.

**Components**

The National Reading Panel report (2000) summarized several decades of research that shows effective reading instruction addresses five critical areas identified below. Further, the report also found that systematic and explicit instruction is most effective. Systematic instruction teaches skills in a planned, logical progression. With explicit instruction the teacher clearly states what the student is to learn and models how the skill is used.

**Phonemic Awareness** is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words (pre-K-2). Before children learn to read print, they need to become aware of how sounds in words work. Children demonstrate phonemic awareness by recognizing which words in a set begin with the same sound, by saying the first or last sound in a word, by blending sounds to say a word, and by breaking a word into its separate sounds. In addition, children need a broader phonological awareness of larger parts of spoken language and must be able to identify and manipulate words, syllables, onsets, and rhymes. See diagram below for more information.
Phonics is the ability to recognize the relationship between letters of written language and the individual sounds of spoken language. ACPS teachers use the word study approach to help children learn the relationship between letters and sounds and to apply their knowledge of sounds and letters to their own writing. Refer to Words Their Way or Word Journeys for a suggested scope & sequence. Additional resources can be found in the ACPS Resource Folder.

Fluency is the ability to read with speed and accuracy. Fluent readers read aloud with expression, and reading sounds effortless.

Vocabulary is the ability to use words orally and in written communication by applying word meaning. Word walls should be used to build upon students word knowledge as words are discovered within the context of reading. Word walls should continue to grow throughout a school year and be used by students for writing, in addition to word recognition and understanding. (Types of vocabulary- Listening, speaking, reading, and writing.)

Comprehension is the ability to understand the meaning of what is read.

**Reading Process**

The reading process includes all the strategies, conscious and unconscious, that readers use before, during, and after reading a text to construct meaning. Effective readers focus on understanding what they are reading by using these strategies in order to monitor their understanding:
- monitoring comprehension
- activating background knowledge
- questioning
- visualizing
- evaluating to determine importance
- summarizing and synthesizing
- inferring

**Reading Strategies Defined** (see Appendix and link for additional information)

**Schema / Background Knowledge:** Schema (background knowledge) is the meaning you get from a piece of literature that is intertwined with the meaning you bring to it. A layering occurs, a weaving of past and present. When you read, sometimes you activate your schema or you build upon it. Schema helps students understand the strategies for reading comprehension!

**Making Connections:** Children make personal connections with the text by using their schema. There are three main types of connections we can make during reading:
-Text-to-Self: Refers to connections made between the text and the reader's personal experience.

-Text-to-Text: Refers to connections made between a text being read to a text that was previously read.

-Text-to-World: Refers to connections made between a text being read and something that occurs in the world.

**Visualizing or Creating Mental Images:** This strategy involves the ability of readers to make mental images of a text as a way to understand processes or events they encounter during reading. This ability can be an indication that a reader understands the text.

**Metacognition or Self-Monitoring:** Helps students understand the strategies for reading comprehension!

**Inferring:** Authors do not always provide complete descriptions of, or explicit information about a topic, setting, character, or event. However, they often provide clues that readers can use to “read between the lines”—by making inferences that combine information in the text with their schema.

**Determine Importance or Evaluate:** Determining importance has to do with knowing why you’re reading and then making decisions about what information or ideas are most critical to understanding the overall meaning of the piece.

**Synthesizing** is closely linked to evaluating. Basically, as we identify what’s important, we interweave our thoughts to form a comprehensive perspective to make the whole greater than just the sum of the parts.

**Questioning:** This strategy involves readers asking themselves questions throughout the reading of text. The ability of readers to ask themselves relevant questions as they read is especially valuable in helping them to integrate information, identify main ideas, and summarize information. Asking the right questions allows good readers to focus on the most important information in a text.
Below are activities that can be used to teach the above strategies at each part of the reading process (before, during, and after).

BEFORE Reading

Comprehension strategies taught:
- Previewing/activating background knowledge
- Predicting
- Questioning
- Determining importance (looking at text features)

Activities to help teach:
- Prediction statements
- KWL (know, want to know, learned)
- Think, Pair, Share (predictions, “noticings” that helped with predictions)
- Picture walks
- Anticipation guides (the before reading section)
- Think-alouds
- Skimming (text features to focus on)
- Preview-Predict-Confirm organizer
- Making connections
- Concept sorts
- Content vocabulary list to set purpose or make predictions
- Text feature instruction (headers, bold type, maps, illustrations, etc.)
- Text preview (teacher-written passage to build background knowledge before reading)
- List-group-label
- Thinking Maps

DURING Reading

Comprehension strategies taught:
- Questioning
- Self-monitoring
- Visualizing/mental images
- Inferring
- Making connections (text-to-text, text-to-world, text-to-self)

Activities to help teach:
- KWL (know, what I want to know, learned)
- Sticky notes (mark confusing, interesting parts)
- QAR (question-answer relationships)
- Two-column notes
- DR-TA (directed reading thinking activity)
- Think-alouds to monitor strategies
- Rereading
- Literature circles (required roles—examples: discussion director, literary luminary, connector)
- Wordless picture books (visualizing)
- Inferencing (what I read + what's in my head)
- Three-column notes (background knowledge/text clues/inference made)
- Word analysis (context clues)
- Questioning the author
- Word mapping
- Journaling (specific purpose to address a strategy)
- Thinking Maps

**AFTER Reading**

**Comprehension strategies taught:**
- Summarizing
- Evaluating to determine importance
- Self-monitoring

**Activities to help teach:**
- KWL (know, want to know, what I learned)
- Graphic organizers:
  - Web
  - Venn diagram
  - Time line
  - Story map
  - Character map
  - Main idea and details chart
  - Beginning, middle, end
  - Word map (Frayer model)
- QAR (question-answer relationships)
- Two-column notes
- Think-pair-share
- Summary writing ("who, wanted, but, so" for fiction; topic, two facts, personal response for nonfiction)
- Reread to confirm
- Literature circles (required roles—examples: discussion director, literary luminary, connector)
- Concept sort
- Making connections to draw conclusions
- Inferencing (what I read + what's in my head)
- Three-column notes (background knowledge/text clues/inference made)
- Identify themes
- Retelling
- Anticipation guides (the after-reading section)
- Determining topic from details
- List-group-label
- Journaling (specific purpose to address a strategy)
- Discussion
- Jigsaw
- Thinking Maps

[Additional Resources]
How We Organize:
Teachers organize the instructional day for multiple purposes according to student needs. The following sections describe how to group students and how much time to allocate to the components of the reading block.

- **Grouping Practices**
  According to the National Reading Panel, a combination of small group and whole class instruction produces the best results. Student grouping for reading instruction is generally determined by academic need and is based on literacy assessments such as running records and word study assessments. Student interests may also be considered when forming groups.

  While the teacher is working with small groups, other students may be working independently or with partners on work at their independent level. One-to-one instruction, that is, a teacher working with one child, is valuable and is most often seen in intervention or tutorial settings.

Listed below are examples of the types of instructional work that may be seen in each group.

**Whole Group** - Heterogeneous
- Phonemic awareness (most appropriate K-2)
- Read aloud
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Questioning based on Bloom’s Taxonomy
- Writing

**Small Group** - Homogeneous Flexible Groupings
- Fluency
- Phonics
- Dictation (writing for sounds)
- Guided reading
- Comprehension
- Questioning
- Word recognition
- Phonemic awareness (most appropriate K-2)
- Literature circles (most appropriate in upper elementary)

**Managing Small Group Instruction Time**
(What the others are doing while I teach small group)
- Writing
- Independent reading
- Centers/work stations
- Computer activities
- Word study activities
- Collaborative group work
**Allocation of Time**

Amherst County Schools will allocate a minimum of 120 minutes daily for language arts. This will include 90 minutes of reading instruction and 30 minutes of process writing. The reading "diets" on the following pages will be used in lesson planning. Using reading and spelling assessments, the teacher will determine the diet to be used for instruction for each child.

The 90 minutes will occur in various settings such as whole group, small group, and independent work or literacy work stations. For example, a beginning reader might experience five of the recommended 18 minutes of writing for sounds in a whole group setting through a group-generated message, another five minutes writing a dictated sentence in small group instruction, and eight minutes in a literacy work station activity.

Writing referenced in the diets on the following pages is linked to writing as it relates to learning how to read and to improve comprehension skills. Refer to the ACPS Writing Recommendations and the SOL Curriculum Framework for more details on expectations related to the process of writing.

**Guidelines to Follow When Choosing Instructional Reading Materials**

For Grades 2-5, teachers should keep these things in mind when selecting text for their students to read:

**Category 1**

Students who are reading above, on, or 6 months below grade level should read grade level text (or above for students reading above grade level) during both whole group and small group instruction. As Tier 1 students, they may occasionally need remediation if they do poorly on a common assessment.

**Category 2**

For students who are reading between 6 months to a year below grade level, teachers should strive to balance grade level and instructional level reading for their students. The goal is for these students to spend at least 45 minutes of their reading block reading grade level material. These students most likely require a balance of remediation (comprehension and vocabulary) and intervention (decoding and fluency).

**Category 3**

When working with students who are reading a year and a half or more below grade level expectations, teachers should teach grade level standards using text at these students’ instructional reading levels. In addition, these students require intervention rather than remediation. In other words, these students in all likelihood are considered Tier 3, which means they need intensive work with decoding and fluency. This should be a small percentage of students.
### ACPS Suggested Placement in Text

#### Second Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall PALS</th>
<th>Mid-Year PALS</th>
<th>Spring PALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If</td>
<td>Then</td>
<td>If</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or above</td>
<td>Category 1</td>
<td>Between 1 and 2 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primer</td>
<td>Category 2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness-PPC</td>
<td>Category 3</td>
<td>Readiness-Primer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Third Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall PALS</th>
<th>Mid-Year PALS</th>
<th>Spring PALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If</td>
<td>Then</td>
<td>If</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or above</td>
<td>Category 1</td>
<td>Between 2 and 3 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Category 2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness-Primer</td>
<td>Category 3</td>
<td>Readiness-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Fourth Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall PALS</th>
<th>Mid-Year PALS</th>
<th>Spring PALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If</td>
<td>Then</td>
<td>If</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or above</td>
<td>Category 1</td>
<td>Between 3 and 4 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Category 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness-1</td>
<td>Category 3</td>
<td>Readiness-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Fifth Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall PALS</th>
<th>Mid-Year PALS</th>
<th>Spring PALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If</td>
<td>Then</td>
<td>If</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 or above</td>
<td>Category 1</td>
<td>Between 4 and 5 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Category 2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness-2</td>
<td>Category 3</td>
<td>Readiness-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students should have access to reading materials during the entire language arts block. Teachers can provide reading materials to students in a way that provides them access to books they can work in independently and also with support. Leveled book baskets are one way for teachers to provide this access.
**EMERGENT (PREREADER) DIET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Goal</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percent of Time Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCEPT OF WORD</strong></td>
<td>finger-point reading to memorized rhymes, jingles, songs, and dictations repeated reading of little books (natural language text and controlled vocabulary)</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCEPT OF PRINT</strong></td>
<td>listening to stories, retelling stories, story illustrations, drama/flannel boards, and concept sorts</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALPHABET</strong></td>
<td>oral language play, alphabet games and activities, recognition/matching games, picture sorts by letters and sounds (beginning letter alliteration for alphabet)</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Play/PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS</strong></td>
<td>listening to rhyme, rhyme activities, words/sentences, syllables, initial/final consonants</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRITING</strong></td>
<td>drawing and labeling, picture captions, pretend writing, writing letters</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chart taken from McGuffey Reading Center, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia**

**Characteristics of an emergent reader:** scribbles letters and numbers, lacks concept of word, lacks letter-sound correspondence, represents most salient sounds with single letters, and pretends to read and write
# BEGINNING READER DIET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Goal</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percent of Time Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLUENCY</strong></td>
<td>repeated reading of familiar text (books that have been read before), choral and echo reading of controlled vocabulary text, taped reading</td>
<td>40% of instructional time (Approximately 36 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal: success in reading (making reading happen) automatic word recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORD STUDY</strong></td>
<td>word bank sight words, sorting by beginning sounds, sorting by rhyming families, short vowel spellings outside of rime</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal: sort known words by alliteration (beginning sounds), rhyme (short vowel families), and short vowels outside of rhyme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMPREHENSION</strong></td>
<td>concept sorts with word bank words, predicting in text being read, retelling, listening to stories</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal: predicting using multiple cueing systems, cross checking, vocabulary, concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRITING</strong></td>
<td>dictated sentences (from familiar text), writing for sounds, picture captions</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal: writing to use sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>Process writing—additional 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chart taken from McGuffey Reading Center, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia**

**Characteristics of a beginning reader:** spells initial and final consonants and some blends and digraphs, uses letter names to spell vowel sounds, spells phonetically representing all salient sounds in a one-to-one linear fashion, omits most silent letters, omits preconsonantal nasals in spelling (BOP or BUP for bump), finger points and reads aloud, and reads slowly in a word-by-word manner
## TRANSITIONAL/INSTRUCTIONAL READER DIET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Goal</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percent of Time Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLUENCY</strong></td>
<td>timed repeated readings of independent level text, paired readings, readers’ theatre, expert reading, poetry reading</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORD STUDY</strong></td>
<td>sorting known words by long and short vowel spelling patterns, continued word study as stages advance (based on assessment)</td>
<td>20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMPREHENSION</strong></td>
<td>silent reading in instructional level text, directed reading-thinking activities (DRTA) for fiction, graphic organizers (KWL, etc.) for content text</td>
<td>40% of instructional time (Approximately 36 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **WRITING**                      | journal writing, summaries of stories, character studies, inquiry charts (content), free writing | 20% of instructional time (Approximately 18 minutes)

**Process writing—additional 30 minutes**

**Chart taken from McGuffey Reading Center, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia**

**Characteristics of a transitional reader:** spells most single-syllable short-vowel words correctly, spells most beginning consonant digraphs and two-letter consonant blends, attempts to use silent long-vowel markers (NALE for nail), reads silently and with more fluency and expression, writes more fluently and in extended fashion, and can revise and edit

**Characteristics of an instructional reader:** has mastered high frequency words and most single-syllable words correctly, makes errors on low frequency multisyllabic words derived from Latin and Greek combining forms and syllable juncture and in accented syllables, reads with good fluency and expression, reads faster silently than orally, and writes responses that are sophisticated and critical
**PALS Electronic Lesson Plan Activities**

*Activities for the Reading Diet*

*Activities taken from PALS Electronic Lesson Plan Templates*

*Supporting documents to further explain how to carry out activities are housed with the ELP materials (Google Drive, PALS website)*

^listed as a Literacy Workstation/Seatwork, but could be easily adapted to small group;
additional workstation & seatwork activities are outlined in ELPs and not included in this document

**Emergent Reader Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alphabets</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alphabet Tracking</strong></td>
<td>Students track alphabet while singing song; ask students to identify letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alphabet Matching</strong></td>
<td>Create puzzles to practice the pairing of upper-case and lower-case letters; puzzles are cut with a zig and a zag to help with matching; can be created on various shapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child’s Name</strong></td>
<td>Students are given letter cards to spell name; practice organizing letters to create name; match upper to upper and lower to lower before moving to a mix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alphabetize Letters</strong></td>
<td>Students are given alphabet letters to put in order; can focus on upper-case, lower-case or a combination by matching; typically used for those who know 15 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Font Sort</strong></td>
<td>Use various fonts (computer generated, magazine, newspaper) of a target letter for students to sort; sort four or five letters in eight to twelve fonts at a time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Handwriting</strong></td>
<td>Explicit teaching of handwriting formation and pencil grip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept of Word</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cut Up Sentence</strong></td>
<td>Using a familiar sentence or line from poem, students are asked to cut it apart and reconstruct in the correct order; focus given on sound clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Be the Word</strong></td>
<td>Using a simple sentence, students are given a word and asked to be that word; students must recreate the sentence in order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I am thinking of</strong></td>
<td>Teacher prompts the student to locate a word from his or her word bank in memorized text, by providing clues that are appropriate to the student’s level of concept of word awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cloze</strong></td>
<td>Asks students to identify a missing word in familiar text when only one phonics feature/spelling pattern in the word is provided; target words are selected from students’ word banks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Bank</strong></td>
<td>Words are pulled from familiar poem or sentences and added to student word banks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choral Read</strong></td>
<td>Students read chorally with teacher; second reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Echo Read</strong></td>
<td>Teacher reads a line, students echo the line; third reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Read</strong></td>
<td>Student reads individually with support from teacher as needed for pointing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Play With Language**

| **Rhyme** | Students are orally given a word from a familiar poem and provided a new word to identify whether it rhymes; Can use “I’m thinking of” and ask students to find word in poem that rhymes with a given word |
| **Syllable Awareness** | Students are orally given word from familiar poem and asked to clap to identify syllables |
| **Beginning Sounds** | Uses "My Name Is" chant to focus on targeted initial sounds; can search for target sounds in familiar poem; can orally provide students with two words that have target sound and then provide a third word and ask if it matches |
| **Phoneme Blending** | Students are asked to blend two parts from a word from a familiar poem (onset/rime); students can be orally given a target word from poem and asked to change beginning/medial/final sound to create new word; students can be given word and asked to break it into individual phonemes or onset/rime |

**Word Study**

| **Repeated Sorting** | Students practice a sort 4-6 times independently after it is introduced |
| **Word Hunt** | Students read in text to identify additional words that match targeted features; ideally used in familiar instructional or independent text |
| **Draw and Label** | Students are asked to draw pictures that represent the target feature or sound; students are then asked to label the picture to show that target sound as well as any additional sounds heard as they are able |
| **Assessment (Writing Sort)** | Students glue pictures used in sort and label them spelling as much of the word as they are able |

**Beginning Reader Activities**

<p>| <strong>Fluency</strong> |
| <strong>Individual Whisper Reading</strong> | Students use a familiar text to whisper read for fluency; rereading of text; teacher is able to hear individual student read aloud without interrupting others in the group |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner Reading</td>
<td>Students pair up with another student in the group and take turns reading alternating pages aloud; uses materials for rereading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency Phones</td>
<td>Also known as “Whisper Phones”; students whisper read familiar text into PVC pipe corners; used for rereading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paired Reading</td>
<td>Also known as “Buddy Reading”; students are paired with a student at a different level; students are either serving as the mimicker or the modeler in the group and should be rotated often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Reading</td>
<td>Improve fluency by preparing and performing dramatic rereadings of easy or familiar text; text used as a script for students to practice reading parts fluently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Bank</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matching</td>
<td>Students are given a targeted word and asked to locate it in text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze</td>
<td>Activity challenges students to identify a missing word in familiar text when only one phonics feature/spelling pattern in the word is provided; target words are selected from students’ word banks; must apply their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, beginning sounds, and spelling patterns/phonics features to identify missing word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am Thinking Of...</td>
<td>Students are prompted to locate words in text when given clues specific to their concept of word awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting</td>
<td>Students are asked to highlight known words from their word banks in text copies of familiar texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorting</td>
<td>Students categorize word bank words by a targeted phonics feature; can target initial, medial or final sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Students are asked to select a target word from word bank to use in a sentence and then are encouraged to select several other words from word bank that can be included in the sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>Using a set of cards, students look for matches of a targeted feature; can use pictures, entire words or feature on cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>Students create own bingo card with targeted words or features; use gameboard to identify targeted word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slap</td>
<td>Students must read and slap a target word bank word before picking it up from the pile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Fish</td>
<td>Establish words to be used and matched (could be words, pictures, or spelling features depending on reading level); students make card pairs with the words/pictures/features; play game to find matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick Up</td>
<td>Students lay cards face down; teacher calls out word or target sound for students to pick up word or words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Writing for Sounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictated Sentence</th>
<th>Students are given an oral sentence to write that focuses on target sounds; sentence is repeated for students to write; can include target sight vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Word Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Closed Sort</th>
<th>Students are given predetermined headers to sort words/pictures under and are asked to explain the reasoning for their sort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>^Word Hunt</td>
<td>Students read in text to identify additional words that match targeted features; ideally used in familiar instructional or independent text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^Go Fish</td>
<td>Establish words to be used and matched (could be words, pictures, or spelling features depending on reading level); students make card pairs with the words/pictures/features; play game to find matches</td>
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<tr>
<td>^Concentration</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Transitional Reader Activities

#### Fluency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silent Rereading</th>
<th>Students are asked to silently reread a familiar text for fluency and reflect on their reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timed Repeated Oral Reading</td>
<td>Students are asked to orally reread a familiar text and graph progress; typically completed a set of 3 readings; students can focus on number of words read in one minute as well as decreasing number of mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry Read Aloud</td>
<td>Focus on fluency and expression by reading and rereading easy or familiar poetry; keep in binder or folder to be used again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^Paired Reading</td>
<td>Also known as “Buddy Reading”; students are paired with a student at a different level; students are either serving as the mimicker or the modeler in the group and should be rotated often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Comprehension-Before Reading

<p>| Making Connections (t-t, t-w, t-s) | Students pull from background knowledge/schema to identify what they know and how it relates to what they read in order to strengthen comprehension; should teach each type explicitly and then layer them together |
| Anticipation Guide               | Provides students with a list of statements related to informative texts; students must agree/disagree with each prior to reading; students read to prove/disprove statements and thinking; can be adapted for fiction text |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Book Clues</strong></th>
<th>Students are shown props related to text they will read in order to make predictions about the text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opening Lines</strong></td>
<td>Students read the first lines of a story and then use those to make a prediction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KWL Chart</strong></td>
<td>Students reflect on what they know, generate questions for what they would like to learn about a topic and then read to identify what they learned from reading; best used with informative texts or historical fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List-Group-Label</strong></td>
<td>Used to introduce, categorize and define vocabulary; students are given a word and then asked to list additional words related and then group them into categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semantic Map</strong></td>
<td>Also known as a Frayer Model; Semantic Mapping is a way to categorize information and depict key words graphically, allowing students to organize and integrate information; focus is on examples, non-examples, synonyms, antonyms, definition, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comprehension-During Reading**

| **DR-TA** | Teacher guides reading by stopping at predetermined stopping points in text to have students think-aloud, predict and prove thinking; used in conjunction with silent reading |
| **Reciprocal Teaching** | Students are taught how to Predict, Question, Clarify and Summarize; students take ownership of the strategy and serve as the group leader to move other group members through the process |
| **Induced Imagery** | Uses prior knowledge and personal connections to the story that help create mental images; particularly helpful at complex points in the text or when unfamiliar or interesting vocabulary is encountered; students can draw images visualized |

**Comprehension-After Reading**

<p>| <strong>Sum It Up</strong> | Focus on summarizing the information read by breaking it down to eventually summarize with 20 words or less |
| <strong>Story Map</strong> | Summarizing in fiction texts; focus on characters, setting, problem/conflict, solution and ending |
| <strong>Main Idea Graphic Organizer</strong> | Summarizing in fiction or informative text to identify main idea and supporting details found in text |
| <strong>Sequencing Graphic Organizer</strong> | Summarizing in fiction texts by pulling out major events in the plot; presented as a flow map/circle story, storyboard, or with sequence words (first, then, next, last) |
| <strong>Cause &amp; Effect Graphic Organizer</strong> | Summarizing in fiction or informative text to identify cause and effect relationships |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Compare &amp; Contrast Graphic Organizer</strong></th>
<th>Summarizing in fiction or informative text to identify similarities and differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question Answer Relationships (QAR)</strong></td>
<td>Students work to identify three types of questions (right there, think and search, on my own) and how to locate information in text to support responses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Word Study

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>^Bingo</td>
<td>Students create own bingo card with targeted words or features; use gameboard to identify targeted word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^Word Hunt</td>
<td>Students read in text to identify additional words that match targeted features; ideally used in familiar instructional or independent text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Intermediate Reader Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Fluency</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poetry Read Aloud</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speech Recitation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^Performance Reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Comprehension-Before Reading</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Making Connections (t-t, t-w, t-s)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anticipation Guide</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KWL Chart</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four Square</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of Definition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comprehension-During Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DR-TA</th>
<th>Teacher guides reading by stopping at predetermined stopping points in text to have students think-aloud, predict and prove thinking; used in conjunction with silent reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocal Teaching</td>
<td>Students are taught how to Predict, Question, Clarify and Summarize; students take ownership of the strategy and serve as the group leader to move other group members through the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induced Imagery</td>
<td>Uses prior knowledge and personal connections to the story that help create mental images; particularly helpful at complex points in the text or when unfamiliar or interesting vocabulary is encountered; students can draw images visualized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comprehension-After Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GIST (Generating Interaction between Schemata and Text)</th>
<th>Summarizing using informative texts; students break text into chunks and summarize in 15 words or less; eventually transition to summarizing entire text in 20 words or less</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry Chart (I-Chart)</td>
<td>Focuses on questioning, comparing and evaluating informative text; allows focus on point of view (of information shared); students look at various sources to answer developed questions and report on their findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions Into Paragraphs (QuIP)</td>
<td>Focuses on questioning and summarizing in informative texts; students generate questions, identify a source to conduct research and summarize information learned through writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story Maps</td>
<td>Summarizing in fiction texts; focus on characters, setting, problem/conflict, solution and ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequencing Graphic Organizers</td>
<td>Summarizing in fiction texts by pulling out major events in the plot; presented as a flow map/circle story, storyboard, or with sequence words (first, then, next,, last)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause and Effect Graphic Organizers</td>
<td>Summarizing in fiction or informative text to identify cause and effect relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizers</td>
<td>Summarizing in fiction or informative text to identify similarities and differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Study</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closed Sort</strong></td>
<td>Students are given predetermined headers to sort words/pictures under and are asked to explain the reasoning for their sort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Go Fish</strong></td>
<td>Establish words to be used and matched (could be words, pictures, or spelling features depending on reading level); students make card pairs with the words/pictures/features; play game to find matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Hunt</strong></td>
<td>Students read in text to identify additional words that match targeted features; ideally used in familiar instructional or independent text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How We Provide More Support:

- **Intervention/Remediation (aligned with Response to Intervention Model)**

For students who are not achieving according to average grade level expectations, schools need to provide something more. The usual names for this “something more” are remediation or intervention. Since the recent reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the term Response to Intervention (RtI) is being used to describe a systematic approach to intervene with struggling learners. RtI is a way to ensure that academic or behavioral difficulties are not the result of a lack of appropriate instruction. If students fail to respond with adequate progress to appropriate evidence-based classroom and supplemental instruction (and a disability is suspected to be the cause of the lack of progress), a child may be referred for a comprehensive evaluation.

Amherst County Public Schools institutes a process of evidence based instructional interventions that align with a response to intervention framework. A student with academic delays is provided research-validated interventions for a reasonable period of time. The student's progress is monitored frequently and systematically to see if interventions are sufficient to promote reasonable student progress. This process utilizes student performance and other data to guide instructional and intervention decisions.

**Amherst’s Structure/Process for Remediation/Intervention**

1. All students receive evidence-based, differentiated whole-classroom instruction. (Effective for approximately 80-90% of students.)

2. For students not succeeding, reteach or adjust instruction with evidenced-based interventions in small group settings. (Approximately 10-15% of students require supplemental support.)

3. For students still not successful, adjust instruction with additional evidence-based intervention(s) in even smaller groups. Instruction may involve additional time and/or more intensive targeted instruction. (Less than 5% of students require this level of intervention.)
Progress Monitoring

A progress monitoring system provides an ongoing systematic method of collecting data to determine the literacy performance of a student. Progress monitoring provides information to help teachers adjust instruction to a student’s needs. Progress monitoring tools include

- Running records
- PALS Quick Checks
- Analysis of student work
- Spelling assessments (feature mastery)
- Nine-weeks benchmark tests

Where Do We Find Support Resources?

Refer to strategies, intervention and remediation ideas located in the PALS website, appendix, and ACPS English Google Folder.

See reading instruction and intervention strategies in the Learning Intervention Manual available in each school by the Intervention and Support Team (IST) chairperson. Reading and writing are specifically addressed on pages 177-286.

Writing Instruction

The information in this document focuses on reading instruction, yet teachers know that writing and reading are reciprocal processes. Most of the references to writing in these pages refer to writing as it relates to learning to read. Examples of this type of writing are writing for sounds as beginning readers, spelling instruction, and writing involved in comprehension development. The teaching of writing as a process is outlined in Amherst County’s writing curriculum, and the expectations are defined in the ACPS Writing Recommendations which appear in the appendix of this document. Additionally, the ACPS pacing guides and the Virginia Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework and the Enhanced Scope and Sequence provide information to guide effective instruction.

To effectively teach students to become good writers, teachers provide many opportunities for their students to write in various modes, guiding them through the nuances of composing and crafting prose that fit different kinds of writings. Writing instruction in Amherst County encompasses all of the writing process, from planning and pre-writing through drafting, revising, editing, and sharing. Amherst County students are taught strategies for planning, organizing, revising, and editing so that they will become competent in the three domains of writing that comprise good writing and that are assessed on a local test or the Virginia Standards of Learning writing test: composing, written expression, and usage and mechanics.

Teacher Knowledge

As high expectations for achievement for all students have become the norm in our schools, teachers understand that professional development is an essential, ongoing part of their work. Educators must continue to learn to make use of the best available educational research to be able to deliver appropriate, targeted instruction for each child.

Please refer to the ACPS Calendar of Staff Development for details for information on staff development offered within the school division.
Parents as Partners

When a child comes to school able to take full advantage of the school’s instruction, the child’s school success is enhanced. It is the school’s task to reach out to parents to build a partnership between the two major influences in a child’s life.

The school division, as well as each elementary school, has a parent involvement plan that outlines how schools and parents might work together. To effectively serve families, we need to guard against limiting our efforts to activities that occur at school. Remembering James Comer’s quote, “No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship,” we must be open to forging relationships in the home or in other places where parents and families gather. Overcoming barriers such as transportation, trust, and child care issues may be part of the equation in educating the whole child.

Literacy Instruction in Grades 6-12

*Reading Next* and *Writing Next*, two documents from Alliance for Excellent Education, outline action plans for vision and research in secondary level literacy. These documents make the case that the profession must go beyond the goal of expecting that children are on grade level by third grade to ensuring that students have comprehension abilities that allow them to successfully comprehend increasingly complex material. Students’ literacy skills must transfer across the curriculum so that students are able to communicate orally and in writing and to interpret and integrate diverse information.

On the next pages are the action steps from *Reading Next* and *Writing Next*, reports from Alliance for Excellent Education, presented to the Carnegie Corporation (*used with permission*).
Reading Next Recommendations

1. **Direct, explicit comprehension instruction**, which is instruction in the strategies and processes that proficient readers use to understand what they read.

2. **Effective instructional principles embedded in content**, including language arts teachers using content-area texts and content-area teachers providing instruction and practice in reading and writing skills specific to their subject area.

3. **Motivation and self-directed learning**, which includes building motivation to read and learn and providing students with the instruction and supports needed for independent learning.

4. **Text-based collaborative learning**, which involves students interacting with one another around a variety of texts.

5. **Strategic tutoring**, which provides students with intense individualized reading, writing, and content instruction as needed.

6. **Diverse texts**, which are texts at a variety of difficulty levels and on a variety of topics.

7. **Intensive writing**, including instruction connected to the kinds of writing tasks students will have to perform well in high school and beyond.

8. **A technology component**, which includes technology as a tool for and a topic of instruction.

9. **Ongoing formative assessment of students**, which is informal, often daily assessment of how students are progressing under current instructional practices.

10. **Extended time for literacy**, which includes approximately two to four hours of literacy instruction and practice that takes place in language arts and content-area classes.

11. **Professional development** that is both long term and ongoing.

12. **Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs**, which is more formal and provides data that are reported for accountability and research purposes.

13. **Teacher teams**, which are interdisciplinary teams that meet to discuss students and align instruction.

14. **Leadership**, which can come from principals and teachers who have a solid understanding of how to teach reading and writing to the full array of students present in schools.

15. **A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program**, which is interdisciplinary and
interdepartmental and may coordinate with out-of-school organizations and the local community

**Writing Next Recommendations**

1. **Writing Strategies**, which involves teaching students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions

2. **Summarization**, which involves explicitly and systematically teaching students how to summarize texts

3. **Collaborative Writing**, which uses instructional arrangements in which adolescents work together to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions

4. **Specific Product Goals**, which assigns students specific, reachable goals for the writing they are to complete

5. **Word Processing**, which uses computers and word processors as instructional supports for writing assignments

6. **Sentence Combining**, which involves teaching students to construct more complex, sophisticated sentences

7. **Prewriting**, which engages students in activities designed to help them generate or organize ideas for their composition

8. **Inquiry Activities**, which engages students in analyzing immediate, concrete data to help them develop ideas and content for a particular writing task

9. **Process Writing Approach**, which interweaves a number of writing instructional activities in a workshop environment that stresses extended writing opportunities, writing for authentic audiences, personalized instruction, and cycles of writing

10. **Study of Models**, which provides students with opportunities to read, analyze, and emulate models of good writing

11. **Writing for Content Learning**, which uses writing as a tool for learning content material
Appendix

Virginia Department of Education resources (web links):

- Virginia Department of Education Elementary English and Reading
- Virginia Department of Education Middle School English
- Virginia Department of Education High School English
- English Standards of Learning, Curriculum Framework, Enhanced Scope and Sequence, Blueprints, Most Recent Released SOL Tests
- All Released Tests

Video Vignettes of Comprehension/Vocabulary Strategies:

- Read-Aloud
- Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review
- Know, Want, Learn
- Think-Pair-Share
- Sticky Notes
- Think-Alouds
- Question-Answer Relationships
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Anticipation Guides
- Story Face
- Two-Column Notes
- Selective Underlining
- Concept Sorts

Assessment:

- Web links
  PALS (Phonological Awareness Screening)
  PALS PLUS

- Documents in appendix
  ACPS Reading Benchmarks
  ACPS Reading Correlation Chart
  Dolch Lists
Running records tools

Instruction:

- **Web links**

**General**

- ACPS Pacing Guide
- PALS (Phonological Awareness Screening) *(includes grouping and lesson planning tools)*
- Virginia Reading First *(includes articles and slide shows of instruction)*
- Reading Rockets
- Florida Center for Reading Research
- ReadWriteThink (International Reading Association)
- http://pals.virginia.edu/tools-activities.html
- http://carlscorner.us.com/
- http://www.readinga-z.com/

**Phonological Awareness**

- http://www.kizclub.com/
- http://www.ldonline.org/article/6254
- http://www.aability.com/pagames.htm#pagames
- http://classroom.jc-schools.net/read/Phonemic.htm
- http://www.k-3learningpages.net/web%20phonemic%20awareness.htm

**Phonics**

- http://www.kizclub.com/
- http://db.dadecountyschools.org/~davis/wordstudy/
- http://www.starfall.com/
- http://www.spellingcity.com/
- http://www.readingrockets.org/article/c51/
- http://www.readingrockets.org/target/phonics

**Fluency**

- http://www.timrasinski.com/?page=presentations
- http://www.kizclub.com/
- http://www.readingrockets.org/article/3416
- http://www.literacyleader.com/?q=fluency

**High Frequency Words**

- http://www.readingresource.net/sightwords.html
- http://www.readinga-z.com/more/highfreq_strat.html
Comprehension and Vocabulary

http://www.readingquest.org/
http://specialed.about.com/od/balancedliteracy/a/comp.htm
http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/guided-comprehension-making-connections-228.html
http://reading.ecb.org/ (Comprehension Strategy)
http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=4464 (Think Alouds)
http://www.targetedreadingintervention.org/links-kids-list

Graphic organizers

Vocabulary
http://www.vocabulary.com/

Differentiation
http://www.teach-nology.com/tutorials/teaching/differentiate/planning/

Intervention/Remediation:
Note: Resources for intervention are throughout the appendix; for example, teachers may find resources for meeting struggling students’ needs in the Instruction section.

- Web links
  RTI Action Network
  http://www.readingresource.net/

Writing Instruction:

- Web links
  Virginia Department of Education Middle School Writing Modules
  Virginia Department of Education Writing Resources

- Documents in appendix
  ACPS Writing Recommendations
  ACPS Writing Rubrics
    PK/Smart Start
    Kindergarten
    Grade 1
    Grade 2
    Grade 3
    Grade 4
Grade 5
Grades 6-8
Grades 9-12

SOL Writing Test Rubrics
Grade 5
Grade 8
High School
Reading Assessment Information
### Kindergarten Reading Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>Alphabet Knowledge</th>
<th>Early Literacy Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter Names (Upper)</td>
<td>Letter Names (Lower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st August - October</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd October - December</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd January - March</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th March - June</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Concept of Word: While reading, students are able to match one spoken to one written word in a left to right progression with a return sweep from top to bottom. In addition, students should be able to track words in text while using beginning sound knowledge and recognize words from the text in isolation.

### Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Letter Names (upper &amp; lower)</th>
<th>Letter Sounds</th>
<th>High Frequency Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 25+)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 13+)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 10+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 24)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 12)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 0-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-23)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-11)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (n/a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 41+)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 21+)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 20+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 40)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 20)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 0-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-39)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-19)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (n/a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>+ advanced (n/a)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 27+)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 31+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 52)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 26)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 10-30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-51)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-25)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>+ advanced (n/a)</td>
<td>+ advanced (n/a)</td>
<td>+ advanced (knows 41+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 52)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 30)</td>
<td>✓ on target (knows 40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-51)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-29)</td>
<td>- needs additional help (knows 0-39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* suggested list, but words should be culled from context

- a the like
- we my I
- am go can it
- on to you have do what and red blue yellow
- no see look come for me one little said is
- are here away down two three find make play jump
### First Grade Reading Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>Instructional Reading Level Benchmark</th>
<th>High Frequency Word Knowledge Benchmark</th>
<th>Suggested Fluency Levels (words per minute)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; August-October</td>
<td>Pre-primer 2</td>
<td>40 words</td>
<td>15-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Pre-primer Word List)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; October-December</td>
<td>Primer</td>
<td>92 words</td>
<td>25-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Pre-primer &amp; Primer Dolch Word List)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; January-March</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>133 words</td>
<td>35-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Pre-primer, Primer &amp; First Grade Dolch Word List)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; March-June</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>179 words</td>
<td>50-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or PALS 1</td>
<td>(Pre-primer, Primer, First &amp; Second Grade Dolch Word List)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Second Grade Reading Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>Instructional Reading Level Benchmark</th>
<th>Fluency Benchmarks (words per minute)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; August-October</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>50-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or PALS 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; October-December</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>60-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; January-March</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>70-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or PALS 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; March-June</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>80-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or PALS 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Third Grade Reading Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>Instructional Reading Level Benchmark</th>
<th>Fluency Benchmarks (words per minute)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st August-October</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>80-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd October-December</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>100-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd January-March</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>110-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th March-June</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>110-120</td>
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</table>

### Fourth Grade Reading Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>Instructional Reading Level Benchmark</th>
<th>Fluency Benchmarks (words per minute)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st August-October</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>100-105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd October-December</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>110-115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd January-March</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>115-130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th March-June</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>115-130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fifth Grade Reading Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>Instructional Reading Level Benchmark</th>
<th>Fluency Benchmarks (words per minute)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st August-October</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>100-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>110-115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd October-December</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>115-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd January-March</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>125-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th March-June</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>125-140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Amherst County Public Schools
## Elementary Reading Level Benchmarks/Correlation Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Interim 1 (Sept.)</th>
<th>Interim 2 (Oct.)</th>
<th>End of 1st 9 weeks (Dec.)</th>
<th>Interim 3 (Feb.)</th>
<th>End of 2nd 9 weeks (March)</th>
<th>Interim 4 (April)</th>
<th>End of 4th 9 weeks (May)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Pre-reader</td>
<td>Pre-reader</td>
<td>Readiness (A, B)</td>
<td>Readiness (A, B)</td>
<td>PP1 (C)</td>
<td>PP1 (C)</td>
<td>PP2 (D) or PALS PP1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PP2 (D) or PALS PP2</td>
<td>PP2 (D) or PALS PP2</td>
<td>PP3 (E)</td>
<td>Primer (F, G) or PALS Primer</td>
<td>1.0 (H, I, J)</td>
<td>1.0 (H, I, J)</td>
<td>2.0 (K) or PALS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0 (K) or PALS 1</td>
<td>2.0 (K)</td>
<td>2.5 (L, M) or PALS 1/2</td>
<td>2.5 (L, M)</td>
<td>2.5 (L, M)</td>
<td>2.5 (L, M)</td>
<td>3.0 (N) or PALS 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0 (N) or PALS 2</td>
<td>3.0 (N)</td>
<td>3.5 (O, P) or PALS 2/3</td>
<td>3.5 (O, P)</td>
<td>3.5 (O, P)</td>
<td>3.5 (O, P)</td>
<td>4.0 (Q) or PALS 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0 (Q) or PALS 3</td>
<td>4.0 (Q)</td>
<td>4.5 (R, S) or PALS 3/4</td>
<td>4.5 (R, S)</td>
<td>4.5 (R, S)</td>
<td>4.5 (R, S)</td>
<td>5.0 (T) or PALS 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0 (T) or PALS 4</td>
<td>5.0 (T)</td>
<td>5.5 (U, V) or PALS 4/5</td>
<td>5.5 (U, V)</td>
<td>5.5 (U, V)</td>
<td>5.5 (U, V)</td>
<td>6.0 (W) or PALS 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

() Guided Reading Levels (Fountas & Pinnell)

*PALS Passages are end of year passages, thus the student is ready for the next level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>run</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>away</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue</td>
<td>jump</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>little</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>come</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down</td>
<td>make</td>
<td>up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td>my</td>
<td>where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funny</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>you</td>
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<td>help</td>
<td>play</td>
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<tr>
<td>here</td>
<td>red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>into</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>am</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>there</td>
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<td>are</td>
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<td>they</td>
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<td>at</td>
<td>new</td>
<td>this</td>
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<tr>
<td>ate</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>too</td>
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<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>under</td>
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<td>black</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>want</td>
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<tr>
<td>brown</td>
<td>our</td>
<td>was</td>
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<td>but</td>
<td>out</td>
<td>well</td>
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<td>came</td>
<td>please</td>
<td>went</td>
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<td>did</td>
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<td>what</td>
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<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>ran</td>
<td>white</td>
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<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>ride</td>
<td>who</td>
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<td>four</td>
<td>saw</td>
<td>will</td>
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<tr>
<td>get</td>
<td>say</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td>so</td>
<td>he</td>
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<tr>
<td>soon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>again</td>
<td>her</td>
<td>put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any</td>
<td>his</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask</td>
<td>how</td>
<td>stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as</td>
<td>just</td>
<td>take</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by</td>
<td>know</td>
<td>thank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could</td>
<td>let</td>
<td>them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every</td>
<td>live</td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fly</td>
<td>may</td>
<td>think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give</td>
<td>old</td>
<td>were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going</td>
<td>once</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
<td>open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>gave</td>
<td>these</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>around</td>
<td>goes</td>
<td>those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>been</td>
<td>its</td>
<td>us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>best</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both</td>
<td>off</td>
<td>wash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buy</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call</td>
<td>pull</td>
<td>why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cold</td>
<td>read</td>
<td>wish</td>
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<tr>
<td>does</td>
<td>right</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don’t</td>
<td>sing</td>
<td>would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fast</td>
<td>sit</td>
<td>write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first</td>
<td>sleep</td>
<td>your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>tell</td>
<td>found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Running Records

Use the following ranges to determine reading levels following running records:
Independent level: 98-100 %
Instructional level: 90-97 % (85-97% for readiness and pre-primer levels)
Frustration level: Below 90% (Below 85% for readiness and pre-primer levels)

Sample form for running records is on next page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Instructional</th>
<th>Frustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-100%</td>
<td>90-97% (*85%PP)</td>
<td>&lt;90% (&lt;85%PP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date ________     Student Name ________________________________

Title _______________________________________  Level __________

No. of Times Read ________  WRC% ________

WPM: _______   Fluency: W x W  WxW/Phrases  Choppy phrases  Fluent rdg.

- Using expression
- Pays attention to punctuation

Notes:

- Finger-pointing
- Uses initial sounds
- Self-correcting most errors
- Relies on picture cues
- Missing function/high frequency words

Examples:

- Frequent appeals to adult
- Other:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of text (circle one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat/Pred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

98-100%          90-97% (*85%PP)         <90% (<85%PP)
Reading Resources
# Strategy: How, When & Why

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background Knowledge / Making Connections / Schema</td>
<td>Use what you see or read to think about what you already know about the topic; use this to help you understand what you are reading</td>
<td>Before, During, After</td>
<td>Gives the reader a willingness to take risks when reading, helps better understand what is being read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine Importance</td>
<td>Select what information the author provides you that is most important to help you understand the text</td>
<td>Before, After</td>
<td>Allows the reader to select what pieces of text helps them to understand the author’s message; relates back to the purpose for reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>Use what you see (images, text features) or read to formulate questions that you would like to be able to answer to help you better understand the text</td>
<td>Before, During, After</td>
<td>Helps the reader make sense of what is read and provides a purpose for reading on or a context for reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualize</td>
<td>Use the words provided by the author to create a mental image to help understand the text</td>
<td>During, After</td>
<td>Provides the reader with a scaffold for understanding and allows the words on the page to be seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer / Predict / Draw Conclusions</td>
<td>Use what you know and what you have read to figure out what the author wants you to know or what you think might happen next as a result of what you have read</td>
<td>Before, During</td>
<td>Allows the reader to gain more information than what is stated in the text; helps the reader move to the next level of understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarize / Synthesize</td>
<td>Use the key points to show understanding of what is read by providing details from the reading; use details to apply what was read beyond a factual level</td>
<td>After</td>
<td>Allows the reader to reflect on what was read and show understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Monitor / Metacognition</td>
<td>Pay attention to when you don’t understand; think about your thinking and fix any confusions while reading by using the other comprehension strategies</td>
<td>During, After</td>
<td>Helps the reader to pay attention to what is being read and ensure that comprehension is occurring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skills Versus Strategies

Skills are highly routine, almost automatic behaviors generally associated with lower levels of thinking and learning. It is assumed the use of the skills will be unconscious; there is no monitoring and the reader is viewed as a passive receptor of information.

Dole, Duffy, Roehler & Pearson, 1991

Strategies are conscious, flexible plans a reader applies to a variety of texts, both narrative and expository. The use of strategies implies awareness, reflection, and interaction between the reader and the author. Strategies do not operate individually or sequentially, but are interrelated and recursive. The goal is the active construction of meaning and the ability to adapt strategies to varying reading demands.

Vogt & Verga, 1998

Comprehension is the essence of reading. To assist students with comprehension teachers provide instruction on a variety of comprehension skills and strategies. It is when those strategies and skills are combined that readers are able to comprehend text with more depth and understanding. Skills are highly routine, almost automatic behaviors generally associated with lower levels of thinking and learning. It is assumed the use of the skills will be unconscious; there is no monitoring and the reader is viewed as a passive receptor of information.

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Vogt & Verga, 1998

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Writing Assessment Information
Amherst County Public Schools
Writing Recommendations

All Schools:
1. Provide staff development on the use of Understanding Scoring as needed/requested.
2. Provide staff development on the writing process as needed/requested.
3. Ensure that all four kinds of writing in curriculum/pacing guides are taught. These include:
   - Narrative
   - Descriptive
   - Expository
   - Persuasive/Opinion

   Additional forms of writing for grades 6-12 are outlined in the VDOE English Curriculum Framework and include:
   - Reflective
   - Analytic
   - Interpretive
   - Argumentative

4. Create a writing portfolio for each student which includes the kinds of writing that are required/accomplished. Portfolios should be housed in the classroom to allow access to teachers and students for conferences and goal setting.

5. ACPS teachers will use the Enhanced Scope & Sequence to aid in defining the writing process and writing assignments appropriate for each grade level. The writing process will be taught 30 minutes daily prior to and independent of the writing prompts administered during the year. The writing process is: Prewriting/Brainstorming, Writing/Draft, Revising, Editing, Publishing/Final Copy.

6. A standardized writing prompt is required in grades K-12 each nine weeks. Schools will develop their own writing prompts as appropriate. Refer to the ACPS English Curriculum Maps for the type of writing that should be assigned and scored each nine weeks.

7. At the end of the school year, students’ writing portfolios will contain a minimum of one sample from each writing category. These four samples will remain in the students’ writing portfolios until the portfolio transfers to the next grade level. After teachers have reviewed the writing samples for instructional planning purposes, the portfolio will be purged and the process will begin again for that year. Once the portfolio is sent to the high school, additional samples including a variety of student work (ie: prompts, essays, creative works, etc.) may be collected as determined by the English department.
8. Student cumulative record folders include writing SOL data, spelling data with appropriate keys, and language arts assessment information. Teachers should use the four stages of writing outlined in this document.

9. To encourage students to write in all content areas, content area teachers will implement writing strategies including, but not limited to:
   - Require complete sentences as appropriate in written assignments, homework, quizzes, etc.
   - RAFTS
   - Summaries of reading material
   - Essay question answers
   - Content area writing assignments from the writing category designated for that grading period.
   - Journaling to explain process
   - Using and emphasizing content vocabulary, as well as vocabulary associated with the writing process steps
   - Making books
   - Response stories about field trips, speakers, news items, current events, etc.
   - Promote participation in writing competitions (i.e.: DAR essay) and/or other competitions (i.e.: Science Fair) that might include written work
   - Collaboration between content area and Language Arts teachers on written assignments used for class credit that make logical connections across curricula.

10. **Elementary school students** will complete a minimum of two pieces of writing in their language arts classes from one of the four categories (narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive/opinion) each nine weeks. The kind of writing to be emphasized each grading period will be designated in the curriculum guide.

11. At the end of the school year, students' writing portfolios will contain the students' writing samples that correspond to the four types of writing required in the curriculum guide. Three of the writing samples will be the first three nine weeks' writing prompts, and the writing sample from the fourth nine weeks will be completed in class during the final nine weeks at a time to be determined by the principal.

    At the high school level, the writing portfolios will contain a variety of student work including writing prompts, essays, creative works, etc.

12. The nine weeks writing prompts will be scored according to the ACPS writing rubric in grades K-4. Teachers will use the state writing rubric to score the nine weeks writing prompts in grades 5-12. Scores using these prompts should not include partial points. For example, 3.5 should not be used on the rubric. Writing rubrics for other writing assignments may be developed as needed according to the instructional focus.
13. **In middle and high school English classes**, students will complete a minimum of two multi-paragraph writing assignments (no less than three paragraphs) each grading period of the school year. Teachers will select the order of these writing assignments as appropriate based on the pacing and curriculum guides.

## Stages of Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Literate</th>
<th>Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scribble Stage:</strong> Starting point any place on page, resembles drawing large circular strokes and random marks that do not resemble print or communicate a message</td>
<td>![Scribble Stage Sample]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbols Stage:</strong> Starting point any place on page, pictures or random strokes/marks with an intended message</td>
<td>![Symbols Stage Sample]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directional Scribble Stage:</strong> Scribble left to right direction, linear, intended as writing that communicates a meaningful message/idea</td>
<td>![Directional Scribble Stage Sample]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbolic/Mock Letters Stage:</strong> Letter like formations, may resemble letters but isn’t intentional, interspersed with numbers, spacing rarely present</td>
<td>![Symbolic/Mock Letters Stage Sample]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergent</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strings of Letters:</strong> Long writings of various letters in random order, may go left to right, uses letter sequence perhaps from name, usually writes in capital letters and has not yet begun spacing</td>
<td>![Strings of Letters Sample]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groups of Letters:</strong> Groupings of letters with spaces that resemble words</td>
<td>![Groups of Letters Sample]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labeling Pictures:</strong> Matches beginning sounds with the letters to label a picture</td>
<td>![Labeling Pictures Sample]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Print:</strong> Copies letters/words from environmental/classroom print, reversals common, uses a variety of resources to facilitate writing</td>
<td>![Environmental Print Sample]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Transitional

| **Letter/Word Representation:** Uses first letter sound of word to represent entire word, uses letter sound relationship | ![I went home](image) |
| **First/Last Letter Representation:** Word represented by first and last letter sound | ![Cat](image) |
| **Medial Letter Sounds:** Words spelled phonetically using BME sounds, attempts medial vowels, uses some known words, more conventionally spelled words, one letter may represent one syllable, attempts to use word spacing, writing is readable | ![My cat is brown](image) |

### Fluent

| **Beginning Phrase Writing:** Using all of the above skills to construct phrases that convey a message connected to their illustration | ![I play with my dog](image) |
| **Sentence Writing:** Construction of words into sentences, maybe multiple sentences, writing is readable may use punctuation, known words spelled correctly, topic focused, EME with detail | ![We like to jump rope](image) |
| **Six Traits of Writing:** Students use six traits of writing (Organization, Voice, Ideas, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency) |  |

Please use this summary when determining students’ writing stages and recording the writing stages on their permanent records. The following codes should be used:

- Pre-Literate – PL
- Emergent – E
- Transitional – T
- Fluent – F

*Writing stages will be updated Summer 2020 to include the more advanced stages of writing. Rubrics will also be updated at this time to reflect new state requirements.*
# ACPS Writing Rubric

## PK End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Composing/Written Expression** | • Conveys messages, tells stories | • Understands that spoken language can be written  
  • Copies or writes letters using various materials | • Uses inventive spellings to help understand that writing communicates ideas  
  • Distinguishes print from numbers | • Attempts to write through scribbling forms  
  • Distinguishes print from pictures |
| **Usage and Mechanics** | • Uses inventive spellings to convey messages or tell stories | • Copies 3-5 letter words | • Prints 5-8 letters with a writing tool | • Prints his or her own name |
## ACPS Writing Rubric
### Kindergarten End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Advanced 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proficient 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>Basic 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>Below Basic 1</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generates content and topics for writing</td>
<td>Needs adult suggestions to decide on a writing topic</td>
<td>Writes when an adult gives the topic</td>
<td>Draws pictures but cannot write or tell about the picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes a story correctly</td>
<td>Writes two or more sentences on topic</td>
<td>Draws pictures and writes one sentence to match</td>
<td>Does not write on his/her own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses sight words and phonetically spelled words to write about experiences, people, objects, and events</td>
<td>Spells with beginning sounds and some ending sounds</td>
<td>Spells with letter-like representations, random letters, and may include some letters that represent beginning sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes without resistance when given time, place, and materials</td>
<td>Writes when asked</td>
<td>Writes with teacher’s redirection</td>
<td>Confused telling leaves the adult unsure of “the story”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Expression</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses syntax of oral language, approximating phrasing and rhythm of literary language</td>
<td>Writes somewhat like a story (may have some literary language)</td>
<td>Does not reread his/her story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to reread own text with appropriate word match-written and spoken</td>
<td>Points to the text when rereading with some control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Usage and Mechanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prints complete name correctly</td>
<td>Prints complete name correctly most of the time</td>
<td>Prints complete name correctly some of the time</td>
<td>Prints part of his/her name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently uses capitalization and punctuation</td>
<td>Uses spaces between words at times</td>
<td>Omits space between words</td>
<td>Scribbles OR spells at early emergent stage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controls direction (up, down, top, bottom)</td>
<td>Begins to control direction (up, down, top, bottom)</td>
<td>Writes anywhere on the page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses spaces between words correctly</td>
<td>Spells at early letter name stage</td>
<td>Spells at emergent stage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spells at late letter name stage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ACPS Writing Rubric
### First Grade End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Uses the writing process (plans, drafts, revises, and edits)</td>
<td>- Readily uses temporary spellings</td>
<td>- Needs encouragement and support</td>
<td>- Communicates through drawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Progressing toward purposeful writing</td>
<td>- Spaces between words</td>
<td>- May imitate classmates’ ideas</td>
<td>- Dictates labels, descriptions or events about own drawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clear beginning, middle and ending</td>
<td>- Some evidence of use of the writing process (plan, draft, revise, and edit)</td>
<td>- Needs suggestions to stay on task</td>
<td>- May write random letters and memorized words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some evidence of a beginning, middle, and end</td>
<td>- Stays on task</td>
<td>- Focuses on several topics with little or no elaboration</td>
<td>- May attempt to string several words together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stays on task</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Little evidence of a beginning, middle, and end</td>
<td>- No evidence of a beginning, middle, and end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Needs encouragement and support</td>
<td></td>
<td>- May begin to use own ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- May imitate classmates’ ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Needs suggestions to stay on task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>- Focuses on several topics with little or no elaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Little evidence of a beginning, middle, and end</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- May begin to use own ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Communicates through drawing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dictates labels, descriptions or events about own drawing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- May write random letters and memorized words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- May attempt to string several words together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No evidence of a beginning, middle, and end</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Expression</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Descriptive details included</td>
<td>- Reads back what was written</td>
<td>- Vocabulary is repetitive</td>
<td>- Incomplete sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Descriptive words appear frequently</td>
<td>- Student uses some descriptive vocabulary when writing about people, places, things, and events</td>
<td>- Few complete sentences</td>
<td>- No elaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sentences are complete with a variety of sentence structures</td>
<td>- Some complete sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage and Mechanics</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies most sentences correctly with beginning capitals and ending periods</td>
<td>• Beginning to identify some sentences with beginning capitals and ending punctuation</td>
<td>• Some complete sentences</td>
<td>• Spelling may have one letter (beginning sound) or random letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Corrects most errors (edits) without teacher guidance</td>
<td>• Corrects some errors (edits) with teacher guidance</td>
<td>• Random use of capital letters and periods</td>
<td>• Punctuation is not used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Edits for spelling of frequently used words and phonetically regular words</td>
<td>• Most letters are formed properly and proper spacing between words is used most of the time</td>
<td>• Little evidence of spacing between words</td>
<td>• Words often run together with little or no spacing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Forms letters and properly uses spaces so that writing is readable for the teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ACPS Writing Rubric

### Second Grade End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Advanced 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proficient 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>Basic 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>Below Basic 1</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composing</strong></td>
<td>Purposeful writing that has been revised for clarity</td>
<td>Use of descriptive language is evident</td>
<td>Writes longer stories</td>
<td>Organize ideas with direct adult supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses the writing process (plans, drafts revises, edits and publish)</td>
<td>Begins to group related ideas</td>
<td>Selects one topic and elaborates on it using some descriptive words</td>
<td>Conveys ideas with pattern sentences. <em>I like... I have...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning to use the writing process (planning, drafting, revising and editing)</td>
<td>Readily uses temporary spellings to communicate ideas</td>
<td>Writes simple stories, sometimes containing a beginning, middle, and ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clear beginning, middle, end</td>
<td>Writing contains an appropriate sequence of ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Expression</strong></td>
<td>Students use extensive vocabulary</td>
<td>Uses declarative, interrogative and exclamatory sentences</td>
<td>Reads back what was written</td>
<td>Student uses basic, functional vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentences are complete and sentence structure enhances meaning</td>
<td>Writing shows some evidence of personal style</td>
<td>Student is beginning to utilize some elements of style</td>
<td>Student writes in complete sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student uses own personal writing style</td>
<td>Sentences are complete with a variety of sentence structure</td>
<td>Including word choice, tone, and voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Usage and Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Uses subject/verb agreement</td>
<td>Uses subject/verb agreement most of the time</td>
<td>Uses subject/verb agreement sometimes</td>
<td>Omits subject/verb agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corrects spelling of high frequency words</td>
<td>Corrects spelling of high frequency words most of the time</td>
<td>Capital at the beginning of sentences sometimes</td>
<td>Omits capital letters at the beginning of sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spells in the within word pattern stage</td>
<td>Spells in the letter name stage</td>
<td>Spells at early letter name stage</td>
<td>Spells at emergent stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correct use of *I, a/an, them/those, good/well</td>
<td>Capitalizes proper nouns</td>
<td>Uses inventive spelling (is readable)</td>
<td>Uses inventive spelling but is difficult to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses paragraphing formatting</td>
<td>Correct use of pronouns most of the time</td>
<td>Uses some end punctuation</td>
<td>Uses run-on sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Omits double negatives</td>
<td>Uses end punctuation and commas</td>
<td>Uses some correct sentences, some run-on sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ACPS Writing Rubric

## Third Grade End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Writing is organized with a clear introduction, body and conclusion</td>
<td>- Main idea is understandable with some related details</td>
<td>- Main idea is emerging but there maybe unrelated sentences</td>
<td>- Main idea is unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Writing process is used as evidenced by a writing plan, more than one draft, student initiates revision of ideas</td>
<td>- Writing has a recognizable beginning, middle, and ending</td>
<td>- Writing may be a general listing without a clear beginning, middle, and/or end</td>
<td>- Writing lacks a beginning, middle, and/or ending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student writes for a specific audience and various purposes</td>
<td>- Student sometimes writes for a specific audience and for various purposes</td>
<td>- Student needs support to write for a specific audience</td>
<td>- Student is unable to write for a specific audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Expression</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Main idea is clear with details and elaboration including adjectives and adverbs</td>
<td>- Student initiates some basic revision of ideas</td>
<td>- Student revises only with support</td>
<td>- Student needs a lot of teacher support to revise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Revisions clarify the message</td>
<td>- Student changes/adds nouns, verbs, and adjectives with support</td>
<td>- Some sentences are incomplete, short, choppy, or repetitive (“I like...I have...”)</td>
<td>- Majority of sentences are incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Changes/adds nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs</td>
<td>- Student uses complete sentences with some interesting words, but little variety</td>
<td>- Sentence meaning is unclear</td>
<td>- Sentence meaning is unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students use a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary that is strong and vivid</td>
<td>- Student recognizes run-on sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Writing shows evidence of style and voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Writing has a consistent tone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage and Mechanics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses subject/verb agreement with consistent control</td>
<td>• Uses subject/verb agreement with some control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses capitalization when writing days, months, places, and titles</td>
<td>• Uses capitals for I and names with few errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spells most words correctly, up to the level of the early- to mid-syllable juncture stage</td>
<td>• Uses end punctuation correctly most of the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Forms cursive letters correctly</td>
<td>• Spells high frequency words correctly, invented spellings are understandable and correct up to the level of within word patterns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses paragraph formatting</td>
<td>• Edits with support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses irregular verbs correctly</td>
<td>• Forms legible cursive handwriting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses apostrophes correctly in contractions and singular possessives</td>
<td>• Uses commas in a series</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses commas in a series and an offset</td>
<td>• Uses subject pronouns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses pronouns and conjunctions correctly <em>Examples: My sister and I</em></td>
<td>• Corrects subject/verb agreement with support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student does not use run-on sentences</td>
<td>• Use capitals for I and names sometimes with many errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Omits subject/verb agreement</strong></td>
<td>• Begins to use end punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Omits capitalization and punctuation</strong></td>
<td>• Uses invented spelling is readable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Spells in the early letter name stage</strong></td>
<td>• Edits with support (little evidence of self-initiation of editing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Omits editing</strong></td>
<td>• Uses correct manuscript letter formation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spells at the late letter name stage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


## ACPS Writing Rubric

### Fourth Grade End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Composing**           | • Central idea is distinct and supported by elaborations with related details throughout including adjectives and adverbs  
                          | • Ideas are grouped into unified paragraphs  
                          | • Writing process is evident  
                          | • Establishes understandable central idea and relate details  
                          | • Groups ideas into paragraph form  
                          | • Establishes a recognizable central idea with some organization  
                          | • Conveys ideas with basic, unelaborated lists  
                          | • Groups ideas into a paragraph with support  
                          | • Organize ideas with adult supervision  
                          | • Conveys ideas with basic listing and limited details  
                          | • Writes simple stories, sometimes containing a beginning, middle, and ending |
| **Written Expression**   | • Revises for clarity, changes/adds nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs  
                          | • Purposefully crafted message that the reader remembers  
                          | • Precise information and vocabulary resonates an image in the reader’s mind  
                          | • Voice is enhanced by specific word choice and specific information  
                          | • Rhythmic flow created by sentence  
                          | • Uses complete sentences variety, length and beginning  
                          | • Uses humor, dialogue, and figurative language  
                          | • Initiates revision for clarity of message  
                          | • Some specific word choice and information make the message clear, although there may be some inclusion of unnecessary but related information  
                          | • Some general statements or vague words which somewhat flatten the tone and voice  
                          | • Sentences are varied in length and structure most of the time  
                          | • Some specificity of word choice may exist, but consists of general information, which is written in imprecise, bland language  
                          | • Voice emerges only on occasion  
                          | • Lack of sentence variety may make the reading monotonous  
                          | • Awkward sentence variety may be distracting enough to make the writer’s meaning unclear on occasion  
                          | • While a few brief rhythmic clusters of sentences may occur, an overall sense of rhythmic flow is not present  
                          | • Word choice and information are general, vague, and/or repetitive  
                          | • Lack of sentence variety makes the presentation monotonous  
                          | • May have several awkward sentence constructions  
<pre><code>                      | • Lack of control of vocabulary and information control prevents tone and voice from emerging  |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage and Mechanics</th>
<th>Usage and Mechanics</th>
<th>Usage and Mechanics</th>
<th>Usage and Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses subject/verb agreement consistently</td>
<td>Uses subject/verb agreement with some control</td>
<td>Uses subject/verb agreement sometimes</td>
<td>Uses basic subject/verb agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses inflected endings correctly (verb tense)</td>
<td>Uses inflected endings with some control</td>
<td>Uses some inflected endings</td>
<td>Uses few inflected endings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses homophones correctly</td>
<td>Uses homophones with some control</td>
<td>Editing with support</td>
<td>Edits with much support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiates editing and revising</td>
<td>Uses possesses with some control</td>
<td>Spells mid to late within word stage</td>
<td>Uses some end punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses punctuation correctly</td>
<td>Edits and revises when prompted</td>
<td>Uses correct punctuation sometimes</td>
<td>Uses some basic capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spells at syllable juncture stage</td>
<td>Uses capitalization</td>
<td>Uses paragraph formatting sometimes</td>
<td>Spells at letter name or within word stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses complete sentences without word omissions</td>
<td>Spells at within word or early syllable juncture stage</td>
<td>Uses complete sentences sometimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses paragraph format</td>
<td>Uses correct punctuation</td>
<td>Uses complete sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses a/an, them/those, good/well correctly</td>
<td>Uses paragraph formatting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses correct punctuation</td>
<td>Uses complete sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses paragraph formatting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ACPS Writing Rubric

## Fifth Grade End of Year Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Advanced 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proficient 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>Basic 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>Below Basic 1</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composing</strong></td>
<td>• Clear central idea supported by elaboration with details</td>
<td>• Has understandable central idea</td>
<td>• Central idea unclear</td>
<td>• Central idea is not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ideas are organized into paragraphs with strong topic sentence</td>
<td>• Writing is sequenced with a clear beginning, middle, and ending</td>
<td>• Unclear beginning, middle, and ending</td>
<td>• No beginning, middle, and ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Groups of ideas are present within a paragraph</td>
<td>• No brainstorming is evident</td>
<td>• No brainstorming is evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Has a conclusion</td>
<td>• Lack of organization</td>
<td>• Lack of organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Expression</strong></td>
<td>• Has self-revisions for clarity</td>
<td>• Has attempts of revision</td>
<td>• No elaboration</td>
<td>• No revisions are present, only with support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong voice and tone</td>
<td>• Uses modifiers</td>
<td>• Use of revision with support</td>
<td>• Lack of voice and tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses a variety of sentences</td>
<td>• Flat tone and voice</td>
<td>• Voice emerges on occasion</td>
<td>• Incomplete sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Effective use of descriptive language</td>
<td>• Uses some specific word choice or vocabulary</td>
<td>• Awkward sentence variety</td>
<td>• Boring language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong use of details</td>
<td>• Some sentence variety with length and structure</td>
<td>• Dull word choice, bland language</td>
<td>• Lack of sentence variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific use of vocabulary to help with meaning</td>
<td>• Use of some descriptive words (adjectives and adverbs)</td>
<td>• Lack of rhythm and flow</td>
<td>• Short and choppy sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses dialogue and figurative language</td>
<td>• Uses some details to elaborate thoughts</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Poor word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Overuse of words (really, so, then, I, and, because)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Usage and Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>• Uses correct subject-verb agreement</td>
<td>• Has subject-verb agreement and inflected endings</td>
<td>• Very little subject-verb agreement</td>
<td>• Lack of subject-verb agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Run-on sentences and fragments are absent</td>
<td>• Very little use of run-ons and fragments</td>
<td>• Some use of run-on sentences and fragments</td>
<td>• Overuse of run-on sentences and fragments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses correct capitalization and punctuation</td>
<td>• Correct capitalization and punctuation most of the time</td>
<td>• Incorrect use of capitalization and punctuation</td>
<td>• Lack of basic capitalization and punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Has paragraphs with strong supporting details</td>
<td>• Has paragraphs with supporting details</td>
<td>• Evidence of paragraphs</td>
<td>• Lack of paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Edits spelling errors</td>
<td>• Most words are spelled correctly</td>
<td>• Spells at with-in word stage or early syllable juncture</td>
<td>• Few words are spelled correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses homophones correctly</td>
<td>• Spells at syllable juncture stage</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Spells at letter name or early within word stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spells at the derivational constancy stage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ACPS Writing Rubrics

## Middle School 6-8

### COMPOSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prewriting Strategies</strong></td>
<td>Uses planning strategies effectively to compose</td>
<td>Uses planning strategies to compose paper, but not effectively</td>
<td>Uses planning strategies, but unrelated to story</td>
<td>Uses no planning strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Idea and Unity</strong></td>
<td>Stays on a single topic with one clear point of view</td>
<td>Stays on a single topic with consistent point of view</td>
<td>Includes competing ideas with more than one story</td>
<td>Lacks a central idea (reader cannot determine the focus of the piece)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follows sequential and logical order</td>
<td>Includes some information that is unnecessary</td>
<td>Changes point of view</td>
<td>Switches between points of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes effective transition</td>
<td>Includes transition</td>
<td>Digresses</td>
<td>Lacks organization, sequence, and transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elaboration: Details Examples/ Illustrations</strong></td>
<td>Includes details that show, not tell, throughout the piece</td>
<td>Uses details that show, not tell, in some parts of the piece</td>
<td>Has few details that show, not tell</td>
<td>Tells, does not show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes three or more examples.</td>
<td>Includes at least two examples</td>
<td>Includes one example</td>
<td>Uses general statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appeals to several senses</td>
<td>Appeals to a couple of senses</td>
<td>Appeals mostly to one sense (usually sight)</td>
<td>Includes no examples or sensory material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead/ Closing</strong></td>
<td>Begins with a strong, interesting lead</td>
<td>Begins with a lead that is evident, but not strong</td>
<td>Begins with an uninteresting, weak lead</td>
<td>Includes no lead and/or closing or includes a lead and/or closing that do(does) not match the piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closes with a statement that is &quot;tight&quot; and more than a repetition of previous statements</td>
<td>Closes with a statement that is present but not &quot;tight&quot; and does not wrap up the piece</td>
<td>Concludes with a weak closing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WRITTEN EXPRESSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revision</strong></td>
<td>Strengthens the piece</td>
<td>Strengthens the piece, but additional revisions are needed.</td>
<td>Makes a few revisions, but major revisions are needed</td>
<td>Exhibits little or no revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Precise words</td>
<td>Specific vocabulary, with a few vague or bland words</td>
<td>Bland or anemic words that do not focus or paint a picture in the reader’s mind</td>
<td>General nouns and verbs (nice, pretty) or repetitive words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Information
- Precise information that creates a picture in the reader's mind
- Sensory images and figurative language are present and purposeful throughout the piece

### Voice
- Strong—it is you (It shows your personality)
- Purposeful dialogue (not in all types of writing)

### Tone
- Purposeful throughout the piece
- “Funny,” “entertaining,” “frightening,” “exciting,” etc. can be used to describe the piece

### Sentence Variety
- Simple, complex, and compound sentences are included
- Embedded ideas in the sentences
- Various beginnings throughout the piece

### General information
- Specific word choice
- Some examples of purposeful figurative language and sensory images

### Weak (Emerges only on occasion, if at all)
- No dialogue

### Not present
- No voice (Anyone could have written the story)

### Usage and Mechanics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Understands thoroughly the K-8 usage and mechanics SOLs (consistently applies rules for capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation)</td>
<td>- Exhibits basic understanding of K-8 usage and mechanics SOLs (usually applies rules of capitalization, punctuation, sentence formation)</td>
<td>- Exhibits frequent errors (Inconsistently applies rules of capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation)</td>
<td>- Exhibits frequent and severe errors which distract the reader and make writing hard to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Applies spelling principles most of the time</td>
<td>- Applies principles of spelling inconsistently</td>
<td>- Exhibits 10+ errors (Density and variety of errors keep piece from meeting minimum standards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Exhibits no more than 4-6 errors (Errors do not detract from the quality of the writing)</td>
<td>- Exhibits 7-9 errors (density of errors outweighs control and detracts from meaning)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Short, choppy, monotonous (boring) sentence
- No variety
- Awkward sounding when piece is read
### ACPS Writing Rubrics

#### High School 9-12

#### COMPOSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Main Idea/Thesis/Problem Statement** | • Sharply focused | • Most ideas are focused | • Somewhat focused | • Ideas often stray from the main idea  
• Lacks focus |
| **Details/Examples/Elaboration** | • Specific and well-chosen details/examples that adequately support the main idea  
• Vivid and purposeful writing | • Unclear writing at times  
• More details needed  
• Uneven details | • Lacks elaboration (too few details) OR repetitive details | • Very few details OR many details that do not fit together |
| **Organization Intro/Body/Conclusion** | • Excellent lead, opening, and closing  
• Logical order and flow  
• Easy to read and understand | • Effective lead, opening, and closing  
• Minimal errors in sequencing of ideas | • Inappropriate lead, opening, OR closing  
• Unrelated OR rambling ideas | • Inappropriate OR absent, lead, opening, AND closing  
• Disconnected ideas |

#### WRITTEN EXPRESSION

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Sentence Variety** | • Varied sentence types  
• Ideas flow smoothly | • Some sentence variety  
• Some awkward sentences, but ideas still flow smoothly | • Little sentence variety  
• Awkward phrases are present | • No sentence variety  
• Many awkward phrases |
| **Word Choice** | • Precise information  
• Lively, colorful words create a picture in the reader’s mind  
• Varied choice of words | • Effective use of descriptive adjectives, adverbs and verbs  
• Some overused words | • General information  
• Dull and overused word choices | • Vague and repetitive information |
| **Voice/ Tone** | • The writer’s personality is evident throughout the writing | • The writer’s personality comes through sometimes | • The writer’s personality rarely comes through | • The writer’s personality is not evident |
Clarity
- The writer’s purpose is clear
- The writer’s purpose is usually clear
- The writer’s purpose is seldom clear
- The writer’s purpose is unclear

Specificity
- Well-chosen words which describe topic
- Words are used correctly
- Some well-chosen words which show student’s understanding of topical vocabulary
- Uses words properly
- Attempts to use words which are specific to topic, but uses them incorrectly
- Incorrect use of correct language for the topic/subject
- Lacks attempt to use proper vocabulary which designated specificity of topic

### USAGE/MECHANICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td>- Contains no more than 2-3 errors&lt;br&gt;- High quality writing</td>
<td>- Contains 4-6 errors that do not detract from the quality of writing</td>
<td>- Contains 7-9 errors that do not detract its meaning</td>
<td>- Contains 10 or more errors that prevent the reader from following meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>- Contains no more than 2-3 errors&lt;br&gt;- High quality writing</td>
<td>- Contains 4-6 errors that do not detract from the quality of writing</td>
<td>- Contains 7-9 errors that do not detract its meaning</td>
<td>- Contains 10 or more errors that prevent the reader from following meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>- Contains no more than 2-3 errors&lt;br&gt;- High quality writing</td>
<td>- Contains 4-6 errors that do not detract from the quality of writing</td>
<td>- Contains 7-9 errors that do not detract its meaning</td>
<td>- Contains 10 or more errors that prevent the reader from following meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capitalization</strong></td>
<td>- Contains no more than 2-3 errors&lt;br&gt;- High quality writing</td>
<td>- Contains 4-6 errors that do not detract from the quality of writing</td>
<td>- Contains 7-9 errors that do not detract its meaning</td>
<td>- Contains 10 or more errors that prevent the reader from following meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formatting</strong></td>
<td>- Contains no more than 2-3 errors&lt;br&gt;- High quality writing</td>
<td>- Contains 4-6 errors that do not detract from the quality of writing</td>
<td>- Contains 7-9 errors that do not detract its meaning</td>
<td>- Contains 10 or more errors that prevent the reader from following meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If a student writes a paper about a specific time period, he must understand key words and phrases which mark the period.
- If a student writes a paper about becoming a mechanic, he or she understands the correct steps, words, terms, and schooling that this type of person needs to get a degree or to be successful.
- If a student writes a paper about world resources, he or she understands and uses terms to show their mastery of the topic. For instance, he or she might use words such as capital resources, natural resources, and human resources, can distinguish between each, and provide specific examples. If a student writes a paper about an author, he or she includes information which describes author’s style, time period, genre of writing, etc.
Grade 5 Writing Test Composing/Written Expression Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The writing at this score point level:</strong></td>
<td>The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the composing/Written Expression domain’s features.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writer may control some features of the domain more than others.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features, indicating significant weakness.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The writing at this score point level:**
- Demonstrates consistent focus on a central idea, with clear awareness of audience.
- Purposefully develops the central idea by providing full and consistent elaboration through examples and/or details.
- Organizes ideas in a logical manner with few if any lapses, consistently clarifying the relationship between ideas or events.
- Exhibits unity consistently by having few or no digressions, using transitions to connect ideas or events, and having an effective lead and closure.
- Includes sentences of various lengths and structures, resulting in a rhythmic flow.
- Uses specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information purposefully to craft a message, create tone, and enhance the writer’s voice.

**The writing at this score point level:**
- Demonstrates reasonable focus on a central idea, with awareness of audience.
- Provides reasonable elaboration on the central idea, though some lapses may be evident.
- Organizes ideas in a reasonably logical manner, clarifying the relationship between ideas or events, though some lapses in organization may be present.
- Exhibits reasonable unity by having only minor digressions, using some transitions to connect ideas or events, and having a lead and closure.
- Includes sentences of various lengths and structures, resulting in a rhythmic flow, though rhythm may be diminished by an occasional lack of sentence variety.
- Uses some specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information to craft a message, create tone, and enhance the writer’s voice.

**The writing at this score point level:**
- Demonstrates inconsistent focus on a central idea, with limited awareness of audience.
- Provides inconsistent elaboration on the central idea by listing general, underdeveloped statements or offering a skeletal plot.
- Organizes ideas inconsistently, with limited evidence of relationships between ideas or events.
- Exhibits little unity due to major digressions, competing central ideas, inconsistent use of transitions to connect ideas, and a weak lead and/or closure.
- Contains little variety in sentence lengths and structures, resulting in a lack of rhythmic flow.
- Contains mostly imprecise, bland language, though some specificity of word choice might occur and allow the writer’s voice or tone to emerge on occasion.

**The writing at this score point level:**
- Has little or no focus on a central idea and little or no awareness of audience.
- Has little or no elaboration of a central idea.
- Has little or no organizational plan, failing to develop relationships between ideas or events and typically jumping from point to point.
- Exhibits little or no unity due to major digressions, the lack of transitions connecting ideas or events, and a limited or no lead and/or closure.
- Lacks sentences of various lengths and structures.
- Uses general, vague, and/or repetitious vocabulary with little or no selected information, failing to create tone or to develop the writer’s voice.
# Grade 5 Writing Test Usage/Mechanics Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage/Mechanics</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates reasonable, though not necessarily consistent, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. The writer exhibits control which outweighs occasional errors present in the paper.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Evidence of the author’s knowledge of the domain appears alongside frequent errors. The density and variety of errors outweigh the control present in the paper.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics distract the reader and make the writing hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The writing at this score point level:

- Exhibits consistent control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments and run-ons.
- Exhibits consistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and avoidance of double negatives.
- Exhibits consistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

### The writing at this score point level:

- Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments and run-ons.
- Exhibits reasonable control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and avoidance of double negatives.
- Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

### The writing at this score point level:

- Exhibits inconsistent control of sentence formation, including fragments and run-ons.
- Exhibits inconsistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and double negatives.
- Exhibits inconsistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

### The writing at this score point level:

- Exhibits little or no control of sentence formation, including fragments and run-ons.
- Exhibits little or no control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and double negatives.
- Exhibits little or no control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.
Grade 5 Writing Test Composing/Written Expression Rubric

Score Point 4
The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writing at this score point level: Demonstrates consistent focus on a central idea, with clear awareness of audience. Purposefully develops the central idea by providing full and consistent elaboration through examples and/or details. Organizes ideas in a logical manner with few if any lapses, consistently clarifying the relationship between ideas or events. Exhibits unity consistently by having few or no digressions, using transitions to connect ideas or events, and having an effective lead and closure. Includes sentences of various lengths and structures, resulting in a rhythmic flow. Uses specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information purposefully to craft a message, create tone, and enhance the writer’s voice.

Score Point 3
The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writer may control some features of the domain more than others. The writing at this score point level: Demonstrates reasonable focus on a central idea, with awareness of audience. Provides reasonable elaboration on the central idea, though some lapses may be evident. Organizes ideas in a reasonably logical manner, clarifying the relationship between ideas or events, though some lapses in organization may be present. Exhibits reasonable unity by having only minor digressions, using some transitions to connect ideas or events, and having a lead and closure. Includes sentences of various lengths and structures, resulting in a rhythmic flow, though rhythm may be diminished by an occasional lack of sentence variety. Uses some specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information to craft a message, create tone, and enhance the writer’s voice.

Score Point 2
The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features, indicating significant weakness. The writing at this score point level: Demonstrates inconsistent focus on a central idea, with limited awareness of audience. Provides inconsistent elaboration on the central idea by listing general, underdeveloped statements or offering a skeletal plot. Organizes ideas inconsistently, with limited evidence of relationships between ideas or events. Exhibits little unity due to major digressions, competing central ideas, inconsistent use of transitions to connect ideas, and a weak lead and/or closure. Contains little variety in sentence lengths and structures, resulting in a lack of rhythmic flow. Contains mostly imprecise, bland language, though some specificity of word choice might occur and allow the writer’s voice or tone to emerge on occasion.

Score Point 1
The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writing at this score point level: Has little or no focus on a central idea and little or no awareness of audience. Has little or no elaboration of a central idea. Has little or no organizational plan, failing to develop relationships between ideas or events and typically jumping from point to point. Exhibits little or no unity due to major digressions, the lack of transitions connecting ideas or events, and a limited or no lead and/or closure. Lacks sentences of various lengths and structures. Uses general, vague, and/or repetitious vocabulary with little or no selected information, failing to create tone or to develop the writer’s voice.
Grade 5 Writing Test Usage/Mechanics Rubric

Score Point 4
The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits consistent control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments and run-ons. Exhibits consistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and avoidance of double negatives. Exhibits consistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 3
The writer demonstrates reasonable, though not necessarily consistent, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. The writer exhibits control which outweighs occasional errors present in the paper. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments and run-ons. Exhibits reasonable control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and avoidance of double negatives. Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 2
The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Evidence of the author’s knowledge of the domain appears alongside frequent errors. The density and variety of errors outweigh the control present in the paper. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits inconsistent control of sentence formation, including fragments and run-ons. Exhibits inconsistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and double negatives. Exhibits inconsistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 1
The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics distract the reader and make the writing hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits little or no control of sentence formation, including fragments and run-ons. Exhibits little or no control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adverbs and adjectives, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, and double negatives. Exhibits little or no control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.
## Writing Test Composing/Written Expression Rubric

Use With Grades 6-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composing/Written Expression</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features.</strong></td>
<td>The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writer may control some features of the domain more than others.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features, indicating significant weakness.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The writing at this score point level:**

- Demonstrates consistent focus on a central idea, with clear awareness of the intended audience.
- Fully and consistently elaborates the central idea by using examples, anecdotes, illustrations and/or details.
- Contains a clear and logical organizational plan which consistently clarifies the relationship of one idea or event to another.
- Exhibits consistent unity by having few if any digressions, using effective transitions that connect ideas within and across paragraphs, maintaining a consistent point of view, and having an effective lead and closure.
- Includes sentences of various lengths and structures and appropriately subordinates ideas and/or embeds modifiers to create a

**The writing at this score point level:**

- Demonstrates reasonable focus on a central idea, with awareness of the intended audience.
- Provides reasonable elaboration on the central idea, though some thinness or unevenness in elaboration may occur.
- Contains evidence of an organizational plan which clarifies the relationship of one idea or event to another, although some lapses in organization may occur.
- Exhibits reasonable unity by having few minor digressions or shifts in point of view, purposeful use of some transitions, and the presence of a lead and closure.
- Includes sentences of various lengths and structures, though at times, a lack of structural complexity may diminish the rhythm of the piece.

**The writing at this score point level:**

- Demonstrates inconsistent focus on a central idea, with limited awareness of the intended audience.
- Provides inconsistent elaboration on the central idea by listing general, underdeveloped statements.
- Organizes ideas inconsistently, with limited evidence of the relationship between one idea or event and another.
- Exhibits little unity due to the inconsistent use of transitions to connect ideas, major digressions, competing central ideas, occasional shifts in point of view, and weak lead and/or closure.
- Contains little variety in sentence lengths and structures, resulting in a lack of

**The writing at this score point level:**

- Has little or no focus on a central idea and little or no awareness of the intended audience.
- Has little or no purposeful elaboration.
- Has little or no organizational plan, failing to develop relationships between ideas or events and typically jumping from one thought to the next.
- Demonstrates little or no unity due to major digressions, shifts in point of view, the lack of transitions connecting ideas or events, and a limited or no lead and/or closure.
- Lacks sentence variety rendering the presentation monotonous.
- Uses general, vague, and/or repetitious vocabulary with little or no selected information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhythmic Flow</th>
<th>Uses Highly Specific Word Choice, Descriptive and/or Figurative Language, and Selected Information Purposefully to Craft a Message, Create Tone, and Enhance the Writer's Voice.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhythmic Flow</td>
<td>Contains Mostly Imprecise, Bland Language, Though Some Specificity of Word Choice Might Occur and Allow the Writer's Voice or Tone to Emerge on Occasion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythmic Flow</td>
<td>Failing to Create Tone or to Develop the Writer's Voice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Grade 8 Writing Test Usage/Mechanics Rubric

**Use With Grades 6-8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage/Mechanics</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The writer demonstrates reasonable, though not necessarily consistent, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.</strong> The writer exhibits control which outweighs occasional errors present in the paper.</td>
<td><strong>The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.</strong> Although there are frequent errors, there is also evidence of the author’s knowledge of the domain. The density and variety of errors outweigh the control present in the paper.</td>
<td><strong>The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.</strong> Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics distract the reader and may make the writing hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The writing at this score point level:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The writing at this score point level:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Exhibits consistent control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and beginning sentences with coordinating conjunctions.</td>
<td>- Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and beginning sentences with coordinating conjunctions.</td>
<td>- Exhibits inconsistent control of sentence formation, including occasional fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and a pattern of beginning sentences with coordinating conjunctions.</td>
<td>- Exhibits little or no control of sentence formation, including fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and many sentences that begin with coordinating conjunctions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Exhibits consistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives.</td>
<td>- Exhibits reasonable control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives.</td>
<td>- Exhibits inconsistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives.</td>
<td>- Exhibits little or no control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>- Exhibits consistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
<td>- Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
<td>- Exhibits inconsistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
<td>- Exhibits little or no control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
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</table>
Grade 8 Writing Test Composing/Written Expression Rubric

Score Point 4
The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writing at this score point level:
Demonstrates consistent focus on a central idea, with clear awareness of the intended audience. Fully and consistently elaborates the central idea by using examples, anecdotes, illustrations and/or details. Contains a clear and logical organizational plan which consistently clarifies the relationship of one idea or event to another. Exhibits consistent unity by having few if any digressions, using effective transitions that connect ideas within and across paragraphs, maintaining a consistent point of view, and having an effective lead and closure. Includes sentences of various lengths and structures and appropriately subordinates ideas and/or embeds modifiers to create a rhythmic flow throughout the piece. Uses highly specific word choice, descriptive and/or figurative language, and selected information purposefully to craft a message, create tone, and enhance the writer’s voice.

Score Point 3
The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writer may control some features of the domain more than others. The writing at this score point level:
Demonstrates reasonable focus on a central idea, with awareness of the intended audience. Provides reasonable elaboration on the central idea, though some thinness or unevenness in elaboration may occur. Contains evidence of an organizational plan which clarifies the relationship of one idea or event to another, although some lapses in organization may occur. Exhibits reasonable unity by having few minor digressions or shifts in point of view, purposeful use of some transitions, and the presence of a lead and closure. Includes sentences of various lengths and structures, though at times, a lack of structural complexity may diminish the rhythm of the piece. Uses specific word choice, descriptive language, and selective information to craft the writer’s message. A few examples of vivid or purposeful language may be present alongside some general statements or vague words that somewhat flatten the tone and voice.

Score Point 2
The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features, indicating significant weakness. The writing at this score point level:
Demonstrates inconsistent focus on a central idea, with limited awareness of the intended audience. Provides inconsistent elaboration on the central idea by listing general, underdeveloped statements. Organizes ideas inconsistently, with limited evidence of the relationship between one idea or event and another. Exhibits little unity due to the inconsistent use of transitions to connect ideas, major digressions, competing central ideas, occasional shifts in point of view, and weak lead and/or closure. Contains little variety in sentence lengths and structures, resulting in a lack of rhythmic flow. Contains mostly imprecise, bland language, though some specificity of word choice might occur and allow the writer’s voice or tone to emerge on occasion.

Score Point 1
The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writing at this score point level:
Has little or no focus on a central idea and little or no awareness of the intended audience. Has little or no purposeful elaboration. Has little or no organizational plan, failing to develop relationships between ideas or events and typically jumping from one thought to the next. Demonstrates little or no unity due to major digressions, shifts in point of view, the lack of transitions connecting ideas or events, and a limited or no lead and/or closure. Lacks sentence variety rendering the presentation monotonous. Uses general, vague, and/or repetitious vocabulary with little or no selected information, failing to create tone or to develop the writer’s voice.
Grade 8 Writing Test Usage/Mechanics Rubric

Score Point 4
The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.
The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits consistent control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and beginning sentences with coordinating conjunctions. Exhibits consistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives. Exhibits consistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 3
The writer demonstrates reasonable, though not necessarily consistent, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.
The writer exhibits control which outweighs occasional errors present in the paper. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and beginning sentences with coordinating conjunctions. Exhibits reasonable control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives. Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 2
The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Although there are frequent errors, there is also evidence of the author’s knowledge of the domain. The density and variety of errors outweigh the control present in the paper. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits inconsistent control of sentence formation, including occasional fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and a pattern of beginning sentences with coordinating conjunctions. Exhibits inconsistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives. Exhibits inconsistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 1
The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics distract the reader and may make the writing hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence. The writing at this score point level:
Exhibits little or no control of sentence formation, including fragments, run-ons, comma splices, and many sentences that begin with coordinating conjunctions. Exhibits little or no control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives. Exhibits little or no control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.
**WRITING Standards of Learning Rubric for Grade 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistent control (but not perfect)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reasonable control (some features better controlled than others)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Inconsistent control (control of several features but not of others — “losing it”)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Little or no control</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central idea</strong></td>
<td>Central idea is sharply focused, narrowed by elaboration.</td>
<td>Central idea is present and focused by purposeful elaboration</td>
<td>Central idea may be present, or several ideas may compete.</td>
<td>Central idea is lacking, usually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elaboration</strong></td>
<td>Full: details in sentences; illustrations, examples, reasons, and/or anecdotes within paragraphs.</td>
<td>Purposeful and found at both sentence and paragraph levels (occasional thinness of elaboration)</td>
<td>Little or no elaboration; or a few brief details, underdeveloped statements</td>
<td>Sparse or not purposeful elaboration; bare statement the norm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Strong: minor lapses don’t detract; narrative organization has no lapses, but other modes may.</td>
<td>Reasonable: minor lapses don’t detract significantly; narrative organization is generally intact; other modes may lapse somewhat, although overall plan is apparent.</td>
<td>Very little apparent organization; there may be a list of general statements, or an underdeveloped explanation, or skeleton of a narrative.</td>
<td>Often not present; writing jumps from point to point; sentences can be rearranged without changing meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unity</strong></td>
<td>Opening and closing present (more than mere repetition); consistent point of view; appropriate transitions; no digressions</td>
<td>Few, if any, digressions; few if any, point of view shifts; introduction and closing present but not sophisticated; transitions purposefully used</td>
<td>Opening and closing may be present; closing may be contrived, fake, or trite; significant digressions; unity not fully created because of lack of logically elaborated central idea</td>
<td>There may be some functional transitions or no digressions, but unity is never created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Precise words create images in reader’s mind due to careful choice of words and avoiding anemic, vague words.</td>
<td>Specific, but a few vague or anemic words may be present.</td>
<td>Imprecise, bland vocabulary</td>
<td>Imprecise, bland, vague, general, or repetitive vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>Precise and even information presentation creates images in the reader’s mind; figurative language is purposeful.</td>
<td>Specific information present, making the message clear, but there may be a few general statements; some figurative language may be present.</td>
<td>General information presentation is uneven or tells everything that the writer knows.</td>
<td>Imprecise, bland, vague, or repetitive information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td>Strong: enhanced by word choice and information given</td>
<td>Easily discernible, except when general information or vague, functional vocabulary is used</td>
<td>Emerges seldom or only when specific vocabulary and specific information amplify it.</td>
<td>Does not emerge because specific vocabulary and information are not present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone</strong></td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>Flattens when information and vocabulary are not specific</td>
<td>Rarely emerges due to lack of specific vocabulary and information</td>
<td>Rarely emerges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhythm</strong></td>
<td>Effective, purposefully varied sentence structure; modifiers and subordination are effectively embedded.</td>
<td>Smooth rhythm due to sentence variety and structure, but an occasional awkward construction may diminish it in places.</td>
<td>Sentence beginnings or types not very varied, although an occasional rhythmic cluster of sentences may be present.</td>
<td>Sentence variety lacking; several extremely awkward sentence constructions may be present.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# High School Writing Composing/Written Expression Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composing/Written Expression</th>
<th>Advanced 4</th>
<th>Proficient 3</th>
<th>Basic 2</th>
<th>Below Basic 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writer may control some features of the domain more than others.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features, indicating significant weakness.</td>
<td>The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The writing at this score point level:**

- **Advanced 4**
  - Focuses on a clear position and adapts content to audience, purpose, and situation.
  - Draws effective conclusions.
  - Addresses counterclaims when appropriate.
  - Contains precise and relevant evidence (examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details) that suits the intended purpose and audience, clarifies and defends the writer’s position, and fully and clearly elaborates ideas.
  - Organizes ideas in a sustained and logical manner and exhibits unity by having few if any digressions, maintaining a consistent point of view, using highly effective and purposeful transitions to connect ideas within and across paragraphs, and having a strong lead and closure.
  - Develops a rhythmic flow throughout the piece that results from the purposeful variation or

- **Proficient 3**
  - Focuses on a clear position and generally adapts content to audience, purpose, and situation.
  - Draws reasonable conclusions. Attempts to address counterclaims when appropriate.
  - Contains relevant evidence (examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details) that suits the intended purpose and audience, clarifies and defends the writer’s position, and elaborates ideas, though some thinness or unevenness in elaboration may be present.
  - Organizes ideas in a logical manner and exhibits unity by having a few minor digressions and/or shifts in point of view, using transitions to connect ideas within and across paragraphs, and having a skillful if not sophisticated lead and closure.
  - Develops a rhythmic flow throughout most of the piece that results from some variation of

- **Basic 2**
  - Focuses on a position, but inconsistently adapts content to audience, purpose, and situation.
  - May not draw conclusions.
  - May not address counterclaims when appropriate.
  - Contains limited evidence that suits the intended purpose and audience, clarifies or defends the writer’s position, and elaborates ideas; may be a list of general, underdeveloped statements.
  - Organizes ideas in a limited or inconsistent manner and may lack unity due to major digressions and shifts in point of view, limited or inconsistent use of transitions within and across paragraphs, and a weak or missing lead and/or closure.
  - Develops an uneven rhythmic flow throughout the piece as a result of a limited variation in sentence construction.
  - Exhibits inconsistent tone or voice

- **Below Basic 1**
  - Fails to focus on a position or to adapt content to audience, purpose, and situation.
  - Fails to draw conclusions.
  - Fails to address counterclaims when appropriate.
  - Contains little or no evidence that suits the intended purpose and audience or that elaborates ideas.
  - Fails to organize ideas and lacks unity as a result of major digressions and shifts in point of view, the absence of transitions connecting ideas, and no lead and/or closure.
  - Lacks a rhythmic flow as a result of little or no variation in sentence construction.
  - Lacks tone and voice as a result of little or no specific word choice, descriptive language, and/or selected information.
| repetition of sentence construction for effect, the appropriate subordination of ideas, and/or the effective embedding of modifiers. | sentence construction, subordination of ideas, and/or embedding of modifiers. |
| Contains highly specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information that create a purposeful and appropriate tone and enhance the writer's voice. |
| as a result of limited word choice, descriptive language, and/or selected information. |
| Contains specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information that create tone and enhance the writer's voice. |
# High School Writing Usage/Mechanics Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage/Mechanics</th>
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<th>Below Basic 1</th>
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<td>- Exhibits consistent control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, and comma splices.</td>
<td>- Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, and comma splices.</td>
<td>- Exhibits inconsistent control of sentence formation, including occasional fragments, run-ons, and comma splices.</td>
<td>- Exhibits little or no control of sentence formation, including fragments, run-ons, and comma splices.</td>
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<td>- Exhibits consistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives.</td>
<td>- Exhibits reasonable control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives.</td>
<td>- Exhibits inconsistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives.</td>
<td>- Exhibits little or no control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives.</td>
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<td>- Exhibits consistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
<td>- Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
<td>- Exhibits inconsistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.</td>
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The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features.

The writer demonstrates reasonable, though not necessarily consistent, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. The writer exhibits control which outweighs occasional errors present in the paper.

The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Evidence of the author’s knowledge of the domain appears alongside frequent errors. The density and variety of errors outweigh the control present in the paper.

The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics distract the reader and make the writing hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence.
High School SOL Test Composing/Written Expression Rubric

Score Point 4
The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writing at this score point level:
Focusses on a clear position and adapts content to audience, purpose, and situation. Draws effective conclusions. Addresses counterclaims when appropriate. Contains precise and relevant evidence (examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details) that suits the intended purpose and audience, clarifies and defends the writer’s position, and fully and clearly elaborates ideas. Organizes ideas in a sustained and logical manner and exhibits unity by having few if any digressions, maintaining a consistent point of view, using highly effective and purposeful transitions to connect ideas within and across paragraphs, and having a strong lead and closure. Develops a rhythmic flow throughout the piece that results from the purposeful variation or repetition of sentence construction for effect, the appropriate subordination of ideas, and/or the effective embedding of modifiers. Contains highly specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information that create a purposeful and appropriate tone and enhance the writer’s voice.

Score Point 3
The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writer may control some features of the domain more than others. The writing at this score point level:
Focusses on a clear position and generally adapts content to audience, purpose, and situation. Draws reasonable conclusions. Attempts to address counterclaims when appropriate. Contains relevant evidence (examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details) that suits the intended purpose and audience, clarifies and defends the writer’s position, and elaborates ideas, though some thinness or unevenness in elaboration may be present. Organizes ideas in a logical manner and exhibits unity by having a few minor digressions and/or shifts in point of view, using transitions to connect ideas within and across paragraphs, and having a skillful if not sophisticated lead and closure. Develops a rhythmic flow throughout most of the piece that results from some variation of sentence construction, subordination of ideas, and/or embedding of modifiers. Contains specific word choice, descriptive language, and selected information that create tone and enhance the writer’s voice.

Score Point 2
The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features, indicating significant weakness. The writing at this score point level:
Focusses on a position, but inconsistently adapts content to audience, purpose, and situation. May not draw conclusions. May not address counterclaims when appropriate. Contains limited evidence that suits the intended purpose and audience, clarifies or defends the writer’s position, and elaborates ideas; may be a list of general, underdeveloped statements. Organizes ideas in a limited or inconsistent manner and may lack unity due to major digressions and/or shifts in point of view, limited or inconsistent use of transitions within and across paragraphs, and a weak or missing lead and/or closure. Develops an uneven rhythmic flow throughout the piece as a result of a limited variation in sentence construction. Exhibits inconsistent tone or voice as a result of limited word choice, descriptive language, and/or selected information.

Score Point 1
The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Composing/Written Expression domain’s features. The writing at this score point level:
Fails to focus on a position or to adapt content to audience, purpose, and situation. Fails to draw conclusions. Fails to address counterclaims when appropriate. Contains little or no evidence that suits the intended purpose and audience or that elaborates ideas. Fails to organize ideas and lacks unity as a result of major digressions and shifts in point of view, the absence of transitions connecting ideas, and no lead and/or closure. Lacks a rhythmic flow as a result of little or no variation in sentence construction. Lacks tone and voice as a result of little or no specific word choice, descriptive language, and/or selected information.
High School SOL Test Usage/Mechanics Rubric

Score Point 4
The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. The writing at this score point level: Exhibits consistent control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. Exhibits consistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives. Exhibits consistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 3
The writer demonstrates reasonable, though not necessarily consistent, control of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. The writer exhibits control which outweighs occasional errors present in the paper. The writing at this score point level: Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation, avoiding fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. Exhibits reasonable control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and avoidance of double negatives. Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 2
The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Evidence of the author’s knowledge of the domain appears alongside frequent errors. The density and variety of errors outweigh the control present in the paper. The writing at this score point level: Exhibits inconsistent control of sentence formation, including occasional fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. Exhibits inconsistent control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives. Exhibits inconsistent control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.

Score Point 1
The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the Usage and Mechanics domain’s features. Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics distract the reader and make the writing hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence. The writing at this score point level: Exhibits little or no control of sentence formation, including fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. Exhibits little or no control of usage, including subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjectives and adverbs, verb tenses, plurals and possessives, homophones, and double negatives. Exhibits little or no control of mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization, formatting, and spelling.