

# RCS Writing Continuum Checklist

## Level 1: Emerging

- Uncontrolled or unidentifiable scribbling

## Level 2: Pictorial

- Imitates writing, but writes in scribbles
- Draws a somewhat recognizable picture
- Is able to talk about drawing, but story may not be consistent

## Level 3: Pre-Communicative

- Communicates consistent messages using pictures
- Writes letter-like forms, letters, and/or random letter strings to convey a message; may be randomly placed on page
- Attempts to read message
- Writes own name or occasional known word

## Level 4: Semi-Phonetic (Kindergarten MOY) (4 of 5)

- Writes from left to right and top to bottom; may reverse some letters
- Correctly uses some letters to match sounds
- Spells some high frequency words correctly—words displayed in classroom
- Writes at least one sentence
- May use written letters/words to help tell the story, although may not correlate to words/thoughts

## Level 5: Phonetic (Kindergarten EOY/1<sup>st</sup> BOY) (8 of 10)

- Uses both upper and lower case, with correct shaping & spacing, may reverse some letters
- Writes from left to right and top to bottom
- Uses words and pictures to convey message
- Uses logical phonetic spelling; most sounds in words represented
- Includes some vowels, but often not correct
- Spells some high frequency words correctly
- Correctly uses singular and plural nouns and verbs
- Writes three or more sentences on a related topic or theme
- Capitalizes first word of sentence and pronoun I
- Child can read the writing, but others may be unable to read

## Level 6: Early Transitional (1<sup>st</sup> MOY) (8 of 10)

- Includes all of the previous level:
- Uses logical phonetic spelling including vowels in most syllables, but some may not be correct
- Capitalizes beginning word in sentence, names, and the pronoun "I"
- Correctly uses periods and question marks most of the time.
- Uses appropriate subject/verb agreement in most situations
- Evidence of planning to support the writing (graphic organizer or picture—emphasis might be on the picture)
- Writes three or more sentences of 3-4 words on a related topic or theme
- Attempts to use interesting/descriptive words to add voice to the piece
- Attempts at revision or editing is apparent
- Writing is easily readable

### Level 7: Transitional (1<sup>st</sup> EOY/2<sup>nd</sup> BOY) (8 of 10)

- ❑ Includes all of the previous level:
- ❑ Spells most unknown words phonetically, meets grade level standards for spelling
- ❑ Accurately capitalizes first word in sentence, pronoun "I", names of people & pets, and months most of the time
- ❑ Accurately uses periods, question marks, exclamation marks, and commas in a series and dates most of the time
- ❑ Writes sentences that meet grade level Language Arts standards
- ❑ Uses interesting/descriptive words to add voice to the piece
- ❑ Evidence of planning supports the writing (graphic organizer or picture)
- ❑ Writes an organized 5 sentence paragraph on a related topic or theme
- ❑ Uses varied sentence structure, but some run-on sentences and sentence fragments exist
- ❑ Evidence of revision or editing is apparent

### Level 8: Early Conventional (2<sup>nd</sup> EOY/3<sup>rd</sup> BOY) (8 of 10)

- ❑ Includes all of the previous level:
- ❑ Correctly spells most words according to grade level standards
- ❑ Accurately capitalizes grade level standard expectations most of the time
- ❑ Accurately uses grade level punctuation most of the time
- ❑ Writes complete simple & compound sentences
- ❑ Writing includes some grade level standard specific parts of speech
- ❑ Writing includes interesting or descriptive words that add voice
- ❑ Writing gets to the second page
- ❑ Overall piece is on topic and demonstrates organization that suits the genre
- ❑ Demonstrates use of planning (graphic organizer) and revision

### Level 9: Conventional (3<sup>rd</sup> MOY - 4<sup>th</sup> BOY) (8 of 10)

- ❑ Writes legibly in print or cursive, leaving spaces between letters, sentences, & edges of the paper
- ❑ Correctly spells most words based on grade level standards
- ❑ Correctly uses punctuation and capitalizes words based on grade level standards most of the time
- ❑ Writes simple, compound, and complex sentences
- ❑ Writing includes some grade level standard specific parts of speech
- ❑ Writing fills two pages and begins a third page
- ❑ Uses word choice to enhance writing and add voice to the piece
- ❑ Overall piece demonstrates organization that suits the genre
- ❑ Fully develops the topic/prompt
- ❑ Demonstrates use of planning (graphic organizer), revising, and editing

### Level 10: Early Experienced (4<sup>th</sup> MOY - 4<sup>th</sup> EOY) (8 of 10)

- ❑ Correctly spells most words based on grade level standards
- ❑ Correctly uses punctuation and capitalizes words based on grade level standards most of the time
- ❑ Writes simple, compound, and complex sentences
- ❑ Writing includes grade level standard specific parts of speech appropriate to the piece
- ❑ Writing includes interesting vocabulary specific to topic that adds voice to the piece
- ❑ Writing fills three pages and begins a fourth page
- ❑ Overall piece demonstrates organization that suits the genre
- ❑ Fully develops the topic/prompt
- ❑ Clearly written for specific purpose or audience
- ❑ Demonstrates use of planning (graphic organizer), revising, and editing.

## Suggested process for scoring

You will need:

Students' completed writing packets

RCS Writing Continuum Checklist

Academic Writing Standards Continuum (or another list of grade level standards)

- On the RCS Writing Continuum Checklist look at the indicators for your grade level at the time of year you are assessing
- Read each piece to determine if the indicators are present in the piece or determine if you need to look at lower or higher levels to determine the level.
- Please note there are key terms (such as *accurately, correctly, legibly*) that leave some ambiguity to scoring. Therefore it is important to take into consideration that indicators at each level ...
  - ...are guides to look for evidence that a child knows and can demonstrate proper usage most of the time.
  - ...are NOT to accept only "perfect", error free pieces.
- After you have scored all pieces preliminarily place them in rank order.
  - For pieces that were "on the bubble" between levels ranking them might help determine if it is more like the higher or lower level.
  - Ranking them also will assist you in planning for mini-lessons, guided small group writing lessons, individual conferences, etc...