



# **2025 Writing Assessment Exemplars and Teacher Rationale**

Grade 1

Spring 2025

**Note: This document does not reflect updates made to the year-end rubrics in the Spring of 2025.**

## Using this Resource

### About the Process

In the Spring of 2025, teachers from across the division gathered for two days to participate in a writing calibration protocol. A calibration protocol is collaborative process for bringing teachers together to discuss student work to reach consensus about how to score writing based on set criteria. The calibration process makes scoring student work more consistent among a group of teachers and more aligned to the outcomes upon which rubrics and scoring criteria are based. The purpose of calibration is to ensure that a group of educators evaluate student work consistently and in alignment with the scoring rubric. This increases the reliability of the assessment data.

### About the Exemplars

- Exemplars are samples of student writing selected to represent a range of responses that illustrate the scoring criteria at each level of performance for Grade 1 (*meeting curricular outcomes with an enriched understanding, meeting curricular outcomes, approaching curricular expectations, not yet meeting curricular outcomes.*)
- These exemplars are just a small sampling of successful approaches to the writing task, and the students' edits, misspellings and other idiosyncrasies are retained in the scanned documents.
- It is to be noted that emergent writers have a large span of developmental abilities, and these are reflected in the samples provided.
- In some exemplars the names of people, places or things have been removed to protect the identity of the writer.

### Rationale for the Exemplars

- Teachers may use the rationale for exemplars to apply the scoring criteria consistently and impartially.
  - The rationale for each exemplar consists of "Scoring" and "Evidence of Graded Criteria." Each rationale serves to:
    - provide evidence as to why the writing sample is considered representative of a particular performance outcome.
    - provide evidence representative of a specific grade level.
    - demonstrate the use of criterion-referenced language to explain judgments of student writing.
    - demonstrate that a range of responses are possible within each performance outcome.
  - The rationale that accompanies each response may assist teachers to apply the scoring criteria consistently and impartially.
  - The rationale may include descriptors to describe the quality of the criteria shown in the student response.
  - Scoring rationale about each exemplar is provided by teachers involved in the selection of the student exemplars and serve to:
    - describe qualities of each student sample writing response as it relates to scoring criteria.
    - allow for variation within an outcome.
    - indicate whether the exemplar provided more or less evidence of each criterion and still be representative of the performance outcome.
  - Teachers should use their professional judgment and consider differing levels of evidence when assigning an overall score.
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## Grade 1 Writing Task



*Image Generated with Canva*



*Image Generated with Canva*

Look carefully at the picture. What do you see? What does the picture make you think of?

You could write about yourself or others, real or imagined.

### **DIRECTIONS**

You have 15 minutes to plan **alone or with a partner or small group**.

You will have up to 15 minutes to write.

You may show changes and corrections on your writing, as it is a first draft.

## Grade 1 Level 4: Enriched Understanding – Exemplar A

One cold nite a little  
cat named May  
got an idea  
~~May~~ wanted  
to have a party  
May went to  
the store to buy  
decrashins. But  
May forgot! Then  
it was time for  
the Party!!

Grade 1 Level 4: *Enriched Understanding Exemplar A* – Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
4	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• purposefully generates ideas that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are skillfully combined in a logical sequence to create sentences</li> </ul>
3	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice adequately paints a picture in the reader’s mind</li> <li>• sufficiently align written messages with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• adequately include sensory language in creative writing such as “cold” and “little”</li> <li>• include features to help organize or clarify personal messages such as “ the <b><u>Party!!</u></b>”</li> </ul>
4	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistently applies capital letters when writing such as “May”</li> </ul>
4	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistently and skillfully includes end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
3	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequately writes sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
4	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such “decrashins” and “nite”</li> <li>• uses spelling patterns and parts to support spelling such as “wanted” and “named” and “nite”</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:**

- scorers noted that this piece of writing has a problem

**Instructional Next Steps:**

- sentence structure complexity
- use of line space (starting at the left)
- continue to work on sensory language and text features

## Grade 1 Level 3: Meeting – Exemplar B

It's my cat's third birthday today.

I gave her a treat toy. She had

fun and invited her friends.

She had so much fun. Her

birthday party was at Sky

Castle. She played and played.

Before the birthday party

was done, we went home.

After the party, we had

so much fun and then we went <sup>to sleep</sup>

## Grade 1 Level 3: Meeting Exemplar B – Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
3	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sufficiently generates ideas that can be expressed through written messages such as “third birthday” and “sky castle” and “she invited her friends”</li> <li>• ideas are adequately combined in a logical sequence to create sentences</li> </ul>
2	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice adequately paints a picture in the reader’s mind</li> <li>• written messages simplistically align with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• does not yet include sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>• does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
3	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequently applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
3	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequently includes end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
3	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequately writes several sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense such as the use of “and” and “and then”</li> </ul>
4	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such as “invited” and “friends” and “castle”</li> <li>• effectively uses patterns to support spelling</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:****Instructional Next Steps:**

- support with formation of letters and placement on the line
- extending use of vocabulary
- use of text features

## Grade 1 Level 3: Meeting – Exemplar C

Once upon a time  
there was a dog  
pup. And there had  
cack there set it  
d. There were going to  
have the cack, hopin hop  
on the tabl and spast  
the cack in the Birthday  
girl's fas.

## Grade 1 Level 3: Meeting Exemplar C – Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
3	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sufficiently generates ideas that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are appropriately combined in a logical sequence to create sentences</li> </ul>
2	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice adequately paints a picture in the reader’s mind such as “spast” and “hopt”</li> <li>• sufficiently align written messages with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• does not yet include sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>• does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
3	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequently applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
3	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequently includes end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
3	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequately writes sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
2	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplistically attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such as “ter” and “thae” and “ol” and “tabl” and “fas” and “cack”</li> <li>• simplistically uses spelling patterns and parts to support spelling</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:****Instructional Next Steps:**

- teach long a combinations
- spelling of high frequency words

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar D

Me And My bruthre,  
we wor playing  
in the basmt  
we wor playing gam  
Then My MOM call us  
becKues we hato go  
to eat Luch  
then It as or deb  
time

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar D– Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
3	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sufficiently generates an idea that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are appropriately combined in a logical sequence</li> </ul>
2	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice is beginning to paint a picture in the reader’s mind such as “in the basement” and “mom call”</li> <li>• written messages align sufficiently with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• does not yet include sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>• does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
1	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorrectly applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
1	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorrectly includes end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
2	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning to write several sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
2	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplistically attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such as “basmit” and “bruthre” and “beekues”</li> <li>• simplistically uses spelling patterns and parts to support spelling</li> </ul>

Additional Information:

Instructional Next Steps:

- transcription practice
- proper use of capital letters and punctuation
- proper spelling of high frequency words

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar E

The cat Smash is fed  
into the cache and  
he had to take bath and  
heg PAsins cam and he  
had to punded and he ran  
out the window and for  
wys un gymno/mie cache  
the cat jumped in sid the  
cache and nos

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar E– Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
3	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sufficiently generates an idea that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are appropriately combined in a logical sequence</li> </ul>
2	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice appropriately paints a picture in the reader’s mind such “smash” and “giyunormie” and “jumped”</li> <li>• written messages sufficiently align with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• inconsistently includes sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>• simplistically include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
1	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorrectly applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
1	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet include end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
2	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning to write several sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
2	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logically attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such as “windo” and “giyunormie cacke”</li> <li>• simplistically uses spelling patterns and parts to support spelling such as “bath” and “cam” and “insid” and “wus” and “hed”</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:**

- unique ideas with limited conventions and spelling

**Instructional Next Steps:**

- long a spelling rule
- use of capital letters and punctuation
- consistent use of tense

Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar F

The cat howling  
birth day with balloons  
and confetti loves  
his birth day it was  
fun

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar F – Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
2	<p>Organization and Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generates simplistic ideas that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>ideas are partially combined in a logical sequence to create sentences</li> </ul>
2	<p>Creative Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>word choice is beginning to paint a picture in the reader’s mind such as “...onec stfed its fase In cake”</li> <li>beginning to align written messages with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>does not yet include sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
1	<p>Capitalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rarely applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
1	<p>Punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>incorrectly includes end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
2	<p>Grammar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning to write sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
3	<p>Spelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logically attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such as “cake” and “fase”</li> <li>logically uses patterns to support spelling such as “onec” and “stfed” and “parins”</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:**

- scorers noted that the overall piece is approaching due to the limited amount of text

**Instructional Next Steps:**

- correct usage capitalization and periods
- generating ideas

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar G

The cat howling  
both day with blooms  
and in the day loves  
his both day it was  
fun

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar G – Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
2	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplistically generates ideas that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are adequately combined in a logical sequence to create sentences for example “...he laves his brth day it was fan”</li> </ul>
1	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice is beginning to paint a picture in the reader’s mind for such as “cinfedy” and “bloons”</li> <li>• written messages sufficiently align with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• does not yet include sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>• does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
2	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sometimes applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
1	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet include end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
2	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning to write sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
3	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships in “brth day” and “cinfedy”</li> <li>• logically uses patterns to support spelling</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:**

- scorers noted that the sentence structure was a 2 overall because “is” was missing from the opening statement

**Instructional Next Steps:**

- support with punctuation, capitalization
- expanding and connecting ideas through the use of “because”

Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar H

There wass a box

master i put a rupp

## Grade 1 Level 2 Approaching Exemplar H – Evidence of Graded Criteria

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
2	<p>Organization and Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplistically generates an idea that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are partially combined in a logical sequence</li> </ul>
1	<p>Creative Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice does not yet paint a picture in the reader’s mind</li> <li>• written messages do not yet align with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• does not yet include sensory language in creative writing such as</li> <li>• does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
1	<p>Capitalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rarely applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
1	<p>Punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet include end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
1	<p>Grammar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet write several sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
2	<p>Spelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplistically attempts to spell unknown words using letter-sound relationships such as “mashen” and “rupp”</li> <li>• simplistically uses spelling patterns and parts to support spelling such as “pull” and “There”</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:**

- the idea generated was unique and simplistic
- due to the limited amount of text, the written message does not yet align with the intended audience or purpose

**Instructional Next Steps:**

- correct use of end punctuation
- spelling of common sight words
- increase fluency with generating more written work
- capitalization of “i”

Grade 1: Level 1 Not Yet Meeting – Exemplar I

No eat Loo picture  
Bn a see dc p sech  
fant o in eat look  
fin then do ha + to  
foa sight i+n

**Grade 1 Level 1: Not Yet Meeting Exemplar I – Evidence of Graded Criteria**

Score	Evidence of Graded Criteria
1	Organization and Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet generate ideas that can be expressed through written messages</li> <li>• ideas are not yet combined in a logical sequence to create sentences</li> </ul>
1	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice does not yet paint a picture in the reader’s mind</li> <li>• does not yet align written messages with the intended audience or purpose</li> <li>• does not yet include sensory language in creative writing</li> <li>• does not yet include features to help organize or clarify personal messages</li> </ul>
1	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rarely applies capital letters when writing</li> </ul>
1	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet include end punctuation in sentences</li> </ul>
1	Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not yet write sentences that contain complete thoughts and make sense</li> </ul>
1	Spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unable to spell unknown words</li> </ul>

**Additional Information:****Instructional Next Steps:**

- finger spaces
- letter formation and placement of letters