6-Trait Assessment for Beginning Writers

1 – Experimenting	2 – Emerging	3 – Developing	4 – Capable	5 – Experienced
Ideas __ Uses scribbles for writing __ Dictates labels or a story __ Shapes that look like letters __ Line forms that imitate text __ Writes letters randomly	**Ideas** __ Some recognizable words present __ Label pictures __ Uses drawings that show detail __ Pictures are supported by some words	**Ideas** __ Attempts a story or to make a point __ Illustration supports the writing __ Meaning of the general idea is recognizable/understand-able __ Some ideas clear but some are still fuzzy	**Ideas** __ Writing tells a story or makes a point __ Illustration (if present) enhances the writing __ Idea is generally on topic __ Details are present but not developed (lists)	**Ideas** __ Presents a fresh/original idea __ Topic is narrowed and focused __ Develops one clear, main idea __ Uses interesting, important details for support __ Writer understands topic well
Organization __ Ability to order or group not yet present __ No sense of beginning or end __ Connections between idea are confusing	**Organization** __ No title (if requested) __ Experiments with beginnings __ Begins to group like words/pictures __ Transitions or evidence of sequencing are haphazard	**Organization** __ A title is present (if requested) __ Limited transitions present __ Beginning but no ending except "The End" __ Attempts at sequencing and transitions	**Organization** __ An appropriate title is present (if requested) __ Attempts transitions from sentence to sentence __ Beginning works well and attempts an ending __ Logical sequencing __ Key ideas begin to surface	**Organization** __ An original title is present (if requested) __ Transitions connect main ideas __ The opening attracts __ An effective ending is tried __ Easy to follow __ Important ideas stand out
Voice __ Communicates feelings with size, color, shape, line in drawing or letter imitation __ Work is similar to everyone else's __ Unclear response to task __ Awareness of audience not present	**Voice** __ Hints of voice present in words and phrases __ Looks different from most others __ Energy/mood is present __ Treatment of topic predictable __ Audience is fuzzy – could be anybody, anywhere	**Voice** __ Expresses some predictable feelings __ Moments of individual sparkle, but then hides __ Repetition of familiar ideas reduces energy __ Awareness that the writing will be read by someone else __ Reader has limited connection to writer	**Voice** __ Writing is individual and expressive __ Individual perspective becomes evident __ Personal treatment of a standard topic __ Writes to convey a story or idea to the reader __ Attempts non-standard point of view	**Voice** __ Uses text to elicit a variety of emotions __ Takes some risks to say more than what is expected __ Point of view is evident __ Writes with a clear sense of audience __ Cares deeply about the topic

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Word Choice __ Writes letters in strings __ Imitates word patterns __ Pictures stand for words and phrases __ Copies environmental print	**Word Choice** __ Recognizable words __ Environmental words used correctly __ Attempts at phrases __ Functional language	**Word Choice** __ General or ordinary words __ Attempts new words but they don't always fit __ Big words used only to impress reader __ Relies on slang, clichés, or repetition	**Word Choices** __ Uses favorite words correctly __ Experiments with new and different words with some success __ Tries to choose words for specificity __ Attempts to use descriptive words to create images	**Word Choices** __ Everyday words used well __ Precise, accurate, fresh, original words __ Creates vivid images in a natural way __ Avoids repetition, clichés or vague language __ Attempts at figurative language
Sentence Fluency __ Mimics letters and words across the page __ Words stand along __ Patterns for sentences not in evidence __ Sentence sense not yet present	**Sentence Fluency** __ Strings words together into phrases __ Attempts simple sentences __ Short, repetitive sentence patterns __ Dialogue present but not understandable	**Sentence Fluency** __ Uses simple sentences __ Sentences tend to begin the same __ Experiments with other sentence patterns __ Reader may have to reread to follow the meaning __ Dialogue present but needs interpretation	**Sentence Fluency** __ Simple and compound sentences present and effective __ Attempts complex sentences __ Not all sentences begin the same __ Sections of writing have rhythm and flow	**Sentence Fluency** __ Consistently uses sentence variety __ Sentence structure is correct and creative __ Variety of sentence beginnings __ Natural rhythm, cadence and flow __ Sentences have texture which clarify the important idea
Conventions __ Writes letter strings (pre-phonetic: dmRxzz) Attempts to create standard letters __ Attempts spacing of words, letters, symbols or pictures __ Attempts to write left or right __ Attempts to write top/down __ Punctuation, capitalization, etc. no making sense, yet __ Student interpretation needed to understand text/pictures	**Conventions** __ Attempts semi-phonetic spelling (MTR, UM, etc.) __ Uses mixed upper and lower case letters __ Uses spaces between letters and words __ Consistently writes left to right __ Consistently makes effective use of top to bottom spacing __ Random punctuation __ Nonstandard grammar is common	**Conventions** __ Uses phonetic spelling (MOSTR,HUMN,KLOSD, etc.) on personal words __ Spelling of high frequency words still spotty __ Uses capitals at the beginning of sentences __ Usually uses end punctuation correctly (.!?) __ Experiments with other punctuation __ Long paper may be written as one paragraph __ Attempts standard grammar	**Conventions** __ Transitional spelling on less frequent words (MONSTUR HUMUN, CLOSSED, etc.) __ Spelling of high frequency words usually correct __ Capitals at the beginning of sentences and variable use on proper nouns __ End punctuation is correct (.?!) and other punctuation is attempted (such as commas) __ Paragraphing variable but present __ Noun/pronoun agreement, verb tenses, subject/verb agreement	**Conventions** __ High frequency words are spelled correctly and very close on other words __ Capitals used for obvious proper nouns as well as sentence beginnings __ Basic punctuation is used correctly and/or creatively __ Indents consistently to show paragraphs __ Show control over standard grammar