



Writing within a Comprehensive Literacy Program

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Writing is an integral part of a comprehensive literacy program in a primary classroom. To progress along the writing continuum, students require exposure, instruction and practice with a variety of writing text types and forms, and daily opportunities to write. The writing lessons in *Literacy Place for the Early Years* are built on the premise that students need to move from support to independence in their learning. Thus, teachers will incorporate Modelled, Shared, Guided, and Independent Writing experiences during a writing block and throughout the school day.

The Approaches for Writing Chart (see below) outlines the main characteristics of each approach, the level of teacher support offered to students, and the students' role in the writing approach. The approaches seem similar to those in reading; however, in writing, the lines between them are not as clearly defined as they are in reading. For example, the teacher may move from Modelled to Shared Writing and back to Modelled Writing naturally within a lesson on the same piece of writing. Unlike Guided Reading, Guided Writing lessons do not need to be regularly scheduled. You will bring groups of students together for a Guided Writing lesson when you see a need arise.

Approaches for Writing				
	Modelled Writing	Shared Writing	Guided Writing	Independent Writing
Level of Support	total	significant	targeted	minimal
Grouping	whole class, small group, or individual	whole class, small group, or individual	small group	individual
Teacher's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates the writing process and "thinks aloud" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates the writing process and "thinks aloud" works with students to build a collaborative text "shares the pen" with students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> observes students and gathers those with similar needs together into groups for focused instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourages students to engage in writing provides a range of writing materials provides assistance as needed by arranging instruction in Guided Writing groups
Student's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> observe the teacher's demonstration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> observe the teacher's demonstration contribute ideas, spelling, and conventions, and build a collaborative text with the teacher may "share the pen with" the teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write on their own and meet with the teacher and other students to receive assistance and direct instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write with minimal support from the teacher, although they can access help in Guided Writing groups

In a Kindergarten classroom, Modelled and Shared Writing sessions are a high priority. Demonstrations of writing are powerful for emergent writers, but should be kept brief and focused to capture and maintain young students' attention. If you extend beyond modelling a sentence or two, consider moving into Shared Writing, where you include students in the process. Often referred to as Interactive Writing, this approach encourages student participation as you "share the pen" to create a common text. As students develop more proficiency in writing, ensure you plan for time to work with small groups or individuals in Guided Writing sessions. In this way, students who are experiencing similar writing needs are temporarily grouped together for direct instruction. Then provide ample opportunities for students to explore their topics and write independently.

For further information on this topic, see the "Instructional Approaches for Writing" section in the *Writing Guide*. Included in this section are excellent teaching tips and demonstration lessons. You may find the chart entitled "Think-Aloud Comments for Modelled Writing" very useful when demonstrating key concepts from the writing continuum.

If you have a question you would like answered, please email your request to: workshops@scholastic.ca.