

ESL Grade 1 – 3 Writing Profiles

Step A1 (TDSB)

At the end of Step A1, students can form and copy letters of the English alphabet, and they can write their name. They write a few letters of the alphabet without visual support. They communicate their messages when writing through visuals or the first language (L1). Younger children may need to learn both the concept and the mechanical aspects of writing. Some students new to the Roman alphabet will need to begin by writing single letters. They can copy English words and phrases with spacing, and they can participate in some aspects of the shared writing process.

Step 1

At the end of Step 1, students can communicate ideas and information, using drawings, English words and phrases, and/or first language (L1). They are familiar with directionality of print and basic punctuation rules. They bring their prior literacy knowledge to writing in English. They write simple sentences following a model, using pre-taught and familiar vocabulary. Students require the support provided in shared writing activities. They benefit from strong visual supports such as multilingual labels, word walls, word banks and anchor charts.

Step 2

At the end of Step 2, students can communicate ideas and information in simple sentences, using supports such as teacher generated graphic organizers and L1. They use their prior literacy knowledge when writing in English. They select appropriate vocabulary on a topic of interest. Students still require extensive teacher modelling and feedback, shared writing experiences, as well as guiding questions throughout the writing process.

Step 3

At the end of Step 3, students can communicate ideas and information, using simple compound sentences. They use familiar sound/symbol patterns to spell words from their expanding vocabulary, including subject specific words. They still require writing scaffolds such as sentence frames, and teacher and peer feedback to revise and edit their writing.

Step 4

At the end of Step 4, students can communicate ideas and information on a range of familiar topics, using linked, simple and compound sentences. They are becoming independent English writers who select learned strategies to generate ideas. Students can write in a teacher selected text form, using key academic vocabulary. They still require support for word choice, language conventions and clarity.

Step 5

At the end of Step 5, students can generate and organize ideas using a variety of self-selected strategies, vocabulary and classroom resources to write texts. They write linked, simple and compound sentences using learned language structures and writing conventions. Students still require vocabulary support through the use of personal dictionaries, word lists and other classroom resources to confirm their use of academic vocabulary and spelling conventions.

Step 6

At the end of Step 6, students can generate and organize ideas and select the appropriate text form for a specific purpose and audience. They elaborate on their ideas to communicate meaning clearly. Students use effective vocabulary and expressive language in their writing. They require opportunities to self-assess and conference with teachers and peers to revise their writing. They require support in developing their vocabulary repertoire (cultural nuances).