

Early Writing Development



It is important for children to write everyday no matter what their development level is in writing. It is equally important that the teacher is constantly observing and recording their movement through the following developmental levels. The writing samples should be kept and dated to truly give an overview of the children's progress.

Though most children in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten are approximately the same age, their writing levels usually have a wide range. Some children may be scribbling, but can tell you about their pictures. With daily writing experiences, young children will move through various writing levels, at various rates. Although many of these samples fall in the "Does Not Meet" domain, they do show the natural progression of a beginning writer.

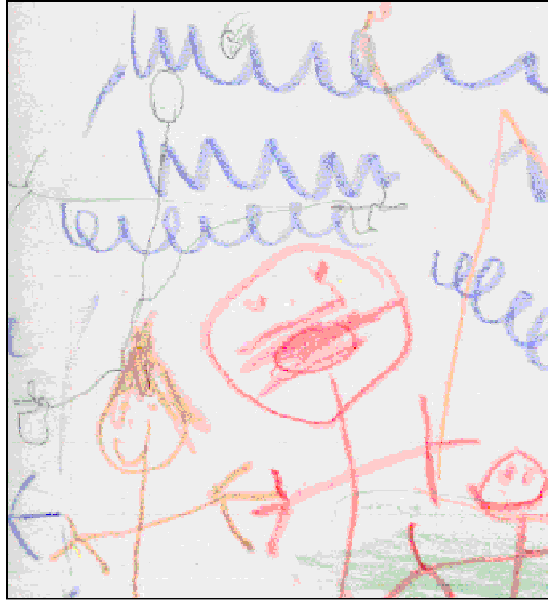
A teacher's task is to help the beginning writer grasp the relationship between text and illustration. By modeling writing everyday and providing children with varied writing activities, the teacher can help children progress in their writing development. Analyzing each child's writing level will also help the teacher in providing meaningful experiences that develop young writers.

Drawing/Picture Writing

In the drawing and picture writing phase, children begin to express their thoughts and feelings, the pictures are usually unrecognizable.



Scribbling



At this level of development, the child begins to draw somewhat recognizable shapes and may tell about the picture. The child may try to imitate writing, as well.

Random Letters



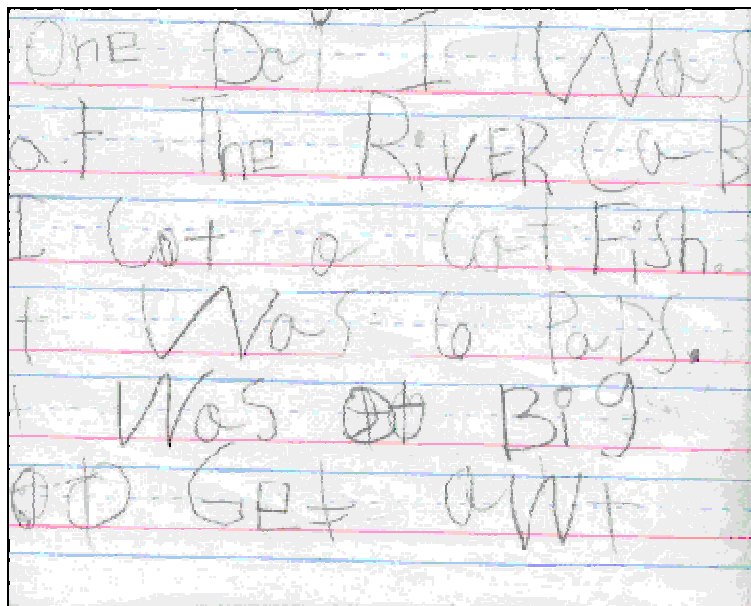
The child begins to print his or her own name and may put strings of letters with his/her picture. They may attempt to read the message, but it is probably still unrecognizable.

Semi-phonetic (Early Spelling)



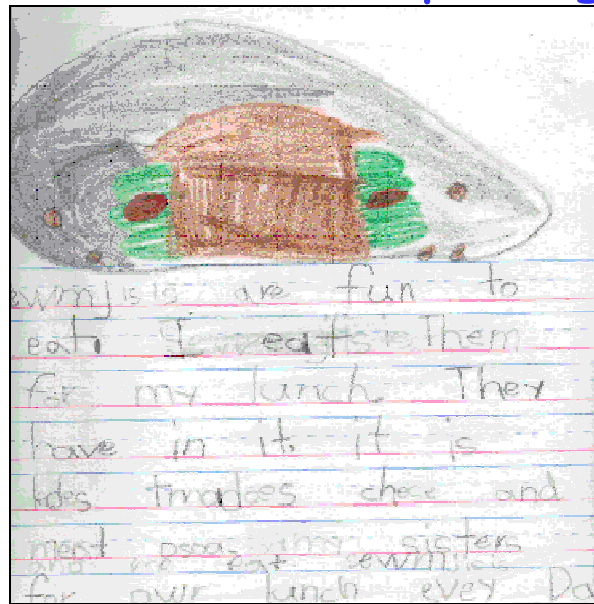
The child begins to use some letters to match sounds, often using a beginning letter to represent the whole word. They may begin to use left to right progression, but letter reversals are still common.

Phonetic



At this level, children begin to write words with beginning and ending sounds. They also begin to spell some high frequency words correctly. Vowels may be inserted into words, but usually are not the correct ones.

Transitional Spelling



At this level, children are writing words the way they sound. They are beginning to leave spaces between words and spell many high frequency words correctly. They begin to use punctuation marks in their writing. Sometimes they are used correctly. They begin to write one or more sentences.

Conventional Spelling

My dog can sit.
He is a good dog.
I like to pet him.

At this level, children spell most words correctly, though phonetic based spelling still comes into play when they must spell longer words. They begin to use punctuation marks correctly and use capital and lower case letters in the correct places.

Sources:

Early Literacy Assessment McGraw Hill Publishing, 1997

Kid Writing Eileen G. Feidus and Isabel Cardonick, Wright Group Pub., 1999

Invitations Reggie Routman, Heinemann Pub. 1995