

# Writing Development Checklist—Kindergarten

## Communication (Content, Purpose, Voice, and Audience)

	Prompts	Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a picture and talks about the message or story it conveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell me about your picture.</li> <li>Your picture really showed me how the story ended.</li> <li>Your picture is about you walking to the pool. Can you draw what happened when you got to the pool?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a picture that includes scribble writing, letter-like shapes, random letters, and/or numbers and talks about the message or story it conveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell me about your writing.</li> <li>What did you write about?</li> <li>What is on your shopping list/in your letter/in your story?</li> <li>Can you read it to me?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is aware that talk can be written down (e.g., dictates a message for an adult to scribe)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell me what you'd like to say.</li> <li>Let's read your message (story, list, etc.) together.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is aware that writing contains a message that can be read (e.g., asks an adult to read a writing attempt or rereads own writing attempt; this "rereading" may contain different content each time it is read)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>So your writing is about... (explore and confirm)</li> <li>Tell me about your writing.</li> <li>What are you writing about...?</li> <li>Can you read it to me?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understands that writing has a purpose (e.g., <i>This is my shopping list</i> or <i>It tells you how to feed my dog</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why did you choose to write a story (letter, poem, etc.)?</li> <li>How is this list going to be useful? Is it just for you?</li> <li>Why are you sending this card (note)?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is aware of an audience for writing (e.g., <i>This card is for my mom</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who did you write this for?</li> <li>Who are you trying to persuade?</li> <li>Who will enjoy this?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has initial awareness of voice (e.g., <i>I write like I talk</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You told me your picture says, "I like tigers." You can write down what you said.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes using a small range of text types</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You could write him a note.</li> <li>You can write about your trip.</li> <li>You might want to write a label to tell visitors what we call our gerbil.</li> <li>Draw the part of the story you liked the best. You can write about it, too.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initiates personal writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would you like to write about?</li> <li>Can you write about...?</li> <li>Tell me about your writing.</li> </ul>	

## Communication (Content, Purpose, Voice, and Audience) continued

	Prompts	Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>chooses a topic to write about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can tell you've written about our trip to the fire station. I can see the fire truck. Tell me about your writing.</li> <li>It's good to write about something you've done, like your soccer game.</li> <li>What a good topic to write about. (reinforcement)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes artistic or dramatic responses to literature, but may include some writing (e.g., to accompany a picture or a label on a play prop)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I see you liked that story about the duck rescue. You wrote "9-1-1" under your picture to tell us they phoned for help. (reinforcement)</li> <li>You've put a label on the phone in the playhouse. Tell me about that.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>records observations with pictures: may add scribble, letters, or words to indicate the message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I like your picture of the bean seed. Can you write about what happened after planting it?</li> <li>Write about which things floated in the water.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>draws a picture of an event from a story and may add scribbles, letters, or words to describe it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>So, Cinderella meets the Prince in your picture. Write about the ball under your picture.</li> <li>You've drawn a lovely picture of the bear. Can you write about what happened in the story when the bear appeared?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>draws pictures, adding a few scribbles, letters, or words to make a report. May ask somebody questions or look at picture books to research the topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You're telling us about big tractors. Can you read your report to me?</li> <li>You could write about how to feed your fish. Can you ask your Mom about how much fish food they need?</li> </ul>	

## Language Structure

	Prompts	Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>orally retells the content of a writing attempt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What did you write about?</li> <li>Tell me about your writing.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>orally dictates a message for an adult to scribe; the adult needs to ask clarification questions to confirm the message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your picture tells us a lot about... What would you like to say about your picture?</li> <li>Do you mean... (clarify)? Is that what I should write down?</li> </ul>	

## Language Structure (continued)

	Prompts	Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is beginning to recognize that written language is in complete sentences (e.g., orally dictates a message for an adult to scribe and uses sentences matching oral pace to the written scribing, or rereads own writing attempt in whole sentences)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That's a lovely sentence. We'll write it down.</li> <li>Thank you for slowing down so that I can write down all your words.</li> <li>Read your ideas to me.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses simple sentence structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read your sentence to me.</li> <li>That's a great sentence about... (reinforcement)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tries compound sentences (e.g., two simple sentences joined with "and" or "but")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have two ideas. Could we join the ideas together and make a longer sentence? (model if necessary)</li> <li>I like the way you have joined two sentences with "and" (or, <i>but</i>, etc.).</li> </ul>	

## Writing Process

	Prompts	Observations
<p><b>Planning and Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talks about ideas for writing (e.g., with a buddy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's a good plan to talk with a buddy about your ideas.</li> <li>I like to hear you discussing your ideas as you plan your writing. Talking things through helps you to think about what you want to write.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>draws ideas for a plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It helps me to think about what I want to write when I draw a few ideas.</li> <li>You try. Draw your ideas before you write.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gathers information by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- asking others</li> <li>- using picture books</li> <li>- watching visual media (e.g., films, videos, DVDs)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can you find out more about...?</li> <li>Is there anyone you can ask about this topic?</li> <li>Which books may help you?</li> <li>Let's watch this movie to find out more about... (Set a specific purpose e.g., to find out more about frogs.)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces a writing attempt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most important thing is to get down your ideas. (in pictures or writing)</li> </ul>	

## Writing Process (continued)

	Prompts	Observations
<b>Revising</b> • adds ideas after discussion with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think needs to be added?</li> <li>• Does something not fit in?</li> </ul>	
<b>Sharing and Publishing</b> • orally shares writing attempts with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell us about your writing and show us your pictures.</li> <li>• What did you write about?</li> <li>• Can you share that with us?</li> </ul>	

## Conventions

	Prompts	Observations
<b>Form</b> <i>(listed in developmental order)</i> • explores with a pencil, pen, crayon, or marker (drawing and scribble writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let me show you how to hold your pencil.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creates letter-like forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Guide pencil usage) Let me show you how to hold your pencil.</li> <li>• Those look like letters. What are you saying in your writing?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prints or scribbles randomly down or across a page</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try holding your pencil this way.</li> <li>• What did you write about?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates an interest in consistency of letter-like shapes (e.g., repeats a shape frequently or creates patterns including several letter-like shapes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Guide pencil usage) Try holding your pencil this way.</li> <li>• You like to write "S." Is that a special letter for you?</li> <li>• Can you write the letter that starts your name?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates an awareness of directionality (e.g., scribbles left to right along the lines, or produces letter-like or letter shapes in left-to-right sequence)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Guide pencil usage) It works best for you when you hold your pencil this way...</li> <li>• You started your writing at the top of the page and went across a line. That's what writers do when they are writing their message.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prints letters (reversals will occur)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like your letters. Tell me about your writing.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prints letters and word attempts in a left-to-right direction and moves to a new line (line movement may be inconsistent)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put your finger on the spot where you are going to start writing.</li> <li>• When the line is full, you need to move to the beginning of the next one. (model by putting a dot where the next line of printing should start)</li> </ul>	

## Conventions (continued)

	Prompts	Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>copies print around the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You found a word you wanted to write. What did you write about? (Sometimes this stage suggests interest largely in the form of words and there is not an intended message. Draw the child back to the message intent.)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>copies own name</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That's your name or You printed your name.</li> <li>That says <i>Joey</i>.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prints own name</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That's your name.</li> <li>That says <i>Sara</i>.</li> </ul>	
<b>Spelling</b> <i>(First half of kindergarten)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>scribble and letter-like forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are writing. What are you writing about?</li> <li>That letter looks like the "S" at the beginning of your name. Tell me what you are writing.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of letter forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are using letters in your writing. Tell me about your writing.</li> <li>I can see you have an "M" and a "T." What are you saying in your writing?</li> </ul>	
<i>(Second half of kindergarten)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mixture of random letters and matching of letters to sounds (DBG = dog, PHSD = party)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read me your writing. I can tell you are listening to the sounds when you spell a word. I can see the "d" at the beginning of dog, etc. (reinforcement)</li> <li>Say the word slowly. What sound do you hear at the beginning?</li> </ul>	
<b>Punctuation and Capitalization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prints using a mixture of upper and lowercase letters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read me your writing. I like the way you are using some small letters now. (reinforcement)</li> <li>Can you try some small letters when you write?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prints own name with a capital at the beginning and other letters in lowercase form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good! Your name is important and so it needs a capital letter at the beginning. (reinforcement)</li> <li>Remember, it's the first letter in your name that needs a capital letter.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses periods unconventionally (e.g., as letter or word spacers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those dots show you want spaces between your words. Let's look how they show spaces in a book...</li> </ul>	