

# Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 3

## ***Lessons Learned***

*Comprehension is the overarching reason for reading. No matter how accurate or fluent a reader may be, without comprehension, and the deeper levels of understanding that strong comprehension instruction provides, reading is purposeless. While on their own accuracy and fluency are important, the real purpose for reading is to understand and, thus, to think.*

– EECD, 2012 p. 19

*The interconnectedness of reading and writing is profound and inescapable ... Fragmenting these complex literacy processes interferes with the greatest goal of literacy education – the construction of meaning from and through text. Using reading and writing together in harmonious concert enables learners to draw on these complementary processes at the same time as they work to construct meaning.*

– Fountas and Pinnell, 2001, p. vi

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## Purpose of this document

This *Lessons Learned* document was developed based on an analysis of the item description reports for each administration of the Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 3. This assessment has been administered annually in the fall since 2012. It is intended to support classroom teachers (P–3) and administrators at the school, board, and provincial levels, in using the information gained from this assessment to inform next steps for literacy focus.

After the results for each assessment become available, an item description report is developed in which each item/question of the reading assessment is described in relation to the curriculum outcomes and cognitive processes involved with comprehending the text and answering the question correctly. The percentage of students across the province who answered each question correctly is also included in the item description report. Item description reports for reading are made available to school boards for distribution to schools, and they include provincial, board, and school data. Schools and boards should examine their own data in relation to the provincial data for continued discussions, explorations, and support for reading focus at the classroom, school, board, and provincial levels.

This document specifically addresses areas that students across the province found challenging based on provincial assessment evidence. It is essential that teachers consider assessment evidence from a variety of sources to inform the next steps most appropriate for their students. Effective classroom instruction and assessment strategies are responsive to the individual learners within a classroom. As well, it is recognized that students need opportunities to engage and interact with a range of texts in the classroom, and that teachers use ongoing classroom assessment to support appropriate text selection for students for both instructional and independent reading purposes (see Appendix A for a description of characteristics associated with emergent, early, and transitional stages of reading and writing).

The Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 3 generates information that is useful in guiding classroom-based instruction and assessment in reading and writing. This document provides an overview of the reading and writing tasks included in the assessment, information about this year's reading and writing assessment results, and a series of lessons learned for reading and writing. Suggested next steps for classroom instruction and assessment are included for each lesson learned.

Each lesson learned in reading identifies skills that students generally found more challenging across a variety of curriculum outcomes, cognitive levels, and text genres. Each lesson learned in writing is based on four areas of writing: Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions. Instructional and assessment strategies are suggested for each of these four areas. Scored student samples of writing are presented and annotated (see Appendix L). Teachers can use these strategies and writing samples to support targeted writing instruction. It is important to remember that writing instruction should always take place in a contextualized manner.

## Overview of the Nova Scotia Assessment (NSA): Reading and Writing in Grade 3 (RW3)

This assessment provides information about reading and writing performance for each student and complements assessment evidence collected in the classroom. This assessment is administered at the beginning of Grade 3. It is designed to provide detailed information for every student in the province regarding his or her progress in achieving a selection of reading and writing curriculum outcomes at the end of Grade 2. The complete listing of outcomes for Grade 2 can be found on pages 386-456 of the 2014 NS English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades P-3. Information from this assessment can be used by teachers to inform instruction.

The design of this assessment includes the following:

- reading and writing tasks that reflect the end of grade 2 curriculum outcome expectations
- reading passages in the narrative, information, poetry/song, and visual text genres
- reading comprehension questions in selected response format
- reading comprehension questions that are designed to provide a broad range of challenge, thereby providing information about a range of individual student performance
- one procedural writing task and one narrative writing task

# Reading and Writing in Grade 3 Lessons Learned

## **Lessons Learned: Reading in Grade 3**

- 1) Students need to understand the function of a variety of text features and how these features contribute to meaning.
- 2) Students need to be able to recognize, evaluate, and analyze relevant evidence throughout a text.
- 3) Students need to be able to make inferences by gathering explicitly and implicitly stated information from a text to support a conclusion.

## **Lessons Learned: Writing in Grade 3**

- 1) Ideas: Students need to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details and examples that support the main idea.
- 2) Organization: Students need to organize their writing in a logical sequence with an introduction, body, and conclusion using a variety of transitional devices.
- 3) Language Use: Students need to use voice, style, word choice, and varied syntax to contribute to clear and fluid written communication.
- 4) Conventions: Students need to use correct conventions (punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, noun-pronoun agreement, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, spelling of frequently used words) to contribute to effective written communication.

## Key Messages

The following key messages should be considered when using this document to inform classroom instruction and assessment.

- The workshop framework is one of the most effective approaches for classroom literacy instruction. It involves planning literacy lessons so there is opportunity for explicit instruction, time for student practice, and time for sharing. The workshop approach encourages balanced and developmentally appropriate instruction, while scaffolding student learning.
- Current research suggests that there is a place for strategy instruction (targeted instruction in mini-lessons and individual conferences, for example). In order to support students in deepening their reading comprehension, they need exposure to a variety of thought provoking texts and opportunities to engage in discussion. During this discussion students must be encouraged to ask and respond to deeper level questions about the text they are reading. Explicit instruction on comprehension strategies is most effective when it is embedded within the context of such discussions.
- Reading and writing are reciprocal processes. Reading and writing instruction is strengthened when teachers make explicit connections between the two. For example, if the learning goal is for students to begin to use quotation marks in their writing it helps to provide a mini-lesson on noticing how authors use quotation marks in their stories. Highlighting for students that quotation marks indicate the beginning and ending of dialogue helps them to recognize when they need to insert quotation marks in their writing. Conversely, a student who has been taught how to use quotation marks appropriately in their writing will be able to attend to this punctuation when reading.

If the learning goal is for students to be able to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details that support the main idea, it is helpful to have them read a variety of texts to identify and discuss the main idea and details that support it. In doing so students begin to understand various text features the author used, the word choices the author made, and any other characteristics that were used to connect the details to the main idea. Again, when students begin to identify these characteristics while reading, they are more likely to attend to them in their writing. This helps students enhance their comprehension of the text and, at the same time, better understand how to organize their writing.

- Ongoing assessment for learning (formative assessment) is essential to effective teaching and learning. Assessment for learning can and should happen every day as part of classroom instruction. It involves the teacher focusing on how learning is progressing during instruction, determining where improvements can be made, and identifying the next steps. “Such assessment becomes ‘formative assessment’ when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs” (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2003, p.2). Effective strategies of assessment for learning during a lesson include: strategic questioning, observing, conversing (conferring with students to “hear their thinking”), analyzing student’s work (products), engaging students in reviewing their progress, as well as providing opportunities for peer feedback and self-assessment.
- Assessment of learning (summative assessment) should also occur periodically. Assessment of learning involves the process of collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of summarizing learning at a given point in time, and making judgments about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria. The information gathered may be used to communicate the student’s achievement to students, parents, and others. It occurs at or near the end of a learning cycle.

- All forms of assessment should be planned with the end in mind, thinking about the following questions:
  - What do I want students to learn? (identifying clear learning targets)
  - What does the learning look like? (identifying clear criteria for success)
  - How will I know they are learning?
  - How will I design the learning so that all will learn?
- Teachers use many different sources of assessment information to provide evidence of understanding in the area of comprehension, including the following:
  - conferring notes
  - reading behaviour checklists
  - observation notes from small and whole group discussions
  - running records (also known as oral reading records)
  - samples of students' writing in response to their reading
- One of the most effective ways to gather information about a student's reading comprehension is to engage students in a conversation about what they are reading during individual student conferences. Questions that encourage students to think aloud about their understanding of a text can provide valuable insight into student achievement in reading. Drawing on the lessons learned in this document, teachers can ask students to find explicitly and implicitly stated information in the text, as well as to analyze and evaluate this information to draw conclusions that are based on the text. Teachers can also ask students about the function of text features, punctuation marks, spelling conventions, and grammatical indicators in the context of the text's meaning. Anecdotal notes (observations/conversations) gathered during conferences provide a valuable source of assessment information that can be used to inform instruction and monitor student progress.
- Before planning for instruction using the suggestions for instruction and assessment, it is important that teachers review individual student results in conjunction with current independent reading and writing assessment information. A variety of current classroom assessments should be analyzed to determine specific strengths and areas for continued instructional focus or support.
- The lessons learned are aligned with suggestions for instruction and assessment. These suggestions were designed with the workshop approach in mind and with the intent that specific areas of literacy instruction are identified using current assessment evidence. Common understandings inherent in each teaching suggestion include:
  - The essence and central purpose of reading is comprehension and of writing is communication; all other aspects of reading and writing contribute to and are in support of these aims.
  - Learning is strengthened when students have opportunities to talk with peers in a collaborative work environment, but there also needs to be opportunities for individual and independent demonstration of reading and writing competence.
  - All strategies and skills are enhanced when learners are aware of their own thinking processes (metacognition). In doing so, students monitor their learning by thinking about their thinking and articulating both their thinking and learning processes; for example, they can explain their thinking behind a given answer/response.
  - Learners require explicit instruction and teacher demonstration in addition to timely feedback that provides specific support and guidance during the process of reading and writing.

# Overview of Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading in Grade 3

The reading questions on this assessment reflect three cognitive levels:

- *Literal comprehension* questions are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended explicit information in the text.
- *Non-literal comprehension* questions are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended implicit information in the text such as inferences, connotative meaning, idioms, and figurative language (e.g., simile and metaphor).
- *Analysis* questions are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has thought critically about texts by analyzing, synthesizing, or evaluating the explicit and/or implicit information in the text.

Each text genre represents 20–30% of the assessment, and each cognitive level represents between 30–40% of the assessment. These percentages and the assessment’s table of specifications were developed and vetted by a provincial RW3 Advisory Group made up of grade 2 and grade 3 teachers to reflect classroom practice at those grade levels. When planning instruction and assessment teachers must be aware of the cognitive levels of questions and provide opportunities for students to interact with a range of texts across all cognitive levels. The different cognitive levels of questions (literal, non-literal, and analysis) require students to engage in different types of strategic thinking in order to fully understand and respond to the text.

## Assessment Results for Reading in Grade 3

Nova Scotia Assessment results are reported across four levels of performance. A description of the Reading Performance Levels is provided below:

- Level 1: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 1 can find information that is clearly stated in the text. They can also infer information that is not directly stated but is clearly suggested in the text.
- Level 2: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 2 can use information from the text to form a conclusion. They can use some text features like pictures and titles to help them understand the text. They can also make sense of some abstract language in the text; for example, they may understand that a person who feels “blue” is sad.
- Level 3: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 3 can understand how different parts of the text fit together. They can make connections among information in different parts of the text and use the connections to form their own conclusions.
- Level 4: Students reading grade level text at performance Level 4 can analyze and evaluate information from the text. They can also make complicated connections among parts of the text to form their own conclusions.

The latest provincial reading results (2015–2016) for Reading and Writing in Grade 3 showed the following performance levels of grade 3 students in Nova Scotia:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reading Performance	15%	18%	67%	not reported: there were not enough questions at this level on the assessment



## Sample Reading Passage

The following story *Emma's Pockets* and related questions illustrate and provide context for each of the lessons learned.

### Emma's Pockets

Emma likes to hunt for interesting things so she can share them with her friend Tara. When Emma finds something really interesting, she puts it in her pocket so she and her friend Tara can figure out what it is.

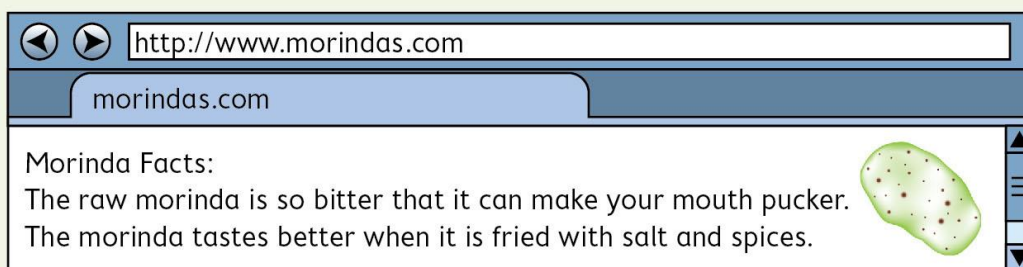
One day, Emma found something small, round, and green on the sidewalk. It was really interesting, so she put it in her pocket and walked to Tara's house.



When Emma took it out of her pocket, Tara said, "I know what that is! My dad told me that it's a morinda fruit. If you put the seeds in some soil, you can grow a morinda plant." Emma and Tara decided to plant the morinda seeds.

After two weeks, a tiny green morinda plant started to grow. Now Emma needed more information about the morinda.

"Tara," asked Emma, "is a morinda safe to eat?" Tara didn't know the answer, so Tara and Emma looked for information on the Internet. Here's what they found:



😊😊 Tara and Emma looked at each other and smiled. Maybe they would just look at the morinda and not take a bite.

A few days later, Emma saw a brown feather and a small grey stone. "Those are both interesting," Emma said, but she only put the feather in her pocket. Then she took it to Tara's house.

Emma smiled and said, "The world is full of interesting things to share with our friends."

Reading Lesson Learned 1

Students need to understand the function of a variety of text features and how these features contribute to meaning.

- Example: The raw morinda tastes
- ☐ bitter.
  - ☐ spicy.
  - ☐ sweet.

This is a *Literal* question. Questions at this cognitive level are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended explicit information in the text.

This type of question requires that students know the function of text features. Students must use this knowledge to make connections between literally stated pieces of information in the text in order to accurately understand the text’s meaning. This type of question assesses a student’s awareness of text features and how they contribute to a text’s meaning.

In order to select the correct answer (the first option), students need to read carefully the Morinda Facts information in the website text box:

*The raw morinda is so bitter that it can make your mouth pucker.*

Students need to understand that they need to read text feature information as part of the complete text. They need to understand that information included in the website text box is connected to the rest of the written text on the page. Information found through the use of text features and the written text should be used together in order to understand the meaning of the text as a whole.

Text Features can be found under three categories:

Print Supports	Visual Supports	Organizational Supports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bold print</li><li>• bullets</li><li>• colour</li><li>• font (type, size)</li><li>• italics</li><li>• underline</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• charts</li><li>• diagrams</li><li>• drawings</li><li>• enlarged photos</li><li>• labelled drawings</li><li>• maps</li><li>• photographs</li><li>• timelines</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• captions</li><li>• glossary</li><li>• headings</li><li>• index</li><li>• labels</li><li>• page numbers</li><li>• table of contents</li><li>• text boxes</li><li>• titles</li></ul>

Nova Scotia Department of Education (2012). *Active Young Readers, Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 75–80.

To support readers to understand the function of a variety of text features and how these text features contribute to meaning:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) <b>Magazine Hunt:</b> Students open to a double page spread in a magazine (e.g., Time for Kids, Owl) and run their hands over the main body of the text to distinguish print text from text features. Discuss how these text features support a reader’s understanding of the overall message(s).</p> <p>b) <b>Think Aloud:</b> Whole group engage in guided practice through the identification of and purpose for given projected text features in the chart (see Appendix E). This general discussion familiarizes students with various developmentally appropriate features and the role that they play within the reading process to extend, deepen, and scaffold comprehension.</p> <p>c) <b>Text Feature Walk:</b> Small groups of students work with a short piece of non-fiction text (2–4 pages). One person begins by naming and describing a text feature (e.g., heading, picture, caption, map). As a group, discuss predictions, questions, and connections based on the text feature and how it may relate to the main idea in the service of comprehension. Everyone should contribute. Continue by moving to the next person and the next text feature and repeat until all of the text features have been discussed and connections to how these features support meaning making of the text are clear.</p>	<p><b>Conversations:</b> Discussions within the groups should focus on how the text features support deeper understanding rather than the identity of the feature itself in isolation of the purpose it serves.</p> <p><b>Observations:</b> Listen in to ensure that the conversation is focused on the relationship between the text feature and how it supports comprehension of the topic. Observe the dynamic of the group, watching that all participants are contributing to the discussion. (Heterogeneous grouping is important, as well as a sense of the level of background knowledge that each brings to the table.)</p> <p><b>Products:</b> Look for use of and application of text feature information in conferences while reading a passage, and in situations where writing samples have included incidental and authentic use of features as helpful in scaffolding authors’ intents for understanding.</p>

### Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 401, pp. 405–411 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 33, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 75–81, 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- <http://www.readingrockets.org/>

## Reading Lesson Learned 2

**Students need to be able to identify, evaluate, and analyze relevant evidence throughout a text.**

Example: What did Emma do that shows the feather was really interesting?

- ☐ She put it in her pocket with the small grey stone.
- ☐ She smiled when she saw it on the sidewalk.
- ☐ She went to show it to her friend Tara.

This is an *Analysis* question. Questions at this cognitive level are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has thought critically about texts by analyzing, synthesizing, or evaluating the explicit and/or implicit information in the text.

This type of question requires that students read the entire text carefully in order to find, evaluate, and analyze evidence to support their answer. This type of question assesses deeper understanding of a text's message.

In order to select the correct answer (the third option), students need to find evidence in the text that shows that Emma found the feather really interesting. Toward the end of the text, Emma says *"Those are both interesting,"* about a feather and a stone that she found. However, the first option is not correct since the sentence goes on to say *but she only put the feather in her pocket*. The text does not say that Emma smiled when she saw the feather on the sidewalk so the second option is not correct. The text does say that Emma took the feather to Tara's house, and students need to analyze and evaluate this sentence in combination with a sentence at the beginning of the text: *When Emma finds something really interesting, she puts it in her pocket so she and her friend Tara can figure out what it is.*

To support readers to be able to identify, evaluate, and analyze relevant evidence throughout a text:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) <b>RAN Strategy</b> (Appendix F):</p> <p>Tony Stead, in his book <i>Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5</i>, identifies three sources of understanding that assist learners in making sense of text through identifying, evaluating, and analyzing facts. They are literal understandings, interpretive understandings, and evaluative understandings. This lesson falls under the latter (see pp. 9–10)</p> <p>Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction Strategies (RAN): This example uses nonfiction as a springboard that may be reflected in the use of fiction, as in the example <i>Emma’s Pockets</i> provided. Provide learners with a piece of nonfiction text on a Unifying Concept currently being investigated as a class (e.g., Animals). This could be done in a small group, in pairs, or as an independent experience. For younger learners for whom it may be more developmentally appropriate, modify the RAN chart to focus only on “What I Think I Know”, “Yes, We Were Right”, “New Information”, and “Wonderings”. “Misconceptions”, as a column for consideration, may be provided to older learners or for those for whom this more sophisticated thinking is more developmentally appropriate.</p> <p>Suggestion: to model the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) in the workshop framework, work through to complete a chart as a whole class first with the teacher doing most of the modeling with a big book or projected text. Then try again in a more interactive mode with much student participation, analyzing text for evidence and evaluating text based on findings. Finally, learners would work in small groups or triad/pairs, or independently to practice the evaluative and analytic understandings. (See chart Appendix F and <i>Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5</i>, pp. 17–31.)</p> <p>Moving to repeat this level and depth of understanding using fiction would require practice as well so that a level of automaticity in</p>	<p><b>Conversations:</b> Discussion throughout while navigating through the chart to hear and see how to search and recognize where evidence lies is modeled. Use of sticky notes may be helpful to hold thinking and represent it in each category. Highlight literate conversation as the form of exchange, rather than interrogational exchanges where the teacher is providing too much of the lead so that students begin to own the ability to analyze, look for evidence, and evaluate accordingly. This would be gradual release scaffolding to put ownership of thinking more in the hands of the learner.</p> <p><b>Observations:</b> Note individual use of text as an anchor to the thinking and how each participant contributes to the overall conversation, as well as contributions made in smaller groupings. If working independently, watch to see how the learner positions his or her thinking to seek and then reflect on analytic and evaluative understandings. Can they show and explain?</p> <p><b>Products:</b> Students may complete RAN charts with a level of detail, making connections to the analytic and evaluative understandings about the topic or passage being investigated.</p>

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
recognizing, analyzing relevant evidence, and evaluating based on that evidence is established.	

### Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades Primary–3*, p. 159, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 33, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 93–96, 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5*, Part 3, pp.111–127, 2006, Tony Stead. Pembroke Publishers Ltd.

Reading Lesson Learned 3

Students need to be able to make inferences by gathering explicitly and implicitly stated information from a text to support a conclusion.

- Example: The sentence with the 😊😊 says, “Tara and Emma looked at each other and smiled.”  
Why did they smile?
- ☐ They were happy they knew what it was.
  - ☐ They did not want to eat the morinda.
  - ☐ They liked to eat food with salt and spices.

This is a *Non-literal* question. Questions at this cognitive level are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended implicit information in the text such as inferences, connotative meaning, idioms, and figurative language (e.g., simile and metaphor).

This type of question asks students to make inferences from information in the text. It is important that these inferences be suggested by the text. For example, students who chose the first option may have inferred that Tara and Emma smiled because they were happy, but this inference is not suggested by the text. This type of question assesses deep understanding of texts and their meanings.

In order to select the correct answer (the second option), students need to combine the following pieces of information from the text: Tara and Emma decided to *just look at the morinda and not take a bite* after they read on a website that the morinda is bitter but that it can be made to taste better if fried with salt and spices. The placement of the sentence *Tara and Emma looked at each other and smiled* just before their decision not to take a bite allows students to infer that they smiled because they didn’t want to eat it. There is no explicit or implicit information in the text that supports that they smiled because they were happy to know what it was or that they smiled because they like to eat food with salt and spices.

To support readers to be able to make inferences by gathering explicitly and implicitly stated information from a text to support a conclusion:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p><b>a) Think Aloud:</b> Make thinking visible in an effort to show or model how to combine and incorporate what is in the text with what is in your head to make connections to meaning through thinking aloud the process of an internal conversation that leads to questions and ponderings/wonderings. This making the invisible visible helps students in using what they already know and what is presented explicitly in the print, with what is hidden “between the lines”. Modeling both what can be seen within the pages and what thinking is needed to connect the dots to the implicit will assist students in going beyond the text to infer.</p>	<p><b>Conversations:</b> Listen to the comments offered by students while thinking aloud is modeled, focusing on how learners can combine explicit and implicit information to clarify confusions, create new conclusions, and satisfy puzzling information. Encourage lots of talk in pairs and in small groups to practice the process of looking within and beyond the page to create inferences.</p> <p><b>Observations:</b> Watch for bridging techniques used by learners as they make sense of what they are reading in shared and guided learning experiences, as well as in conferences, around inferring. How do they bring together the invisible? How do they connect it to the known?</p>

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p><b>b) Graphic/Strategy Organizers:</b> When appropriate, provide students with a template on which they can hold their thinking, (see Appendix G for an example). Making thinking visible in this way helps the learner identify and represent the combination of what is in the book and what is brewing around inside one's head making the newly formed ideas or inferring possible.</p> <p><b>c) Picture Books:</b> Many picture books provide visual supporting detail that is not explicitly mentioned in the text. Using picture books during read aloud/think aloud can help learners see that to infer requires combining explicit and implicit clues to fully and successfully make meaning. Reading between the lines requires that the reader play an active role in using clues from the text along with thinking in the head to draw conclusions and construct meaning. Using what we know, to understand what we don't know, is the process of inferring.</p>	<p><b>Products:</b> Record the learner's ability to infer as needed through the use of the various templates/organizers such as <i>What's in the Book/What's in My Head</i> template provided in Appendix G. Completed templates such as this one provide evidence of the student's thinking process during reading.</p>

### Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*, pp. 160-161, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 33, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, p. 19, 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Comprehension from the Ground Up: Comprehension from the Ground Up: Sensible Instruction for the K–3 Reading Workshop*, pp. 156–157, pp. 221–226, p. 252, 2011, Sharon Taberski, Heinemann.
- *Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5*, Chapter 5, pp. 73–88, 2006, Tony Stead, Pembroke Publishers Ltd.



# Overview of Nova Scotia Assessment: Writing in Grade 3

The RW3 assessment includes two writing prompts, a narrative writing task, and a procedural writing task. An *Administration Guide* includes a teacher directed activity that provides students with time to talk about each writing prompt.

Student writing is scored according to four criteria: Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions. Each criterion is scored at one of four levels (see Appendix J for the Nova Scotia Assessment: Analytic Writing Rubric). The student assessment booklet includes the following tips for students to keep in mind while they are writing:

**I Checked My Writing**

- ☐ I read my writing and it is the best that I can do.
- ☐ My writing will make sense to the teacher who reads it.
- ☐ My spelling is the best that I can do.
- ☐ My capitals and periods are in the right place.

Grade 2 and grade 3 classroom teachers are involved in every step of the development of the assessment, establishing the expectations for the assessment, as well as scoring the writing components of this assessment. Their professional input is essential in ensuring that the assessment reflects what students are required to know and be able to do at the end of grade 2.

## Assessment Results for Writing in Grade 3

Student writing is scored by Nova Scotia teachers at a scoring session using an analytic writing rubric (see Appendix J), and scoring guide (see Appendix L) that establishes the provincial expectations for this assessment. The rubric includes four components, each with four levels of performance: Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions. Each piece of student writing is scored independently by at least two different teachers and individual student writing results reflect the student’s writing performance across both writing tasks. Writing results are reported by performance level across both tasks within each component. Like the reading portion of this assessment, the expectation for the assessment is performance level 3 and above. The latest provincial writing results (2015–2016) for Reading and Writing in Grade 3 showed the following performance levels of grade 3 students in Nova Scotia:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Ideas</b>	2%	25%	62%	11%
<b>Organization</b>	3%	37%	52%	7%
<b>Language Use</b>	3%	34%	54%	9%
<b>Conventions</b>	4%	45%	44%	7%

This information provides opportunities for continued discussions, explorations, and support for writing at the classroom, school, board, and provincial levels.

## Writing Lesson Learned 1

**Ideas: Students need to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details and examples that support the main idea.**

The Ideas trait has to do with topic, details, and clarity. More specifically, students are focused on finding the right topic, selecting interesting and relevant details, and making the content clear.

To support writers to write a clear main idea and develop that main idea through relevant details and examples that support the main idea:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<b>Talk, Draw, Write!</b> Focus on ideas through choosing something concrete with which to tell a story (e.g., homemade bread, a rock). Model telling a story about how to make bread or the characteristics of a rock. Students take turns intermittently, choosing something of interest in their lives to tell their story. Once students have had an opportunity to tell their story, instruct the learners to draw a picture of the story they told. (Preferably, this is a pencil sketch, as more relevant detail can be included using this medium, rather than crayons or markers, if possible). Once sketches are complete, instruct students to write the story that they told and drew. This scaffolds the focus of ideas from an oral language connection to model, to using art as a bridge to writing. Layering many modes of language helps students to understand the essence of a main idea rather than choosing the first thing written as the main idea.	<b>Conversations:</b> After lots of practice with making the connections from oral language to drawing to writing a story with a focus, detail, and clarity, listen for talking among learners that emphasizes or highlights these elements for developing ideas for writing. Prompt students, as they talk, to challenge each other to figure out the main idea or essence of the story. Help them understand this concept. <b>Observations:</b> After lots of practice, listen and look in on the telling, sketching and writing of a story to see if the ideas for the story include a focused topic, interesting and relevant details, and clarity. <b>Products:</b> Collect sketched and written story artifacts to assess for topic, detail, and clarity.

### Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*, pp. 73-80, pp. 228-232, pp. 392-394, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 43–45, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, Chapter 3, 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.
- *Creating Young Writers: Using the Six Traits to Enrich Writing Process in Primary Classrooms*, pp. 77–80, 2004, Vicki Spandel, Pearson.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, The Primary Scoring Guide: Ideas, p. 70 (teachers), 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, My First Scoring Guide for Ideas, p. 99 (students), 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.

## Writing Lesson Learned 2

**Organization: Students need to organize their writing in a logical sequence, with an introduction, body, and conclusion, using a variety of transitional devices.**

Organization has to do with structuring the information in a story so that it makes sense to the reader. Specifically the focus is on including a beginning, middle, and end, (lead, plot, resolution), as well as providing strong sequencing and linking smoothly so that the internal and overall structure is well written.

To support writers to organize their writing in a logical sequence, with an introduction, body, and conclusion, using a variety of transitional devices:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) <b>Getting Hooked:</b> (Spandel, 2004, p. 121) Through a developmentally age appropriate form of media (DVD, YouTube clip etc.), show the first minute or two and ask learners to pay close attention. Then discuss if the snippet is a good opening and why. Try to choose a variety of angles (funny, scary, mysterious) so that students can see the variables that make strong beginnings. Also, jump into a particularly engaging spot somewhere between the beginning and the end and discuss the importance of organizing a story into a logical, sequentially linked order.</p> <p>b) <b>Word Hunts/Collages:</b> Focus on brainstorming words that are good for smooth transitions such as <i>and</i> or <i>but</i>, OR words that show passage of time such as <i>while</i>, <i>later</i>, <i>after</i>, <i>next</i> (see Appendix M). Provide magazines to hunt for these and other words that help pull the reader smoothly through a story and present to classmates in the form of a collage or poster that can be showcased subsequently in the classroom for ready reference.</p> <p>c) <b>Sentence strips or Lists:</b> To practice order or sequence, provide sentence strips of a simple story that can be physically moved around so as to play with the arrangement until the order makes the most sense. Talk with a partner about various possibilities, if desired. Alternately, provide out of order lists such as recipes or “how to” or procedural samples that need to be reordered in a more logical way.</p>	<p><b>Conversations:</b> Listen to students talk about what makes a good lead, debate about whether a particular clip viewed was one that grabbed your attention and interest, and how some transitions work better for the flow of a story than others. Record the exchanges as students search for words, focusing on the problem solving involved as they make their way through the reordering of sentences or steps. Interview students to delve into how they make choices and why they make certain choices to see if they have a solid understanding about the relationship organization has to a reader’s ease of understanding.</p> <p><b>Observations:</b> Watch students as they hunt for words to display and manipulate the ordering of sentences or steps and talk with one another about possibilities. Why do they make the choices they make? How do they come to the conclusions that they do?</p> <p><b>Products:</b> Collect artifacts such as collages, posters, lists, and procedural “how to” samples to check for accuracy and logic in choices made.</p>

## Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*, pp. 228-232, pp. 391-394, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 43–45, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, Chapter 4, 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.
- *Creating Young Writers: Using the Six Traits to Enrich Writing Process in Primary Classrooms*, pp. 104–108, 2004, Vicki Spandel, Pearson.
- *6 +1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, The Primary Scoring Guide: Ideas, p. 104 (teachers), 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, My First Scoring Guide for Ideas, p. 133 (students), 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.

### Writing Lesson Learned 3

**Language Use: Students need to use voice, style, word choice, and varied syntax to contribute to clear and fluid written communication.**

This includes passion, individuality, and confidence, the use of word and sentence structure to bring life to the writing, as well as a harmonic rhythm and flow, otherwise known as prosody.

To support writers to use voice, style, word choice, and varied syntax to contribute to clear and fluid written communication:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) <b>Readers' Theatre:</b> Students love to be on their feet whenever possible! Provide scripts for rehearsal and performance that give students the opportunity to “dramatize” works such as folk tales, fairy tales, fables, and poetry. The emphasis given to characters in performance enhances the learners’ ability to embed a personalized voice in associated writing. By regularly using Readers’ Theatre scripts, reading fluency is also practiced and improved. However, it is important to make explicit the connection to using similar effects in their own writing. If students become familiar with various techniques for bringing a story to life as they read, they can transfer these strategies to their writing.</p> <p>b) <b>Speed!</b> Expanding vocabulary so that students have a broader base of words from which to choose as they write is important. In this example, the focus is on speeding up or slowing down the writing adverb choice (e.g., “fast” adverbs are <i>swiftly</i>, <i>rapidly</i>, <i>briskly</i>, <i>abruptly</i>, <i>suddenly</i>, etc.; “slow” adverbs are <i>gradually</i>, <i>sluggishly</i>, <i>leisurely</i>, etc.). Students can hunt for adverbs in books and magazines, provide examples that they already know, or search for them online. Once they have a good inventory of adverbs, they can qualify the speed of their writing based on word choice and usage. For example, students can select a single paragraph from their own writing and examine how the description could be further enhanced. Students need explicit teaching around how to “explode” their paragraph to make it come alive through the use of vivid language. Reading aloud a sample story with vivid description can model how word choice can impact a piece of writing.</p> <p>c) <b>Poetry:</b> Poetry is naturally fluent and has rhythm, and, perhaps, rhyme that models the prosody that needs to be embedded in their writing. Compose and share varieties of poetic forms often!</p>	<p><b>Conversations:</b> Provide lots of opportunity for students to talk about voice, word choices, and fluency in their writing. Provide various samples of obvious strong and distinguishable voices in writing and listen as they discuss the elements necessary to have voice in writing and identify the benefits of voice.</p> <p>Listen in to conversations about how certain words are a better “fit” than others. How does the way a sentence is structured affect the quality of the writing?</p> <p><b>Observations:</b> Watch students as they use body language to enhance character development during Readers’ Theatre, as they search for new words such as fast and slow adverbs to add to their repertoire in books, magazines and on-line.</p> <p><b>Products:</b> Collect and assess various artifacts looking for voice, word choice, and fluency (flow) in the writing.</p>

## Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*, pp. 228-232, pp. 440-445, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 43–45, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.
- *Creating Young Writers: Using the Six Traits to Enrich Writing Process in Primary Classrooms*, pp. 109–124, 2004, Vicki Spandel, Pearson.
- *6 +1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, The Primary Scoring Guide: Ideas, p. 140, 174, 209 (teachers), 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.
- *6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*, My First Scoring Guide for Ideas, p. 169, 203, 239 (students), 2005, Ruth Culham, Scholastic Inc.

## Writing Lesson Learned 4

**Conventions: Students need to use correct conventions (punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, noun-pronoun agreement, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, spelling of frequently used words) to contribute to effective written communication.**

Young writers show increasing control of conventions as they become aware of the need based on the audience and the purpose for their writing. It's like cleaning up after the party; the party being the actual act of writing, and cleaning up, as required, in order for the written meaning to be clearly communicated to the reader. Specifically, adhering to conventions in writing takes place largely within the editing and proofreading stages of the writing process.

Scored and annotated samples of student work are provided in Appendix L to illustrate these lessons learned in writing. Teachers can use these samples and accompanying discussions to target specific areas of writing instruction. The rubric used to score these samples can be found in Appendix J.

To support writers to use correct conventions (punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, noun-pronoun agreement, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, spelling of frequently used words) to contribute to effective written communication:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) <b>Convention Hunt:</b> (Spandel, 2004, pp. 125–131) Provide time for students to work in pairs in a “free hunt” experience, whereby students just go looking for basic conventions that are familiar to them (such as period, comma, exclamation mark, and question mark). Follow up to broaden the base by introducing other conventional forms through browsing through big books or providing a projected similar story that has exceptional opportunities for students to see other forms of conventions. Discuss how these conventions add to the reader’s clarity of understanding and have students offer examples. Hold another Convention Hunt; this time students expand the search for a greater variety of conventions, while discussing how they are and can be used to increase a more thorough understanding of the reading.</p> <p>b) <b>Self and Peer Editing:</b> Students can self and peer edit on a regular basis as authentic opportunities throughout the writing process present themselves. Keep the focus on one thing at a time with the youngest learners, from remembering to put their name on their work to dating and spacing. Always double space rough drafts so that there is room below the original work to make the edits needed. By doing this, students can see what they had, and the edits that were made to</p>	<p><b>Conversations:</b> Lots of whole group and small group discussion will help ensure that exposure to and distinctions around conventional detail become well understood and applied with a level of automaticity during editing. Listening to what students say to each other in dialogue around the hunt for familiar and less familiar conventional features, as well as listening to how they help one another through the editing process provides lots of evidence of knowing what the student has under control. It also offers teachers valuable information about the next steps for whole group, small group, and individual instruction.</p> <p><b>Observations:</b> Watch the interactions among students as they search for various conventional examples that they do know and recognize as a conventional tool, even if they are not certain as to how they are used. See how pairs of students use reference tools such as anchor charts, dictionaries, or thesauri to check various editing strategies as they process their writing in this stage.</p> <p><b>Products:</b> Regularly analyze various artifacts of conventions such as collections of samples, rough draft edits done independently or with a partner (using double-spaced, rough draft, lined paper so the evidence of editing attempts are known), and everyday writing samples such as journal entries or quick writes to monitor progress and inform</p>

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>make the writing clearer for the reader. Also, for older writers, providing editing checklists and symbols for ready reference (see Appendix H) and lots of writing tools in the writing centre gives young writers lots of reasons to be excited about cleaning up their writing so that readers can make good sense of the messages within.</p> <p>c) <b>Model/not correct:</b> It is always good modeling to provide regular, descriptive, and immediate (if possible) feedback to students' writing. Within the written feedback, there are always lots of opportunities to model correct spelling, use of punctuation etc. within your response rather than pointing out obvious "errors" within this domain.</p>	<p>instruction. Is the student noticing that a misspelled word was modeled in some feedback and then applied in a subsequent writing attempt? Was it sustained beyond a one-time correction? Use all writing sample products to determine what the student has under control over time.</p>

### Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*, pp. 440-449, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.



## Additional Teacher Resources to Support Classroom Literacy Instruction and Assessment

NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2012). *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.

NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014). *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.

NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2013). *Literacy in Action Website*. Retrieved May 13, 2015, from [www.lia.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.lia.ednet.ns.ca).

NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2006). *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.

Ontario Ministry of Education. *Primary Reading Discussion Paper Video Clips*. Retrieved March 30, 2015, from <http://curriculum.org/secretariat/primary/>.

Ontario Ministry of Education. *Precision Teaching in the Primary Classroom Video Clips*. Retrieved March 30, 2015, from <http://curriculum.org/secretariat/precision/index.shtml>.

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- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for Learning: Putting it into Practice*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Fountas, I.C., and Pinnell, G.S. (2001). *Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades 3–6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Fountas, I.C., and Pinnell, G.S. (2012). *Prompting Guide for Comprehension: Thinking, Talking, and Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Nova Scotia Department of Education (DOE) (2012). *Active Young Readers, Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.
- Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) (2014). *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.
- Spandel, V. (2004). *Creating Young Writers: Using the Six Traits to Enrich Writing Process in Primary Classrooms*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Stead, T. (2006). *Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5*. Markham, ON: Pembroke Publishers Ltd.
- Taberski, S. (2011). *Comprehension from the Ground Up: Sensible Instruction for the K–3 Reading Workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

## Appendix A: Stages of Reading and Writing Development

Emergent Readers	Early Readers	Transitional Readers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• know that language can be recorded and revisited</li> <li>• know that text as well as illustrations convey the message</li> <li>• display reading-like behaviour</li> <li>• understand directionality of text</li> <li>• identify some familiar written words in a variety of contexts in a book, on a chart, or in the environment outside of school</li> <li>• can discuss what is happening in a story and predict what might happen next</li> <li>• make links to their own experiences</li> <li>• occasionally predict based on initial and final consonants or familiar parts of words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistently match one-to-one</li> <li>• have knowledge of print conventions</li> <li>• are more confident in using background experience</li> <li>• make approximations and use context and letter-sound associations to sample, predict, and confirm</li> <li>• begin to self-correct</li> <li>• know the most common sounds and letters</li> <li>• have a basic sight word vocabulary of functional words</li> <li>• begin to read familiar texts confidently and can retell the message from printed and visual texts</li> <li>• select text appropriate to their needs and interests</li> <li>• use a variety of strategies to create meaning (e.g., make inferences, identify character traits, follow written directions)</li> <li>• use some features of written text to determine content, locate topics, and obtain information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set purposes for their reading</li> <li>• read widely and experience a variety of children's literature</li> <li>• select appropriate material</li> <li>• adjust strategies for different texts and different purposes</li> <li>• use pictorial, typographical, and organizational features of written text to determine content, locate topics, and obtain information</li> <li>• integrate cues as they use reading strategies of sampling, predicting, and confirming / self-correcting</li> <li>• self-correct quickly, confidently, and independently</li> <li>• prefer to read silently</li> <li>• can retell and discuss their own interpretations of texts read or viewed</li> <li>• recognize characters can be stereotyped</li> <li>• make meaningful substitutions</li> <li>• have an increasing bank of sight words</li> <li>• use a range of word identification strategies for constructing meanings</li> </ul>

Emergent Writers	Early Writers	Transitional Writers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use drawings, scribbles, or random letters to convey meaning</li> <li>• label drawings to explain some ideas</li> <li>• produce strings of letters (capital letters or letter-like forms)</li> <li>• may produce some words in conventional spelling</li> <li>• use some left to right directionality in writing</li> <li>• use some letter-sound relationships to represent some sounds of speech</li> <li>• demonstrate beginning knowledge of writing in different forms</li> <li>• explain or read their own written communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand that writing is “ideas written down”</li> <li>• write two or three lines on a single topic</li> <li>• apply more letter-sound relationships in writing, relying predominately on dominant sounds</li> <li>• accurately form all or almost all letters</li> <li>• include consonant and vowel sounds</li> <li>• use some common spelling patterns</li> <li>• use high-frequency words and other known words in writing</li> <li>• use temporary spelling when writing a draft</li> <li>• have a well-established top to bottom and left to right directionality</li> <li>• consistently space between words</li> <li>• write showing a connection between text and drawings</li> <li>• write in a wider range of genres and forms</li> <li>• use simple sentence structures</li> <li>• begin to develop editing skills</li> <li>• attempt to use punctuation</li> <li>• can read back their own writing most or all of the time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show an increasing awareness of audience</li> <li>• demonstrate increasing knowledge of spelling patterns</li> <li>• use increasing numbers of accurately spelled words</li> <li>• apply a wider range of spelling strategies resulting in more conventional or close to conventional spellings</li> <li>• use words and phrases that elaborate text (detail and description)</li> <li>• use simple and compound sentences</li> <li>• use upper- and lower-case letters appropriately most of the time</li> <li>• use end-of-sentence punctuation</li> <li>• write longer more sophisticated texts</li> <li>• write showing increasing organization (e.g., beginning, middle, end)</li> <li>• apply editing skills</li> <li>• begin to revise for clarity</li> <li>• think while writing and maintain focus on topic or ideas</li> <li>• write on the same topic or in the same form over several pages</li> </ul>

Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014). *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*. Halifax, NS: Province of Nova Scotia.

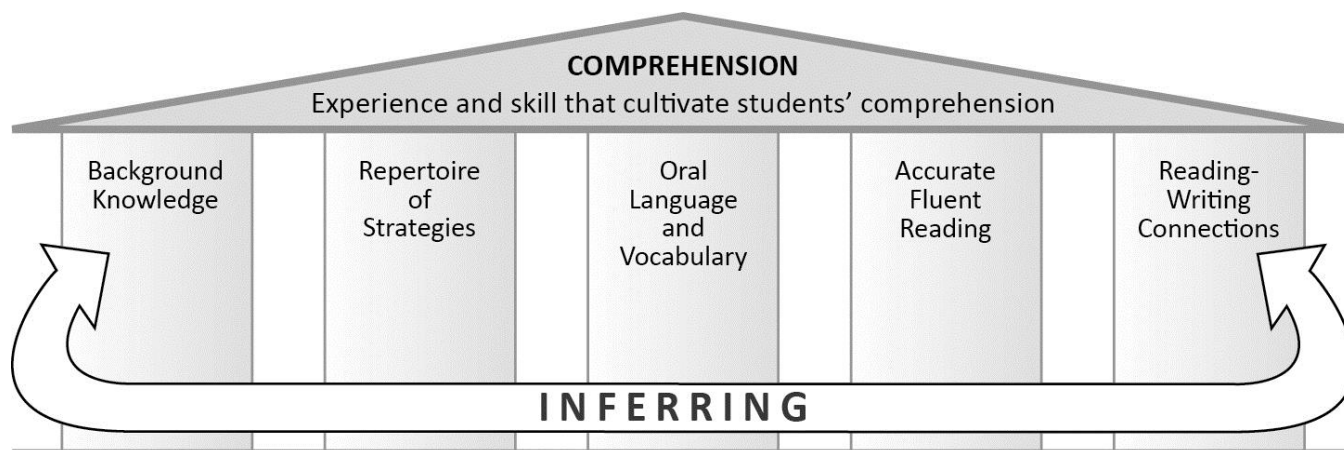
## Appendix B: Curriculum Connections

This assessment is based on end of grade 2 reading and writing provincial English language arts curriculum outcomes. The language of these outcomes has been revised to reflect the streamlined curriculum as of September 2015:

- GCO 3 (Reading & Viewing): Students will demonstrate a variety of ways to comprehend and select from a range of culturally relevant texts
- GCO 4 (Reading & Viewing): Students will select, interpret, and combine information in multiple cultural contexts
- GCO 5 (Reading & Viewing): Students will respond personally and critically to a range of diverse texts
- GCO 7 (Writing & Other Ways of Representing): Students will use writing and other forms of representing, including digital, to explore, clarify, and reflect on thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings
- GCO 9 (Writing & Other Ways of Representing): Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and media products to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness

## Appendix C: Reading Comprehension

The goal and essence of reading is comprehension and is founded on broad pillars that are unified by the common thread of inferring, as represented in the diagram below (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2012, p.19).



### Reading: It's All About Comprehension!

- Meaning-making is at the heart of what would define a successful reader
- If a child does not make sense of written words, he/she is not reading, but just “word-calling”
- Comprehension is the overarching essence of what reading is
- There are significant pillars that support or uphold understanding and comprehension
- These pillars contain essential experiences and skills that cultivate a child’s comprehension
- The breadth and depth of background knowledge play a vital role in reader’s ability to make meaning
- Readers need a repertoire of comprehension strategies on which they can rely to build meaning. These include:
  - Purpose
  - Accessing prior knowledge
  - Questioning and wondering
  - Visualizing
  - Determining importance
  - Summarizing and synthesizing
  - Analyzing
- Inferring is a wrap-around strategy that children use when they have an unresolved question or wonder
- Oral language and the building of vocabulary are highly correlated to overall reading achievement
- Accurate fluent reading is comprised of concepts about print, high-frequency words, phonemic awareness and phonics (word solving strategies), sampling, predicting, confirming/self-correcting, and reading fluency
- Reading and writing processes are reciprocal in nature so making regular connections is essential

### Things to remember:

- Phonemic awareness, while significant and necessary, is not “pillar worthy” on its own
- Fast readers are not necessarily good readers
- Children need time to talk, write, read, and think!

Comprehension strategies are applied before, during, and/or after reading as appropriate to the reader and the text.

#### Comprehension *Before* Reading

- Activates prior knowledge.
- Sets a purpose for reading.

#### Comprehension *During* Reading

- Helps the reader monitor his/her understanding throughout the text.

#### Comprehension *After* Reading

- Helps the reader confirm and/or modify previous predictions.
- Helps the reader determine the important information in the text.
- Helps the reader combine prior knowledge and new information to synthesize his/her interpretation of the text.
- Helps the reader analyze and develop an appreciation of the text.

## Appendix D:

### Questioning to Prompt Conversation and Assess Comprehension

**Setting a Purpose for Reading** – the reader identifies the reason(s) for reading the text

- I am curious about your book choice. Tell me a little bit about what you were thinking when you chose it.
- How are you finding it – is it a good fit for you? Tell me more about that.
- Tell me what you have been working on in your reading since we last met?
- Last time we met you were going to try \_\_\_\_\_. How is that going?
- You have chosen a new book since we met last. How is that going?
- I've noticed that you have abandoned your last book. Tell me about that.
- I see you're still reading \_\_\_\_\_. Tell me how your reading is going.
- What have you been thinking about today as a reader?
- You have been reading this book for a while. How long do you think it will take for you to finish it?
- You have been reading a lot of fiction (whatever genre) lately; perhaps next time you can share a different genre and tell me why you chose it.

**Thinking Within the Text**

**Determining Importance** – the reader identifies central ideas and selects key points

- What was the problem in the story? How was it solved/fixed? How do you think it will get solved?
- What were the most important ideas in the story?
- What is the main idea? Why do you think that? (non-fiction)
- What do you think are some of the big ideas here?
- Choose an important scene and explain its significance.
- Can you think of ideas or details that are important to remember? How did you make your decision?

**Metacognition** – the reader thinks about his/her thinking processes

- Where was the tricky part? What was tricky about it? What did you/can you do to help yourself with that?
- What else can you try?
- Did you find the text easy, hard, or just right?
- Last time we met, you mentioned you were having some trouble with some of the words in this book. How is that going now?
- Are there parts of the book that are sticking in your head today?
- What new vocabulary have you noticed today?
- Is there a passage, section, quote, or a line in your reading that really made sense or resonated with you?

**Monitoring Comprehension** – the reader notices when he/she needs to use a comprehension strategy

- Talk to me a little bit about what you do when you find yourself not understanding something.
- You stopped for a moment when you were reading to me. What were you thinking when you stopped?
- When you read that page to me you didn't slow down at all. Remember we talked about pausing, considering and reflecting as we read. What would happen if you read it a little more slowly?
- I'm thinking that when you might not be grasping what the book is telling you, you just keep reading without making sure it makes sense. I would like you to focus on stopping periodically to check on your understanding.
- You seem to be having trouble reading the dialogue when two characters are talking. What could you do to help you know who is saying what?



### **Thinking Beyond The Text**

**Questioning/Wondering** – the reader asks questions to understand what he/she is reading

- I would love to hear you read just a little bit to me. Why don't you read a portion/page or two to me that you are thinking/wondering about?
- Thinking about what you just read, what do you think will happen next? What's your thinking behind your prediction?
- Think about all the questions or thoughts you have as you read and then pick one or two that best help you to understand the story. What are they?
- Do you have any unanswered questions about the story?
- Find a part that you especially loved or a part that you are wondering about. Read a bit of that section to me so we can talk about what you are thinking.
- What did this passage (selection/piece/story) make you wonder about? Why did you wonder that?

**Making Connections/Using Schema** – the reader uses background and prior knowledge to understand

- What do you already know that helps you understand this text?
- Have you read any other texts written by this author? If yes, how is this similar or different from the other text?
- What are all the things you already know, believe, or feel that will help you understand this piece?
- How is this book like another one you have read and why?
- What background knowledge did you use to help you understand the passage (selection/piece/story)?
- Have you had any experiences in your life that helped you better understand the story?
- Did the story remind you of something?
- How does this book compare to the author's other books?
- You talked a lot about using your background knowledge. Now, see if you can pin-point those times when it's your background experience that is helping you understand.

**Synthesizing** – the reader combines information from many sources to make new meaning

- What surprised you in the story?
- What is another possible title for this story (text/selection/piece)? What makes this a good title?
- How has your thinking changed as a result of reading this story?
- What conclusions have you made so far?
- How would you complete this sentence: I used to think.... but now I'm thinking...
- What have you learned about yourself, people, relationships or life in general [pick one] after reading this book?
- What does this story mean to you?
- What information is useful and how does it fit (or not fit) with what you already know?
- What have you learned after reading this text/book?
- How is your thinking changing as you have been reading this book?

**Inferring** – the reader uses clues in the text to understand implied meanings

- Why did you think \_\_\_\_ happened?
- Are any of your questions unanswered after reading? What could/might the answers be to your questions?
- Why do you think (character) did (action)?
- Describe the behaviour of one of the main characters. What kind of person is he/she? How do you know?

### **Thinking About the Text**

**Personal Response** – the reader explains how reading the text affected him/her

- Tell me something you liked or didn't like about the story/text. Why did you like (or not like) that?
- What did you think about the story/text? Why did you think that?
- To whom would you recommend this story/book/text? Why?
- How did you feel when you were reading this text/book?

**Critical Response: Critical Literacy** – the reader notices and questions assumptions and looks at how language is used to construct particular historical, social, cultural, political, and economic realities

- Tell me something you were wondering about in the story. Why were you wondering that?
- What do you think is the author's intended message? (fiction and non-fiction)
- What do you think the author's purpose was in writing this? (fiction and non-fiction)
- Who do you think is the intended audience?
- Whose point of view is used in the story? How would the story change if told by another character?
- In this story/text, what point of view do we mainly hear from? What points of view are absent? (fiction and non-fiction)
- In another time or place, how would the story change?
- Who else could be in the story? Is there someone missing?
- How are minority roles depicted?
- Could the story be told if gender roles were reversed?
- If you were the author, how would you have ended the story in a different way?
- Has the author been fair? Why or why not? (fiction and non-fiction)
- If everything you learned about \_\_\_\_ (e.g., teenagers, girls, boys, mothers, fathers) came from this book, what would you know? (fiction and non-fiction)

**Critical Response: Analysis of Style, Text Structure and Features** – the reader notices and reflects on the author/publisher's choice of style, text structure, and features

- How is this text structured? How does this structure support the author's purpose? (e.g., question and answer, cause and effect, descriptive, compare and contrast, language choice, categories, repeating patterns, beginning-middle-end)
- How has the author organized this text to help you understand it?
- Using examples, tell me how the text features helped you understand the text.
- Did the author present the information clearly?
- How qualified was the writer to inform us about the topic?
- Why do you think the author bolded (or italicized, underlined, used different font on) these words? What was the author's purpose in doing this?
- What was the purpose of the text boxes in this piece? (or ask about paragraphs, spacing, chapters, indentations, titles, headings)
- What interesting punctuation choices has the writer made in this text?
- How did the illustrations, charts, maps, etc. support your understanding?
- Are the characters believable? Why or why not?
- Did the author's style hold your attention? Why or why not?

Questions taken from *Conferring: The Keystone of Reader's Workshop* (Allen, 2009) and *Prompting Guide for Comprehension: Thinking, Talking, and Writing* (Fountas and Pinnell, 2012)

## Appendix E: Text Features

Name of text feature	Purpose of text feature
<b>Title</b>	Quickly tells the reader what information they will learn about
<b>Table of contents</b>	Shows students the different chapters or section titles and where they are located
<b>Index</b>	Directs students where to go in the text to find specific information on a topic, word, or person
<b>Glossary</b>	Identifies important vocabulary words for students and gives their definitions
<b>Headings or subtitles</b>	Help reader identify the main ideas for that section of text
<b>Sidebars</b>	Are set apart from the main text, (usually located on the side or bottom of the page) and elaborate on a detail mentioned in the text
<b>Pictures and captions</b>	Show an important object or idea from the text
<b>Labeled diagrams</b>	Allow readers to see detailed depictions of an object from the text with labels that teach important components
<b>Charts and graphs</b>	Represent and show data related to, or elaborate on, something in the main body of text
<b>Maps</b>	Help a reader locate a place in the world that is related to text
<b>Cutaways and cross sections</b>	Allow readers to see inside something by dissolving part of a wall or to see all the layers of an object by bisecting it for viewing
<b>Insert photos</b>	Can show either a faraway view of something or a close-up shot of minute detail

## Appendix F: Comparison of Know, Want to Know, Learned (KWL) and Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction (RAN) Strategies

(Stead, 2006)

KWL Strategy			RAN Strategy				
What I Know	What I Want to Know	What I Learned	What I Think I Know	Confirmed	Misconceptions	New Information	Wonderings
Children state information they know about a topic	Children come up with questions they want answered	Children research to specifically answer questions raised	Children state information they think is correct about the topic	Children research to confirm prior knowledge	Children research to discard prior knowledge	Children research to find additional information not stated in prior knowledge	Children raise questions based on the new information gathered

(Taberski, 2011)

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## Appendix H: Editing Checklist and Symbols for Beginning Writers (Spandel, 2004)

### Editor's Checklist

\_\_\_\_\_ *Name on paper*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Date*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Title*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Capital letters to begin sentences*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Periods or question marks to end sentences*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Spaces between words*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *"Capital I"*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Checks: \_\_\_\_\_

### Easy Symbols for Young Editors

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>It means</u>	<u>Use it like this</u>
	Put something in.	<i>likes</i> Paul  cats.
	Take this out.	Don is a <del>big</del>  huge guy.
	Put in a space.	Amy loves  apples.
	Add a period.	The horse saw us  .
	Make this letter a capital.	We live in <u>oregon</u> .
	Make this letter Lower case.	Do you eat <del>Bacon</del> ?
	Underline this title.	Our teacher read the book <u>Crickwing</u> to our class.

## Appendix I: Using the Nova Scotia Assessment: Analytic Writing Rubric

The rubric includes four criteria (Conventions, Ideas, Organization, and Language Use), and there are four levels of performance for each criterion. Level 3 and above is the expectation for writing assessments, so it's important to look at these levels first when reviewing the rubric. The following information is provided to teachers prior to scoring student writing at provincial scoring sessions.

It may also be helpful for teachers who wish to use this rubric with students in their classrooms. Please keep in mind that the expectations for specific assessments are anchored in the writing samples in a scoring guide, as they are relative to specific grade levels (end of grades 2, 5, 8). The scoring guide provides two student writing samples that illustrate each performance level outlined in the rubric.

A sample scoring guide is available in Appendix L of this document.

- 1) Read the rubric as a whole before looking at each criterion in more detail.
- 2) **Conventions:** Read the four levels of performance under Conventions. Conventions includes spelling of commonly used words (including homonyms), punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, verb tense agreement, noun/pronoun agreement – these are grounded in what's appropriate for a given grade level
- 3) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Conventions: *conventions, communication*
- 4) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Conventions:
  - a. Level 3: *variety, generally correct, effective*
  - b. Level 4: *variety, consistently correct, enhanced*
  - c. Level 2: *errors, noticeable, coherent*
- 5) Level 1: *errors, confusing, or, little evidence of conventions*
- 6) **Ideas:** Read the four levels of performance under Ideas. Ideas includes the presence and quality of a main idea, the extent to which the main idea is developed through details, and the quality of the details used to support the main idea.
- 7) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Ideas: *main idea, developed, details*
- 8) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Ideas:
  - a. Level 3: *clear, relevant*
  - b. Level 4: *distinct, vivid, relevant*
  - c. Level 2: *evident, somewhat, may be irrelevant* (Even if details are relevant, a piece of writing can be a Level 2 if it's only somewhat developed.)
  - d. Level 1: *not present, or, not developed*
- 9) **Organization:** Read the four levels of performance under Organization. Organization includes the way the writing is organized as a whole as well as how it is organized throughout (internal and external organization). There should be a beginning, middle, and end and a logical sequence between ideas. Transitions include transitional words or phrases, but also the way the writer transitions from one idea to the next.

- 10) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Organization: *writing, organized/organization, transitions*
- 11) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Organization:
- a. Level 3: *effective, varied*
  - b. Level 4: *skillfully, skillful, varied*
  - c. Level 2: *somewhat, vague, and/or mechanical* (Even if transitions are not vague or mechanical, a piece of writing can be a Level 2 if it's only somewhat organized.)
  - d. Level 1: *lacking, little or no evidence*
- 12) **Language Use:** Read the four levels of performance under Language Use. Language Use includes voice, word choice, sentence style, syntax. Sentence structure is considered in terms of writing style in this criterion, not the grammatical correctness of sentence structure since correctness is assessed under the Conventions criterion.
- 13) Underline the elements that are same across all four levels in Language Use: *Language use, writing*
- 14) Circle key words that are unique to each level in Language Use:
- a. Level 3: *clear, fluid*
  - b. Level 4: *vivid, skillful*
  - c. Level 2: *vague, and/or mechanical*
  - d. Level 1: *confusing, or, little evidence of language use*
- 15) **Not Enough Evidence:** This designation would only be used in rare cases when there is not enough evidence to assess a student's writing (e.g., indecipherable, blank paper, not enough information to score such as a single word).

Once teachers have become familiar with the rubric, they may wish to use it in their classrooms to support student writing. Looking at the rubric with students may facilitate useful conversations about Conventions, Ideas, Organization, and Language Use and how these elements work together in a piece of writing. Through these discussions, writing samples (either students' own samples or scoring guide samples) could be used to illustrate the various writing components outlined in the rubric. When students have an opportunity to engage in these conversations, they may begin to enhance their own writing processes.



## Appendix J: Nova Scotia Assessment: Analytic Writing Rubric

### Nova Scotia Assessments: Analytic Rubric for Scoring Writing (RW3)



Conventions
<p><b>4</b> A variety of consistently correct conventions contribute to enhanced communication.</p> <p><b>3</b> A variety of generally correct conventions contribute to effective communication.</p> <p><b>2</b> Errors in conventions are noticeable, but communication is coherent.</p> <p><b>1</b> Errors in conventions contribute to confusing communication, or there is little evidence of conventions.</p>
Ideas
<p><b>4</b> A main idea is distinct and is developed through vivid and relevant details.</p> <p><b>3</b> A main idea is clear and is developed through relevant details.</p> <p><b>2</b> A main idea is evident and is somewhat developed through details, some of which may be irrelevant.</p> <p><b>1</b> A main idea is not present, or a main idea is not developed with details.</p>
Organization
<p><b>4</b> The writing is skillfully organized with skillful use of varied transitions.</p> <p><b>3</b> The writing is organized with effective use of varied transitions.</p> <p><b>2</b> The writing is somewhat organized with vague or mechanical transitions.</p> <p><b>1</b> The writing is lacking organization; there is little or no evidence of transitions.</p>
Language Use
<p><b>4</b> Language use contributes to vivid and skillful writing.</p> <p><b>3</b> Language use contributes to clear and fluid writing.</p> <p><b>2</b> Language use contributes to vague or mechanical writing.</p> <p><b>1</b> Language use contributes to confusing writing, or there is little evidence of language use.</p>
Not Enough Evidence
<p>There is not enough evidence to assess the student's writing (e.g., indecipherable, blank paper).</p>

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## Appendix K: Using the Nova Scotia Assessment: Scoring Guide Sample

Student writing is scored using the analytic writing rubric and scoring guide. It is important to have a solid understanding of the analytic writing rubric before reviewing the scoring guide. The scoring guide includes the writing prompt and two samples at each performance level in the following order:

Level 4, 3, 2, 1.

Although adherence to writing task is important during classroom instruction and assessment, it is important to note that this is not the focus of provincial writing assessments. Provincial assessment writing prompts are designed to allow for a broad interpretation of the prompt. This allows students from across the province with a variety of life experiences to connect to the prompt in some way so they can provide a response that can be assessed for writing quality based on the rubric (ideas, organization, language use, and conventions).

Each writing sample includes an annotation at the bottom of the page that provides the rationale for the scores using language from the rubric and the student's writing. Level 3 and above is the expectation for writing assessments, so it's important to look at these levels first when reviewing the scoring guide. Below are a few suggestions for reviewing the scoring guide:

- 1) Review the rubric criteria for Level 3 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 2) Read the Level 3 Scoring Guide samples and annotations
- 3) Review the rubric criteria for Level 4 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 4) Read the Level 4 Scoring Guide samples and annotations
- 5) Review the rubric criteria for Level 2 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 6) Read the Level 2 Scoring Guide samples and annotations
- 7) Review the rubric criteria for Level 1 in Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions
- 8) Read the Level 1 Scoring Guide samples and annotations

Once teachers become familiar with the scoring guide, they may wish to use some of the writing samples with their students for talking about elements of writing.

Since writing is personal and involves risk-taking, students may be more comfortable critiquing anonymous writing samples from the scoring guide. After students have had an opportunity to understand the rubric, teachers could begin with showing them a sample of writing at Level 3, Level 4, then Level 2 and Level 1. (This would be spaced out over several mini-lessons at the teacher's discretion.) The samples could anchor some wonderful conversations about what students notice about how main ideas are developed through supportive details, as well as other elements of writing. The level 2 and 1 samples could be used as a springboard for students to discuss how the writing could be enhanced in each of the criterion of the rubric. Finally, once students have had an opportunity to engage in these discussions with teachers about writing, they should feel more comfortable to begin pulling out some of their own writing from their portfolios. They could work with an existing piece of writing from their writing portfolio to focus on each criterion at a time to gradually enhance the same piece of writing each time. Students can engage in peer review and conversations to support their revisions. At the end of the process, they will be able to compare their original piece of writing with the revised piece of writing and reflect on their process and progress.

## Appendix L: Nova Scotia Assessment: Scoring Guide Sample

### **Writing Prompt: When I Grow Up I think I Will ...**

After teachers ask students to turn to the image in their student assessment booklets, teachers read aloud the following **Script**:

*The grade three students in this picture were asked to dress up to show what they might look like when they are grown up.*

*The first child, Chris, is dressed as a carpenter. The second child, Devon, is a cowgirl. The third child, Niko, is going to be a chef. The fourth child, Hannah, wants to be a doctor. And the fifth child, Kyle, is dressed as a firefighter.*

*What you cannot see in this picture is that Chris grew up and became a carpenter for a company that builds solar powered race cars. Devon now works with horses that were injured when they were working as race horses. She has four horses and two ponies of her own that she loves very much. To no one's surprise, Niko, with her love of food, has become a chef. We guessed that Hannah might become a doctor, but she is not a "people" doctor. She is an animal doctor. Just last week she saved a small squirrel's life. Kyle is a firefighter, but he also volunteers for children's rights all over the world.*

*Now it's your turn. What will your life be like when you are a grown up? What will you do? What will you look like? Where will you live? What will you see? Hear?*

*As you can see, there is a lot to think about. So please close your booklets and think quietly. Picture yourself all grown up. This could be 15 years in the future. Or 20. Or maybe even 50! What is happening in your life? After a quiet minute, I'll ask some of you to share your ideas about your future self.*

**Process:** After thinking about this topic, students have an opportunity to share their thoughts about life as a grown up. After students have shared their thoughts, they are asked to plan their writing piece in their student assessment booklet so the people who read it can picture what their life will be like when they are grown up. After planning time has passed, students are asked to begin writing on the lined pages provided in the student assessment booklet.

The following scoring guide includes a variety of student writing samples that reflect each of the four performance levels based on the Analytic Writing Rubric.

Please note: permissions have been obtained for the following student writing samples.

## When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

be an artist and I would like to live in Paris. I want to live in Paris because that is where all of my favorite artists lived. I would love to be able to paint water lilies, sun sets and flowers perfectly. Art is my dream, it has been since I was five but before that I wanted to be a hair dresser. I don't want to any more. I find that art is very peaceful and calming. My favorite Artists are Monet with a silent T and Van Gogh when I am an artist, I will keep my art and sell my art! Maybe I will start an art class like my art teacher Debbie Taylor or as I call her Debbie Doodles. Oh! And I almost forgot I like Art so much that my Parents let me turn half of the basement into an art studio.

#5

4 Conventions: A variety of consistently correct conventions contribute to enhanced communication: e.g. the use of commas, end punctuation and difficult to spell words.

4 Ideas: A main idea is distinct and is developed through vivid and relevant details. The writer distinctly describes future plans to be an artist in Paris and provides vivid and relevant details: *I find that art is very peaceful and calming... Maybe I will start an art class...*

4 Organization: The writing is skillfully organized with varied transitions. Ideas are skillfully organized in a logical sequence and transitions are skillfully used: *...or as I call her Debbie Doodles... Oh! And I almost forgot...*

4 Language Use: Language use contributes to vivid and skillful writing. There is a distinct voice: *Monet with a silent T... I like art so much that my Parents let me turn half of the basement into an art studio.*

**When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...**

When I grow up I want to be a Vet. I want to be a vet because I love to help animals. My grandparents have a dog and my ant and uncle have a cat. When I drive there I always help give them food or give them a bath. My dad does not want a dog but my mom wants to get one. I also want to be a vet because I am nice to animals and they are nice to me. Also I want to be a vet because I want to learn about them so I can answer question from other people about animals. I think I will have a lot of fun when I am

2/2

older. I love to help  
with them. They are my  
favourite thing in the world.

#27

4 Conventions: A variety of consistently correct conventions contribute to enhanced communication.

4 Ideas: A main idea is distinct: *I want to be a vet because I love to help animals* and is supported using vivid and relevant details: *I want to learn about them so I can answer questions from other people about animals.*

4 Organization: The writing is skillfully organized with skillful use of transitions: *When ever I drive... but my mom wants to get one...* Skillful use of concluding sentence: *They are my favourite thing in the world.*

4 Language Use: Language use contributes to vivid and skillful writing. Language choices enhance the writing: *When ever I drive there I always help give them food or give them a bath... I think I will have a lot of fun when I am older.*

13

## When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

I think when i grow-up  
 im being an ice-cream girl-  
 jist to get a fue bucks.  
 Then when i get a fue bucks  
 i mite be a artist. I  
 think im a good drawer.  
 Others may not think im  
 a good drawer but at least  
 i think im a good drawer!  
 writer

#13

3 Conventions: A variety of generally correct conventions contribute to effective communication. Sentences are generally structured correctly. Spelling of high frequency words is generally correct.

3 Ideas: A main idea is clear and is developed through relevant details: *I'm being a ice-cream girl jist to get a fue bucks. Then when I get a fue bucks I mite be a artist. I think I'm a good drawer.*

3 Organization: The writing is organized with effective use of varied transitions: *Jist to get.. Then when... Others may not think... at least I think.*

3 Language Use: Language use contributes to clear and fluid writing: *Jist to get a fue bucks... Others may not think I'm a good drawer but at least I think I'm a good drawer!*

32

### When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

a hairdresser. I will have my own shop at my house. My hairdressing shop will be called Natalie's hair. I will have poster in town. Peopole will see them and came to my house to get thirir hair done for weddings, partys, dinnes, shows and work. I will love being a hairdresser.

#32

3 Conventions: A variety of generally correct conventions contribute to effective communication.

3 Ideas: A main idea is clear and is developed through relevant details: *...a hairdresser, I will have my own shop at my house... I will have poster in town.*

3 Organization: The writing is organized with effective use of varied transitions: *Peopole will see them and came to my house to get thirir hair done...*

3 Language Use: Language use contributes to clear and fluid writing: *My hairdressing shop will be called Natalie's hair... to get thirir hair done for weddings, partys, dinnes, shows and work.*



44

## When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

Be a sinetist because  
 I went to be a cell  
 sinetist. I like them  
 they ande exstemly cool.  
 bekause they destad .D.N.A.  
 wach I Think is cool.  
 I will  
 live in a town  
 like cool, and I

#44

2 Conventions: Errors in conventions are noticeable, but communication is coherent: *I went to be... they ande exstemly cool.*

2 Ideas: A main idea is evident: *I went to be a cell sinetist* and is somewhat developed: *because they destad .D.N.A. wach I Think is cool*

2 Organization: The writing is somewhat organized with vague and mechanical transitions: *because I... because they.*

2 Language Use: Language use contributes to vague and mechanical writing: *Be a sinetist because I went to be a cell sinetist.*

1/1

9a

When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

WHEN I GROW UP I THINK  
 I WILL WORK ON 18 WHEELERS  
 AND TRAILERS AND BIG TRUCKS  
 IN A BIG GARAGE AND I WILL WORK  
 ON CARS MAYBE

#92

2 Conventions: Errors in conventions are noticeable - the entire piece is written almost completely in capital letters - but communication is coherent.

2 Ideas: A main idea is evident and is somewhat developed through details: *WHEN I GROW UP I THINK I WILL WORK ON 18 WHEELERS AND TRAILERS AND BIG TRUCKS IN A BIG GARAGE.*

2 Organization: The writing is somewhat organized with mechanical transitions: *AND...AND...AND*

2 Language Use: Language use contributes to mechanical writing: *I WILL WORK ON CARS MAYBE.*

When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

I want to be a wasler  
I will have a masc & have wasler

#9

1 Conventions: Errors in conventions contribute to confusing communication: *wasler... masc*

1 Ideas: A main idea is not developed with details. The writer wants to be a wrestler and will have a mask but this idea is not developed.

1 Organization: The writing is lacking organization; there is little evidence of transitions.

1 Language Use: Language use contributes to confusing writing: *thay wasler*

## When I Grow Up I Think I Will ...

sap if food and woke at me and de he,  
 Ahdit will be the Boasro  
 and the food will be more in the and it  
 will be fun and it will be and

#99

1 Conventions: Errors in conventions contribute to confusing communication.

1 Ideas: A main idea is not developed with details: *saelfood and woke at meadene*.  
*Ahdit will Berelle Boasc*

1 Organization: There is little evidence of transitions.

1 Language Use: There is little evidence of language use.

## Appendix M: Transitions Used in Student Writing

The below chart includes examples of transitions used in student writing from Nova Scotia Assessments and Examinations. Though it includes only words and phrases, it is recognized that “transitions” also includes the way a piece of writing is organized and flows from one idea to the next.

Grade 3	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First...two...three</li> <li>• So that’s my</li> <li>• I think</li> <li>• This is how</li> <li>• First you... you keep doing this</li> <li>• Does the exact same thing</li> <li>• And that’s how</li> <li>• I love that</li> <li>• Take... then... next... now</li> <li>• If there are</li> <li>• If you</li> <li>• You can</li> <li>• The main point is</li> <li>• But there is</li> <li>• It is important too</li> <li>• Or as I say</li> <li>• Oh! And I almost forgot</li> <li>• Whenever I</li> <li>• But my</li> <li>• They are my favourite</li> <li>• People will see and</li> <li>• Just to</li> <li>• Then when</li> <li>• Others may not</li> <li>• At least I</li> <li>• Mostly because</li> <li>• If I don’t</li> <li>• So</li> <li>• When I</li> <li>• I will be</li> <li>• I am going to</li> <li>• I hope I can be</li> <li>• Like this</li> <li>• If it doesn’t work</li> <li>• I also want to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By this time</li> <li>• Once inside</li> <li>• After successfully</li> <li>• Finally</li> <li>• I have been...since</li> <li>• If we were to</li> <li>• Before we would</li> <li>• An hour later</li> <li>• As we</li> <li>• When</li> <li>• In the end</li> <li>• If I... I would</li> <li>• The first thing</li> <li>• To end our</li> <li>• Next</li> <li>• But of course</li> <li>• Firstly, secondly, thirdly etc.</li> <li>• The next thing</li> <li>• That night</li> <li>• While at the</li> <li>• Do you know why</li> <li>• It’s because</li> <li>• There are many reasons why</li> <li>• For one</li> <li>• These will also</li> <li>• It that’s not enough</li> <li>• If we don’t...we won’t</li> <li>• I also think</li> <li>• I have heard about</li> <li>• When people... they... because</li> <li>• Some ideas could be</li> <li>• That is why</li> <li>• And most of all</li> <li>• They should, however, only</li> <li>• First of all...second... lastly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• But these only worked because...</li> <li>• It is my opinion that...</li> <li>• Instead of going to..., we can go....</li> <li>• I think...because...</li> <li>• And with that kind of access to..., we can...</li> <li>• Another thing...</li> <li>• In the past,... Now...</li> <li>• If it were a long time ago, ...</li> <li>• Not only does..., it allows...</li> <li>• Just yesterday, I ....</li> <li>• Next</li> <li>• So in the following I will tell you about...</li> <li>• To start...</li> <li>• In fact...</li> <li>• Such as</li> <li>• So why...</li> <li>• By..., we can...</li> <li>• This means...</li> <li>• All in all</li> <li>• The last issue</li> <li>• Because</li> <li>• Finally</li> <li>• So, as you can see...</li> <li>• I highly think that...</li> <li>• The first one I am going to talk about is...</li> <li>• The reason why...</li> <li>• The 2<sup>nd</sup> topic on the list is...</li> <li>• For example</li> <li>• This could lead to...</li> <li>• What I mean about...is...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultimately</li> <li>• Essentially</li> <li>• Based on how</li> <li>• Unique to</li> <li>• As the</li> <li>• Also serves as</li> <li>• First of all... second</li> <li>• In conclusion</li> <li>• Often</li> <li>• Every... every... will have</li> <li>• Although</li> <li>• Have you ever</li> <li>• Whether it be... or</li> <li>• Every day there are</li> <li>• It gives</li> <li>• Everyone wants</li> <li>• All of these</li> <li>• It makes</li> <li>• Some form of</li> <li>• Though not always</li> <li>• Sometimes</li> <li>• We are more... than</li> <li>• Is one strong example</li> <li>• After reading</li> <li>• When I think about</li> <li>• But how does</li> <li>• It is helped by</li> <li>• Overall</li> <li>• It generally</li> <li>• It implies</li> <li>• She point out that</li> <li>• It will cause</li> <li>• As well as</li> <li>• Is not the only but is the most</li> <li>• What if</li> <li>• When reading</li> <li>• Even though</li> <li>• As long as</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As well as</li> <li>• If you are still</li> <li>• In conclusion</li> <li>• I think this because</li> <li>• Also</li> <li>• Don't you think</li> <li>• By now</li> <li>• Just to add</li> <li>• It all started when</li> <li>• Just as</li> <li>• After I... then</li> <li>• She turned and</li> <li>• He thought for a moment then</li> <li>• So what are we</li> <li>• Once they</li> <li>• Next</li> <li>• One of the</li> <li>• I wouldn't want</li> <li>• The first...then...so after</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So these are the three reasons why I think...</li> <li>• I am sure...but</li> <li>• In my opinion, I think...</li> <li>• For teenagers,...</li> <li>• If we can..., maybe there will be...</li> <li>• Not only for teenagers, but for parents too</li> <li>• In conclusion, I think...</li> <li>• That's my opinion...</li> <li>• I finally finished...</li> <li>• At first nothing happened, but then...</li> <li>• Despite all of the previously listed negative outcomes...</li> <li>• Then realizing what had happened, ...</li> <li>• After a minute or two of silence, ...</li> <li>• If none of the above tickles your fancy, this will—....</li> <li>• As intriguing as...</li> <li>• When suddenly...</li> <li>• A few seconds later...</li> <li>• All of a sudden,...</li> <li>• Perhaps this has enlightened you with...</li> <li>• I started to..., and then</li> <li>• I slowly sat up to see...</li> <li>• Could this really be happening?</li> <li>• I started to wonder if...until I saw...</li> <li>• The answer for many is clear:...</li> <li>• This requirement would provide...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This I find</li> <li>• To think</li> <li>• It was supposed</li> <li>• A lot can change</li> <li>• Nothing in the world is</li> <li>• Whether it is... or</li> <li>• You know those times when... and</li> <li>• I think by now</li> <li>• The last and strongest argument...</li> <li>• And I noted that</li> <li>• Have you ever...then</li> <li>• Many...may not be...but</li> <li>• Have you ever...but then</li> <li>• I have my doubts</li> <li>• I would look for</li> <li>• Sometimes things can be</li> <li>• And arguably</li> <li>• This shows</li> <li>• Just because</li> <li>• On the other hand</li> <li>• As... we often</li> <li>• Quite frequently we</li> <li>• One of the main reasons...another</li> <li>• We often assume that</li> <li>• To conclude</li> <li>• In saying that though</li> <li>• Which means that</li> <li>• Mainly by</li> <li>• And ultimately</li> <li>• If you were to</li> <li>• If you do...then....If you don't...then...</li> </ul>
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