

Grades K-3 Common Quarterly Writing Prompt FAQ

Purpose:

The purpose of the on-demand prompt as an assessment of writing is to provide a snapshot of what a student can do with a particular prompt, limited time and space, and without teacher input (unless the standard recognizes support from the teacher is developmentally appropriate). This assessment does not encompass all the forms of assessment students should experience in writing. All of the standard-referenced writing rubrics can and should be used throughout the school year for instruction and assessment purposes.

Administration:

- The purpose of the prompt is as an assessment. Refrain from doing teaching, editing, or additional prewriting activities with students.
- Post and read the writing prompt.
- Reread the prompt as needed for individual or groups of students.
- Apply all modifications and accommodations as indicated in IEP, ELL, and 504 plans.
- Have the student complete one draft with no final copy.
- Writing assessment may be broken up into shorter sessions of prewriting, drawing, and writing, but the writing portion should be confined to one session. For example, a teacher might choose to have students prepare their graphic organizer (20-minutes), then write (30-minutes) and draw for (10-minutes).
- Students should have access to any writing tools normally available to them during writing time (ie: word walls, word banks, writing folders, desk dictionaries, etc.).
- If students need more time to finish their paper at the end of the writing period, you may allow them a reasonable amount of time to finish their writing, provided they are making continual progress and it is all in one sitting. An example of an **appropriate** time extension could be at the end of the writing period two students are still actively writing their story. Allow them to move to a quiet location to independently finish their work before recess (10-20-minutes). An example of an **inappropriate** time extension could be a student becomes frustrated by the writing and they are allowed to pick up where they left off the next day.
- At the end of the writing session, check all students' writing to ensure that you can read their writing. If not, have the student read their writing back to you as you transcribe their writing.
- If a student had more that they wanted to write but were unable, either due to skill or time constraint, the teacher may record a dictation of anything else they wanted to add. The teacher may NOT prompt the student to say more.
- Use attached rubric to score the writing prompt.

The Day before Assessment Administration:

- 1) **Choose one of the given prompts to read to your students. To locate prompts, see either the narrative, argument/opinion, or informative prompt directions.**

The Day of Assessment Administration, read the following script to your students:

- 1) **Before you begin the assessment, say to the students:**

“We are about to begin our writing. The results of your writing will be used to help me teach you writing this year.”

- 2) **Read the appropriate prompt to your students.**

- 3) **Give student 5-minutes to discuss in pairs or small groups.**

- 4) **Say to the students:**

“Now you are going to have 10-minutes to draw a picture to illustrate (fill in the blank).”

- 5) **After 10 minutes, say:**

“Our drawing time is finished. You have 20-30 minutes to write about the prompt. Remember to do your best work. You may use your tools as you go (i.e. word wall, alphabet charts, dictionaries). If you don’t know how to spell a word try your best. I want to see what you can do on your own. Use your picture to help you.

In your writing, make sure you:

- Introduce the topic you will teach about.
- Include a lot of information.
- Organize your writing.
- Use transition words.
- Write an ending.

- 6) **After you read the prompt, say:**

“This session is scheduled to be ___ minutes long. If you work steadily, you should be able to complete your work during this amount of time. When you finish your draft, use your time wisely to review your work. Do you have any questions?”

**Teachers: At your discretion, students who are finished before the session is over should move to activities that are appropriate for your classroom (reading, extension activities, etc...) Students may continue writing if they are on task with their writing.*

- 7) **Teachers can give students timed warning signals (adjust times accordingly):**

- a. Half way through the writing session (depending on time allotments)
- b. 10 minutes before the end of the writing session is complete
- c. 5 minutes before the writing session is complete

8) When the assessment time is complete, say:

“This is the end of the time scheduled for this writing assessment. Please put all of your writing in a neat stack. I will pick up your materials.”

** At teacher discretion, students may continue writing if they are on task with their writing.*

FAQs About the Kindergarten Common Assessment

- Paper may be lined or unlined. The writing paper may be enlarged to 11X17 for ease of student use. You may choose to use the writing paper included with this prompt, or another paper and/or graphic organizer that the children are familiar with in your classroom. Regardless of the paper used, the piece should represent first draft writing (pictures and writing done in a single sitting).
- The response should include a picture (or pictures) and whatever sentences, words, or letters the child can add.
- Students should be given time and encouraged to add details to their illustrations as another means of communicating information to the reader.
- Verbal cues are permitted. Students may be reminded of strategies and students can be directed to use classroom resources. However, recording dictation or providing tracers is not allowed until after the student has finished their independent writing.
- To facilitate scoring the paper, have each student read their piece aloud to their teacher after they have finished and record their words as they read it back to you. Note whether there is correspondence as they track the words with their finger.
- After the student has done all the writing they can do independently and has read back their writing to you (see below), then you or another adult may take a dictation of other sentences or words they wanted to say. Be sure that your writing will not be confused with theirs (i.e. write on a sticky note, or at the bottom of the page in small, neat print).