

Grade 2 – E2 Writing

Second graders need large blocks of time for writing so they can sustain their work longer, say more and provide more detail than they have in the past. They use specific criteria to decide what to write about – what is important to them, what they know something about, what will yield a good product and what will reach the audience. They reread their writing, get help from their teachers or peers and revise and adjust to make their writing understandable to their audience.

E2a: Habits and Processes

If second graders are to develop the expected levels of proficiency as writers, their daily writing habits must continue and expand.

Working independently, second-grade children who are meeting standards make plans for their writing. They understand there are choices about how to write about a topic, and they are able to select a genre, develop an angle or conjure a vision to frame their writing.

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

- write daily;
- generate their own topics and make decisions about which pieces to work on over several days or longer;
- extend pieces of writing by, (for example, turning a narrative into a poem or a short description into a long report;
- regularly solicit and provide useful feedback;
- routinely reread, revise, edit and proofread their work;
- take on strategies and elements of author’s craft that the class has discussed in their study of literary works;
- apply commonly agreed upon criteria and their own judgment to assess the quality of their own work; and
- polish at least 10 pieces throughout the year.

E 2b: Writing Purposes and Resulting Genres

For second graders who are progressing according to standards, writing has become a meaningful activity with myriad purposes. More than ever, these children write to communicate with other people, to learn new things and to give evidence of their understanding. By the time they leave second grade, they have experimented with and produced many kinds of writing, including narrative account, response to literature, report and narrative procedure.

E 2b.1: Sharing Events, Telling Stories: Narrative Writing

By the end of the year, second-graders should move beyond simply describing a sequence of events. The structure for extended pieces may be built around a cluster of memorable events (episodic memoirs), around problems and solutions, or around a central idea or a theme running through events.

Second graders should be able to set the action of a narrative in a context that could include setting relationships among characters, motives and moods-perhaps beginning with a classic story opening (for example, “Once there was a girl...”, or “It was a dark, dark night when...”). Second graders should begin to use strategies for building pace and tension, such as giving more attention to some events than others, summarizing or skipping some events, and creating anticipation.

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to produce fictional and autobiographical narratives in which they:

- incorporate some literary or “writing;” language that does not sound like speech;
- create a believable world and introduce characters, rather than simply recount a chronology of events, using specific details about characters and settings and developing motives and moods;
- develop internal events as well as external ones;
- write in first and third person; and
- use dialogue effectively.

E2b.2: Informing Others: Report or Informational Writing

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to produce reports that:

- have an obvious organizational structure;
- communicate big ideas, insights or theories that have been elaborated on or illustrated through facts, details, quotations, statistics and information;
- usually have a concluding sentence or section; and

- use diagrams, charts or illustrations as appropriate to the text.

E 2b.3: Getting Things Done: Functional and Procedural Writing

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to produce narrative procedures that:

- establish a context for the piece;
- identify the topic;
- show the steps in an action in enough detail to follow them;
- include relevant information;
- use language that is straightforward and clear; and
- frequently use pictures to illustrate steps in the procedure.

E 2b.4: Producing and Responding to Literature

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

Producing literature:

- write stories, memoirs, poems, songs and dramas – conforming to appropriate expectations for each form;
- write a story using styles learned from studying authors and genres; and
- write poetry using techniques they observe through a study of the genre.

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

Responding to literature:

- provide a retelling;
- write letters to the author, telling what they thought or asking questions;
- make a plausible claim about what they have read;
- write variations on texts they have read telling the story from a new point of view, putting in a new setting, altering a crucial character or rewriting the ending; and
- make connections between the text and their own ideas and lives.

E2c: Language Use and Conventions

Second graders should be developing fluency as writers, producing longer, more detailed texts and crafting stories to achieve an effect, as their control over the conventions of language increases. Some of their sentences still echo their oral language patterns, while others show their awareness of literary style and other generic forms. Conventions appear more regularly: periods, capital letters, quotation marks and exclamation points frequently are used correctly.

E2c.1: Style and Syntax

By using a variety of sentence structures, second-grade writers show their ability to handle subordination of thought by subordination of structures. While punctuation of such sentences may be erratic or uneven, the sentences themselves show children’s increasing proficiency in realizing their thoughts in writing. By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

Using one’s own language:

- use all sentence patterns typical of spoken language;
- incorporate transition words and phrases; and
- use various embeddings as well as coordination and subordination.

Taking on language of authors:

- use varying sentence patterns and lengths to slow reading down, speed it up or create a mood;
- embed literacy language where appropriate; and
- reproduce sentence structures found in the various genres they are reading.

E2c.2: Vocabulary and Word Choice

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

Using one’s own language:

- use words from their speaking vocabulary in their writing, including words they have learned from reading and class discussion; and
- make word choices that reveal they have a large enough vocabulary to exercise options in word choice.

Taking on language of authors:

- make choices about which words to use on the basis of whether they accurately convey the intended meaning; and
- extend their writing vocabulary by using specialized words related to the topic or setting of their writing.

E2c.3: Spelling

Second-grade writers on target for meeting standards are beginning to control for spelling. That is, they correctly spell words that they have studied, words that they encounter frequently as readers and words that they regularly employ as writers. They also should spell correctly some high-frequency words with unpredictable spelling patterns that must be memorized (for example, *of, have, the*). At the same time, their incorrect spellings become less random because

a clear logic is at work (for example, *used to* is frequently spelled as *yousto*).

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

- use a discernible logic to guide their spelling of unfamiliar words, making incorrect spellings less random;
- produce writing in which most high-frequency words are spelled correctly;
- correctly spell most words with regularly spelled patterns;
- correctly spell most inflectional endings, including plurals and verb tenses; and
- use correct spelling patterns and rules most of the time.

In addition, we expect these students to:

- use specific spelling strategies during the writing process (for example, consult the word wall to check a spelling, think about the base and prefixes and suffixes they know); and
- engage in the editing process, perhaps with a partner, to correct spelling errors.

E2c.4: Punctuation, Capitalization and Other Conventions

Children should leave second grade with a good sense of how beginning capitalization and end punctuation are applied conventionally, though they may continue their creative use of capital letters (for example, “the dog was HUGE”) and exaggerated punctuation (for example, “he bit me!!!”)

Second graders meeting standards may not have consistent control over punctuation, but they show their understanding by incorporating all the commonly used punctuation marks to some degree in their writing.

By the end of the year, we expect second-grade students to:

- use capital letters at the beginnings of sentences;
- use periods to end sentences;
- approximate the use of quotation marks;
- use capital letters and exclamation marks for emphasis;
- use question marks; and
- use common contractions.