WRITING PORTFOLIO GUIDE:
Grade 1 Informational Writing

CSDE

Connecticut State Department of Education

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WRITING PORTFOLIO GUIDE:
Grade 1 Informational Writing

To develop and promote effective writing assessment resources that align to the Connecticut Core Standards, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) developed training materials to support classroom teachers' instruction of writing throughout the year.

This particular Grade 1 guide includes a grade-appropriate text and an evidence-based writing prompt that was administered to over 130 first-grade students representing a range of writing abilities from across Connecticut. The CSDE collected and scored their responses with guidance from the Writing Assessment Advisory Committee.

These materials can be used for classroom-, building-, or district-level training to support evidence-based student writing.

Background

During the fall and early winter of 2017, English language arts consultants from the CSDE visited seven Grade 1 classrooms in Connecticut in which the mentor text, *Same, Same But Different,* written by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw, was read aloud to students. Following the reading, the class was asked to write a paper about a close friend or someone they know well. Students were directed to provide details, drawing comparisons to the person they chose. The students were instructed to provide specific examples and were reminded to make sure that their writing had an introduction, body, and conclusion.

Student responses were scored across three writing dimensions (Organization/Purpose, Evidence/ Elaboration, and Conventions) using Connecticut-developed scoring rubrics aligned to the Smarter Balanced ELA Performance Task Writing Rubrics and the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for Grade 1.

The collection represents a range in both depth and abilities. Examining student responses across the three dimensions for writing provides teachers with a closer look at individual and group strengths and weaknesses in writing. In particular, this writing prompt calls for students to use evidence-based examples in their written response. By looking more closely at the three scoring dimensions, teachers can provide students with specific tools and instruction needed to meet the grade-level expectations set in the standards.

The scoring rubrics were meant to be general and can be used with a variety of writing assignments across content areas and purposes. They can be used in part to focus on one particular dimension, such as using Evidence/Elaboration, or in their entirety to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in writing.

Student Exemplars

The exemplar set for Grade 1 informational writing contains a stimulus, an item stem, scoring rubrics, a Smarter Balanced Performance Task Conventions Scoring Chart, writing anchor papers, and a student-friendly rubric.

Directions for using this ELA/Literacy guide:

1. Start by reading the stimulus and the accompanying item stem.
2. Examine the specific rubrics for each dimension and score point.
3. Read through the condition code document to better understand how to score unusual responses.
4. Read the student's response each time a new rubric is used.

Writing Portfolio Guide Glossary

Source: informational or research-based texts from various academic disciplines for students to use as evidence or support in their writing.

Item Stem/Your Assignment: a paragraph prompting the student to create a focused written response.

Anchor Papers: examples of student responses and scoring comments ordered from high to low by score point. In this set of anchor papers, each student response received three annotated scores: a score for Organization/Purpose, a score for Evidence/Elaboration, and a score for Conventions.

Scoring Rubrics: a description of the item expectations that includes a description of response characteristics typically exhibited at each score point to ensure consistent scoring.

Scores with Plus or Minus

Within a score point there are varying levels, from the low end of the point indicated by a minus sign, to the very high end of a score point, indicated by a plus sign. This allows us to differentiate when hand scoring between those students who are either barely within a score point and those that are close to the next score point. This additional information is beneficial when learning to score a paper and when determining next steps in instruction based on students' strengths and weaknesses.

Grade 1 Informational Writing

Source: Kostecki-Shaw, J. (2011). *Same, Same But Different*. Henry Holt and Company, New York, NY.

Item Stem/Your Assignment: Write a paper about how you are same, same but different from someone you know. Give examples of how you are the same. Give examples of how you are different. Provide details. Make sure that your writing has an introduction, body, and conclusion.

Standards

The Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCS ELA) are grounded in evidence and designed to ensure that all students have the academic knowledge and skills they need to succeed after high school. The CCS ELA standards progression documents provide a view of learning expectations by strand and by grade level, and can be useful in understanding why the standards are sequenced the way they are across a number of grade levels. The CCS ELA K–5 writing standards progression provides a more comprehensive identification of the skills and expectations at each grade level in the writing strand, and were designed to support organizing curriculum and classroom instruction. To access the learning progression documents, visit www.ctcorestandards.org.

Grade 1 Informational Writing Scoring Rubrics

Grade 1 Informational Writing Rubric: **ORGANIZATION/PURPOSE**				
Score	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Organization/Purpose	The response is clearly organized and consistently focused. The response: • clearly introduces a topic • uses a structure that matches the purpose • provides a clear closure	The response is adequately organized and generally focused. The response: • adequately names a topic • incorporates a structure • provides a sense of closure	The response is somewhat organized and is unevenly focused. The response: • names a topic, but it is weak • begins to show emerging structure • provides a weak closure	The response lacks organization and/or focus. The response: • names an unclear topic or does not name a topic • uses a random or unclear structure • provides no closure

January 20, 2017

Grade 1 Informational Writing Rubric: **EVIDENCE/ELABORATION**			
Score	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Evidence/Elaboration	The response provides effective elaboration of the support/evidence for the topic. The response: • effectively supports the topic using relevant information and facts • effectively uses vocabulary/ language appropriate to the task (may mix precise and more general language)	The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/ evidence for the topic. The response: • adequately supports the topic using information and facts • adequately uses vocabulary/ language appropriate to the task (may mix general language with some precise language)	The response provides some elaboration of the support/evidence for the topic. The response: • provides information or facts that are insufficiently connected to the topic • uses some vocabulary/ language appropriate to the task (simplistic language used)	The response does not provide relevant elaboration of the support/evidence for the topic. The response: • provides no information or facts to support the topic • uses vague, unclear, or confusing vocabulary/ language

January 20, 2017

	Grade 1 Informational Writing Rubric: **CONVENTIONS**		
Score	**2**	**1**	**0**
Conventions	The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions. The response demonstrates: • adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling	The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions. The response demonstrates: • limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling	The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions. The response demonstrates: • infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling

January 20, 2017

CONVENTIONS

Holistic Scoring:

• Variety: A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling.

• Severity: Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors.

• Density: The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.

Smarter Balanced — Conventions Chart — April 2014
Grades K–1

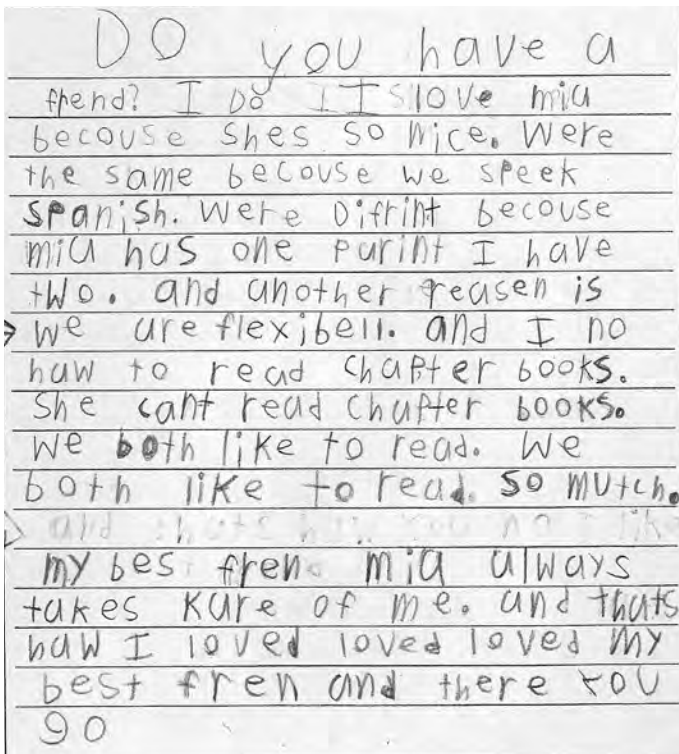| Spelling	Capitalization	Punctuation	Grammar Usage	Sentence Completion
• Use regular plural nouns correctly by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes). • Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words.	**Capitalize:** • the first word in a sentence. • the pronoun I. • names of people. • days of the week. • months of the year.	Use **end punctuation** for sentences. Use **commas** • in dates. • to separate **single** words in a series.	**Nouns:** • Correctly use singular and plural **nouns** with **matching verbs** in **basic** sentences (e.g., He hops; We hop). **Verbs:** • Correctly use **verbs** to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home). **Pronoun:** • Correctly use common personal, possessive, and in-definite **pronouns** (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their; anyone, every-thing). **Determiners:** • Correctly use **determiners** (e.g., articles, demon-stratives). **Conjunctions:** • Correctly use frequently occurring **conjunctions** (e.g., and, so, but, because).	N/A

Smarter Balanced Condition Code Categories

For the purposes of scoring open-ended responses on the summative test, including Performance Tasks, Smarter Balanced applies the following Condition Code Categories to capture those responses that do not fulfill the expectation of the test item. In some cases, a student may not provide a response, while another case may include a response unrelated to the question or topic being assessed. These codes allow the handscorer to categorize the type of response and provide more information than merely scoring it a zero.

Condition Codes	Smarter Balanced Condition Code Category Updated April 25, 2017
B	**Blank** No response provided
I	**Insufficient** a. Student has not provided a meaningful response. Some examples: • Random keystrokes/handstrokes • Undecipherable text • *I hate this test* • *I don't know, IDK* • *I don't care* • *I like pizza!* (in response to a reading passage about helicopters) • Response consists entirely of profanity b. For ELA Full Writes, use "I" code (Insufficient) for responses described above and also if: • student's original work is insufficient to determine whether he or she is able to organize, cite evidence/elaborate, and use conventions as defined in the rubrics; or • response is too brief to determine whether it is on purpose or on topic.
L	**Non-Scorable Language** ELA/literacy: Language other than English and/or Mathematics: Language other than English or Spanish
T	**Off Topic** *for ELA Full Writes Only* Definition: A writing sample will be judged off topic when the response is unrelated to the task or the sources, or shows no evidence that the student has read the task or the sources (especially for informative/explanatory and opinion/argumentative). • Off-topic responses are generally substantial responses.
M	**Off Purpose** *for ELA Full Writes Only* Definition: A writing sample will be judged off purpose when the student has clearly not written to the purpose designated in the task. • An off-purpose response addresses the topic of the task, but not the purpose of the task. • Note that students may use narrative techniques in an explanatory essay or use argumentative/persuasive techniques to explain, for example, and still be on purpose. • Off-purpose responses are generally developed responses (essays, poems, etc.) clearly not written to the designated purpose.

Grade 1 Anchor Sets

GRADE 1	P-1	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		4+	4+	2

4+: The student clearly names a topic and uses an appropriate structure for the purpose. The student provides a basic closure. The choice of a transitional phrase helps move the response forward *(And another reason is...).*

4+: The student effectively supports the topic with varied and relevant information while incorporating vocabulary that is both precise and general *(flexible/chapter books/takes care of me).*

2: Although there are misspelled words, the student shows a strong phonetic understanding. Many of the vocabulary words used are above grade level. This paper demonstrates an adequate control of conventions.

"Do you have a friend? I do, I love Mia because she's so nice. We're the same because we speak Spanish. We're different because Mia has one parent, I have two. And another reason is we are flexible. And I know how to read chapter books. She can't read chapter books. We both like to read. We both like to read so much.
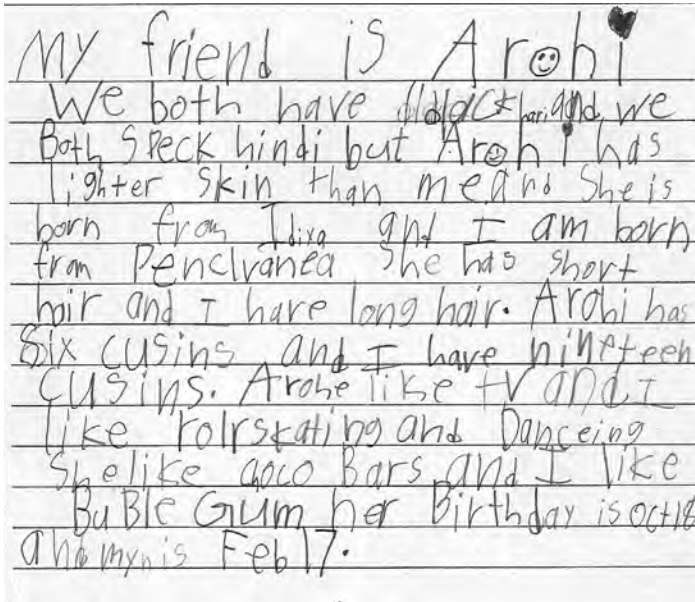
My best friend Mia always take care of me. And that's how I loved, loved, loved my best friend, and there you go."

GRADE 1	P-2	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		4-	4	0

4-: The student clearly names a topic and provides a list-like response that attempts to sustain the writing. It also includes a sense of closure.

4: The student uses appropriate language and integrates multiple examples *(We both speak Hindi; Arohi has lighter skin than me; Arohi has six cousins and I have nineteen cousins).*

0: This response includes inconsistent spelling and punctuation. There are multiple errors in grammar usage *(Arhoi like TV; she like coco bars).*

"My friend is Arohi. We both have black hair and we both speak Hindi, but Arohi has lighter skin than me and she is born from India and I am born from Pennsylvania. She has short hair and I have long hair. Arohi has six cousins and I have nineteen cousins. Arohi like TV and I like roller skating and dancing. She like cocoa bars and I like bubblegum. Her birthday is October 18 and mine is February 17."

GRADE 1	P-3	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		4	2	0

4: The student clearly names a topic and provides a sense of closure.

2: The response includes details that are awkwardly written and, at times, ineffective. Some details are random and unconnected.

0: The response contains inconsistent spelling and punctuation. Capitalization is random. This paper demonstrates a lack of control of conventions.

"My best friend is A'mya. Because we sit together at the cafeteria. And we eat salad, me and A'mya. A'mya love to be my friend. A'mya is taller than me because she is seven. I like to be A'mya friend. And, I got a dog. And, A'mya got a cat. Me and A'mya is happy."

GRADE 1	P-4	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3+	3+	1+

3+: The student provides a topic, but is missing an ending. However, the structure is clear and focused throughout.

3+: This response integrates specific details *(strawberries vs. apples)* to elaborate on the evidence provided.

1+: This response contains issues with spelling and capitalization. Overall, there is a limited control of conventions.
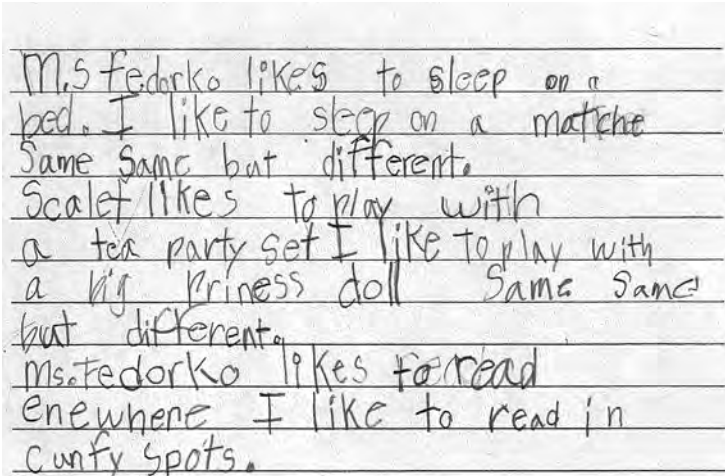
"Maddie is the same as me because she is in my class. Maddie is also the same as me because she sits at the same table as me. We are different because Maddie likes fruit and I don't. I like apples and Maddie likes strawberries. Me and Maddie also both have a brother. We are also different because we do not have the same hair color."

GRADE 1	P-5	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3	4	1

3: This response is focused, but is missing an opening and conclusion.

4: The specific examples the student incorporated in this response *(bed vs. mattress; tea party set vs. big princess doll)* follow the tone of the book.

1: The student incorporates phonetic spelling for out-of-grade level words *(matche/ mattress, enewhere/anywhere, cunfy/comfy)* though punctuation is inconsistent.

"Ms. Fedorko likes to sleep on a bed. I like to sleep on a mattress. Same, same but different. Scarlett likes to play with a tea party set. I like to play with a big princess doll. Same, same but different. Ms. Fedorko likes to read anywhere. I like to read in comfy spots."

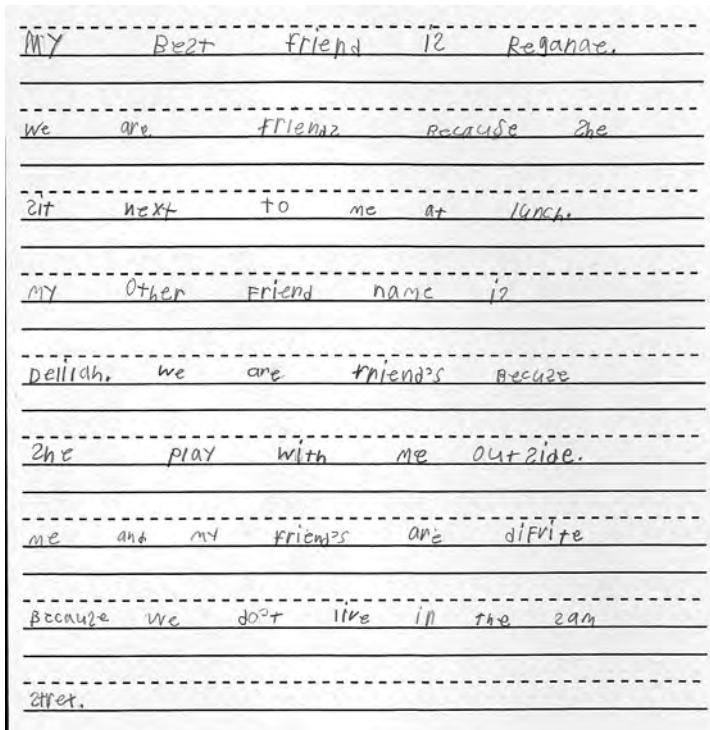| GRADE 1	P-6	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3	3	0
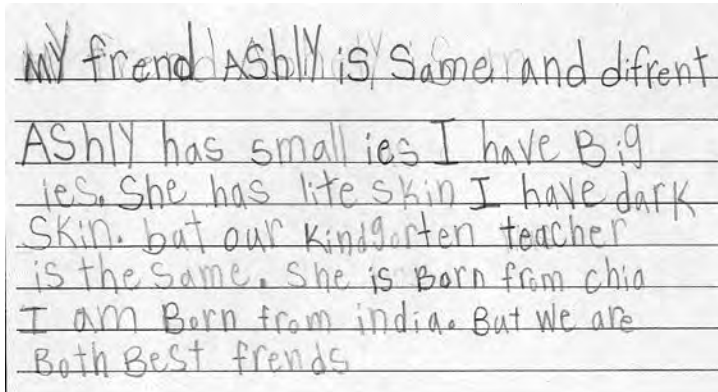
"My friend Ashley is same and different. Ashly has small eyes, I have big eyes. She has light skin, I have dark skin. But, our kindergarten teacher is the same. She is born from China. I am born from India. But, we are both best friends."

3: The response includes a clear topic and the student attempts to provide an ending *(But we are both best friends)*.

3: The student provides several examples/details, but presents them in a list-like fashion *(has small eyes/I have big eyes; light skin/dark skin; born from China/ born from India)*.

0: There is irregular punctuation, and random capitalization throughout. In a short amount of writing, there are also grammar usage and spelling errors, placing this response in the score point 0 category.

GRADE 1	P-7	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3	3-	1-

My Best friend 12 Reganae.
We are frienaz Because 2he
2it next to me at lunch.
My Other Friend name i2
Dellidh, We are friend's Becu2e
2he play with me out2ide.
me and my friem2s are diFVite
Because we do°t live in the 2am
2tret.

"My best friend is Reganae. We are friends because she sit next to me at lunch. My other friend name is Delliah. We are friends because she play with me outside. Me and my friends are different because we don't live in the same street."

3: This response is organized and clear, but it is missing a closing.

3-: The details are a mixture of general *(play outside; on the same street)* and specific *(Reganae, Delliah)*.

1-: This response includes subject/verb agreement issues, spelling issues, backward "s."

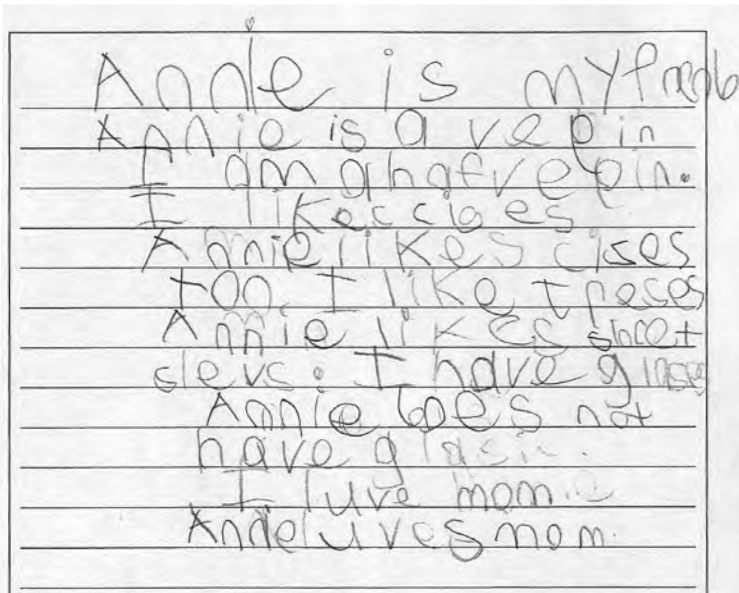| GRADE 1	P-8	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2+	4-	2

2+: This response is missing an introduction to the topic and is missing a conclusion. The structure is clear, though very list-like.

4-: The student uses strong elaboration with relevant and specific details, along with specific word choice (*gymnastics, snow pants, magenta*).

2: This response demonstrates a clear and adequate command of conventions. The response includes above grade vocabulary (*gymnastics, magenta*), much of which is spelled correctly.

"Sadie and I both wear glasses. Sadie and I have different hair. Sadie has orange hair and I have brown hair. Sadie and I both like climbing trees. My favorite fruit is an apple and Sadie's is an orange. Sadie and me both have curly hair. Sadie lives in Kay Street and I live on Farm View Lane. Me and Sadie have the same snow pants; hers are bigger and mine are smaller. Sadie and I both like gymnastics. Sadie and I both like playing games together. But, she likes tag and I like hide and seek. Sadie and me both like swimming in the pool. Sadie and me both like kittens. Sadie and me both like flowers. Sadie and me both like princesses. Me and Sadie both like magenta."

GRADE 1	P-9	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	3	0

"Annie is my friend. Annie is a vegan. I am a half vegan. I like clothes. Annie likes clothes, too. I like dresses. Annie likes short sleeves. I have glasses. Annie does not have glasses. I love mom. Annie loves mom."

2: The student adequately names a topic and shows a basic focus; however, there is no closure.

3-: The student supports the topic and uses vocabulary that is appropriate *(vegan, short sleeves).*

0: This response contains inconsistent use of capital letters. There are spelling, lettering, and punctuation issues.

GRADE 1	P-10	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	3	0

2: This response is missing the introduction of a topic, as well as lacking a conclusion. The structure is weak and uneven.

3: The student uses strong elaboration with relevant and specific details. The response includes high-level vocabulary *(complement)*.

0: This response lacks appropriate capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, and does not demonstrate phonetic awareness.

"So my friend Harper has a dog, but I don't because I have a fish. Harper like Epic, but I don't. So we are the same by we use to have the same teacher. We both complement each other. Harper likes strawberry and so do I. Harper also like me. I like chocolate cake. Harper likes vanilla, but I do not. Harper likes Ms. Klebrat and so do I and she has brown hair and so do I. Harper likes rainbows and so do I."

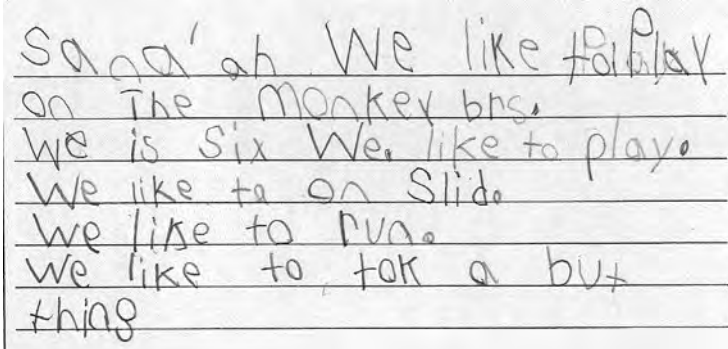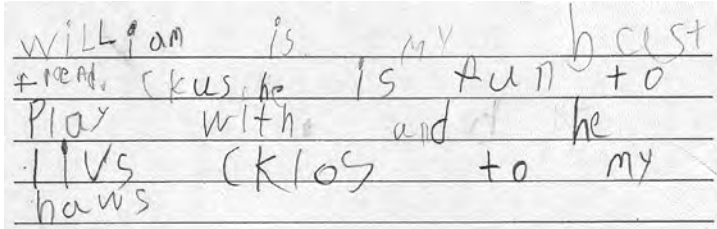| GRADE 1	P-11	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	3-	0
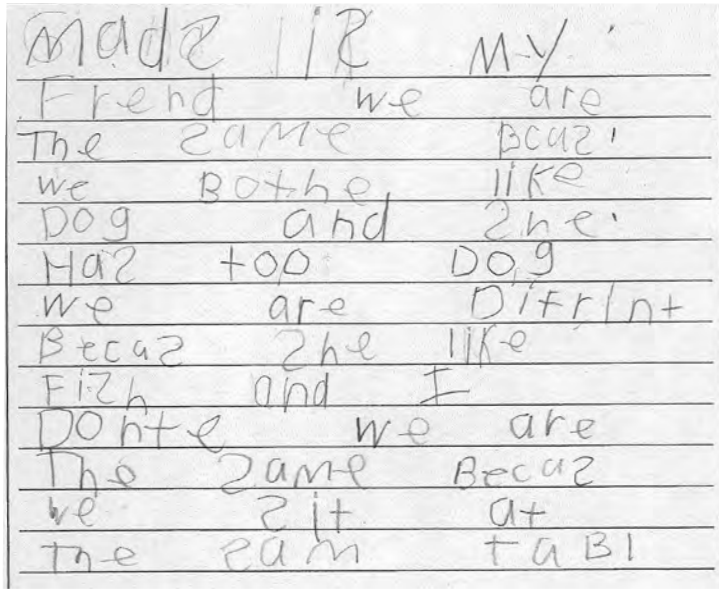
"Maddie is my friend. We are the same because we both like dog and she has two dog. We are different because she like fish and I don't. We are the same because we sit at the same table."
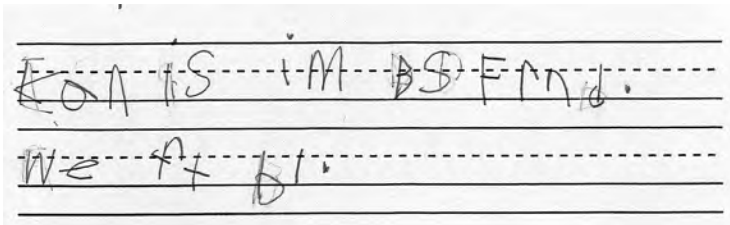
2: The student adequately names a topic and incorporates some structure, but the organization is uneven. The response is unfocused and is missing a conclusion.

3-: The student incorporates adequate elaboration and vocabulary *(We both like dog, and she has two dog).*

0: This response meets the criteria of errors in variety, severity, and density. There is a lack of punctuation and letter formation, with some letters written backwards. The amount of errors in relation to the amount of writing places this response in the score point 0 category.

GRADE 1	P-12	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		1+	2	1-

"Sana'ah we like to play on the monkey bars. We is six. We like to play. We like to on slide. We like to run. We like to talk about thing."

1+: The student does not introduce the topic and is missing a conclusion. The ideas are neither connected nor developed.

2: The student minimally integrates list-like details *(we like to play; we are six; we like to run; we like to talk).*

1-: This response lacks appropriate punctuation and spelling.

GRADE 1	P-13	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		1	1+	0

"William is my best friend because he is fun to play with and he lives close to my house."

1: The student doesn't introduce the topic and provides no closure or visible structure. The writing veers off the topic in that there are no comparisons between similarities and differences.

1+: The student provides vague information *(fun to play with; lives close)*, and no information on how they are the same or different. The response contains simplistic and vague language.

0: This response lacks appropriate capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, and does not demonstrate phonetic awareness.

GRADE 1	P-14	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		1	1	0

"Kayron is my best friend. We like football."

1: When dictated, this undeveloped response provides an introduction *(Kyron is my best friend)*, but is missing a conclusion.

1: This response contains a minimal integration of detail to support the student's friendship with Kayron *(We like football)*.

0: This response shows no command of conventions.

The following optional *First Grade Writer's Checklist* can be used or modified by the teacher to meet the appropriate writing objectives to assist classroom instruction.

First Grade Informational Writer's Checklist		
I wrote a sentence to introduce the main idea.		
I included several details or facts from the text to support the main idea.		
Details or facts are explained in complete sentences for each example provided.		
I wrote a conclusion or ending that connects to the main idea.		
My writing is complete.		
I double-checked my writing for complete sentences, neatness, correct spelling, and punctuation.		
I tried my best!		