

Traits Rubric for K-2

Traits Rubric for Ideas: K-2

Key question: Does the writer engage the reader with fresh information or perspective on a focused topic?

		Not proficient			Proficient		
		1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
		Does not communicate an idea through writing, drawing, or dictation	Attempts to present the idea, but it is vague and there is no support through writing or drawing, or support offered is not connected	Conveys the idea in writing in a general way (e.g., through a sentence), but support is lacking or not convincing	Presents a simple idea (e.g., a story, information, or opinion) with some details in writing	Conveys a rich, clear main idea (e.g., tells a story, provides information, or offers an opinion) using multiple sentences with supporting details	Conveys a clear, focused, and well-developed idea (e.g., through a story, information, or opinion) in writing that is fresh or original
A. Main idea		Uses scribbles or shapes that imitate letters; may write letters randomly; may dictate ideas or labels for pictures	Uses some recognizable letters or words; may include line forms that imitate text; drawing (if present) may be labeled but may not relate to writing	Tries to convey a simple experience or information about a topic using words, but meaning is not entirely clear; drawing (if present) may relate to writing	Conveys a clear idea (e.g., through a story, information, or opinion); drawing (if present) is appropriate to the topic	Conveys a focused main idea; drawing (if present) supports idea	Presents a focused, complete, and fresh or original idea; drawing (if present) enhances focus
B. Details and support		Presents drawing or writing that is lacking details	Provides one or more clues or details in a drawing but does not support main idea; presents no written details	Offers one or two simple details in writing but does not develop them sufficiently (e.g., provides lists without additional explanation); drawing (if present) may add details with limited connection to writing	Includes several written details and/or reasons supporting the idea; drawing (if present) relates to main idea	Features many specific written details and/or reasons that develop or support the idea; drawing (if present) provides additional detail	Uses specific, interesting, important details and/or reasons to develop or support ideas and demonstrate understanding; drawing (if present) adds meaning

Traits Rubric for Organization: K-2

Key question: Does the organizational structure enhance the ideas and make them easier to understand?

	Not proficient			Proficient		
	1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
	Has no obvious structure or organization	Appears to attempt a structure in writing or drawing, but it is incomplete or confusing	Begins developing a structure, but it is basic or confusing in places	Demonstrates a basic structure in writing that supports ideas; includes transitions in the structure	Uses a structure that flows well, with varied transitions and sound sequencing	Provides a structure that highlights the message, with rich and varied transitions and sequencing that enhances meaning
A. Beginning, middle, and end	Has no sense of beginning, middle, or end; drawings may appear random and/or disconnected	Shows a beginning sense of structure in writing or drawing, but it is incomplete or out of order	Begins developing a structure though organization is hard to follow; experiments with a beginning (e.g., "Once upon a time") and/or a middle; includes no clear ending except possibly "The End"	Includes a beginning, middle, and end, though they may not flow together smoothly or be entirely clear	Has a beginning, middle, and end that work together to communicate consistently; includes lead and concluding sentences	Has an inviting beginning, a middle with appropriate details, and a developed ending that is effective, interesting, or thoughtful
B. Transitions	Does not demonstrate ability to order or group words and/or drawings	Attempts to group like words and/or drawings; may attempt limited transitions	Includes limited transitions but relies primarily on simple words (e.g., so, and, then); drawing (if present) may attempt to link ideas	Uses often predictable transitions (e.g., linking and temporal words); drawing (if present) may link ideas	Uses frequently varied transitions to connect main ideas and details; drawing (if present) builds connections	Connects ideas in logical, interesting ways with a variety of transitions; drawing (if present) elaborates connections
C. Sequencing	Shows no sense of sequencing in writing or drawing	Has sequencing that seems random in writing and/or drawing	Includes attempts at sequencing in writing and/or drawing that are confusing or seem out of order	Uses logical sequencing that can be followed by reader in writing; drawing (if present) may also reflect logical sequencing or placement	Puts writing in an order that clarifies meaning; drawing (if present) also extends meaning	Uses organizational structure and sequencing to enhance or extend meaning and clarify main idea; drawing (if present) enhances meaning
D. Title (optional)	Has no title	Has an unrelated or confusing title	Includes a basic title such as The Dog, The Beach, which connects to the main idea	Creates a title that refers to the main idea	Develops an interesting title	Uses an original, insightful, or clever title

Traits Rubric for Voice: K-2

Key question: Does the reader clearly hear this writer speaking in the piece?

	Not proficient			Proficient		
	1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
	Does not suggest feeling, mood, or awareness of audience through writing or drawing	Has limited clues to feeling/mood in writing or drawing; contains few, if any, individual qualities and has limited audience awareness	Expresses predictable feeling/mood in writing and/or drawing; makes some attempt to connect with the reader	Begins to show individual expression in writing, including some awareness of the reader	Includes individual or unique expression; connects with reader	Engages reader fully and reflects the writer's unique personality
A. Feelings/mood	Expresses little or no feeling/mood	Offers hints of feeling/mood through words, phrases, and/or drawing, but is not clear	Expresses predictable feelings or personal opinions in writing and/or drawing, though may be repetitious	Conveys identifiable feelings or personal opinions in writing; drawing (if present) may support feelings or opinions	Features writing that is individual and expressive; drawing (if present) highlights individuality	Uses writing intentionally to display a variety of emotions; drawing (if present) enhances emotional appeal
B. Individual expression	Does not show personal expression through writing or drawing	Demonstrates emerging individual expression in writing and/or drawing, though it may lack personal connection to or interest in the topic	Contains some personal feelings or occasional point of view in writing or drawing	Expresses individual perspective and/or opinion in writing; drawing (if present) conveys individuality	Helps reader understand personal feelings or point of view, even if they are unpopular or controversial; drawing (if present) enhances personality	Takes risks that enhance meaning and commitment; conveys writer's unmistakably individual, highly original point of view and/or purpose; drawing (if present) heightens commitment
C. Engagement/audience awareness	Has unclear response to task in writing or drawing; shows no audience awareness in writing and/or drawing	Treats topic generically in writing or drawing; audience awareness appears unclear or accidental in writing and/or drawing	Attempts to connect with reader but is unsuccessful; may express a general awareness that writing/drawing will be seen by someone else	Connects with reader in some places; conveys awareness of reader; drawing (if present) supports connection	Connects with reader in an engaging treatment of topic; drawing (if present) enhances connection and/or engagement	Creates close connection with reader, demonstrating unique perspective on topic; shows a clear sense of audience throughout; drawing (if present) supports perspective

Traits Rubric for Word Choice: K-2

Key question: Does the author's choice of words convey precise and compelling meaning and/or create a vivid picture for the reader?

		Not proficient			Proficient		
		1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
		Makes inconsistent letter shapes; includes imitative writing or does not write at all	Begins to include a few words, but word choice is difficult to decode; vocabulary may rely on environmental print	Conveys topic through word groups and phrases with possible help from drawing; vocabulary is limited to known, safe words and may be repetitious	Uses words that stand on their own to convey message; uses basic vocabulary correctly; may attempt a few creative word choices	Has precise and/or vivid word choice; shows vocabulary is expanding through variety of words	Uses words that reflect thorough and deep understanding of topic and appeal fully to senses; includes colorful words and phrasing showing wide vocabulary
A. Word meaning		Uses drawings to stand in for words and phrases; writes letters inconsistently and in strings	Uses some decodable and simple, recognizable words; may attempt phrases and/or word patterns	Includes general or ordinary words, sometimes incorrectly; may attempt new or challenging words but they may not fit the message	Uses favorite and/or safe words correctly; experiments with more sophisticated words with some success	Uses everyday words well; often employs more precise and accurate words to create variety	Uses precise, accurate, fresh, or creative words and phrases throughout writing; demonstrates variety in word choice
B. Word quality		Uses no descriptive words	Settles for words or phrases that are comfortable or simple and are repetitive (e.g., names, letters, high-frequency words)	Uses fairly common words; has some limited success with attempts to use descriptive words to create images	Uses some descriptive words to provide details and to make the writing more vivid, or to create images	Creates multiple, vivid images in writing through descriptive language	Consistently produces vivid, detailed images that linger in the reader's mind; may use metaphors, similes, and/or other figurative language
C. Word usage		Copies environmental print or does not write at all; may use words that are displayed on the classroom walls (e.g., North, South), but writing does not make sense	Uses functional language and environmental print words correctly; may be repetitious	Relies on slang, safe, or simple words	Uses basic and common words to convey message, sometimes including more precise or accurate words	Demonstrates ability to choose words for accuracy and to fit specific purposes (e.g., synonyms, adjectives, adverbs, text type); if needed, uses domain-specific vocabulary, usually correctly	Consistently chooses rich, sophisticated language to enhance precision and accuracy; uses precise domain-specific language, when appropriate

Traits Rubric for Sentence Fluency: K-2

Key question: Does the author control sentences so the piece flows smoothly when read aloud?

	Not proficient			Proficient		
	1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
	Has no sentences or sentence parts (e.g., uses disconnected words)	Includes part of a sentence that is decodable (e.g., “Cus it is clu”); writing contains no sense of rhythm	Contains most of a single, decodable sentence (e.g., “Like bunne becuz ther riree Fas”); begins sentences in the same way, with choppy rhythm	Correctly uses simple sentence patterns but with little variety; may have mechanical rhythm	Employs multiple sentence patterns, including a variety of sentence beginnings; has rhythm that is fluid and easy to read aloud	Uses a variety of sentences that flow smoothly and are enjoyable to read aloud; includes sentence phrasing (e.g., dialogue, questions) to enhance meaning
A. Sentence structure	Shows writing that mimics letters and words; may string marks or letters across the page, moving left to right	Has short, phrase-like sentences, some of which are decodable	Uses simple sentences, usually correctly	Uses simple sentences correctly; may experiment with varied sentence patterns	Conveys simple and varied sentences effectively	Uses correct sentence structure that is varied throughout writing; is frequently creative
B. Sentence variety	Contains no sentences or sentence fragments	Uses short, repetitive patterns; has no sense of rhythm; may be incomplete or inappropriate in places	Begins sentences the same way, with few exceptions; uses sentences that are about the same length, resulting in choppiness	Varies sentence lengths and beginnings	Has a variety of sentence beginnings and lengths, which results in even rhythm and effective communication	Purposefully uses a variety of sentence beginnings and lengths to enhance and extend meaning
C. Connecting sentences	Is apparent that any transition words are accidental choices among other random words	May include some simple transitions (e.g., and, but) in partial sentences	Includes a few simple transitions that serve as links between phrases (e.g., and, then); has some repetition	Uses simple transitional words and/or phrases appropriately	Uses transitional words and/or phrases to improve readability	Uses varied transitional words and/or phrases smoothly and effectively to enhance rhythm and readability of writing
D. Sentence rhythms	Produces random words that cannot be read as writing	Features writing that sounds disjointed and awkward; piece is difficult to read aloud; has fragments that are difficult to string together	Is difficult to read aloud due to uneven sentence structure; is bogged down by repetitive writing	Has somewhat mechanical rhythm, though writing is easily read aloud	Incorporates rhythm and flow frequently that feels natural to read aloud	Uses natural rhythm and cadence to create a flow that is easy and pleasurable to read aloud

Traits Rubric for Conventions: K-2

Key question: How much editing is required before the piece can be shared as a final product?

(Note: For the trait of Conventions, grade level matters. Expectations should be based on grade level and include only skills that have been taught.)

	Not proficient			Proficient		
	1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
	Demonstrates little or no understanding of grade-level conventions	Has many types of convention errors scattered throughout text	Handles conventions well at times but makes errors that impair readability	Applies standard grade-level conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar) accurately on most occasions	Shows few errors with only minor editing needed to publish; may try more complex tasks in conventions	Uses conventions effortlessly without significant errors; may use conventions to creatively enhance message
A. Spelling	Uses letter strings (i.e., pre-phonetic) indicating gaps in knowing letter/sound relationships; has emerging print sense	Attempts phonetic spelling (e.g., MTR, UM, KD) that is mostly decodable; may include some simple words spelled correctly	Has spotty spelling of grade-level, high-frequency words; spells some high-frequency words correctly and uses phonetic spelling (e.g., MOSTR, HUMN, KLOSD) on less common words	Shows generally correct spelling of grade-level, high-frequency words; uses phonetic spelling on less frequent words (e.g., MONSTUR, HUMUN, CLOSED)	Usually spells grade-level, high-frequency words accurately; spells less frequent/difficult words logically with some correctly spelled	Spells nearly all words correctly, including grade-level, high-frequency words and more difficult words
B. Punctuation	Has no punctuation present	Attempts some random punctuation	Experiments with end punctuation (e.g., period, question mark, exclamation mark)	Has end punctuation that is usually correct	Uses end punctuation that is usually correct; attempts other punctuation, sometimes correctly (e.g., commas, colons, quotation marks)	Has end punctuation that is usually correct; often correctly uses advanced punctuation (e.g., commas in series, quotation marks); may use punctuation for style and effect
C. Capitalization	Contains no evidence that capital letters are for a particular purpose, if used at all	Uses upper and lower case letters inconsistently	Has inconsistent capitalization but shows signs of appropriate use (e.g., some starts of sentences, names, or titles)	Uses capitals at the beginnings of sentences and for some names and/or titles	Uses capitals at the beginning of sentences and fairly consistently for names, titles, and/or proper nouns	Uses capitals consistently for name, titles, and/or proper nouns, as well as sentence beginnings; may use creative capitalization (e.g., all upper case for emphasis)
D. Grammar/usage	Demonstrates no understanding of basic grammar	Uses some grammatical constructions	Attempts standard grammar, but effect is uneven, overly simplistic, or has many missing parts	Often uses noun/pronoun agreement, verb tenses, and subject/verb agreement correctly in simple constructions	Uses correct grammar nearly all the time	Shows consistent and correct use of grammar at grade-level expectations and frequently beyond

Traits Rubric for Presentation: K-2

Key question: Is the finished piece easy to read, polished in presentation, and pleasing to the eye?

	Not proficient			Proficient		
	1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Capable	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional
	Strings letters or words together with no sense of spacing; uses drawings/graphics (if present) that may not support writing and are randomly placed	Begins to make letters, but they are randomly placed; drawings/graphics (if present) are not well connected to writing	Shows some discrepancies in letter shape; has mostly correct spacing of letters and words; drawings/graphics (if present) match writing and fit layout	Produces readable piece, with letters, words, and sentences properly spaced; drawings/graphics (if present) include pictures, charts, tables, graphs that are logically placed with writing	Is easy to read, with appropriate spacing; drawings/graphics (if present) connect to and support writing	Uses polished handwriting with all elements properly spaced and good use of white space; drawings/graphics (if present) are placed purposefully to enrich the text
A. Handwriting	Has no consistent shape to marks or letters; shows alphabetic understanding may be incomplete	Shapes some letters properly, but others are difficult to recognize or inaccurate	Shows inconsistencies in letter shape, but many letters are identifiable	Has consistent letter shape that makes most letters and words readable	Uses letters that are well formed and easy to read	Features handwriting that can be read easily, is attractive, and shows style
B. Spacing	Strings together letters and words without spacing or margins	Shows random attempts to use spacing between letters and words and incorporate margins on page	Has some letters and words that are readable; uses mostly correct spacing	Includes proper spacing for most letters, words, and sentences	Has words and sentences that are easy to read, appropriately spaced, and correct; indents first line of piece	Features words and sentences that are consistently and evenly spaced throughout; uses margins that frame the piece; consistently indents or blocks paragraphs (if used)
C. Drawings and graphics (optional)	Places drawings randomly on the page in a way that does not support print attempt	Positions drawings or graphics so that they break up the flow of writing and are distracting	Begins to place drawings or graphics to reflect topic and meaning of text	Places drawings or graphics logically	Uses drawings or graphics to improve connection to ideas	Places drawings or graphics creatively to effectively enhance meaning