

Reading and Writing
Continua

Frontier School Division



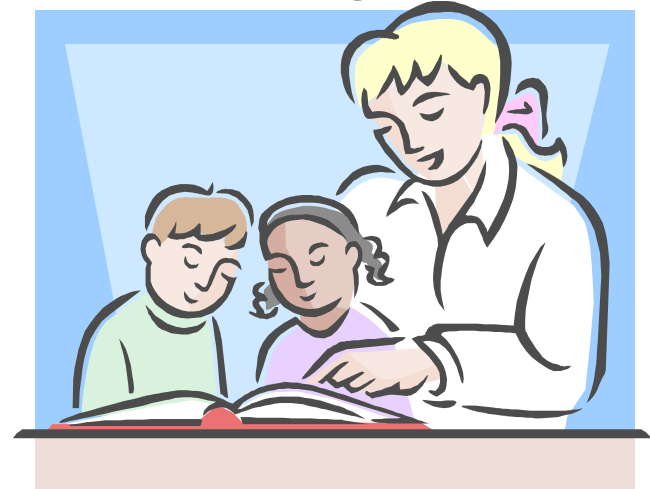
Introduction

- Teachers use a continuum to systematically observe what students “can do” and are “learning to do” in literacy learning.
- The teacher and students can use the continua to discuss and reflect on the student’s knowledge, skills, strategies, and attitudes in reading and writing.

Rationale

The information from continua

- informs instruction
- provides a starting point for discussion with students, parents and colleagues.



Storage and Use of the Continua

- Teachers should have an individual continuum for each student that will be the working copy throughout the school year.
- Schools must decide where to store the permanent copies of the reading and writing continua.
- Schools must decide how teachers will show their students' growth on both the working and permanent copies.



Storage and Use of the Continua

- Only one copy of the Reading and Writing continua will be kept permanently in the cumulative file and added to each year by the current teacher.
- Transfer year end information from the working copy onto the student's permanent cumulative file copy.

Sample permanent copy

2005 represents end of grade 6. 2006 represents end of grade 7.

FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION READING CONTINUUM Observable Student Characteristics

Fluent	Proficient
<p>2005 - Knows and uses interactive processes to set personal and group reading goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Asks relevant questions to support an analysis of the text.— Identifies language (e.g. metaphors, imagery, irony and satire) and visual images that evoke emotion. <p>2005 - Distinguishes between fact and opinion in text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Distinguishes difference among a variety of form/genres (e.g. fact, fiction, fantasy).— Explains, with text support, how the author's use of language and techniques creates the characters, setting and plot.— Identifies the theme, conflict/type of problem with text support.— Demonstrates a mature outlook when reading sensitive issues.— Reads a variety of texts to find information. <p>2005 - Self-monitors time spent reading to ensure engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Sets personally challenging reading goals. <p>2005 - Uses the various components of expository text to construct and maintain meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Visualizes and demonstrates understanding of what is not stated but is implied in the text.— Responds personally, critically and creatively to text in terms of theme, author's purpose and style. <p>2006 - Uses increasingly complex vocabulary, encountered in reading, in oral and written responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Visualizes and responds critically to author's creation of mental images. <p>2006 - Immerses self in text so that story detail is recalled emotionally.</p> <p>2006 - Incorporates newfound awareness of sensitive issues into own thinking.</p>

Completing the Reading and Writing Continua

- It is expected that each student from Kindergarten to Senior 1 be profiled on the Frontier Reading and Writing Continua.
- The following steps can be used to complete the continua:



Completing the Reading and Writing Continua (con't)

- At the start of the school year, locate the reading and writing copies from the previous school year.
- Examine these copies to help focus your observations for this year.



Completing the Reading and Writing Continua (con't)

- Begin gathering work samples early in the year.
- Keep a portfolio for each student in both reading and writing.
- Collect data related to the specific, observable characteristics identified on the reading and writing continua.

Completing the Reading and Writing Continua (con't)

- Revisit, near the end of the first term, the most recent data collected so that you can begin to fill in the continua.
- Share the information with parents and students during first term reporting.



Completing the Reading and Writing Continua (con't)

- Revisit each student's reading and writing continua by recording any changes and progress on an ongoing basis.
- Use opportunities such as the Frontier Divisional Assessments and provincial assessments to add to your information.

Sample working copy

2006 represents progress in grade 7.

FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION READING CONTINUUM Observable Student Characteristics

Fluent	Proficient
<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Knows and uses interactive processes to set personal and group reading goals.— Asks relevant questions to support an analysis of the text.— Identifies language (e.g. metaphors, imagery, irony and satire) and visual images that evoke emotion.- Distinguishes between fact and opinion in text.— Distinguishes difference among a variety of form/genres (e.g. fact, fiction, fantasy).— Explains, with text support, how the author's use of language and techniques creates the characters, setting and plot.— Identifies the theme, conflict/type of problem with text support.— Demonstrates a mature outlook when reading sensitive issues.— Reads a variety of texts to find information.- Self-monitors time spent reading to ensure engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Sets personally challenging reading goals.Sept. 05 - Uses the various components of expository text to construct and maintain meaning.— Visualizes and demonstrates understanding of what is not stated but is implied in the text.— Responds personally, critically and creatively to text in terms of theme, author's purpose and style.Jan. 06 - Uses increasingly complex vocabulary, encountered in reading, in oral and written responses.— Visualizes and responds critically to author's creation of mental images.March 06 - Immerses self in text so that story detail is recalled emotionally.Dec 05 - Incorporates newfound awareness of sensitive issues into own thinking.

Completing the Reading and Writing Continua



- Re-examine and update the continua near the end of the year
- Submit a Class Summary sheet which lists every student in your class and their current status on both the Frontier Reading and Writing Continua to your ELA consultant.

Frequently Asked Questions

● **Can students be in more than one stage?**

- Yes, you often find that student performance will span two or three stages.
- A student's behaviors seldom fall neatly into only one stage.
- Children develop at different rates.
- This is not a scope and sequence of skills or a scoring rubric/checklist.
- The descriptors reflect characteristics of typical readers and writers at milestone stages of development.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How can I record on my class summary sheet students who are in more than one stage?**
 - Reflect on the student's current knowledge, skills, strategies, and attitudes in reading and writing.
 - Check the one or two stages that best describe the student's stage of independence in reading and writing.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What tools do I use to find at which stage my student is reading and writing?**

- Some useful tools for assessment for reading and writing are



Frequently Asked Questions

Writing	Reading
- Checklists	- Checklists
-Dated anecdotal notes	- Dated anecdotal notes
- Dated writing samples over time (samples from writing folder and content areas)	- Running record and/or miscue analysis
- Journals	- Inventories
- Conferences	- Questionnaires
	- Notes/observations of literature circles and or group discussions
	- Journals
	- Conferences (With individual students)
	- Strategies from ELA Implementation Guide

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Where can I find some of these tools?**
 - These and other useful tools can be found in
 - The ELA Foundation and Implementation Documents
 - Success for All Learners Document
 - Other resources such as Orchestrating Success in Reading by Dawn Reithaug.



Frequently Asked Questions

- **How does the Characteristics of Text portion of the reading continuum help me in observing my students?**
 - This portion provides a starting point for your observations of what the student “can do” in reading.
 - There is no one text or type of text to be used in reading. As you are looking at what your students are reading you can begin to locate the stage of development on the reading continuum.
 - High interest, low vocabulary books are not reflected in any category of text characteristics on this continuum. Use of these books is based on the needs of the student.
 - Data will not be collected on the Characteristics of Text portion of the reading continuum.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How can I understand developmental stages vs. grade level?**
 - In any one class there is always a wide range of ability. Children will develop as readers and writers at different rates throughout the year.
 - There are no grade levels but ages can be a starting point to focus teachers' observation of students.
 - Approximate ages per stage are on the next slide.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I understand developmental stages vs. grade level?

Approximate Age	Stage on Writing Continuum	Stage on Reading Continuum
4 – 6	Emergent	Emergent
5 – 7	Early	Early
6 – 8	Developing	Developing
7 – 9	Transitional	Transitional
8 – 10	Expanding	Expanding
9 – 11	Bridging	Bridging
10 – 12	Conventional	Fluent
11 – 13	Connecting	Proficient
12 – 14	Proficient	Independent

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I understand developmental stages vs. grade level?

- Ages are given as a starting point to focus teacher observation of student writing. Because students develop at different rates, ages should not appear on continua shared with parents.
- It can be disheartening to parents if their child's stage does not match the age range shown.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How do I address parents' concerns?**
“Where should my child be?”
 - Use the information on the continua as a starting point for dialogue about what the child can do, is learning to do, and how the child has progressed over time.
 - Parents need to know what the plan is for moving their child further along the continuum and what the role is for student, parent, and teacher.
 - It is appropriate to say to parents that most students of this age are within this/these range/ranges.
 - The continuum can also be a starting point for looking into other issues that may impact on the child's literacy learning.

Frequently Asked Questions

● **When should I start filling in the reading and writing continua?**

(The following are steps that you may consider in completing the continuum)

- Familiarize yourself with the student characteristics on the reading and writing continua. You need to have an idea of what you should be observing in your students.
- Collect information through various means regarding what each student can do in reading and writing.

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I start filling in the reading and writing continua?

- When you have sufficient evidence of what a child “can do,” document it on the working copy of the continuum.
- You may want to use a date or a different colour or symbol to indicate the time of year when you noticed the student consistently exhibiting the behaviour.

(Note: Characteristics have to be consistently observable. You should see evidence of the behaviour at least three times.)

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I start filling in the reading and writing continua?

- Continue to collect and gather information on each student's literacy learning and continue to update the information in the continua.
- At the end of each school year, the reading and writing continua should be accurate and up to date.
- Transfer the year end information to the permanent copy in the cumulative file.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Should I be looking at last year's continuum to guide my instruction?**
 - Yes, this is the place to start. The continua from the previous year should be accessible in each student's file.
 - Growth does not stop at the end of a grade; it is continuous.
 - Professional dialogue with the previous teacher is a good way to learn about the needs of your students and how to best plan instruction to meet those needs.

Frequently Asked Questions

● **How should the continua be shared with parents?**

- The working copy can be shared at any time during the school year with parents to give a current picture of what the child can do and is learning to do at any point in time
- Sending the continua home may be confusing for parents. They need to talk about the stages with the teacher and to see evidence that supports the student's learning.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How often should the continua be filled out?**
 - Filling out the reading and writing continua should be **ongoing** throughout the school year.
 - It is recommended that you complete your initial observations early in the school year, to get a good picture of what your students “can do” and are learning to do.
 - The reading and writing continua **must be** up to date and current prior to the end of the school year

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How much time will it take for me to profile each student on the continua?**
 - The profiling of students on the continua takes very little time; it is the gathering of evidence that takes time, but it is a part of day-to-day formative assessment.



Frequently Asked Questions

- **Can I use these continua with Special Needs Students?**
 - Yes, profiling what *any* student can do informs learning and instruction.
 - Profiling also helps to show progress, however, collaboration with another teacher or resource teacher may be needed in order to do this.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How much growth should I see in each child at the end of each year?**
 - Different children grow at different rates and not always in a linear fashion.
 - It takes longer to move through some stages than others.
 - Different children require more practice and instruction at various stages. However, from year to year, growth should be evident.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What if a child does not show growth?**
 - If a child does not show growth over an extended period of time, it is necessary to look further to see what other factors are impacting learning.



Frequently Asked Questions

- **How does the information on continua help me in my instruction?**
 - Teachers can use continua to
 - Monitor and identify classroom trends in reading and writing
 - Group students for instruction based on needs
 - Identify what aspects need to be modeled and practiced in the classroom
 - Give a positive look at what students can do
 - Guide instruction, theme/resources, selection of materials

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is done with the data from class summaries?**
 - Data collected from class summaries will help the division and individual schools to determine whether more professional development on the continua is needed, and may be used to help schools develop their literacy plans and school plans.