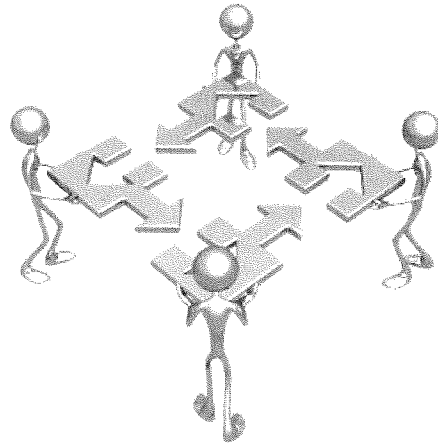




English Language Arts

Reading and Writing Continua



**An Information Handbook
for
Frontier School Division Teachers**

Revised June 2010

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Appendices:

A – Using the Continua to Plan for My Class (blank)

Using the Continua to Plan for My Class (sample)

B – Copies of Continua

- Writing Continuum**
- Reading Continuum**
 - o Observable Student Characteristics**
 - o Characteristics of Text**

Purpose

A continuum is a visual representation of observable descriptors depicting the developmental stages of literacy learning.

Teachers use a continuum to systematically observe what students “can do” and are “learning to do” in literacy learning. The teacher and student can use the continua to discuss and reflect on the student’s knowledge, skills, strategies, and attitudes in reading and writing. The information from continua informs instruction and provides a starting point for discussion with students, parents, and colleagues.

- Continua serve various purposes in the classroom, school, area, division, and the larger community.
- Continua are resources that support teachers in planning for instruction, monitoring and assessing learning, and reporting student progress to parents.
- In the multilevel classroom, continua are an effective means of planning instruction and assessment across more than two grades.
- When used throughout the year in a school, in a school division, and in the province, continua may increase the consistency of student performance of provincial learning outcomes across grades.

Background History

The development of student continua in Frontier School Division began with the Area 3 Early Literacy Project in September, 1999. This project focused on classroom-based literacy assessment. An outcome of the project was the development of three continua for early years: Reading, Writing, and Oral Language.

Following discussions with middle years’ teachers, administrators, and the divisional assessment committee, a decision was made to expand the writing continuum to include middle years writers. In the fall of 2002 the process of middle years continua development began with the Divisional Middle Year’s Committee.

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*“Reading and writing should be treated as complementary activities; work on one informing and enhancing the other.”*

- Gordon Wells

The Frontier writing continuum went through a process of development and revision and is now an extended writing continuum to be used in classrooms from Kindergarten to Grade 9.

Due to the success of the writing continuum, it was decided to also extend the reading continuum. This process began in May, 2004 and the Draft Continuum was completed in May, 2005. Implementation of the Frontier Reading Continuum began in September, 2005. Based on teacher feedback and recent developments in our understanding of literacy, revisions to both continua are on-going.

It is important to note that in all of these Frontier projects and committees, the Manitoba English Language Arts Curriculum was the foundation of all development. The descriptors for all of the continua have been developed from clusters of learning outcomes identified in the curriculum as observable behaviours and characteristics of learners.

#### Storage and Use of the Continua

Completed individual student Reading and Writing Continua must be stored in the student's cumulative file so they are accessible to teaching staff who may require information about a student's ability. The classroom teacher must use a duplicate or working copy of the continua on which to track progress throughout the year. At the end of the year, the information from this working copy is used to update the Reading and Writing Continua in the cumulative file.

The completed continua provide valuable information on what each child is capable of doing. This information is useful to various stakeholders including

- the current ELA teacher
- other teachers who teach or who will teach this student
- parents or guardians
- support personnel at the school including the resource teacher and other consultants/specialists

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"A novel or poem or play remains merely inkspots on paper until a reader transforms them into a set of meaningful symbols. The literary work exists in the live circuit set up between the reader and text."

- Louise Rosenblatt

The information contained on the continua assists the current ELA teacher by informing further instruction for that student, assisting with grouping of students for instruction, and identifying trends and needs in the classroom literacy program.

Completing the Reading and Writing Continua

It is expected that each student from Kindergarten to Grade 9 be profiled on the Frontier Reading and Writing Continua. Teachers can use the following steps:

1. At the start of the school year, locate copies of the reading and writing continua from the previous year.
2. Examine these copies to help focus your observations and plan for instruction.
3. Begin gathering work samples and dated anecdotal notes early.
4. Collect data related to the specific, observable characteristics identified on the reading and writing continua. This data may be kept in a portfolio for each student.
5. Use the data collected throughout each term to update the reading and writing continua.
6. Share the information with parents, guardians, and students throughout the year. This communication highlights what students can do and are learning to do.
7. Use opportunities such as the Frontier Divisional Assessments and provincial assessments to add to your information.
8. At year end ensure that the information from the working copy of the continua is transferred to the permanent copies stored in the student's cumulative file

"I regard meaning as the 'given' in all reading – the source of anticipation, the guide to being on track, and the outcome and reward of the effort."

- Marie Clay

Reporting on the Continua (*Using the Continua to Plan for My Class*)

Using the Continua to Plan for My Class is intended to summarize the reading and writing continua information on a class. It allows teachers to reflect on the strengths and needs of their class so they can target outcomes and strategies to meet the needs of their students.

Teachers must complete this sheet at the end of the fall, winter, and spring terms by the due date assigned by their principal. Principals will use this sheet to lead discussions with teachers regarding the progress of their students and their plans to address the needs of their classes. Administrators will use this information to aid in literacy planning for the school.

Principals must forward a copy of *Using the Continua to Plan for My Class* to their area superintendent three times per year. At the end of the year or the beginning of the new school year this sheet should be shared with the teacher who will be teaching this group of students.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. 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. A continuum 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.

2. How can I record students who are in more than one stage on my *Using the Continua to Plan for My Class* Sheet?

Reflect on the student's current knowledge, skills, strategies, and attitudes in reading and writing. Identify the one stage that best describes the student's level of independence in reading and writing. This would be the stage that has the most observable student characteristics checked off.

Note: The continua are formative assessment tools that show where a student is working while the planning sheet is a summative tool that shows the number of students who have mastered each stage of development.



"Those who don't read good books have no advantage over those who can't." - Mark Twain

3. What do I use to determine at which stage my students are reading and writing?

Some useful forms of assessment are:

Writing	Reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ dated writing samples over time (samples from writing folders/portfolios) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ running records and/or miscue analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ writing samples from content area subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ questionnaires or inventories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ dated anecdotal notes from focused observation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ conferences with students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ journals, reading/writing logs, portfolios 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ checklists 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ notes from group discussions (literature circles, book clubs, guided writing and reading) 	

Evidence gathered using the assessment tools above may be collected in student portfolios.

Remember – “You can’t make it up – you have to back it up.” You must have evidence, and you must see evidence of the behavior at least three times.

4. Where can I find out more about these forms of assessment?

These and other useful tools can be found in the following Manitoba Education publications:

- The ELA Foundation for Implementation
- Success for All Learners
- Independent Together

“If you don’t have time to read, you don’t have the time or tools to write.”

- Stephen King

5. How does the “Characteristics of Text” portion of the reading continuum help me in observing my students?

There is no one text or type of text to use in reading. A variety of text are important in balanced literacy. As you are looking at what your students are reading you can begin to locate the stage in the characteristics of text and correlate it to the student’s stage of development on the reading continuum. Text provides a starting point for your observations of what the student can do in reading.

High interest, low vocabulary texts are not reflected in any category of text characteristics on this continuum. Use of these books is based on the needs of the student.

6. 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. Below are the approximate ages per stage.

Approximate Age	Stage on Writing Continuum	Stage on Reading Continuum
4 – 6	Emergent	Emergent
5 – 7	Early	Beginning
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

~~~~~  
*“You write to communicate to the hearts and minds of others what’s burning inside you. And we edit to let the fire show through the smoke.”*  
- Arthur Polotnik

Ages are given as a starting point to focus teacher observation of a student. 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.

**7. Can I use these continua with Special Needs students?**

Yes. Profiling what any student can do informs learning and instruction and shows progress over time. Collaboration with another teacher or resource teacher may be needed in order to do this.

**8. How do I address parental 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/guardians 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.

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

The following are steps to consider in completing the continuum:

- a. Familiarize yourself with the student characteristics on the reading and writing continua. You will then have an idea of what you should be observing in your students.
- b. Collect information through various means regarding what each student can do in reading and writing.
- c. Your school should establish a common coding system to indicate the time of year the student exhibited the characteristics. This should be represented as a legend on the continua.
- d. Continue to collect and gather information on each student's literacy learning and continue to update the information on the continua.

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“To read is to empower . . . To empower is to write . . . To write is to influence . . . To influence is to change . . . To change is to live.” - Jane Evershed

- e. At the end of each school year, the reading and writing continua should be accurate and up-to-date.
- f. Transfer the year-end information to the permanent copy in the cum file.

10. Should I be looking at last year's continua and *Using the Continua to Plan for My Class* to guide my instruction?

Yes, this is a 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 about the needs of your students is a good way to learn about them and how to best plan instruction to meet those needs.

11. How should the continuum be shared with parents?

Continua must be shared 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 continuum home may be confusing for parents. They need to talk about it with the teacher and to see evidence that supports the student's learning.

12. How much time will it take for me to profile each student on the continuum?

Profiling the students on the continuum takes very little time. It is the gathering of evidence that takes time, but it's part of day-to-day formative assessment.

13. 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.

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*"By elevating your reading, you will improve your writing or at least tickle your thinking."*

- William Safire

**14. 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.

**15. 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

**16. What is done with the data from *Using the Continua to Plan for My Class?***

Data collected from this document helps the individual school and the division determine whether more professional development on particular aspects of the continua is needed. Data should be used to help schools develop their literacy plans and school plans.

**17. Where can I get more information on using continua?**

Manitoba Education supports the use of continua and refers to them in many of their documents, notably the ELA Foundation for Implementation. As well, Frontier School Division contains support materials on their website under Programs and linked to English Language Arts. The ELA Consultant for your area as well as members of the Continua Learning Community are also good resources for further information and training.

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"The greatest part of a writer's time is spend in reading, in order to write; a man will turn over half a library to make one book." - Samuel Johnson

Finally, the following references may be utilized as they helped form the basis for our continua:

References

- Education Department of Western Australia: First Steps Reading Development Continuum
- Fountas, I. and Pinnell: Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3 – 6
- Hill, Bonnie Campbell: Development Continuums: A Framework for Literacy Instruction and Assessment K-8. Norwood, MA; Christopher-Gordon 1994
- Manitoba English Language Arts Curriculum of Outcomes and Standards Foundation for Implementation

USING THE CONTINUA TO PLAN FOR MY CLASS

Teacher		School Year		Grade	
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WRITING STAGE	Emergent	Early	Developing	Transitional	Expanding	Bridging	Conventional	Connecting	Proficient	READING STAGE	Emergent	Beginning	Developing	Transitional	Expanding	Bridging	Fluent	Proficient	Independent		
	Fall											Fall									
Winter										Winter											
Spring										Spring											

* If you have a multigrade class, fill out the above table on separate sheets for each grade level.

	Fall (due date: _____)	Winter (due date: _____)	Spring (due date: _____)
Strengths			
Needs			
Outcomes/ Strategies			

Recommendations for next year:

USING THE CONTINUA TO PLAN FOR MY CLASS

Teacher	Mr. X	School Year	2010-11	Grade	4
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WRITING STAGE	Emergent	Early	Developing	Transitional	Expanding	Bridging	Conventional	Connecting	Proficient	READING STAGE	Emergent	Beginning	Developing	Transitional	Expanding	Bridging	Fluent	Proficient	Independent
	Fall	1	1	3	9	5	1					Fall			2	7	9	2	
Winter		1	2	10	6	2				Winter			1	8	8	3			
Spring			2	9	5	4				Spring			1	6	8	5			

* If you have a multigrade class, fill out the above table on separate sheets for each grade level.

	Fall (due date: <u>Nov. 12</u>)	Winter (due date: <u>March 11</u>)	Spring (due date: <u>May 27</u>)
Strengths	Conventions Activating activities Independent reading	Most reading wider variety of genres	Strong in mechanics/conventions Eager readers Beginning to do independent research
Needs	Self-reflection strategies More mini-lessons on non-fiction Direct instruction on using agenda books for homework Attendance concerns with 5 students Respect for each other	Strategies for revision Revision on the computer Attendance concerns with 4 students Respect: Listening to each other	Reinforcing behaviour when listening A few starting to refuse to do homework Some still need to be more respectful towards other students
Outcomes/ Strategies	Self-reflection 1. Metacognitive Rdng. Inventory (Strategies, Pg. 293) 2. Goal setting (Pg. 298) More use of all text cues in non-fiction – 2.1.3 Textual cues SQ3R Reciprocal Reading	4.2.2 Revise content to create an interesting impression & check for sequence of ideas. Revising Work in Progress Cut and Paste Computer Revision	4.4.3 Attentive Listening Demonstrate Appropriate Behaviours Listen-Think-Pair-Share SWIM Fishbowl

Recommendations for next year:

Work on listening to each other when they are discussing – early in the year. Encourage X, Y, and Z to read different kinds of material. Discuss homework concerns with parents as early in the year as possible. Review regularly and post active listening and group work behaviours.



**FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION
READING CONTINUUM**

Observable Student Characteristics

Student Name: _____

School: _____

Emergent		Beginning		Developing		Transitional		Expanding					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knows some letter names and some letter sounds <input type="checkbox"/> Realizes that print carries a message <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes own name in print <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes that print is organized top to bottom, left to right, front to back in all text situations <input type="checkbox"/> Holds books the right way and turns the pages in the correct direction <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies and selects computer icons, menus, and prompts with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Knows some poems and books with patterns by heart <input type="checkbox"/> Uses pictures and prior knowledge to help tell a story or relate information <input type="checkbox"/> Rhymes and plays with words <input type="checkbox"/> Shows curiosity about print in the environment (e.g., signs, labels, logos, computer icons) <input type="checkbox"/> Shows interest in a variety of texts <input type="checkbox"/> Links own experience to oral, literary, and media text <input type="checkbox"/> Discusses/relates to how characters feel <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates story sense through the initiation of story language and patterns (e.g., once upon a time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Views self as a reader <input type="checkbox"/> Refers to letters by name and knows most letter sounds <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes variations in print (e.g., size, font) <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes the difference between a letter and a word <input type="checkbox"/> May read new and unfamiliar text word by word, line by line <input type="checkbox"/> Relies on multiple cueing systems to read unfamiliar words (e.g., these may include pictures, patterns, rhyme, sound-letter relationships, chunking, rereading) with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Uses finger-voice-print matching <input type="checkbox"/> Reads simple sight words and recognizes high frequency words in a variety of texts and environments <input type="checkbox"/> Makes meaningful predictions <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to notice errors in their reading <input type="checkbox"/> Reads books with simple repetitive language <input type="checkbox"/> Retells orally <input type="checkbox"/> Makes personal connections to text <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguishes between fiction and non-fiction <input type="checkbox"/> Shares favourite reading materials and websites; talks about favourite stories <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses preference for favorite oral, literary, or media text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses texts with guidance to suit purpose and need <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects on reading choices to assess preferences with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Talks about reading to others <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to use multiple cueing systems to make meaning independently <input type="checkbox"/> Reads texts with more information, longer text, and richer vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to ask relevant questions to make sense of a topic <input type="checkbox"/> Locates and shares information from varying texts and images with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Retells accurately with detail and may use a visual support <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes when information in text answers a question <input type="checkbox"/> Makes predictions based on the form/style of texts (e.g., circle stories) <input type="checkbox"/> Is aware of a variety of reading materials (print, visual, media) <input type="checkbox"/> Reads and follows simple directions <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to understand author techniques (e.g., rhyme, bold print, punctuation, pattern, repetition) with guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sets realistic reading goals with guidance (punctuation marks, headings, titles, labels, captions) with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Relies on print more than illustrations <input type="checkbox"/> Reads out loud with fluency (automaticity, expression, rate, and phrasing) <input type="checkbox"/> Rereads to confirm predictions and make meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Responds to and makes personal connections with facts, characters, and situations in text <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to make connections to culture portrayed in oral, written, and media text <input type="checkbox"/> Reads texts of greater complexity both fiction and non-fiction <input type="checkbox"/> Retells stories in sequence and with increasing detail <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies main idea of a text <input type="checkbox"/> Asks relevant questions <input type="checkbox"/> Reviews informational text for relevance to topic <input type="checkbox"/> Reads independently for 10 to 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Uses all cueing systems to make meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects on own reading strategies and preferences and sets goals for reading <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguishes between fact, opinion, and accuracy in texts with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Questions whether information from media sources is factual, useful, and/or distracting with guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an understanding of more complex author techniques (e.g., puns, similes, exaggeration, personification) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variety of textual cues and features (e.g., indexes, maps, charts, glossaries, table of contents, guide words, URLs) <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates understanding of detail, sequence, character, setting, and plot <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses opinions with evidence from text <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies main idea and important details <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates consideration of other readers' connections or opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Reads independently for longer periods (20+ minutes) 									
Bridging		Fluent		Proficient		Independent		Grade		Teacher		Year	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Makes predictions based on the form/style of text (e.g., compare/contrast, problem/solution, description) <input type="checkbox"/> Summarizes main idea and important details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses prior knowledge to make meaning of text <input type="checkbox"/> Uses self-correction to construct and maintain meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies descriptive and figurative language in text <input type="checkbox"/> Gains deeper meaning by making inferences <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates group participation skills and strategies with guidance (e.g., literature circles, book talks, and buddy reading) <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates deeper understanding of text (i.e., orally, visually, or in writing) <input type="checkbox"/> Describes and/or represents the visualization generated from text <input type="checkbox"/> Remembers and comprehends story plot lines over a period of time <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses text independently from a variety of forms and genres appropriate to purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Reads independently for longer periods (30+ minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knows and uses interactive processes to set personal and group reading goals <input type="checkbox"/> Asks relevant questions to support an analysis of the text <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies language (e.g., metaphors, imagery, irony, and satire) and visual images that evoke emotion <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguishes between fact, opinion, and accuracy in text <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguishes difference among a variety of forms and genres <input type="checkbox"/> Explains, with text support, how the author's use of language and techniques creates the characters, setting, and plot <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies the theme and type of conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a mature outlook when reading sensitive issues <input type="checkbox"/> Reads a variety of texts to find information new or deeper understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Synthesizes knowledge and information to create Self-monitor's reading to ensure engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sets personally challenging reading goals <input type="checkbox"/> Uses the various components of fiction and non-fiction text to construct and maintain meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Visualizes and demonstrates understanding of what is not stated but is implied in the text <input type="checkbox"/> Responds personally, critically, and creatively to text in terms of theme, author's purpose, and style <input type="checkbox"/> Oral and written responses include content specific vocabulary encountered while reading <input type="checkbox"/> Shares personal thoughts, feelings, and images evoked by texts <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an understanding of how authors use language to create mental images for the reader <input type="checkbox"/> Immerses self in text so that story detail is recalled emotionally <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporates newfound awareness of sensitive issues into own thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrases and summarizes content to confirm or reject predictions, inferences, and conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates the importance of bringing knowledge to text prior to reading <input type="checkbox"/> Asks relevant questions to bring additional information to the text <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes bias and stereotyping in text <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates understanding of interrelationship of literary aspects (e.g., techniques and elements, language, artistry, purpose, audience, form, genre, context) "Reads like a writer, writes like a reader." <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies and comprehends underlying themes, conflicts, and larger truths in fictional genres <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluates, interprets, and analyzes text content critically <input type="checkbox"/> Makes connections among self, texts, world, and cultural issues <input type="checkbox"/> Engages in controversial debates regarding reading (small or large group) <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses and comprehends a wide variety of challenging texts to meet a variety of purposes (e.g., newspapers, magazines, manuals, poetry) <input type="checkbox"/> Sustains interest and understanding over long text and reads over an extended period of time <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionally chooses and reads a text that evokes emotional responses <input type="checkbox"/> Sets a purpose for reading based on an inquiry or research project 	<p>Grade</p>	<p>Teacher</p>	<p>Year</p>							

"Learning is a journey, not a race."



**FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION
READING CONTINUUM**

Characteristics of Text

- This document is not to be used for tracking the reading choices of individual students. It only provides a list of descriptors to be used as a reference for finding suitable reading material for a student at that stage of reading development.
- A piece of text does not need to exhibit all of the descriptors listed for that stage.
- These "Characteristics of Text" can also help students in choosing reading material, but it is important to note that prior knowledge, experience, interest and purpose will influence difficulty and sustainability.
- "Text" refers to oral, literary and media texts.

Emergent	Beginning	Developing	Transitional	Expanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictable text • Few words or no words on a page • Repetitive language • Consistent print placement • Pattern remains the same, ideas/concepts change • Illustrations clearly support text • Simple sentence structure • Based on familiar experiences of child • Generally large size font with distinctive spaces • Repertoire of high frequency words is introduced and repeated in meaningful context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterned or predictably patterned • New structures are introduced • 3 – 4 lines of print per page • Contains broader repertoire of high frequency, commonly used vocabulary and decodable words • Picture placement varies • Print placement varies • Vocabulary reappears throughout text • Illustrations provide support for text • Variety of fonts • Varied sentence patterns • Text reflects common shared experiences • Text contains a variety of punctuation • Texts have simple single plot or topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer more varied sentences • Contains increasingly more complex high frequency words • Some difficult or challenging vocabulary • Contains little or no pattern • Illustrations confirm text meaning • Recognizable sequence • Identifiable structure consistent with fiction and non-fiction text • Font size and white space begin to decrease • Text reflects more complex or technical topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More difficult or challenging vocabulary • More details, more descriptive language • Text carries most of the meaning and images lend only limited support • Longer, more sophisticated sentence (e.g., compound-complex), tags embedded in conversation • Some text may be divided into chapters or contain headings, table of contents, and other organizational structures, URLs • Simple plots, limited number of characters • The characters' actions, thoughts, words, and traits are more fully developed • The main idea or relevant information is easily located • Content is closer to experience of reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May contain basic literary techniques (e.g., exaggeration, puns, idioms, similes) • Setting and characters are clearly described • Text contains implicit ideas • Simple presentation and organization of information in text • Content may be more complex/technical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story lines are simple and organized chronologically • Text may include playful language such as slang, jargon, colloquialism • More technical or subject specific vocabulary • More variety of genres (e.g., biography, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, graphic novels, blogs) • Fictional text contains fewer images and smaller font size • Text organizers are frequently evident (e.g., chapter headings, table of contents, index, glossary, URLs) • Well developed characters, plot, and setting • Images in non-fiction text provide support and add information • Fiction includes more than one problem and solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few main characters that often confront challenges and issues • More complex plots with characters who change or develop • Limited conflicts that are predictably resolved by the main character • Settings are fully described and important to understanding the text • Elements found in text make it distinguishable as a particular form or genre • Contains literary language and devices (e.g., metaphors, similes, irony, satire) • More complex presentation and organization of information in text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texts include literary devices (e.g., flashback, alternating narrators and/or settings) • Texts include sophisticated imagery and figurative language • Descriptions of settings, characters, feelings and plots become more detailed and longer in length • Texts may contain specialized and unusual vocabulary • Graphics, tables, visuals and illustrations are strategically used and require the support of the print in order to make meaning • Settings are often in other time periods or unfamiliar locations that require background knowledge • Multiple, well developed characters face complex issues and challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some settings require an understanding of other cultures and perspectives • Some texts focus on complex and/or controversial issues • Texts include sophisticated language and symbolism or promote specific ideologies • The use of multiple themes, layers, perspectives, inter-relationships and ambiguities lead the reader to diverse interpretations and high level engagement with the text • The use of features like an epilogue and/or prologue is critical to making meaning • Non fiction texts include substantial information and details that require background knowledge and deeper level understanding of a topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some settings require an understanding of other cultures and perspectives • Some texts focus on complex and/or controversial issues • Texts include sophisticated language and symbolism or promote specific ideologies • The use of multiple themes, layers, perspectives, inter-relationships and ambiguities lead the reader to diverse interpretations and high level engagement with the text • The use of features like an epilogue and/or prologue is critical to making meaning • Non fiction texts include substantial information and details that require background knowledge and deeper level understanding of a topic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent 	

**FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION
WRITING CONTINUUM
Student Characteristics**

Student Name: _____ School: _____

Emergent	Early	Developing	Transitional	Expanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Talks/shares personal experiences, feelings and ideas before writing — Connects symbols in environment to print and uses them in own writing — Writes (types) or attempts to write own name — Uses letters, numbers, and symbols interchangeably and/or randomly on the page — Makes marks other than drawing — Recognizes and prints most letters of the alphabet — Writes initial letters for familiar words — Includes scribbles as symbols — Tells about own writing/drawing — Relies on pictures to convey meaning when telling about their "writing" — Asks questions for inquiry, to satisfy curiosity and for information needs — Responds to stories by actively listening/drawing/writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Experiments with own ideas — Recognizes difference among the concepts of a letter, number, and a word — Connects sound, letter, picture to meaning (uses one or two letters to represent a word) — Can copy familiar words using print from the classroom environment (for example: word walls) — Writes from left to right and top to bottom — Uses upper case letters randomly — Begins to use periods — Uses patterned sentences in stories — Attempts to write a few familiar words correctly — Recognizes that print carries a message — Adds labels and details to stories and drawings — Uses print and pictures to convey meaning — Sees self as a writer, knows writing has meaning, can read own writing, but others may not be able to read it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Takes greater risks expressing their own ideas in writing — Uses or attempts to use unfamiliar words — Writes words with spaces between them — Uses words in writing that they have learned in other contexts, e.g. uses words from shared reading — Uses beginning, middle, and end sounds to make words — Forms all letters legibly, upper and lower case, whether writing or using the keyboard — Constructs simple complete sentences — Begins to use capitalization, including I, their name, beginnings of sentences — Begins to use punctuation, including periods (.) and question marks (?) — Begins to write familiar words correctly — Writes pieces with beginning, middle, and end — Represents information in categories according to similarities, differences, and sequence — Writes pieces that make sense to self and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Develops and arranges ideas using pre-established organizers, such as story maps and planners with guidance — Includes ideas/information from other sources in own words — Uses a variety of forms for particular audiences and purposes, such as letters, narratives, poetry, reports and other expository writing with guidance — Uses phonetic spelling to write unfamiliar words independently — Writes familiar words correctly — Composes complete sentences with more detail by adding detail with guidance — Expands use of punctuation such as commas in a series, apostrophes, and quotation marks with guidance — Expands use of capitalization to include days of the week, months and most proper nouns — Edits for complete sentences including end punctuation — Begins to use basic transition words with guidance — Composes pieces with clear beginning, middle, and end independently — Sets goals based on feedback with guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Considers audience, purpose, and form with guidance — Uses a variety of pre-writing strategies such as webs, charts, lists, graphs, maps independently — Composes more complex sentences using conjunctions and sentence combining with guidance — Shares writing and begins to use feedback to improve writing — Offers feedback on writing using pre-established criteria — Revises by expanding descriptions using adjectives, adverbs and prepositional phrases — Begins to edit for spelling using word walls, dictionaries, spell check, online resources, etc. with guidance — Edits for commas in a series, apostrophes, quotation marks, and more sophisticated uses of capitalization with guidance — Recognizes the importance of reflection in writing with guidance — Reflects on writing using pre-established criteria — Sets goals based on reflection with guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Recognizes the relationship among audience, purpose, and form — Asks questions to fill gaps in information — Includes an opening — Organizes ideas in logical sequence — Begins to use paragraphing — Eliminates unnecessary information (repetition of words and ideas) with guidance — Uses pre-determined criteria to revise during conferencing and reflection — Considers others' ideas for revision — Recognizes spelling errors in unfamiliar words and edits with guidance — Edits for capitalization, end punctuation, commas in series, and quotation marks — Uses relevant supporting details — Revises to expand ideas using supporting details or information with guidance — Creates voice by taking risks with word choice to evoke an emotional response — Identifies areas of success and sets goals for writing, with guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Chooses pre-writing strategy appropriate to form/audience-purpose independently — Maintains form appropriate to audience and purpose — Uses openings to catch readers' attention and direct purpose — Uses strong conclusions — Uses a variety of sentences — Uses transitional devices to maintain flow of ideas — Revises for specific writing traits (ideas, word choice, sentence fluency, and voice) independently — Acknowledges the value of, and integrates others' ideas into own writing — Uses a variety of tools to edit for unfamiliar words (dictionaries, spell check, online resources, thesaurus, etc) — Reflects on stages of process — Reflects on product — Sets future goals in writing based on self-assessment of process and product using pre-determined criteria — Uses words, language and sentence variation to create sensory images and mood — Evaluates new information for completeness and relevance to audience and purpose using predetermined criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Chooses pre-writing strategy appropriate to form/audience-purpose independently — Maintains form appropriate to audience and purpose — Uses openings to catch readers' attention and direct purpose — Uses strong conclusions — Uses a variety of sentences — Uses transitional devices to maintain flow of ideas — Revises for specific writing traits (ideas, word choice, sentence fluency, and voice) independently — Acknowledges the value of, and integrates others' ideas into own writing — Uses a variety of tools to edit for unfamiliar words (dictionaries, spell check, online resources, thesaurus, etc) — Reflects on stages of process — Reflects on product — Sets future goals in writing based on self-assessment of process and product using pre-determined criteria — Uses words, language and sentence variation to create sensory images and mood — Evaluates new information for completeness and relevance to audience and purpose using predetermined criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Adapts specific forms to match content/audience/purpose, i.e., story to diagram, news report to poem/comic strip — Creates well developed paragraphs — Uses writing elements that work together to support purpose — Uses different types of format and presentation for effect — Revises to enhance meaning and effect according to pre-determined criteria — Edits and proofreads own and others' work independently — Reflects upon overall effect of writing process and product independently — Takes responsibility for the planning, revising, and editing to ensure writing achieves its purpose — Uses dialogue to create an effect appropriate to purpose and audience with guidance — Uses relevant details that go beyond the obvious or predictable — Selects from a variety of previously acquired tools and strategies for gathering and evaluating information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Considers audience, purpose, and form with guidance — Uses a variety of pre-writing strategies such as webs, charts, lists, graphs, maps independently — Composes more complex sentences using conjunctions and sentence combining with guidance — Shares writing and begins to use feedback to improve writing — Offers feedback on writing using pre-established criteria — Revises by expanding descriptions using adjectives, adverbs and prepositional phrases — Begins to edit for spelling using word walls, dictionaries, spell check, online resources, etc. with guidance — Edits for commas in a series, apostrophes, quotation marks, and more sophisticated uses of capitalization with guidance — Recognizes the importance of reflection in writing with guidance — Reflects on writing using pre-established criteria — Sets goals based on reflection with guidance
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