

AMHERST & PELHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DESCRIPTORS OF ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING BY GRADE LEVELS

GRADE LEVEL:	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
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KINDERGARTEN:	Begins to decide what to draw and write to convey thoughts.	Builds an understanding that writers structure their texts in various ways by exploring and attempting to use multiple genres.	Attempts to expand ideas in pictures or text.	Begins to understand that writing may be read by others and uses pictures and words to communicate ideas.	Recognizes that there are rules for placing text on the page and attempts to use these in their own writing.
GRADE 1:	Can decide what to write and conveys thoughts on personal experiences and topics of interest so they make sense.	Begins to use different genre structure and text features to guide organization and meaning.	Grows in exploring repertoire of strategies to expand ideas, topics, and characters with meaningful details and descriptions.	Builds awareness of need to expand use of precise words, actions, and dialogue for clarity of images, feelings, and topics for intended audience.	Begins to use spelling strategies and writing mechanics to make writing readable by themselves and others.

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GRADE 2:	Practices generating ideas, selecting the one to write about, and expanding ideas for the writing.	Uses knowledge of genre structure and text features to guide organization and meaning.	Practices using simple strategies to develop ideas, topics, and characters with the addition of meaningful details and descriptions.	Begins to convey identifiable attitude toward the reader and topic through language choices.	Expands use of standard spelling and writing mechanics to make writing readable by themselves and others.
GRADE 3:	Generates and selects a topic, narrows the focus, and identifies what is important to say about it.	Consistently uses knowledge of genre structure to guide organization before, during and after drafting.	Purposefully uses learned strategies to expand ideas, topics, and characters by adding interesting and relevant information and details.	Shows a growing sense of the audience through language choice and personal expressiveness.	Uses grade level spelling and knowledge about composing and punctuating simple and compound sentences so others can read the text easily.

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GRADE 4:	Gains in the ability to generate ideas, purposefully select a topic for writing, decide on significance, and engage in writing based on these decisions.	Uses knowledge of genre to guide structural organization, craft certain parts, and locate specific sections to be emphasized.	Selects from amongst strategies of writer's craft to expand imagery, extend thinking, and place an emphasis on the more important parts.	Begins to expand vocabulary and the natural rhythm of language to establish a relationship with the audience and reveal personal flair.	Uses grade appropriate spelling along with knowledge of creating and punctuating compound and complex sentences to enhance the meaning of text.
GRADE 5:	Generates and rehearses for writing, establishes audience, a clear intention for writing, and makes decisions about specific writing techniques based on these.	Uses knowledge of genre structure, literary elements and writer's craft to shape the piece and help the reader follow the message.	Applies awareness of strategies and writer's craft in order to extend and convey personal thoughts, emotions, and responses.	Uses cadence and specific vocabulary to help clarify the writer's personal voice, and enhance the level of communication between the author and audience.	Expands application of conventional writing mechanics to clarify emphasize or elaborate upon ideas.

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GRADE 6:	Utilizes writing process to quickly establish a focus, audience, and intention for writing.	Purposefully chooses suitable genre structures to enhance the organization, intention, ideas, or tone of the piece.	Makes choices about writer’s craft techniques to reveal ideas with clarity and deeper personal and world insight that support meaning for the reader.	Embellishes writing with personal vocabulary, a flair for language, and willingness to reveal personal feelings, ideas, and convictions.	Masters conventional mechanics allowing for less ambiguity of meaning and greater ease in following an intended message.