

64<sup>TH</sup> CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

**WORKING TOGETHER  
TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS**



**Using Curriculum Based  
Measurement (CBM) to Guide  
Writing Instruction**

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PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
State Office of Education | Department of Public Instruction

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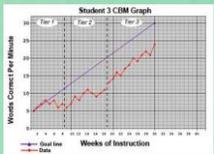
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**We need assessment to...**

- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Plan instruction to fit diagnosed needs
- Evaluate instructional activities
- Provide feedback
- Monitor progress
- Report progress



**RTI and MTSS**

Graph image retrieved from [http://files.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/mods/61602-attachment/0\\_access/](http://files.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/mods/61602-attachment/0_access/)

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**Curriculum Based Measurement**

Rather than relying on informal observations or standardized testing, Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) provides information teachers can use to assess academic skills, develop meaningful IEP objectives, progress monitor, and target instruction.

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### Informal Observations

- Informal observations do not always provide enough data for instructional decision making.
- “Well, he doesn’t like to write and I can’t get a complete sentence out of him.”
- “He can sometimes write a topic sentence and 3 detail sentences, but most of the words are misspelled or he uses incorrect grammar.”




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### Standardized Testing

- Standardized Testing does not always provide data that is useful for planning instruction or writing IEPs.
- “She scored at the 2.3 grade level on written expression.”
- “She scored two standard deviations below the mean in written expression.”




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### CBM is not a new idea

- Schools are currently using CBM in reading
  - DIBELS
  - AIMSweb
- “He can read 30 words in one minute.”
- “She can pronounce 15 one syllable nonsense words in one minute.”




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**It's just a little more complicated for writing.**




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**A writing curriculum includes**

- Process
- Product
- Purpose




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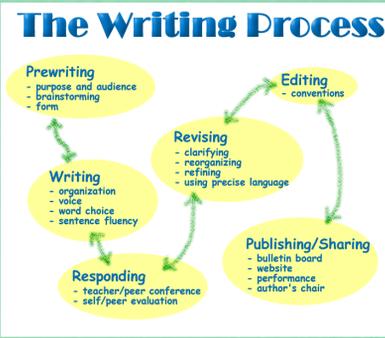
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**The Writing Process**

**Process**



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    graph TD
      Prewriting --> Writing
      Writing --> Responding
      Responding --> Publishing_Sharing
      Publishing_Sharing --> Editing
      Editing --> Revising
      Revising --> Prewriting
  
```

**Prewriting**

- purpose and audience
- brainstorming
- form

**Writing**

- organization
- voice
- word choice
- sentence fluency

**Responding**

- teacher/peer conference
- self/peer evaluation

**Publishing/Sharing**

- bulletin board
- website
- performance
- author's chair

**Editing**

- conventions

**Revising**

- clarifying
- reorganizing
- refining
- using precise language

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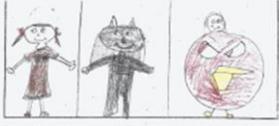
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# Product



My favorite costumes are unicorns, bat  
 women, and Abby Cadabby. A unicorn is from  
 Texas. Cat women are from Texas. Bat  
 like the character's for Abby Cadabby.  
 A unicorn is from Texas. I like  
 this costume because I've always want  
 to be a unicorn. For example, I like my  
 costume and I'm from Texas.

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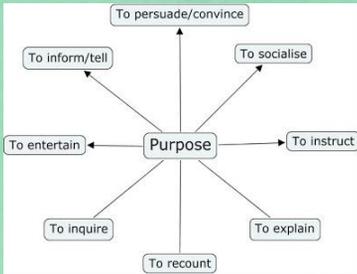
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# Purpose




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# Our focus...

## Product



My favorite costumes are unicorns, bat  
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 A unicorn is from Texas. I like  
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### Five areas to consider for the product

- fluency
- content
- conventions
- syntax
- vocabulary

(Isaacson, 1984)

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### Today's focus

Conventions




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### Written Expression Conventions

- spelling
- usage
- capitalization
- punctuation
- sentence structure




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## How to measure conventions?

- Teachers cannot write separate IEP objectives for all of the writing conventions.
- Teachers need to write objectives for overall writing performance.

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## CBM vs. Holistic Scoring

- CBM is more sensitive than traditional holistic scoring to incremental growth over time.
- A holistic scoring system may require that teachers assess students' writing on a scale of 1 to 4.
- For a student to move up on such a scale takes a significant amount of time and instruction.
- How do teachers track the incremental growth that they hope is occurring as students' skills are moving them from a score of 1 to 2 or 2 to 3?

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## Sample Conventions Rubric

Points	Descriptions
2	<b>Exhibits reasonable control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits reasonable control of sentence formation</li> <li>• Exhibits reasonable control of standard usage including agreement, tense, and case</li> <li>• Exhibits reasonable control of mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling</li> </ul>
1	<b>Exhibits minimal control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits minimal control of sentence formation</li> <li>• Exhibits minimal control of standard usage including agreement, tense, and case</li> <li>• Exhibits minimal control of mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling</li> </ul>
0	<b>Lacks control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lacks control of sentence formation</li> <li>• Lacks control of standard usage including agreement, tense, and case</li> <li>• Lacks control of mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling</li> </ul>
<b>Note:</b>	<b>Students who receive accommodations that invalidate the conventions score (i.e., Dictation to Scribe) will have 0 entered for their conventions score.</b>

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## The “accuracy” objective

This just doesn’t work in the case of written expression.

**80%**

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## Consider this...

I saw a very cute dog. I saw a very littel man. I saw a blak cat.

This student wrote 3 sentences with 17 words with 2 errors, so that would be 88% accuracy.

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## And this...

When I was walking, I saw a butiful flower garten. It was full of difrent colors of the rainbo. it was such a sight to see.

This student wrote 3 sentences with 43 words and 4 errors. That is 90% accuracy.

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## Same grade level, different needs

I saw a very cute dog. I saw a very littel man. I saw a blak cat.

When I was walking, I saw a butiful flower garten. It was full of difrent colors of the rainbo. it was such a sight to see.

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## CBM for Written Expression

There are several curriculum-based measures that can be used in written expression

- total words written
- words spelled correctly
- correct writing sequences
- correct punctuation marks
- total different words

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## Conducting the Assessment

- Provide a story starter
  - [Intervention Central](#) has a generator
  - First, give students 1 minute of "think time"
  - Next, give students 3 minutes to write

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Curriculum-Based Measurement: *Written Expression Probe*

The Amazing Day  
 Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

One day I was walking down the street and a little dog walked up to me.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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### Total Words Written

To assess writing fluency, teachers simply count the total words written (TWW) and record that number on each student's graph. Students can take part in the process of recording.

Week	TWW
Week 1	10
Week 2	12
Week 3	15

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### What counts as words?

- Words are generally counted as a group of letters separated from another group of letters by a space.
- Words do not have to be spelled correctly to be counted.

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### Practice Total Words Written (TWW)

My dog was walking to the woods His name is super. he saw a rbbit. He strated chasing the rbbit and jumped over a big log. it was very cool.

Total Words Written (TWW):  
30

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As students move up in grade level, it becomes important not only to measure how much a student is writing (TWW), but also to attend to the quality of that writing.



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### Correctly Spelled Words (CSW)

To score a writing sample for correctly spelled words (CSW)

- Read the sample
- Circle misspelled words
- Subtract the number of words spelled incorrectly from TWW

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### Practice Correctly Spelled Words (CSW)

- My dog was walking to the woods His name is super. he saw a rabbit. He strated chasing the rbbit and jumped over a big log. it was very cool.

Correctly Spelled Words (CSW):  
30-6 = 24

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Plot the data using the same same graph as TWW so that there is a visual display documenting the discrepancy between TWW and CSW.

Week	TWW	CSW
Week 1	12	5
Week 2	12	6
Week 3	15	8

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### So far, the only area assessed...

- spelling
- usage
- capitalization
- punctuation
- sentence structure

What about these?

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### Correct Writing Sequences

- Teachers can use the same 3-minute writing sample and count correct writing sequences (CWS).
- A CWS is defined as "two adjacent correctly spelled words that are acceptable within the context of the phrase" (Videen, Deno, & Marston, 1982, p. 3).
- Correct capitalization and punctuation are considered when counting CWS.
- Correct grammar and usage is considered.

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### Example

To determine CWS, the scorer marks each writing sequence as correct (^). For example, the following sample contains 8 CWS:

^ The ^ boy ^ ran ^ away ^ from ^ his  
^ mom x He x run x fast ^.

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### Practice CWS

^ My dog was x walking x to the x woods x His name is ^  
x super. x he saw x a r b b i t. x He strated x chaseing x  
x r b b i t and jumped over a big log. it was very cool. ^

Total Correct Word Sequences:  
17

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### Reliable Measures

- When comparing a student's growth over time reliable measures ensure that the results are consistent.
- Reliable measures include Total Words Written (TWW), Correctly Spelled Words (CSW), and Correct Writing Sequences (CWS)

(e.g., Espin, Scierka, Skare, & Halverson, 1999; Espin et al., 2008).

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### Present Level of Performance

"When given a story starter and 1 minute of think time, Evan *is currently able to* write 17 correct writing sequences in 3 minutes."

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### Annual Goal

An annual goal for that student might read,

"When given a story starter and 1 minute of think time. Evan *will be able to* write 40 correct writing sequences in 3 minutes."

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### Instructional Tips (Sentence Level)

Sentence Starters  
Sentence Frames

The character I liked most is \_\_\_\_\_

I think the author chose this ending because \_\_\_\_\_

A text-to-text connection I made was \_\_\_\_\_

My favorite part is when \_\_\_\_\_

I like the part when \_\_\_\_\_

I have learned \_\_\_\_\_

A text-to-text connection I made was \_\_\_\_\_

I would recommend this book to \_\_\_\_\_

I noticed that \_\_\_\_\_

So far the story is about \_\_\_\_\_

My favorite part is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

This reminds me of \_\_\_\_\_

This book reminds me of \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

I like the book because \_\_\_\_\_

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### Sentence Starters

Common uses for sentence starters are to help students with

- describing facts
- making predictions
- comparing and contrasting
- stating an opinion
- clarifying or paraphrasing information

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### Sentence Starter Examples

- I think the author chose this ending because \_\_\_\_\_ .
- I like the part when \_\_\_\_\_ .
- In my opinion \_\_\_\_\_ .

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## Sentence Frames

- Expose students to content vocabulary
- Provide language support for ELLs
- Increase oral language proficiency

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## Examples

The character I admire most is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

In ancient \_\_\_\_\_, life was hard because \_\_\_\_\_.

A mammal has \_\_\_\_\_ however, a reptile has \_\_\_\_\_.

All cells have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Implementation Tips

For students who need assistance in thinking of words or are being introduced to new academic vocabulary, add a word bank.

<b>large</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• big</li> <li>• enormous</li> <li>• gigantic</li> <li>• humungous</li> </ul>
<b>funny</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amusing</li> <li>• hilarious</li> <li>• comical</li> <li>• witty</li> </ul>
<b>hard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficult</li> <li>• challenging</li> <li>• complicated</li> <li>• tough</li> </ul>

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Give the names of two characters and two personality traits and have the student match the character with the trait.

**The character I most admire is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Abraham Lincoln*                      *he led the Civil Rights movement*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*            *he enacted the Emancipation Proclamation*

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- For students working on improving their spelling, add a word bank and provide hints.

John Hancock was the first to sign the D \_ \_ \_ a \_ \_ t \_ \_ n of I n \_ e p \_ n \_ e n \_ e .

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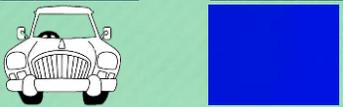
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Pictures can be added below the blank to assist student in choosing a word.

The \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_.




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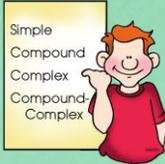
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### Sentence Combining

- Explicitly teach students to write more complex and sophisticated sentences.
- Teacher models how to combine two or more related sentences to create a more complex one.
- Students should be encouraged to apply the sentence combining skills to their own writing.




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### Sentence Combining Examples

- Compound Subjects  
The girl started to cry. The boy started to cry.  
**The girl and boy started to cry.**
- Compound Objects  
The dog walked in the grass. The dog walked in the road.  
**The dog walked in the grass and the road.**

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### Creating Complex Sentences

MOOD	Dependent Clause	Verb Choice	Adjective/Description
	The dog	ran across	the yard.
excited	With a bone in his mouth, the dog	bounded across	the green, grassy yard.
sad	With his head hung low, the dog	slowly stepped across	the dusty yard.
scary, sneaky			
happy			
angry			

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### iPad Apps--Creating

- Little Story Creator (Grasshopper Apps)
- Scribble Press (Scribble Press)
- Story Creator (Innovative Mobile Apps)
- Toontastic (Launchpad Toys)

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### iPad Apps—Sentence Level

- Card Stack Sentences (entelligent life)
- Sentence Builder (ABITALK)
- Rainbow Sentences (Mobile Education Store)
- Sentence Ninja (SmartyEars)
- Clicker Docs (Crick Software)

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