

Look Fors in K–5 Writing Instruction

Look for	Description
Program and Lesson Components	<p>Whole Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher demonstrates strategy or skill focus for lesson using his or her own writing and/or mentor texts. Anchor charts with visuals are created with students to use as resources during independent work. Students engage in accountable talk during lesson through Think/Pair/Share, Turn and Talk, and other cooperative learning activities. Preview/Review and other sheltering strategies are used to ensure comprehensible input for ELLs. Read-alouds happen daily for all students; in primary grades, shared reading happens daily as well. Materials used include DPS Instructional Planning Guides, Lucy Calkins’ units of study, Ralph Fletcher’s <i>Teaching the Qualities of Writing</i>, mentor or touchstone texts, student and teacher writing, and grade-level genre studies. <p>Independent and Buddy Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students independently engage in the writing process or confer with writing partners or teacher. Students may also read as they explore a particular genre as part of the inquiry process during the beginning of a genre study. Teacher confers with individual students as a “fellow writer,” asking questions to help them think through how to improve their writing. <p>Small Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher may meet with small groups of students with similar needs to provide further assistance.
Classroom Environment	<p>Arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The room is organized for whole and small group instruction and independent/buddy work. Materials are clearly labeled, readily accessible to students, and arranged in an inviting way. <p>Displays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anchor charts reflect current instructional areas of focus, procedures, and expectations. Examples of current student work are displayed on walls. Word wall is being developed with students throughout the year. Rubrics, attribute charts, and other learning posters, created with students, provide clear expectations for student work and include visuals to support ELLs and emergent writers. <p>Materials/Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing folders include works in progress, editing checklists, and student reflection sheets. Students use writing notebooks in grades 2 and higher to capture stories and entries for writing ideas. A variety of writing and revision tools are available, including different kinds of paper, markers, pens and pencils, alphabet charts, editing checklists, word walls or individual spelling dictionaries, tape, scissors, sticky notes, staplers, and word processors.
Assessment	<p>Both formal and ongoing informal assessments are used to inform instruction and monitor student progress and are gathered into a Body of Evidence for each student. Information is collected on the student’s performance in both L1 and L2, if possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal assessments might include conference notes, use of teacher-developed rubrics to measure progress toward SMART goals, and teacher/student-developed rubrics for self-evaluation. Formal assessments include DPS benchmark writing, and pre-, mid-, and post-prompted writing samples.