

Kindergarten Writing and Representing Development: Expressing Meaning Through Drawing

Developmental aspects	Emerging With direct support... 	Developing With guided support... 	Applying With minimal support... 	Extending 
The Child	With direct support, may participate in writing/representing experiences to communicate a message. May understand writing/representing as thoughts written down.	With guided support, participates in writing/representing experiences by using approximations of emergent symbol systems (a combination of picture, oral description and symbols). More of the meaning is conveyed in picture and oral description.	With minimal support, participates in writing/representing experiences using an emergent symbol system (a combination of picture, oral description and conventional letters) to communicate ideas. Meaning is beginning to be conveyed in the writing.	Participates in writing/representing experiences using a mixture of emergent and conventional symbol systems. Meaning is conveyed in both the writing and the accompanying representations and oral description.
Meaning				
Expressing meaning through drawing	With direct support may draw random scribbles without recognizable forms in a picture.	With guided support attempts to draw a picture that is related to topic and contains some recognizable forms.	With minimal support draws a recognizable picture with some detail that is related to topic.	Draws a detailed picture that is related to topic.
The Support/Scaffolding*	The Model: showing, instructing, explaining, directing, making explicit, demonstrating, giving examples	The Coach: structuring, sequencing, focusing, cueing, guiding, organizing, supporting	The Advisor: suggesting, reminding, prompting, monitoring, asking for elaboration	The Mentor: extending, stretching, wondering aloud, exploring, "what if-ing"
*a variety of supports (teachers, peers, environmental, etc.) can be provided at any stage of development				

Scenario: After the winter holidays, this kindergarten teacher has introduced daily writing through journals and writing from personal experience. The children explore and develop their ideas orally through partner talk, role-playing, movement, etc. They are then invited to draw a detailed picture to express their ideas or feelings, or to show something about a personal experience. The teacher has worked with the class to develop simple criteria for drawings that show what they want to say: choose a topic for your drawing; draw a picture that matches your topic; make it interesting by using detail and colour.



Direct Support

Aiden is sitting quietly by himself. He has not begun to draw. When the teacher comes to his table, he says, "I don't know how to draw anything. My drawings are stupid!" The teacher asks what he wants his drawing to be about. He says, "My dad got a new car." She provides direct support by *describing* the pictures she sees in her head while he recounts a story about his first ride in the car. She helps him choose one part of the story to illustrate—getting into the car for a trip to the store—and they talk about what shapes he will need to make for the car. She *demonstrates* some basic shapes (circles for wheels; rectangle for the body) that he can trace with a marker to get started.



Guided Support

Next the teacher connects with a small group who are sharing a basket of crayons at a round table. She notices that several have drawn recognizable people, and *cues* them to connect their drawings to ideas and feelings by asking, "What is happening here?" "How are these people feeling?" She gives guided support by *focusing* them on details that help people understand what their drawings are about.



Minimal Support

Anna is concentrating on drawing a simple picture with some detail about her new baby brother. Knowing she needs only minimal support to expand on her ideas, the teacher *prompts* her to think about what else she could add, and *suggests* several possible details that would make the picture more complete.



Without Support

Without support, Karen is drawing a detailed picture about her Grandma's funeral. The teacher discusses it with her, letting Karen take the lead. The teacher asks Karen several questions to help her *extend* her thinking about how to show people's feelings.



An environment that fosters thoughtful learning emphasizes the development and expression of ideas rather than focusing on surface features or correctness. It focuses on possibilities as well as problems.

