

Kindergarten Writing and Representing Development: Explaining Writing/Representing

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				
Explaining writing/representing	With direct support may provide some simple oral detail about writing/representing.	With guided support provides some oral detail about writing/representing.	With minimal support shares ideas or gives information about writing/representing.	<i>Shares ideas or gives more complex information about writing/representing.</i>
The Support/Scaffolding*	The Model: showing, instructing, explaining, directing, making explicit, demonstrating, giving examples	The Coach: structuring, sequencing, focusing, cueing, guiding, organizing, prompting, 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: This teacher is using journals with her class this year as a teaching and learning structure for writing and representing. At the beginning of the year the teacher models how writers can represent their ideas through pictures. She sets the criteria of "Big, Bright and Beautiful" to emphasize the use of space, colour and detail, and to encourage students' best work. After the students complete journal activities, they are encouraged to share their representing.



Direct Support

The class goes on a visit to a pumpkin patch early in the fall. The next day, in addition to 'Big, Bright and Beautiful,' the criteria for journaling include representing something from the pumpkin patch visit. The teacher asks Ollie to tell her about his picture. Ollie looks up blankly. The teacher *directs* his attention to a circle within his drawing and asks Ollie, "Is this your pumpkin?" With this direct support, Ollie is able to say, "Punkin."



Guided Support

In November, the teacher reads a variety of fiction and non-fiction books about dinosaurs to the class, and they watch a video about dinosaurs. Then the students are asked to represent something about dinosaurs in their journals. During the directed drawing activity, Ollie makes a picture of a dinosaur beside a volcano. The teacher asks Ollie to tell her about his picture. Ollie promptly replies, "T-Rex, grrrr." The teacher offers guided support for Ollie to provide more oral detail by *focusing* his attention on the volcano portion of his picture and saying, "Tell me more." Ollie says, "A volcano."



Minimal Support

In January, the teacher reads a variety of fiction and non-fiction books about penguins to the class, and they watch a video about penguins. The students are invited to represent something they have learned about penguins in their journals. Ollie draws a picture of a penguin on an ice floe. The teacher asks Ollie to tell her about his picture. Ollie replies, "My penguin is on some ice." The teacher provides minimal support by *asking for elaboration*: "What else did you learn about penguins from the video yesterday?" Ollie explains where the baby stands and says that they eat fish. The teacher *prompts* him to continue with, "Great ideas Ollie. Can you add some of those details to your picture?"



Without Support

In March, the class learns about snakes. In their journal writing, the children are encouraged to represent how snakes move and the different patterns on their bodies. When asked to share what his picture represents, Ollie describes in detail how his snake moves and where his snake lives. Without support, he shows the colourful design on the body of his snake. The teacher asks him an *extending* question: "Why do you suppose snakes have such colourful patterns on their bodies?"



The amount of writing children do in school is correlated with their reading achievement. Both narrative and content area writing are beneficial, but content area writing makes an especially important contribution to success in reading.

Dickinson & DiGisi, 1988, in the *BC Primary Program*, p. 132