

## Balanced Literacy Matrix Independent Writing

**Description:** Independent writing is a daily writing opportunity which allows students to work individually and silently on their own writing. The writing process is practiced during silent writing with students making rough drafts, editing, and publishing some pieces. Other key elements:

- Student choice is always considered; writers work best when they have ownership of what they are writing
- Basic structure is mini-lessons, silent writing, confer with the teacher and with peers, share time

**Directions:** Mark the characteristics within each category that most clearly describes your teaching at this time.

<b>Materials:</b> My goal is to have all necessary materials organized and accessible to use during independent writing.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I have background information about independent writing but have not implemented this. I am just learning about the writing process and how to use the writer's notebook. I do not model writing consistently and only provide prompts for writing instruction.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have introduced the writer's notebook and my students are entering ideas in the notebook but I still am unsure if I am using the notebook effectively. I am learning about using books and mentor texts during modeled writing so that students can read like writers. students are writing on self selected topics	<input type="checkbox"/> I am beginning to use books and mentor texts during mini lessons and modeled writing. My students are using the writer's notebook to collect their ideas. I have introduced a writing station which holds supplies needed for writing.	<input type="checkbox"/> My students are self-selecting their topics for silent writing. They are using their writer's notebook. I am using books or mentor text for craft study. I have a defined space in the classroom for a writing station which contains all necessary supplies needed such as reference books, writing supplies, conference forms and mentor text students can refer to during silent writing.
<b>Classroom Management/Student Engagement:</b> My goal is to establish routines, articulate the expectation of silent writing, conferences and share time, and develop independence and responsibility.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I have not yet established a system for independent writing. Students need a great deal of attention, so I can not implement modeled writing, silent writing, or conferences. My writing instruction is whole group and all writing in response to a prompt.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am beginning to establish student choice in writing topics. I am modeling writing and providing daily mini-lessons for my students then giving them time to write individually. My students are entering ideas in their writer's notebook and have a personal investment in their writing. I am beginning to implement peer conferencing and share time.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am beginning to put a system in place to check status of the class. This system helps me confer with students as they need my support. My mini-lessons are designed around the needs of my students. I am able to determine this through the conferences. Students are becoming more comfortable with sharing their writing with their peers.	<input type="checkbox"/> My classroom is well managed. I have a visual system in place to check the status of the class. Students are engaged and writing at different stages of the writing process. They confer with one another and with me about both the process and the craft. They use mentor text as resources and put into place the mini-lessons that are introduced and modeled.

<p><b>Assessing Student Progress:</b> My goal is to design assessments that provide information that will help me adjust my instructional focus as needed to meet student’s collective and individual needs.</p>			
<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am assessing my students’ writing once the product is finished. I usually assess all of my students using the same assessment on one finished product.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am beginning to confer with my students to understand the needs of individual students. I am starting to use rubrics to assess my students on the process as well as the product.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am assessing students on a regular basis and helping students begin to monitor their own work through rubrics. I monitor students as they confer with their peers.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> My students are able to monitor their own understanding, seek help when needed, and evaluate their growth. Students are leading the discussion in our conferences.</p>
<p><b>Lesson Routines:</b> My goal is to provide thoughtful and engaging lessons that teach the process and craft of writing.</p>			
<p><input type="checkbox"/> I have not yet implemented any of the components of independent writing.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I have introduced mini-lessons and model writing for my students. I guide students during silent writing. I am not consistent with designing my mini-lessons with the needs of my students.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am implementing mini-lessons, silent writing, and share time in my writing block.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> My mini-lessons are explicit and I use authentic text discuss and show how writers work. My students are focused and have developed a rhythm for writing. They are familiar with the system for status of the class.</p>
<p><b>Instructional Focus:</b> My goal is for my students to see themselves as writers. Students will value their own writing, share it with others, and receive response from each other’s writing. They will write to communicate, explore, question, persuade, and inform.</p>			
<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am assigning prompts to generate ideas for writing. Students are on the same stage of the writing process. Most of the writing assignments are personal narratives because I have not introduced other forms of writing.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am teaching lessons that promote students to self select topics and move through the writing process. I am beginning to confer with my students to observe their individual needs.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> My students are engaged in their writing and are putting into place what I introduced in my lessons or in modeled writing. I am teaching craft lessons through mini-lessons. My students move themselves through the writing process. I am beginning to initiate guided writing and my students initiate conferences.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> My students are taking risks by exploring and writing variety of genres. They understand the writing process through process studies as well as the craft through craft studies. I meet the individually needs of my students through conferences or guided writing lessons while others are writing independently.</p>