



Baseline Writing Assessment: Explode a Moment

1. Model for students thinking about a single moment from your summer that was memorable. As you talk about it “doodle” an image about the moment on your white board (small size). Have students do the same. Have students get in groups of 3-4 and take turns talking about their moment. If time allows have them share with the whole class one at a time.
2. Using your “doodle”, model for students how to make a short list or web as a prewriting activity for writing about this moment. Think out loud about how you organize your writing as you do this. Have the students do the same.
3. Model for students how you would turn that list/web into a single piece about the moment. Model a piece of writing that is just above the level you would expect from the students at your grade level. For example,
 - Kinder: label the drawing or write a simple sentence
 - 1st: writing a few sentences about the moment with some descriptive detail
 - 2nd: write several sentences that flow like a paragraph
 - 3rd write a solid paragraph or two about the moment
 - 4th-8th write a multi-paragraph piece and show the students how to break up your piece into logical paragraphs
4. Have students write their pieces on their own. Before students begin writing, make a short checklist including what should be included. For example:
 - Use sensory detail to help us picture your moment
 - Use interesting words
 - When done, check for capitals, periods, spelling

Allow as much silent writing time as needed.
5. End the session with having students read aloud either their whole piece or a favorite sentence/section.
6. Use these first writing pieces as a baseline sample for determining where to begin with your writing instruction. You may want to take these through the steps of the revision/editing process to use as the first published piece on your portfolio wall.

Narrative



Narrative writing paragraphs are covered in the Common Core Standards under Writing **W3** and **W4**; and revision under **W5**.

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Explode a Moment: Baseline Writing Analysis Chart

Grade Level: _____ Teachers: _____

Once you have given the baseline writing assessment, meet with your grade level team and review:

- Which writing skills did the students retain over the summer? You may want to review the previous grade level standards to see which things they learned last year and they are still using in their writing.
- What can you learn about your new students from this writing? Interests, motivation and fluency with writing? Skill with drawing and talking as a pre-writing task?

Once you've had a discussion, you can record your thoughts below. Use the "strengths" side to give your students positive feedback about their writing. Use the "next steps" side to inform your teaching during the first month or so of school. Consider using the "**Back to School Writing Basics**" lessons to review basic writing process, sentence structure, and use of conventions. You may also want to bring your notes to a staff meeting to discuss school-wide trends in writing development.

Strengths  Donut	Next Steps  Nudge
What do the students know about writing?	What's the next thing to teach these students in the coming months to support their development as writers?
School-wide Trends	Action Needed





Strengths

Donut



Next Steps

Nudge



What do the students know about writing?

What's the next thing to teach these students in the coming months to support their development as writers?

School-wide Trends

Action Needed

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