

Writing at St. Mary's

If students are to build a repertoire of writing skills, they must by nature have massed practice opportunities to do so. If the instructional staff have planned and articulated a measured and spiraled set of skills to master by grade level, students have a far greater proclivity for success.

Rubrics

- Engaging the student in understanding how to assess his/her writing is the first step towards intrinsic ownership.
- Establishing school-wide rubrics ensures consistency, continuity, and uniformity in assessment.
- Precise, prescriptive anecdotes for specific skill area improvement is crucial to success.

The following chart reflects both the content and mechanics of writing expectations.

WRITING AT ST. MARY'S	
Grade Level	Skills focus
K	Sound symbol recognition Beginning sounds Ending sounds Capitals / periods Introduce sight / high frequency words
1st	Capitals / periods Beginning / middle / end Complete sentences Use of graphic organizers Apply sight / high frequency words Nouns / verbs Paragraphs
2nd	Capitals / ending punctuation Complete sentences Details... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details on graphic organizers into sentences • Abbrev ideas on graphic organizers Adjectives Visualization Poetry – Haiku & Acrostic Sequencing – flow Friendly letters Paragraphs

WRITING AT ST. MARY'S	
Grade Level	Skills focus
3 rd	<p>Paragraphs</p> <p>Good basics – use of app. Sentence structure</p> <p>Simple subject / predicate – to more complex</p> <p>Expository...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structuring paragraphs • sentence structure • details • creative flow <p>Poetry...</p> <p>introduce couplets, cinquains, diamantes, Haiku</p> <p>Later in the year...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • narrative writing • dialog <p>Friendly letter</p>
4 th	<p>Mechanics...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grammar, punctuation • complete sentences <p>Good paragraph development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topic sentences • use of graphic organizers • details <p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • descriptive • figurative / analogies • adjectives /adverbs • concluding sentences • use of thesaurus <p>Friendly letters</p> <p>Poetry – cinquains, limericks</p>
5 th	<p>Descriptive, sensory writing</p> <p>Details</p> <p>Simple paragraphs at first</p> <p>Organizing ideas</p> <p>Fact vs. opinion</p> <p>Factual writing...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliciting facts from research • organizing sequence • note taking / highlighting <p>Later in the year...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transitional sentences • multi-paragraph essays & short stories • narrative, persuasive, expressive writing <p>poetry</p> <p>Elements of Character, setting, plot</p> <p>1st & 3rd person</p> <p>Letters – friendly & business</p>

WRITING AT ST. MARY'S	
Grade Level	Skills focus
6 th	Imaginative / Narrative Descriptive Practical / Informative Compare / Contrast Topic sentence / clincher Sufficient relevant details Transitional words Varied sentence beginnings Varied sentence types (.?!) Adjectives Figurative language Complete sentences All capitals Commas separating words in a series, with transitional words and in compound sentences Quotations Develop thesis statements Mini research project
7 th	Imaginative / Narrative Practical / Informative Analytical / Expository Complete paragraph (topic sentence, details, clincher) i.e. open response Four – six paragraph essay (introduction, supporting paragraphs, strong conclusion) Transitional words Sentence variety (varied beginnings, lengths and types) Point of view (first and third person) Vivid verbs Research project Clear thesis statement
8 th	Practical / Informative Analytical / Expository Complete paragraph (topic sentence, details, clincher) Clear thesis statement Four to six paragraph essay (introduction, supporting paragraphs, strong conclusion) Transitional words Interesting, attention getting introductions Sentence variety (varied beginnings, lengths and types) All punctuation Research project

INSTRUCTIONAL TIMING

Students should have some automaticity w/ paragraph components BEFORE moving on to longer essays.

Types of writing:

- 1-8 – instructional / structured – EXPOSITORY
- 3-8 – NARRATIVE

- 4-8 INFORMATIVE / PERSUASIVE
- K-8 SENTENCE STRUCTURE
- 2-3 – PARAGRAPHS ONLY
- 4-5 MULTI PARAGRAPH (moving toward essays)
- 4-8 - OUTLINING / NOTE TAKING

RUBRICS

The rubrics used at St. Mary's are below.

KINDERGARTEN WRITING RUBRIC

	MECHANICS	CONTENT
1	Scribble writing	Uses pictures or symbols to express ideas
2	An awareness of letter formation increases	Attaches labels to their pictures using random letters
3	Experimenting with beginning and ending sounds Experimenting with punctuation Letter formation improves	Statement is expressed in a word or phrase attached to a picture
4	Writes sight words Uses spacing, inventive spelling and some punctuation	Makes a statement w/ some description and length i.e. This is a cat.

1st GRADE WRITING RUBRIC

	MECHANICS	CONTENT
1	No spacing Not written on the line Initial & final sounds	Thought is expressed in a word or phrase May include a picture (i.e.) A car.
2	Spacing inadequate Lacks capitals or periods Words include vowels w/ beginning and ending sounds	Sample is expressed in complete sentences May include a picture (i.e.) This is a car.

	MECHANICS	CONTENT
3	Capitalization & periods Spacing between words Use of lower case Appropriate spelling	Sample is expressed w/ details (in a sentence) May include a picture (i.e.) This is a red car that drives fast.
4	Capitals, periods, question marks Appropriate spacing Complete thoughts	Thought is expressed in a group of sentences. Sentences include many details.

2ND GRADE WRITING RUBRIC

	MECHANICS	CONTENT
1	Incorrect capitals & punctuation Phrases difficult to understand	Story contains: No clear ending Minimal details Inappropriate sequencing
2	Some capitals & punctuation Some correct spelling	Story contains: A beginning and end Some sequencing Who, what, when
3	Mostly correct spelling & punctuation Complete sentences	Story contains: A clear beginning, middle & end Sequencing Who, what when where & (some) why
4	Correct spelling & punctuation Complete sentences	Story contains: Clear beginning, middle & end Sequencing Details & descriptive vocabulary Story may contain a problem that is resolved

3rd - 8th GRADE RUBRIC

IDEA / TOPIC DEVELOPMENT

1	2	3	4	5	6
Little development	Limited development	Some development	Moderate development	Well developed	Rich development
List of ideas	Very few details	Has a beginning, middle end	Good details	Logical organization	Careful organization
No details	Not well organized	Basic supporting details	Variety of language	Strong details	Effective language

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not aware of reader	Not aware of audience	Simple vocabulary	Personality	Takes a risk	Rich language
Not organized		A little boring		Varied language	Wonderful
				Some metaphors etc.	
				Very enjoyable	

STANDARD ENGLISH CONVENTIONS

1	2	3	4
Serious errors	Too many errors	Easy to understand	Excellent sentences
Not sentences	Hard to understand	Few errors	Few grammatical errors
Poor grammar	Poor spelling	Good sentence structure	Varied punctuation
Poor punctuation	Poor grammar	Good spelling	Appropriate spelling
Poor spelling		Good punctuation	