|  |
| --- |
| **Writing** |
| GOALS | * Children learn the purpose, structure, and language of various genres of writing.
* Children begin to identify and develop their voices as writers.
* Children write to authentic audiences for authentic purposes.
* Children employ a variety of media to communicate their ideas.
* Children apply developing skills in foundational literacy and knowledge of conventions of print.
 |

Throughout the *Focus* day, children communicate through writing—in Centers/Studios, during and after Read Aloud/Text Talk, at Literacy Small Groups and Stations, and during dedicated Writing instruction. As writers, children rely on their funds of knowledge, their cultural and linguistic identities, and their lived experiences to develop and communicate powerful ideas in a variety of media and genres. Continuing through second grade, “writing” includes drawing and recognizes all of children’s mark making as efforts at communication. Writing instruction is built around whole group lessons and shared and individual writing and is situated in the context of the unit of study.

Beginning in PreK, through foundational lessons in the first weeks of school, children begin to understand that writing is a means of communication and that authors write for specific purposes, to specific audiences. With repetition and practice, children learn about and increase their facility with the tools, routines, and rituals that are part of the formal writing block. This instruction is grounded in the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory and based on the work of Dr. María Brisk.

Over the course of a given year, children write across genres that fit into the three major categories of writing identified by the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* for English Language Arts and Literacy: narrative, informational, and argument. Children produce work in a variety of media, including books, letters, posters, brochures, and poetry. In SFL, poetry (for example) is a medium, rather than a genre, because a poem is a form through which any genre can be expressed; both a personal recount and an argument can be written in the form of a poem.

Through a fluid, coherent teaching and learning cycle that includes negotiation of the field (building content knowledge about which to write), deconstruction, joint construction, and individual construction, children are apprenticed in the purpose, structure, and language features of each genre. Together with the teacher and classmates, children listen to, act out, read, and analyze mentor texts to uncover their purposes, structures, and language features. During joint construction, the teacher and children compose text together in the given genre.

Alongside the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks,* writing instruction attends to the BPS Essentials for Instructional Equity, the BPS Social Emotional Learning Competencies and Practices, and the Massachusetts Guidelines for Preschool and Kindergarten Learning Experiences, as appropriate for each grade.

***How does Writing instruction support playful learning?***

Lessons and related experiences in communicating ideas on the page are made meaningful by the broader context in which children are learning, talking, and playing. Teachers bring a disposition of joyful discovery to the written word and encourage playfulness with language as children practice expressing their ideas across genres and media. Some writing prompts are precipitated by hands-on experiences; consider what happens when children endeavor to draft instructions for striking a specific yoga pose (procedure) or describe how a squirrel moves (explanation); consider how a story takes a silly turn when an important event is left out, a character says something surprising, or an impassioned opinion is directed to the wrong audience. Finally, when children are presented with compelling topics or are given leave to choose their own, they approach their writing with passion, and teachers see their pleasure, stamina, and production soar.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific to **PreK** | Specific to **Kindergarten (K2)** |
| * Teaching structure: whole group lessons (5-10 minutes, twice weekly) and small group lessons (20 minutes, each child meets at least weekly)
* Instruction begins with communicating through oral storytelling.
* Instruction includes shared experiences, looking at mentor texts, and joint construction.
* Genres include personal recount, report, procedure, and argument.
* Children write freely at the Writing and Drawing Center.
 | * Lesson duration: 30 minutes
* Instruction begins with communicating through oral storytelling and drawing.
* As the year progresses, children encode sounds, words, and sentences, while continuing with storytelling and drawing.
* Lessons include whole group instruction, joint and individual construction, and a feedback, revision, and publishing cycle.
* Genres include personal recount, report, explanation, procedure, and argument.
* Children write freely at the Writing and Drawing Center.
 |
| Specific to **First**  | and **Second Grades** |
| * Lesson duration: 30 minutes
* Lessons include whole group instruction, joint and individual construction, and a feedback, revision, and publishing cycle.
* Genres include personal recount, report, explanation, procedure, argument, and biography.
* Children write in response to text- and investigation-related prompts during Text Talk, in Science and Engineering lessons and journals, and in Stations. These prompts include the use of vocabulary relevant to the topic of study.
* Children write freely and in response to prompts in Studios.
 |