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## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Writing workshop in kindergarten: A multiple-case study investigating the nature  
of engagement and the quality of students' writing composition**

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Otterbein University

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Education  
degree.

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## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of engagement and the quality of my students' writing composition when I implement a writing workshop. To facilitate both specific and in-depth data collection and analysis, I conducted a multiple-case study, examining three of my kindergarten students with a spectrum of literacy skills (Mertler, 2019). The multiple-case study lasted 11 weeks and contained three phases of data collection. Data showed that the participants were most engaged in elements of the writing process that corresponded to their viewed strengths as a writer and preferences. For the participants' writing composition, data showed the participants had more similarities than differences in their writing processes. They could all apply different levels of conventions when writing independently and succeeded in creating more than one book with clear ideas.

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### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Whether or not one consciously thinks about writing, it is a skill people use throughout their daily lives. People write for different purposes and by utilizing diverse forms. As early as kindergarten, the Ohio Department of Education sets standards for children to express thoughts, opinions, and information through writing (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). Learning how to write is an integral aspect of literacy instruction and is a skill that children will use for the rest of their lives. The significance of learning to write generates many questions for me as a kindergarten teacher.

The decision to investigate writing instruction in my kindergarten classroom stems from my three years of teaching kindergarten and a critical reflection on the quality of my literacy instruction. Over the past three years, I have applied what I have learned in my graduate studies to implement research and theory-based literacy instruction to meet the needs of all my students. After reflection on my instruction and student engagement in literacy, I noticed students exhibited greater strides and excitement in reading experiences compared with writing.

My writing instruction consists of daily journal writing. The first step in my journal-writing instruction is to have the students draw a picture based on a sentence starter. Each day, I write a sentence starter that consists of past and present sight words, such as, “I like...” After I think aloud as I write the sentence starter – reminding students of directionality, handwriting, and spacing – I direct students to their illustration and model strategies to complete the sentence. For example, if I drew a pumpkin, I would say, “I hear the /p/ sound at the beginning of ‘pumpkin.’ What letter do I know makes the /p/ sound? I know P makes that sound.” Next, students work independently to complete the sentence. After three years of daily journal instruction, I have observed how my students, especially

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struggling students, are disengaged with writing and simply view it as a task they are forced to complete, instead of an exciting opportunity to share ideas.

I believe the lack of authentic writing experiences, choice, and time has contributed to less growth and enjoyment in writing. According to the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), essential elements of effective elementary writing instruction include opportunities to write for specific purposes, for students to have choice in their writing, and between 30 minutes to an hour of writing time (Graham, S., Bollinger, A., Booth Olson, C., D'Aoust, C., MacArthur, C., McCutchen, D., & Olinghouse, N., 2018). As I reflect on the needs of my students and research supported recommendations of quality writing instruction, I recognize the need to investigate a different form of writing instruction.

A type of writing instruction recommended by early childhood educators and which also addresses the development of emergent writers is known as a writing workshop. Ray and Cleaveland (2004) indicate that a writing workshop builds from a child's nature to explore and create. Children can determine what and how they create when writing, with the support and instruction of teachers and peers. After discussing writing instruction with colleagues, and examining research and theory on writing, I have decided to explore utilizing a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom. The purpose of this study is to investigate the nature of engagement and the quality of my students' writing composition when I implement a writing workshop. For the purposes of this study, I will research the following elements of writing composition: content, writing process, and conventions. I will conduct a multiple-case study with three students of varying literacy skills to facilitate detailed data collection and analysis.



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The research question for this case study: When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students' writing engagement and composition?

### **Significance**

The examination of the effects of a writing workshop on the writing composition and engagement of my kindergarten students is significant. First, the investigation can inform my instruction on how to enable my students to meet the kindergarten learning standards for writing in a developmentally appropriate way. According to Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts, students are expected to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to develop opinion, narrative, and informational texts by the end of kindergarten (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). For the past three years, it has been a struggle for all my students to meet the writing learning standards and to do so in a meaningful way, however, I believe that implementation of writing workshop has the potential to improve their learning. Collecting and analyzing data of students with three representative literacy skills on the impact of a writing workshop can inform my present and future instruction. In addition, I can share my findings with my colleagues to promote reflection on their writing instruction.

Another reason to study the in-depth effects of writing workshop is to learn how a type of writing instruction can influence students' levels of engagement to write. Calkins (1994), an esteemed teacher and researcher of quality writing instruction, communicates how a teacher who teaches writing can either smother the joy or reveal the power of writing. For instance, writing instruction centered around brief opportunities to write with no anticipation to share with others can prevent students from becoming invested in their

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writing. The opportunity to work through the writing process, share their ideas and experiences with others, and learn the purposes of writing would be lost (Calkins, 1994). My current writing instruction, which includes about 15 minutes of students copying and completing journal prompts with few opportunities to share, may be contributing to my students' lack of desire and engagement to write. It is essential for educators to help students develop intrinsic motivation to use writing to communicate and share ideas. This multiple-case study can help me see if writing workshop increases students' self-motivation to write.

Lastly, analyzing the development in my students' writing composition through a detailed case study not only provides information on their writing skills, but also reveals their current understandings and development in both reading and oral language. Clay (1975) and Sulzby and Teale (1985) describe how there is a connection amongst writing, reading, and oral language development. For example, as children write, they are learning and applying their knowledge of written language, such as the directionality of print, how words are separated by space, and how letters in a certain order create words that carry meaning. These critical understandings of written language directly apply to skills needed to read. Oral language provides a foundation for both writing and reading, as children learn syntax and meaning, such as what makes sense or sounds right when writing and reading (Clay, 1975). Analyzing my students' writing composition skills can not only show their writing skills, but also reveal elements of their overall literacy development.

To facilitate the examination of writing and overall literacy development for my kindergarten students, I will conduct a multiple-case study asking this research question:

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When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students' writing engagement and composition?

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### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The classroom fills with groans as I announce, “Please take out your journals...”

As a kindergarten teacher who is passionate about sharing the wonder of literacy, my heart drops as my 5- and 6-year-old students express strong dislike for the opportunity to write. Many questions arise as my students show negative feelings toward writing: Why do my kindergarten students dislike writing? Is the act of writing or how I am teaching writing the cause? What type of writing instruction would enable students to meet learning standards, be developmentally appropriate, and spark their engagement?

In the following literature review, I will seek to answer these questions by presenting research and literature on writing development and instruction, followed by a more focused examination on research and literature surrounding Writing Workshop. First, I will review research on emergent writing development to understand who kindergarten students, ages of 5 to 6 years old, are as writers. Second, I will describe the defining characteristics of high-quality emergent writing instruction, which provides a reference for evaluating emergent writing instruction. Next, I will examine how to engage young writers in the writing process. Finally, I will introduce the writing workshop approach and the rationale for implementation in a kindergarten classroom.

#### **What is typical writing development for kindergarten students?**

Before educators can begin to teach writing, they must understand who their students are as writers. The first step is to understand how children develop as writers.

For this study, research will focus on how emergent, or early writers, develop.

Researchers have dedicated their work to understand how young children progress from the slightest scribbles on a page to conventional print. Sulzby and Teale (1985) observed how 18-month-old infants began to demonstrate markings to convey meaning. As they

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observed a child's writing development evolve from ages 1 to 3, Sulzby and Teale noticed how random scribbles turned into scribbles with intended meaning, then evolved into conveying meaning through drawing and scribbles (see Figure 1). The transition from drawing to both drawing and markings indicates a child's beginning understanding of a distinction between drawing and print (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, and Johnston, 2012). Even before children enter school, they begin to experiment with markings and drawings to share ideas.

As children progress, it is typical to notice the transition from scribbles to evidence of letter forms. Ganske (2014) indicates that children in the pre-phonetic spelling stage will begin to represent words using a line of letters that lack letter-sound correspondence (see Figure 1). A line of random letters evolves to representing the prominent sounds in words, such as the beginning and ending sounds, like "bt" for "boat." As children obtain key literacy skills, their writing begins to emulate conventional forms of writing. Such skills include the development of the alphabetic principle, which is the understanding that letters represent sounds in words. Other skills include phonemic awareness, which is the understanding that words are comprised of individual sounds, and concept of word, in which words are separated by space. Increased knowledge of letters and sounds leads children to letter-name or phonetic spelling. When spelling, children use the letter names that best align with the sounds they desire to write (see Figure 1). For example, when spelling the word "fit," a child in the letter-name spelling stage may write "fet" because the letter name that best corresponds to how the mouth feels when expressing the short "i" sound is "e" (Ganske, 2014). Children's spelling

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abilities continue to advance as they progress across spelling stages. For this study, the focus will be on early writers, those in kindergarten ages 5 to 6.

**Figure 1**

## *Emergent Writing*

<p><b>Random Scribbles</b></p> 	<p><b>Scribbles with Assigned Meaning</b></p>  <p><b>"Shopping and camping list" (Sulzby &amp; Teale, 1985)</b></p>	<p><b>Drawing with Assigned Meaning</b></p>  <p><b>"Church."</b></p>
<p><b>Drawing and Scribbles</b></p>  <p><b>"Me eating my hair when I was little."</b></p>	<p><b>Drawing and String of Random Letters</b></p>  <p><b>"Me and my dad like to paint."</b></p>	<p><b>Drawing and Phonetic Spelling</b></p>  <p><b>"Mary and Saint Joseph ride and ride so long."</b></p>

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In contrast to Ganske's spelling stage view of writing development, other researchers explain how in reality, a child's writing development is more complex than linear. According to Clay (1975), it is easier for educators to view writing development as a strict linear progression of learning all letters to forming words to creating sentences; however, even after children learn a few letters, they begin to form words. In other words, development of letters, words, and sentences happen simultaneously. Sulzby and Teale (1985) support Clay's stance. They observed that the same child could use a mix of scribbles, invented spelling, and conventional writing at the same time. Sulzby, Teale, and Clay acknowledged that the writing development of young children is complex and unique.

In addition to the complexity of stages of writing development, children's writing development is unique, based on their experiences. Every child has different experiences with language. Children bring their past and present experiences with oral and written language to their writing at school. It is essential to value each child's experiences and use that information to guide instruction. For example, if a child comes from a home with rich literacy experiences, such as being read to; opportunities to experiment with writing; and hearing and using oral language, he or she may show greater strides in writing development (Clay, 1975). To obtain a complete picture of who emergent writers in kindergarten are, an understanding of their past experiences with language is key.

As it is important to appreciate the language experiences children bring to their present writing, it is also important to celebrate and learn from their attempts at conventional print. Clay (1975) explains that children's attempts at letter formation, phonetic spelling, and features of print such as concept of word and directionality sheds

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light on their current understandings of print and must be valued. As children gather new understandings of written language, such as how speech can turn into print and convey meaning and letter-sound correspondence, they attempt, or approximate new understandings. For example, a child with a beginning mastery of letter-sound correspondence and phonemic awareness may spell “bat” as “b.” The child’s approximation displays that the child can isolate the beginning sound in a word and can correctly associate the letter with its sound. The attempt also shows the child is not yet able to isolate and represent medial and final sounds in words. Graves (1983) builds from the idea of approximation by describing how writers grow through problem solving during the writing process. He explains that all writers work through challenges, however, the prominent challenge for early writers is spelling. From spelling, problem solving next transitions to handwriting, print conventions, topic, and revision. Both Clay (2013) and Graves (1983) articulate the importance of emergent writers having the opportunity to make approximations and problem-solve as they work through new understandings of written language.

Emergent writing development is also seen as a result of children’s social interactions and how they learn to represent their experiences through print. Dyson (1989) conducted a three-year multiple case study observing four students and how they developed as writers. A major finding from her case study was that the children learned to write through discovering how to “symbolize their experiences and to form social relationships with others” (p. xvi). She observed how children learned about the functions of print through meaningful social interactions. For example, she explains how during dramatic play, children learn how print can be used to record and organize information,



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such as making grocery lists, and to communicate with others, such as writing a note or making a card. As children continue to comprehend the functions of print, there is a shift from relying on speech and drawings to convey meaning, to integrating conventional print. Research exhibits the complex development of emergent writers in kindergarten.

### **What are characteristics of exemplary emergent writing instruction?**

Before focusing on one type of writing instruction, it is important to review the research on quality writing instruction for emergent writers. I will first look at the four recommendations the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) establishes, based on research on best practices for elementary writers.

#### ***Frequency***

The first recommendation of quality writing instruction for young writers is daily writing experiences. The opportunity to write daily enables students time to practice taught skills, gives teachers the chance to observe and provide daily feedback, and builds the students' confidence in writing. For kindergarten students, the IES recommends a minimum of 30 minutes of writing experiences a day (Graham, Bollinger, Booth, D'Aoust, MacArthur, McCutchen, and Olinghouse, 2018). Another benefit to daily writing opportunities relates to the composition process of choosing writing topics. According to Graves (1983), when writing daily, students can build upon current and previous writing to spark ideas. If writing occurs every few weeks, students have less practice choosing topics and may rely on the teacher's topic selection, decreasing student ownership. Writing instruction that provides emergent writers the opportunities to compose and practice taught writing skills leads students to present and future writing success.

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### *Writing Process*

The second recommendation of effective writing instruction for elementary writers is to explicitly teach students the writing process. The IES explains that students need a gradual release of support to learn strategies on how to be successful in each part of the writing process. The writing process includes planning, drafting, sharing, evaluating, revising, editing, and publishing (Graham et al., 2018). It is a cyclical process, meaning writers move fluidly between elements (Graves, 1983). It is important to recognize that each part of the writing process may look different, depending on an individual's writing development. Graves (1983) documented each stage of the writing process for himself, a fourth-grade student, and a first-grade student. All three individuals went through each element of the process but did so in his or her developmentally appropriate way. For example, during the planning, or choice/rehearsal process, the first-grade student relied on drawing while the fourth-grade student wanted to race into writing and struggled to gather ideas from past experiences. Fountas and Pinnell (2017) indicated in their literacy continuum that by the end of kindergarten, students should be able to show evidence of each level of the writing process, but in a way that corresponds to their level, such as planning using drawing and oral language. Although emergent writers may flow through the writing process differently than more developed writers, it is important to explicitly teach developmentally appropriate strategies.

### *Writing for a Purpose*

In addition to teaching the writing process, it is important students understand that people write for specific purposes: “describe, narrate, inform, and persuade” (Graham et al., 2018). The Ohio Learning Standards requires kindergarten students to be able to use a

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combination of drawing, writing, and dictating to write opinion, narrative, and informative texts. Learning how to write for different genres enables students to understand that writing is a tool to express ideas for specific reasons and audiences. Writing for different purposes provides students the opportunity to find a genre that emphasizes their strengths as writers. For example, students may find more success writing informative versus narrative texts or vice versa. Chances for success helps all students identify as writers (Seban & Tavsanlı, 2015). Emergent writing instruction that includes writing for specific purposes will help students discover the relevance of being successful writers.

### ***Fluency in Handwriting and Conventions***

The third recommendation for effective elementary writing instruction is to enable students to develop fluency in handwriting and application of conventions. The IES explains that when writers develop automaticity in letter formation, spelling, and sentence structure, there is an increased opportunity for focus on expressing ideas (Graham et al., 2018). When Graves (1983) examined the composing patterns of both himself and a first-grade student, he discovered that the first-grade student focused so much attention on conventions that the importance of her message was shadowed. In contrast, he could prioritize developing a clear message due to a mastery of basic writing skills. For early writers, instruction on mastering letter formation and continued development of spelling skills is developmentally appropriate (Graham et al., 2018).

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### *Engaged Writing Community*

The fourth recommendation is to create an engaged writing community through fostering a positive learning environment and providing opportunities for collaboration (Graham et al., 2018).

To create a community of writers, the teacher must work to create a positive and safe learning environment. Students need to feel comfortable sharing, writing, and working through the writing process. The IES articulates the importance of teachers engaging in their own writing, modeling the writing process, and sharing their writing with students (Graham et al., 2018). Another way to establish a positive learning community is for teachers to show respect to students and value their present skills (Kaufman, 2004). An environment built on the foundations of respect can help engage students in the writing process.

To build community, it is important for teachers and students to collaborate within the writing process. Examples include working together as a class on a writing project and teachers and peers providing feedback on writing (Graham et al., 2018). Collaboration strengthens relationships, creating a space for the sharing of ideas, support, and feedback. Both Dyson (2010) and Boscolo (2008) express how writing is a social activity, where talk and social interactions play a role in children's writing. Emergent writing instruction that incorporates collaboration can help generate an engaged community of writers.

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### **How do we engage emergent writers?**

An essential element of effective writing instruction is student engagement. If students lack the interest, dedication, and motivation to write, there is little room for growth. Researchers have learned ways teachers can engage emergent writers.

#### ***Choice***

One way to engage emergent writers is the opportunity for choice. The IES indicate that elementary writers show increased investment in writing when they choose the topic (Graham et al., 2018). For example, instead of the teacher always identifying the topic, students can pick based on interests and life experiences. Another example of the power of choice is how it stimulates a writers' voice. According to Graves (1983), "voice is the imprint of ourselves on our writing" (p. 227). Voice is found when the reader can sense the writer's purpose, thoughts, passion, and personality. Through Graves's (1983) research of the writing process, he observed when the writer chooses a topic of interest, his or her voice shines, resulting in enjoyment and an increased desire to have the writing reach its full potential. Likewise, Ackerman (2016) noticed how four kindergarten students during a writing workshop displayed increased levels of self-motivation and voice when they selected the topic for writing. The findings from Seban and Tavsanlı (2015) support how choice engages emergent writers. In their action research study, they investigated how high, average, and struggling second-grade students developed a writing identity through a writing workshop. Seban and Tavsanlı (2015) interviewed students on their view of the writing process. One finding displayed how students valued the chance to decide on a topic they had interest in and background knowledge of, resulting in less struggle to write and increased confidence. Emergent

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writers having choice in the writing process increases engagement through a spike of interest, an increase in voice, and a rise in confidence.

### ***Learning Environment***

A second way to engage emergent writers is to create a positive and safe learning environment that results in a supportive writing community. The IES indicates that elementary writers are more engaged when they are a part of a supportive writing community (Graham et al., 2018). A positive and safe learning environment is built upon foundations of respect and trust between the students and teacher. After conducting an interview with Donald Graves on how to create a successful writing classroom, Kaufman (2004) learned that there must be mutual respect and trust amongst students and teachers if students are expected to take risks when learning to write. If beginning writers know they are respected and trust their teacher and peers will support them, they are more likely to engage in the challenges writing presents. An essential aspect of developing an engaged writing community is a sense of belonging. To belong to a community, one knows he or she is valued. After reflecting on her past teaching experience and herself as a writer, Calkins (1994) emphasizes how if teachers listen and value students' life experiences, students will desire to share their experiences through writing. Students, now knowing their voices are heard and valued, will be encouraged to spread their voice in their writing. Emergent writers need to belong to a writing community built on respect and trust in order to engage them in the writing process.

### ***Social Interactions***

A third way to engage emergent writers is the integration of social interactions during the composing process. Researchers have found a link between children's high

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engagement during meaningful social experiences and writing. Dyson (2010), who studied the composing process of kindergarten and first-grade students, learned how children desired to use writing as a tool to communicate and formulate relationships with others. Communicating with peers during the composing process allows students to use writing to make sense and build upon their experiences, making writing an engaging and relevant act. Boscolo (2008) also articulates how students are engaged when writing links them to the social experiences in their classroom community. Another way to engage emergent writers through social interaction is collaboration. Examples of collaboration during the writing process include working together on a class project, peer and teacher feedback, and opportunities to share writing (Graham et al., 2018). Students and teachers working together giving feedback and support can spark engagement. Meaningful social interactions during the composing process can increase the engagement of emergent writers.

### ***Writing Identity***

A fourth component to engaging emergent writers is if students view themselves as writers. Research has shown that beginning writers are more apt to want to write when they believe they are writers. Seban and Tavsanlı (2015) found a factor into the level of engagement of second-grade writers of varying skill levels exhibited was how the students perceived themselves as writers. Students who do not see themselves as writers may be less inclined to engage in the writing process. Ackerman (2016) explained when her students identified as writers, they strove to improve their craft. Similarly, emergent writers who recognize their ability to write are sparked with curiosity about written language, by both learning about and finding examples of print in their environments

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(Calkins, 1994). For students to see themselves as writers, it is essential their teachers acknowledge and value their writing. For beginning writers, it is especially important to celebrate their beginning approximations as writing. Clay (1975) concludes from observations that beginning writers are more engaged and desire to write when their attempts are valued. Children who identify as writers are more engaged in the writing process.

### **What is a writing workshop in a kindergarten classroom?**

After examining defining characteristics of quality writing instruction for emergent writers, the focus of the study will be on one type of writing instruction: the writing workshop.

#### ***Defining Characteristics***

A writing workshop is a form of writing instruction that integrates purposeful whole, small group, and individual instruction with time for independent writing (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). A basic framework includes a daily 1-hour block of time, consisting of a mini lesson, work time, and sharing (Calkins, 1994).

Mini lessons are brief, purposeful opportunities for instruction that meet the needs of all students learning about the writing process. Calkins (1994) explains that mini lessons have a variety of purposes, such as to establish writing workshop procedure, to demonstrate writing strategies, to provide models of quality writing, and to provide guided support. Typically, mini lessons are about 5 to 15 minutes long and implement whole-group instruction (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). Ray and Cleaveland (2004), who specialize in the writing workshop for young writers, articulated the core purpose of mini lessons is to help children expand the possibilities for their writing. For example, teachers can use mentor



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texts, such as valued children's literature, to model ways to craft their writing. Although the topics and methods of mini lessons vary, the common element is to provide students with support, tools, and skills to reach their full potential as writers.

After the mini-lesson is completed, students next work on individual writing projects while the teacher holds individual- and small-group conferences. A defining aspect of a writing workshop is sustained writing time. Calkins (1994) explains that providing students with a large amount of time to invest in their writing allows them to work through the writing process. In addition to a continuous writing time, the expectation is not to complete a writing project in one day. A writing workshop model emphasizes the importance of the process of writing, rather than just the product. The process approach to teaching writing involves students actively engaged in the writing process while the teacher provides support (Boscolo, 2008). As Brown (2010) explains, during implementation of the writing workshop in her kindergarten classroom, students work through the continuous nature of the writing process to compose writing over time, not in one time-constrained portion of the day, as daily journal writing can suggest.

As students are writing, the role of the teacher is to hold individual and small group writing conferences. Writing conferences are a significant element to the writing workshop. The purpose of individual or small group conferences is to further support students as writers. Calkins (1994) describes three phases to a conference: "research, decide, teach" (p. 224). In the research phase, the teacher listens to the student in order to understand who the student is as a writer. Instead of focusing on the writing subject, the teacher must first learn who the student is as a writer, focusing on his or her writing process (Calkins, 1994). The focus surrounds *how* a student is writing rather than *what* the student is writing about.

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After gathering information on the student as a writer, the teacher next decides what teaching point will be most beneficial to help the writer. In addition, Ray and Cleaveland (2004) aligned with Calkin's emphasis on using conferences to teach students individualized writing strategies they can implement for present and future writing.

Following writing time and conferences, the writing workshop concludes with a time to share student work. The sharing of students' writing has several purposes: One is an additional opportunity for the teacher to reinforce specific learning objectives (Ray & Cleaveland, 2004). For instance, during conferences, the teacher can notice students' work that is an example of the learning objective, such as word choice, and ask them to share with the class. The teacher can use the students' work to emphasize characteristics of quality writing. Another purpose for students to share work is to build a strong writing community through peer feedback (Graham et al., 2018). During sharing time, students can give each other feedback and learn how to show respect. After examining the defining characteristics of a writing workshop model for teaching writing, it is important to understand the rationale for implementation in a kindergarten classroom.

### ***Rationale***

An important question to consider is this: Why should a writing workshop model be used in a kindergarten classroom? To explore this question, one can examine kindergarten learning standards, defining elements of quality elementary writing instruction, and developmentally appropriate practices.

**Meets Learning Standards.** For kindergarten, the Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts outlines writing goals focused on writing for varied purposes, applying feedback to revise writing, and exhibiting proper use of basic conventions (Ohio

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Department of Education, 2017). A writing workshop approach incorporates opportunities for students to write for different purposes, receive and apply both peer and teacher feedback, and learn how to use conventions. Kindergarten students can explore writing to tell a story, persuade, and inform through purposeful mini lessons, writing time, and individual conferences. For instance, Ackerman (2016) conducted a year-long study on how four of her kindergarten students grew as writers using a writing workshop model. She had her students learn and write both informational and opinion pieces. Although the four students were varied in their levels of literacy skills, they flourished in having the opportunity to use writing as a tool to share topics they were experts at via informational writing and to create change through opinion writing. A writing workshop model, which includes meaningful and relevant opportunities to study and create writing for different purposes, enables kindergarten students to meet required learning standards. Kindergarten students experience how to receive and give peer and teacher feedback through the writing workshop model. In an action research study, Jasmine and Weiner (2007) studied 5- and 6-year-old first-grade students to learn how the writing workshop helped them become independent writers who used the writing process. During the study, students learned through mini-lessons and work time how to conduct quality peer conferences. Through interviews, the students articulated how the peer conferences helped them add details and fix mistakes. As this study illustrates, a writing workshop provides young children opportunities to give and receive feedback to improve their writing. Lastly, the writing workshop addresses the learning standard of learning and applying basic conventions, such as capitalization and punctuation. Ray (2006) studied a first-grade classroom during a writing workshop and noticed how the teacher engaged students in meaningful studies to

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learn how to use conventions. The teacher implemented mini lessons that taught conventions in context with mentor texts and student writing. Rather than teaching conventions in isolation, the students saw an authentic way an author used a type of punctuation and discovered ways they could integrate it in their own writing. What is clear is that not only will kindergarten students meet the writing learning standards, but they will have had meaningful writing experiences they can bring to first grade.

**Meets Effective Instruction Criteria.** A second rationale for implementing a writing workshop in a kindergarten classroom is that it aligns with the IES criteria for effective instruction for elementary writers. The first criterion the writing workshop reflects is frequency. Calkins (1994) and Ray and Cleaveland (2004) emphasize an important element to an effective writing workshop is having daily 1-hour blocks of organized and predictable writing time.

The second criterion a writing workshop meets is teaching the writing process and writing for different purposes. An illustration of emergent writers learning and using the writing process during a writing workshop is the first-grade students observed by Jasmine and Weiner (2007). The first-grade students in the study experienced the writing process of rehearsal/planning, drafting, revising, editing, sharing, and publishing through a combination of mini-lessons, individual and small-group work time, and both peer and teacher conferences. After analyzing writing samples, interviews, and surveys, the researchers concluded that the writing workshop contributed to students becoming independent writers using the writing process (Jasmine & Weiner, 2007). The writing workshop model also allows emergent writers opportunities to write for different purposes. For instance, Seban and Tavsanlı (2015) studied second-grade students within the writing

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workshop. Within the workshop, students wrote for different purposes, such as to inform, describe, and entertain. As a result, the students grew as writers.

The third criterion a writing workshop reflects is opportunities to develop automaticity in handwriting and conventions. For emergent writers, such as kindergarten students, the IES explains how handwriting instruction requires a combination of explicit instruction and opportunities to apply skills in meaningful writing projects (Graham et al., 2018). The writing workshop approach provides students with relevant ways to apply and practice handwriting. Whole-class explicit instruction in handwriting is not a typical element of a writing workshop model. Writing workshop is the time young writers get firsthand experience working with written language in meaningful activities, rather than in isolation (Ray & Cleaveland, 2004). In addition to handwriting, the writing workshop invites emergent writers to practice early spelling skills, such as letter-sound correspondence, through invented spelling. During writing time, teachers can use individual writing conferences to support students who need assistance with handwriting, spelling, and conventions or to also help those who are ready to extend their skills. The writing workshop is a time for students to practice handwriting and conventions in authentic ways (Ray & Cleaveland 2004).

The fourth criterion for effective elementary writing instruction the writing workshop model reflects is an engaged writing community (Graham et al., 2018). The writing workshop approach engages emergent writers through opportunities for choice, collaboration, and a positive learning environment. As previously discussed, students having ownership of the writing topic increases their engagement in writing. The writing workshop approach encourages students to pick topics based on interests and experiences

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(Ray & Cleaveland, 2004). For instance, while implementing the writing workshop in her kindergarten classroom, Ackerman (2016) had students select a topic for informational writing in which they could share their expertise with others. As a result, the students' writing engagement was increased. The writing workshop model also paves the way for collaboration between peers and teachers. Students have opportunities to work in small groups, participate in peer and teacher conferences, and share their work (Calkins, 1994). For example, in a first-grade classroom, students expressed how they enjoyed working with others to make their writing better (Jasmine & Weiner, 2007). Lastly, the writing workshop fosters a positive learning environment where student effort is celebrated and valued. A key component of a writing workshop is sharing time. During this time, it is typical for the class to gather and take turns sharing their writing with the classroom community (Ray & Cleaveland, 2004; Calkins, 1994). One purpose of sharing time is to provide students encouragement and support throughout the writing process (Calkins, 1994). For example, first-grade students who participated in a writing workshop communicated having positive experiences sharing work with peers as they received feedback and encouragement (Jasmine & Weiner, 2007). Daily sharing that provides opportunities for beginning writers to receive encouragement and feedback can contribute to creating a positive learning environment. The writing workshop model fosters meaningful opportunities for choice and collaboration, and helps create a positive learning environment, resulting in an engaged community of writers.

**Developmentally Appropriate Instruction.** A significant reason the writing workshop model should be used in a kindergarten classroom is because it reflects developmentally appropriate instruction. The writing workshop values emergent writing

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approximations, incorporates writing in a social context, and relates to the needs of early childhood learners.

The writing workshop approach is focused on honoring the developmentally appropriate approximations of emergent writers. Ray and Cleaveland (2004) express the importance of understanding that although a young writer's work may not reflect conventional print, it is still important because, to the child, it conveys meaning. Ray's and Cleaveland's philosophy aligns with Clay (1975) regarding how a child's approximations, such as scribbles, drawing, and random letter forms, are a window into what the child understands about print, and therefore can inform instruction. Valuing and regarding young children's attempts at conventional print as writing reflects the principles of Emergent Literacy Theory. The Emergent Literacy Theory suggests that beginning at birth, children develop literacy skills (Handsfield, 2016). In the context of writing instruction, the Emergent Literacy Theory emphasizes that all children can write, no matter their age and skills they have learned. The view that children should write before they have learned and show certain literacy skills, such as letter-sound knowledge, is contrary to Thorndike's Law of Readiness. Thorndike's Law of Readiness assumes that children must learn specific skills at certain ages before they are ready to read or write (Handsfield, 2016). Although the readiness theory has value, the writing workshop approach resonates with proponents of the Emergent Literacy theory, because the development of written language skills, such as letter-sound correspondence and generating words and sentences, happens simultaneously, not in a strict linear progression (Clay, 1975; Sulzby & Teale, 1985). The writing workshop approach can be seen as developmentally appropriate instruction for kindergarten students due to its alignment with emergent literacy.

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A second indication that a writing workshop approach is developmentally appropriate for kindergarten students is the inclusion of literacy learning in a social context. During the writing workshop, students collaborate with peers and teachers to develop ideas, improve writing, and to share their work (Ray & Cleaveland, 2004; Calkins, 1994). The National Association for the Education of Young Children (2009) (NAEYC), who developed guidelines for developmentally appropriate instruction for children from birth to age 8, state that children's learning and development is benefited when situated in opportunities to form relationships with peers and adults through collaboration. The peer and teacher conferences and daily sharing sessions give kindergarten students the chance to work with others and develop their language skills. Research studies have also attributed how interacting with others helps young writers in the writing process. Dyson and Genishi (1982) conducted a case study with first-grade students to learn how students used oral language while writing and how social interactions affected the students' writing process. After observing two six-year-old first grade students writing alone and, in a group, Dyson and Genishi (1982) found that both students used their interactions with others to aid them in the writing process. The structure of the writing workshop reflects the importance of social interaction to young children's growth in literacy and developmental skills.

As a kindergarten teacher, it is essential that I implement an effective writing instruction that meets the needs of my 5- and 6-year-old students. After reviewing literature on emergent writing development, effective elementary writing instruction, ways to engage young writers, and developmentally appropriate instruction, it is evident that the writing workshop approach should be implemented in a kindergarten classroom.



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The writing workshop values emergent writers' purposeful approximations of conventional print (Clay, 1975; Sulzby & Teale, 1985; Ray & Cleaveland, 2004), provides frequent, purposeful, and engaging opportunities to write (Graham et al., 2018; Calkins, 1994), and engages students through collaborative social interactions (Dyson, 2010). I anticipate that the writing workshop approach will be developmentally appropriate for my kindergarten students, resulting in higher engagement and growth. To determine the effect of a writing workshop in my own kindergarten classroom, I will investigate the research question: When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students' writing engagement and composition?

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### **Chapter 3: Research Design and Method**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the nature of engagement and the quality of my students' writing composition when I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom. In this study, the term "engagement" refers to the students' desire to participate in the act of writing. The term "writing composition" refers to the writing content and conventions, as well as the writing process. To facilitate both specific and in-depth data collection and analysis, I conducted a multiple-case study, examining three of my kindergarten students (Mertler, 2019). In this section, I will describe the research design and method of the case study.

#### **Method**

I implemented a multiple-case study to determine the nature of engagement and the quality of my students' writing compositions when I implemented a writing workshop. A multiple-case study is a type of qualitative research involving detailed data collection and analysis of a small number of subjects (Mertler, 2019). In contrast to a single-subject case study, I chose a multiple-case study to represent a purposeful stratified sample. A purposeful stratified sample is a specifically chosen subgroup of participants, such as three kindergarten students with low, average, and high literacy skills (Patton, 2002; Mertler & Charles, 2011). I chose a multiple-case study to investigate the effects the writing workshop approach had on participants across a spectrum of literacy skills. This multiple-case study reflects qualitative research because it involves the collection of "narrative data," consisting of observations, work samples, and interview and video transcripts. The research occurred in the participants' natural setting of their kindergarten classroom and sought to analyze both the process and product as the participants worked through the writing workshop (Mertler & Charles,

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2011, p. 192). The multiple-case study lasted 11 weeks and contained three phases of data collection. The first three weeks (Phase 1) consisted of collecting initial data prior to implementing the writing workshop approach. The remaining eight weeks involved daily writing workshop instruction and included Phases 2 and 3 of data collection.

### **Setting**

The multiple-case study took place at an Ohio, suburban private Catholic PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade school during the 2020-2021 academic school year in a self-contained kindergarten classroom. The school consists of 340 students. The grade levels, from kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> grade, consist of two teachers per grade. There are four teachers each for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The case study took place during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The school has conducted in-person learning all school year, requiring all students and faculty to wear masks and stay six feet apart.

The multiple-case study took place in my kindergarten classroom; therefore, my research role was one of participant-observer (Mertler & Charles, 2011). My kindergarten class consists of 17 students between the ages of 5 and 6 and includes 10 boys and 7 girls. The class demographics include 15 white students, 1 black student, and 1 multi-racial student. All students began the school year after participating in pre-school remotely from March to June 2020.

### **Participants**

From my 17 kindergarten students, I selected three students as the participants for the case study. I selected three students; one each who displayed low-, average-, and high-level literacy skills, in order to form a more complete picture of how the writing workshop approach could affect kindergarten students of varying abilities. To determine

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student literacy levels, I collected preliminary data consisting of both formal and informal assessments, observations, and writing samples, which I will explain in detail in the Data Collection Section.

After I analyzed the preliminary data, I chose three participants who exhibited low-, average-, and high-level literacy skills: Alice, Ray, and Jane. The names of the participants in this study were pseudonyms. Each student verbally consented to participate and provided written consent from his or her legal guardian. Next, I will describe each participant's assessed literacy skills before the study.

### *Alice*

Alice, age 5 years and 11 months, was a biracial girl in my kindergarten class. After I analyzed the three assessments and writing samples, I chose Alice to represent a kindergarten student with low literacy skills. To illustrate her literacy skills, I will provide brief descriptions of assessment results and writing sample observations. Results from the letter-sound assessment (see Table 1) revealed she was not yet able to meet the learning goal to identify at least 12/26 capital and lower-case letters, but her letter-sound knowledge was adequate, as the expectation was to begin to identify letter sounds. To see a full analysis of Alice's letter-sound assessment, see Figure A2 in Appendix A.

**Table 1**

### *Alice Letter-Sound Identification Results*

<b>Capital Letters</b>	<b>Lower-case Letters</b>	<b>Letter sounds</b>
11/26	8/26	6/26

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The results of the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (HRSW) displayed that she could encode 8 of the 37 phonemes in the dictated sentence. Four of the five sounds were known sight words, such as “the” and “red.” The other four sounds were shown in “uote/boat”, “woeiw/we,” and “twoo/to.” Alice’s results showed she was able to encode the prominent consonant sound in words several times and the medial vowel sound and ending consonant sound once. To see a full analysis of Alice’s HRSW assessment, see Figure B3 in Appendix B. The Writing Vocabulary assessment revealed Alice could spell 10 words correctly. It is important to note that Alice could spell her name independently, but that she copied other nine words from the classroom sight-word board. To see a full analysis of Alice’s Writing Vocabulary assessment, see Figure C3 in Appendix C.

Finally, the writing sample from daily journal writing provided further insight of her understandings of print, ability to encode, and adherence to detail (see Figure 2). For example, Alice copied the prompt correctly, writing from left to right and with proper spacing, showing directionality and concept of word. In addition, the writing sample showed that Alice may have not been able to encode, or isolate sounds in words independently, as she wrote my example to complete the given prompt instead of her own. Lastly, her illustration, although the same as mine, did reveal her attention to detail when drawing. Alice’s writing sample shows she was not ready to complete the journal prompt independently, which resulted in not yet meeting the learning goal. Both the preliminary assessments and writing sample informed my decision that Alice represented a kindergarten student with low-level literacy skills.

**Figure 2***Alice Journal Writing Sample****Ray***

Ray was a 6-year-old white boy in my kindergarten class. After analyzing the three assessments and writing samples, I chose Ray to represent a kindergarten student with average literacy skills. To illustrate his literacy skills, I will provide brief descriptions of assessment results and writing sample observations. Results from the letter-sound assessment (see Table 2) illustrated he met the learning goal of knowing at least 12 of the 26 letters and beginning ability to identify sounds. To see a full analysis of Ray's letter-sound assessment, see Figure A4 in Appendix A.

**Table 2***Ray Letter-Sound Identification Results*

Capital Letters	Lower-case Letters	Letter sounds
22/26	19/26	15/26

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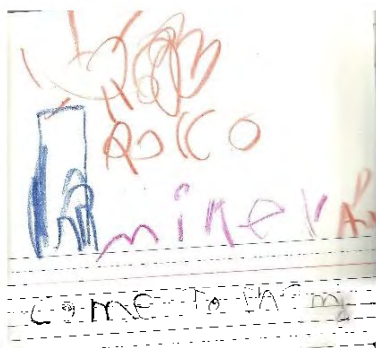
The results of the HRSW displayed that he could encode 23 of the 37 phonemes of the dictated sentence. He was able to isolate and record the prominent beginning consonant sounds in words, except for /r/ in “ride” and showed beginning ability to isolate prominent consonant ending sounds, such as “hv/have” and “ud/ride.” According to our kindergarten learning goals, in October of kindergarten, students should be able to isolate beginning sounds in words. To see a full analysis of Ray’s HRSW, see Figure B5 in Appendix B. On the Writing Vocabulary assessment, Ray wrote nine words correctly. It is important to note that he wrote seven of the nine words independently and referred to the sight-word board in the classroom to write the other two. Although he did reference the sight-word board, he was able to write more words independently than Alice. To see a full analysis of Ray’s Writing Vocabulary assessment, see Figure C5 in Appendix C.

Finally, the writing sample from daily journal writing provided further insight into his understanding of print, ability to encode, and adherence to detail (see Figure 3). For example, Ray copied the prompt correctly, writing from left to right and with proper spacing, showing directionality and concept of word. In addition, the writing sample showed Ray could encode the beginning consonant sound of “museum” independently. Lastly, Ray’s illustration of himself and his friend at a museum did seem rushed with only the outlines of figures. Ray’s writing sample met the learning goal of completing the journal prompt independently and correctly isolating the beginning sound. The preliminary assessments and writing sample informed my decision that Ray represented a kindergarten student with average literacy skills.

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**Figure 3**

*Ray Journal Writing Sample*



**Jane**

Jane, age 5 years and 9 months, was a white girl in my kindergarten class. After analyzing the three assessments and writing samples, I chose Jane to represent a kindergarten student with high literacy skills. To illustrate her literacy skills, I will provide brief descriptions of assessment results and writing sample observations. Results from the letter-sound assessment (see Table 3) illustrated how her letter-sound knowledge exceeded the learning goal of knowing at least 12 of the 26 letters and beginning ability to identify sounds. To see a full analysis of Jane's letter-sound assessment, see Figure A6 in Appendix A.

**Table 3**

*Jane Letter-Sound Identification Results*

Capital Letters	Lower-case Letters	Letter sounds
26/26	23/26	24/26

The results of the HRSW displayed that she could encode 26 of the 37 phonemes of the dictated sentence. She was able to isolate the prominent beginning and ending



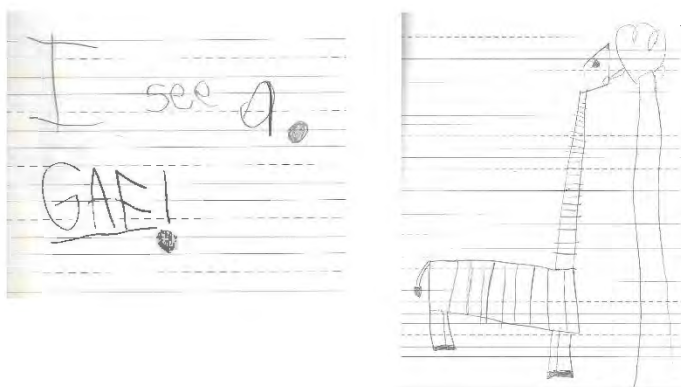
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consonant sounds in words, which was above learning expectations for October in my kindergarten class. To see a full analysis of Jane's HRSW, see Figure B7 in Appendix B. Jane wrote 12 words accurately on the Writing Vocabulary assessment. Compared to Alice and Ray, Jane was able to write and spell more words independently, only copying words from the sight word board several times. To see a full analysis of Jane's Writing Vocabulary assessment, see Figure C7 in Appendix C.

Finally, the writing sample from daily journal writing provided further insight into her understanding of print, ability to encode, and adherence to detail (see Figure 4). For example, Jane copied the prompt correctly, writing from left to right and with proper spacing, showing directionality and concept of word. In addition, the writing sample showed Jane's ability to encode beyond the beginning sound, an indicator of high-level literacy skills in the fall of my kindergarten class. Lastly, her illustration was detailed, but could have used some color. The preliminary assessments and writing sample informed my decision that Jane represented a kindergarten student with high literacy skills.

**Figure 4**

*Jane Journal Writing Sample*



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### **Data Collection**

Prior to beginning the three phases of the study, I collected preliminary data consisting of both formal and informal assessments, observations, and writing samples to determine student literacy levels. The literacy skills I assessed included letter and sound identification, knowledge of print, ability to hear and record sounds in words, word knowledge and spelling. I chose these elements of literacy because they are all essential skills to write conventional print (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, and Johnston, 2012).

The first preliminary assessment administered evaluated students' letter-sound knowledge (see Appendix A). This assessment, with the help of my classroom aide, is administered twice in a nine-week quarter. The assessment required students to identify all capital and lower-case letters and their corresponding sounds. After scoring, I could begin to determine students that displayed low-, average-, and high-level abilities in letter-sound knowledge.

The second preliminary assessment I administered was Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (HRSW) (see Appendix B). The purpose of HRSW, by Clay (2013), is to determine the degree in which a student can encode, or translate the sounds heard in words, into print. In other words, it informs teachers how well a student is making the connection between letters and sounds. It is important to note that HRSW assesses correct recording of phonemes, rather than spelling. After scoring, I could determine the students that exhibited a low, average, and high ability to encode.

The third preliminary assessment I used to help determine my three participants was the Writing Vocabulary created by Clay (2013) (see Appendix C). The purpose of this assessment is to observe how many words a participant can spell correctly.

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Finally, I analyzed students' writing samples from daily journal writing and observations. As described in Chapter 1, daily journal writing required students to first draw a picture based on the provided prompt. Subsequently, they would then copy a prompt I wrote while I provided guided reminders such as capitalization, spacing, and handwriting. Next, students would complete the prompt, applying their letter-sound knowledge and ability to isolate sound in words. When looking at students' journal entries, I analyzed students' ability to write from left to right, to copy the prompt accurately from the board, to create proper spacing between words, and to isolate sounds in words to complete the prompt. In addition, I noted how their illustrations matched their words and the amount of detail they added. Once I reviewed all preliminary data, I began data collection for the study.

To investigate the effects a writing workshop approach had on the participants' writing engagement and composition, I collected qualitative data in three phases. I divided data collection into three phases to distinguish when I collected initial, weekly, and final data. In the following sections, I will describe the data collected in each phase of the case study.

### ***Phase 1 (Weeks 1-3): Journal Writing***

Before implementing the writing workshop, I took three weeks to collect initial data to understand the participants' attitudes toward writing, their sense of writing identity, and their writing process, within what had been the traditional writing context of the classroom. The type of writing instruction the participants received during phase 1 was composed of daily journal writing.

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**Interview.** To assess Alice, Ray, and Jane's engagement in writing, I created a six-question interview (see Appendix D). For the purposes of this study, engagement refers to the participants' desire to write and level of focus on the writing task. The questions allowed me to learn about the participants' attitudes toward writing and how they identified themselves as writers. Research has shown that students are more engaged in writing when they see themselves as writers (Seban and Tavsanlı, 2015). In addition to engagement, the interview informed me of how the participants understood writing, such as its purposes and what it means to write. The interview followed a semi-structured format which allowed for follow-up questions when needed and aligned with appropriate interview protocols (Mertler & Charles, 2011).

**Observations.** To gather data on the participants' writing process and level of engagement in the act of writing, I recorded observations of each participant during daily journal writing (see Appendix E). For the purposes of this study, the writing process is one aspect of writing composition I investigated. The purpose of the observations was to both learn and understand the process Alice, Ray, and Jane used to compose their journal entry and to also observe the degree to which they engaged in the task.

### ***Phase 2 (Weeks 4-11): Writing Workshop***

After collecting initial data, I began Phase 2 of data collection. At Week 4 of the case study, I began to implement the writing workshop. Phase 2 consisted of the weekly data I collected during the eight weeks of writing workshop instruction.

**Writing Samples.** To gather data on Alice's, Ray's, and Jane's development of writing composition during the writing workshop, I collected weekly writing samples. For the purposes of this study, writing composition referred to the content, writing

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process, and conventions used by each participant. The writing samples were in the form of books, which will be discussed in a later section.

**Conference Notes.** During the writing workshop, I met with the participants one to two times a week during individual conference time. Each time I met with a participant, I took notes on his or her responses to my questions and what I observed (see Appendix F). The conference notes provided data on each participant's writing process and the teaching support I provided based on his or her needs. In addition to my written conference notes, I video-recorded one conference for each participant and created transcriptions for each.

### ***Phase 3 (Weeks 8-11): Writing Workshop***

During the last four weeks of the case study, I gathered one-time observations, formal assessments, and interviews to learn about the participants' writing composition, engagement, and literacy skills.

**Observations During Writing (Weeks 8 and 9).** Just as I conducted observations of each participant's writing in Phase 1, I did the same in Phase 3 (see Appendix G). During Weeks 8 and 9 of the case study, I video-recorded Alice, Ray, and Jane during writing time. The purpose of these observations was to further learn about each participant's writing process and level of engagement.

**Observations Reading Their Writing (Weeks 8, 9, and 11).** To gather data on each participant's ability to read his or her own writing, data about each participant's writing process, and data related to their literacy skills, I video-recorded the participants reading one of their finished books. After recording, I wrote observations and transcribed the recording (see Appendix H).

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**Formal Assessments (Week 10).** I administered two of the same assessments I used to select participants: HRSW and Writing Vocabulary (see Appendix I). The purpose of these assessments was to measure the participants' current ability to hear and record sounds in words and the number of words they could spell correctly. These assessments were used as a reference and means of comparison to see if the participants' writing samples reflected the results of the assessments. It is important to note that the results of these assessments were not in direct correspondence to the writing workshop.

**Interview (Week 11).** To assess Alice, Ray, and Jane's engagement in writing after participating in the writing workshop, I created an eight-question interview (see Appendix J). The interview consisted of the same six questions as in Phase 1, but with two additional questions asking their opinion of the writing workshop and how they liked it in comparison with daily journal writing.

### **Instruction**

In the next section, I will describe my eight-week writing workshop instruction in which Phases 2 and 3 of data collection occurred.

### ***Writing Workshop***

For eight weeks, I implemented a writing workshop for 50 minutes, five days a week. A writing workshop is a form of writing instruction that integrates purposeful whole, small-group, and individual instruction with time for independent writing (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). The writing workshop I implemented consisted of a 10- to 15-minute mini-lesson, approximately 20-30 minutes of student writing time and individual conferences, and 5 to 10 minutes of sharing. Based on the writing workshop approaches of Ray and Cleaveland (2004), my students worked each day, serving as both authors and

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illustrators when creating their own books. The books consisted of about six blank white sheets of paper stapled together. I used blank paper, as recommended by Ray and Cleaveland (2018), to reduce possible stress caused by having to write on fixed lined paper. During the last week of the study, I did introduce books with lined paper so students could begin to write books with a slightly different format. To understand the defining elements of each part of the writing workshop I implemented, I will describe the structure of mini-lessons, the expectations for writing time, my method for individual conferences, and an overview of sharing time.

### *Mini Lessons*

Each day, I taught 10- to 15-minute mini-lessons designed to both explain and model procedures, strategies, and elements of the writing process. The mini-lessons involved whole-class teaching with opportunities for the students to participate when appropriate, such as for brief discussion, to engage in interactive writing, and to ask questions. As Ray and Cleaveland (2004) articulate, the mini-lessons provide students with the tools and understandings needed to both become and grow as authors and illustrators.

For the first week of writing workshop, I implemented the lessons from Ray and Cleaveland (2018) to set up a strong foundation, in order for my students to understand the expectations, procedures, and purposes of our writing workshop time. Examples of expectations included writing books about one idea and including pictures and words on every page. The first week also incorporated explaining and modeling ways to get words on the page, the importance of re-reading past days' work, and how they could continue to add details on the same book to make it better.

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After the first week of writing workshop, I applied what I observed in order to plan for the next week. One observation I had during writing time was that some students were timid in their attempts to write words while others were not afraid to try. To address timid writers, I decided to focus on encouraging students to not be afraid of approximating spelling words. First, I reviewed the word-making strategies we learned the first week, which encouraged students to ask themselves: What sounds do I hear in the word? Can I find the word in the room? Is the word long or short? Next, we created a chart that read: "I'm not afraid of my words!" where students shared their attempt at a word and then I wrote the conventional spelling. This activity celebrated students' attempts at using their letter-sound knowledge to spell unknown words. In addition to focusing on writing words, I noticed students needed explicit guidance to determine if their book was complete. To facilitate independence in the decision-making process, I reviewed questions for students to think about, such as: Can I add more details to my words and illustrations? Is my book about one idea? Are there pictures and words on each page? The ability for 5- and 6-year-old students to be metacognitive, or self-reflective of their work, was challenging and was revisited.

The third week of mini-lessons focused on how students could begin to go back to their books and add details to their illustrations. After reviewing students' books from the previous week, I noticed many seemed to rush through their illustrations, only using one color with minimal details. To foster the beginning understanding of revision as part of the writing process, I modeled it using my own writing. Using a think-aloud strategy, I shared my thought process, asking myself questions, such as: What can I add to my book



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to make it better? What can I add to my illustrations? Then, I invited the students to help me brainstorm ideas.

While the first three weeks helped establish expectations and strategies, the remaining weeks focused on where writers generate and produce ideas. As the first step in the writing process, it was important for students to learn where and how ideas are discovered. To accomplish this, Ray and Cleaveland (2004) recommend sharing where published writers get ideas. We explored that authors get ideas from something they encounter every day, from their family members, and from specific life experiences. As we read the selected picture books, students analyzed how the authors and illustrators worked together to create meaning through intentional decisions. After analyzing the picture books, I discussed how the students could apply what they have learned from the published authors and illustrators to their own books. As the weeks continued, I scheduled additional mini-lessons based on the needs I observed, such as new word-making strategies and modeling revision to pictures and words. I will next discuss the structure and expectations of the writing time and individual conferences.

### ***Writing Time and Conferences***

After the taught mini-lesson, students had 20 to 30 minutes of writing time. Students had opportunities to work independently and talk with peers about their writing. Due to COVID-19, the students' desks were six feet apart. If they wanted to discuss their writing with a peer, I allowed them to do so, but at an appropriate distance.

While students wrote, I conducted individual conferences. During the 20- to 30-minute writing period, I attempted to meet with approximately three to four students per day. The purpose of the conferences was to learn about the students' individual writing

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process and provide support to help their present and future writing. Next, I will describe the structure of sharing time during the writing workshop.

### *Sharing*

After writing time, the class came back together for a 5–10-minute sharing time. During the eight-week period, I implemented two different sharing structures. The first type of sharing involved my sharing of students' work that would help reinforce teaching points. For example, while the students wrote, I noticed a student re-reading his or her writing (a strategy I had modeled in the mini-lesson). Upon rereading, the student decided to add more detail to the illustrations and added known sight-words. The second type of sharing involved students reading their stories in front of the class. After the students read their books, their peers took turns sharing what they liked about the stories.

### **Data Analysis**

To capture the nature of engagement and development of the participants' writing composition when I implemented a writing workshop, I conducted a logico-inductive analysis of collected data in the three phases. Characteristic of qualitative research, a logico-inductive analysis is the process of organizing data into logical categories, finding patterns, and generating conclusions to answer the research question (Mertler & Charles, 2011). In order to analyze the three phases of data, I created two main categories that relate to the research question: engagement and writing composition. I then took a directed approach to content analysis, meaning I created coding schemes before analysis that represented key elements of engagement and writing composition based on research (see Table 4) (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Next, I coded the data, analyzed it for patterns, and generated conclusions.

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**Table 4**

*Coding Schemes*

<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Writing Composition</b>
<b>DTW:</b> Desire to write	<b>CT:</b> Content <b>*CT:CI-</b> Clarity of ideas
<b>ATT:</b> Attitude toward writing	<b>WP:</b> Writing Process <b>*WP:PI-</b> Planning <b>*WP:DR-</b> Drafting <b>*WP:RE-</b> Revising <b>*WP:ED-</b> Editing
<b>WID:</b> Writing identity	<b>C:</b> Conventions <b>C:SP:</b> Spacing <b>C:D:</b> Directionality <b>C:SPL:</b> Spelling <b>C:H:</b> Handwriting

I conducted a multiple-case study with a purposeful stratified sample to investigate the research question: When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students' writing engagement and composition? I gathered preliminary assessment data, then three phases of data for students across a spectrum of literacy skills. Finally, I took a directed approach to analyze data.

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### **Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis**

In this section, I will report my findings and analysis for the following research question: When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students' writing engagement and composition? An analysis of triangulated data revealed patterns regarding the students' writing engagement and composition. To report my findings and analysis, I will identify the themes derived from the data patterns under two main categories: writing engagement and composition. I will also provide supporting evidence for the themes. For writing engagement, I will explore the themes of writing identity and attitude toward writing. For writing composition, I will explore the themes of similarities and differences in the writing process, application of conventions, and clarity of ideas.

#### **Writing Engagement**

In this multiple-case study, I collected and analyzed data regarding the nature of my students' writing engagement. In this study, the term "engagement" refers to the students' desire to participate in the act of writing. While analyzing interviews and observations, I focused on three elements of writing engagement: desire to write, attitude toward writing, and writing identity. After I concluded my analysis, I found common themes across the three elements of writing engagement that showed possible sources for the participants' desire to actively participate in the writing process.

#### ***Writing Identity***

My students wanted to engage in the writing process when the writing instruction expectations aligned with their writing identities. For the purposes of this study, writing identity refers to how the participants viewed themselves as writers. When the participants had the opportunity to display their strengths in the writing process, they

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voiced a positive attitude toward writing and viewed themselves as writers. Evidence from both the interviews and the observations of writing from Phases 1 and 3 of data collection highlights the connection between writing engagement and writing identity. How each participant viewed either himself or herself as a writer corresponded to what he or she liked about writing and the type of writing instruction.

**Alice.** Alice identified herself as a writer through her ability to draw. In her interview during Phase 1, when I implemented daily journal writing, Alice expressed that she saw herself as a writer because she loved to both draw and imagine things. Alice's drawing-focused writing identity corresponded with her attitude toward writing. She explained that she liked to write "because you can make all things and flowers and stuff" (Alice Phase 1 Interview). Alice shared similar thoughts on her writing identity and view of writing in her Phase 3 interview when I implemented writing workshop. For instance, she said she saw herself as a writer because she could draw many things, such as cats and dogs, and that she loved to write because she could draw anything she wanted. Both interviews revealed that Alice viewed drawing as one of her key strengths. Alice's writing identity also corresponded with her opinion of the two types of writing instruction (Journal Writing and Writing Workshop). In the Phase 3 interview, when I asked her if she liked either daily journal writing or writing workshop more, Alice responded that she liked both because she gained the chance to draw. The data shows that when Alice had the opportunity to draw, whether it was during daily journal writing or writing workshop, she desired to write.

**Jane.** Jane identified herself as a writer through her ability to create art through making books and notes. To Jane, writing and creating art were one and the same. In the

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first interview, Jane personally expressed that writing is a form of art to her. In her second interview, she again defined writing as art because “art is beautiful things put together and makes me want to be drawing...” (Jane Phase 3 Interview). It appeared that, like Alice, Jane viewed writing in terms of drawing more than writing words. In the second interview, Jane explained that she saw herself as a writer because she made books and notes. When I asked her to elaborate, she explained that “books are like art because you can make art inside them” (Jane Phase 3 Interview). Jane’s view that she was a writer—through her ability to make books and notes and how writing connected with art—corresponded with her attitude toward writing. In the first interview, Jane shared that she liked to write because her mother writes and also is an artist. Similarly, in the second interview, she explained that writing made her happy because she was born with art: “When I was born, I thought art was my beauty, so I liked drawing a lot” (Jane Phase 3 Interview). It was evident that both Jane’s writing identity and attitude toward writing were connected through her love of art. Jane’s strength and interest in art related to what she liked about the writing workshop. She also shared in her Phase 3 interview that she liked writing workshop because she liked making books. The action of making books, in turn, generated ideas for her art. The interview data showed that the writing workshop provided an opportunity for Jane to utilize her perceived strengths as a writer. When Jane had the opportunity to create art, she desired to write.

With regard to daily journal writing, Jane articulated that she liked journal writing the same as writing workshop, but her reasoning strayed from the connection to art. She said she liked both journal writing and the writing workshop because “they make me write words and if I get them wrong, it’s ok” (Jane Phase 3 Interview). Her reference to

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making words revealed that although the case may not be how she identified herself as a writer in the interviews, she still may be engaged in the process of writing words.

**Ray.** Contrary to Alice and Jane, Ray did not clearly identify himself as a writer. In both interviews, Ray expressed that he sometimes saw himself as a writer. His writing identity and attitude toward writing did relate, however, in that he explained that he only sometimes saw himself as a writer because he did not always like to write. In his first interview during daily journal writing, he expressed he would get bored when writing letters. In his second interview during writing workshop, he shared “If I have stuff in my head going on, I don’t want to, but if I don’t have much stuff going on in my head, I do” (Ray Phase 3 Interview). Although it was unclear why Ray did not feel like writing sometimes in the second interview, it was evident that Ray made a connection between his writing identity and attitude toward writing. It is important to note that although Ray expressed that he did not always view himself as a writer, he still said he did believe he had the ability to write. When I asked him to clarify if he thought he could write, he said in both interviews that he could write. Specifically, in his Phase 3 interview, he shared he was good at writing dinosaurs, monsters, and sight-words. To clarify, when he said he could write dinosaurs and monsters, he described how a person could draw the creatures, showing that his understanding of writing incorporated both drawing and writing, like Alice and Jane. These responses showed that although Ray did not have a firm writing identity, he did think he had strengths, such as drawing dinosaurs and monsters and writing sight-words. Ray’s viewed strength in drawing specific things may be related to his view of writing instruction. For instance, in his Phase 3 interview, Ray stated that in the writing workshop he liked “writing the pictures in the books and hearing them” (Ray

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Phase 3 Interview). His perceived writing strength in drawing did correspond to one reason why he liked the writing workshop. Regarding daily journal writing, he said he did not like it because he claimed all aspects of it were very hard. Although his dislike of daily journal writing was unclear from his responses to the interview questions, interview data showed that one reason Ray desired to write in the writing workshop was so he could implement his strength in drawing.

### *Attitude Toward Writing*

Data from multiple sources showed my students were more engaged in parts of the writing process that aligned with their attitude toward writing. Attitude toward writing refers to how the participants felt about participating in the writing process. Evidence from both Phase 1 and Phase 3 interviews, along with writing observations, supports the correspondence between the parts of the writing process they liked and their observed engagement during the writing process.

**Alice.** Alice's interview responses and writing observations during daily journal writing and writing workshop portrayed her heightened engagement when drawing. In her Phase 3 interview, Alice shared that the aspect of both daily journal-writing and writing workshop she preferred was the opportunity to draw. Her positive attitude toward drawing during the writing process corresponded with what I observed as she wrote during both types of instruction. For example, when observing Alice during daily journal writing, she showed a greater focus and attention to detail when drawing than when writing the words. When she was drawing, her eyes were on her work as she worked independently, adding colors and detail to her picture. In contrast, when it was time for her to copy the prompt, she was spinning in her chair, looking around, and was falling



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behind. As she struggled copying the prompt, “Come with me to the...”, she skipped the task of independently completing the prompt and went back to adding detail to her drawing. Alice’s adherence to drawing, rather than the word-writing process, aligned with her positive attitude toward drawing, which was her perceived strength in writing. Observations of Alice writing during writing workshop also supported increased attention toward drawing. For instance, while working on her book about what she liked, she spent the most time adding detail to her illustrations. She even returned to an illustration to add more color. Contrary to her lack of independent word-writing during daily journal-writing, she did independently write words, but did so quickly and did not re-read her words to either add or change elements, like she did to her illustrations. Throughout the writing process, I observed that Alice had heightened engagement when drawing compared with writing words. As a result, her increased engagement dovetailed with her preference, drawing.

**Ray.** Ray’s interview responses and writing observations revealed his preference for social interaction during the writing process. In his Phase 3 interview, he expressed that he liked the writing workshop because he could share his books with his family and the class. His positive attitude toward social interaction was clear when observing him during writing workshop. For example, when I videotaped nine minutes of Ray during the allotted writing time of writing workshop, he spent about two minutes finishing writing and re-reading his book. He then spent the remaining seven minutes by reading two of his books to a peer. Additionally, he also had a discussion with another peer about his or her book. My daily observations of Ray during writing workshop also supported his preference to engage in social interaction. On more than one occasion, when writing

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workshop began, Ray eagerly proceeded to either share his books or discuss ideas with fellow peers. Observations of Ray during writing workshop clearly illustrated his heightened engagement when interacting with others during the writing process.

Ray displayed a similar preference for social interaction during daily journal writing. Analysis of my observations of Ray during daily journal writing showed that he engaged in social interaction seven times in the form of sharing his picture and responding to a peer's questions about his or her writing. In both daily journal-writing and writing workshop, it was evident Ray gravitated toward opportunities to interact with others during the writing process. Ray's behaviors across both writing approaches aligned with his positive attitude toward social interaction.

**Jane.** Jane's interview responses and writing observations revealed she had a positive attitude and was engaged when both drawing and writing words. In the Phase 3 interview, Jane shared she liked writing workshop because she liked creating books, which in turn gave her ideas for art. In addition, when asked how she felt about daily journal writing, she said she liked both types of writing instruction because she had to write words and knew it was acceptable to make mistakes. These interview responses showed she had a positive attitude toward both drawing and writing words. The writing observations for both types of writing instruction illustrated her engagement in drawing and writing words. For example, in the journal writing observation, Jane worked the whole time, focusing on her writing and drawing and showed no observable signs she was uninterested. The writing workshop observation showed Jane independently writing words in one of her books with no observable signs of disengagement. After analysis, the

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data showed a relationship between Jane's positive attitude toward drawing and writing words and her observed engagement in both types of writing instruction.

Through the analysis of triangulated data, I found that the participants' writing identity and attitudes toward writing played a role in their level of engagement during the writing process.

### **Writing Composition**

In this multiple-case study, I collected and analyzed data regarding my students' writing composition. To investigate what happened to the participants' writing composition when I implemented a writing workshop, I analyzed data comprised of their writing process, conventions, and writing content. After I concluded my analysis, I found common themes that illustrated the development of the participants' writing composition.

### ***Similarities in Writing Process***

Across the spectrum of literacy skills, the three participants exhibited similarities in their writing processes. As Graham et al. (2018) stated, the writing process describes how an individual composes a piece of writing through steps, such as planning, drafting, sharing, evaluating, revising, editing, and publishing (Graham et al., 2018). For the purposes of this study, I will focus on planning, drafting, revising, and editing. A triangulation of data from observations, writing conferences, and writing samples illustrated commonalities in how the participants executed planning, revising, and editing.

**Planning.** Although Alice, Ray, and Jane had varying levels of literacy skills, the data showed they undertook the first step in the writing process in similar ways. Both observations and individual writing conferences revealed how the majority of the time the

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participants used drawing to develop their ideas from their books. For example, during individual writing conferences, all three participants shared that they drew pictures before they wrote. Observations during writing workshop also showed the participants drawing first, then subsequently writing words. Even though the participants differed in literacy skills, they participated in the act of drawing to plan and develop their ideas for their books.

Another similarity in the planning process is how the participants generated ideas for their books. Alice and Ray displayed the commonality of gathering ideas from their interests, and what they cared about. Alice's writing conferences and samples revealed that the focus of three of the five books she wrote during the study stemmed from what she liked, such as robots and animals. Ray explicitly stated in a writing conference that all his books were about what he loved, such as dinosaurs, animals, dogs, and movies: "I love dinosaurs so much. I love animals. I love dogs. Anything inside these books I love. So, this is how I write books about me. I love everything in these books. I love movies" (Ray Phase 3 Interview). The data showed that Alice and Ray looked inward to formulate ideas for writing. In contrast, Jane looked outward for the majority of her ideas, using what she saw in her surroundings. For instance, she generated the idea for her book about Jesus when she saw His name on our sight-word chart. She also discovered the idea for her Valentine's Day book after seeing a heart next to the month of February on our classroom calendar. Although Alice and Ray differed in their literacy skills, they both formed the root of their ideas from their interests.

**Revising and Editing.** Another similarity among the participants regarding the writing process was how they all required guidance to revise and edit their books. For the

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purposes of this study, revising referred to either adding or taking away details in both the illustrations and words to improve a reader's understanding of their books. Editing referred to checking for proper conventions, such as the inclusion of known sight-words, known letter-sound correspondences, and basic punctuation (. ? !). Observations, writing samples, and writing conferences revealed how Alice, Ray, and Jane needed prompting to evaluate and to decide how they could improve their writing.



Alice needed prompting to recognize she needed to revise her book to both meet learning expectations and add meaning to her story. For example, when Alice shared with me during her writing conference that she thought her robot book was finished, I noticed she did not have pictures and words on every page, which was the expectation I established. To guide Alice to reflect on her work, I asked her if every page had pictures and words. When she re-read her story, she realized she needed to add words to several pages. Ray also needed prompting to revise his books. One example was in his fifth book; many of his illustrations were one-color stick figures with no facial features. To help Ray learn how to evaluate his illustrations, I provided prompts: How could you help the reader know what is going on in the illustration? What else does a person need? With those prompts, Ray decided he could label the people he drew and add facial features (see Figure 5). Although Jane had high-level literacy skills, she too needed guidance to revise her work. For instance, Jane needed prompting to revise her title, as it did not reflect what her entire book was about. Although possessing different literacy skills, Alice, Ray, and Jane all required guidance and support when revising their writing.

The participants also needed guidance to edit conventions. At the time of the study, the conventions I expected students to begin to edit were spelling known sight-

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words, letter-sound correspondence, and basic punctuation (. ? !). Ray and Jane required support to edit conventions that were appropriate to their current knowledge. For example, Ray read a page from his eighth book, which read, “Everybody come here; there is a map!”, which he wrote within two speech bubbles, “evB UNLO” (see Figure 5). Knowing we had learned the sight-word “come”, I prompted Ray by asking, “Do you know a sight-word in that sentence?” Ray realized he knew the sight-word “come” and added it to the page. Ray also needed prompting to edit letter-sound correspondence. For example, on the page previously mentioned, I prompted Ray to re-think the sounds he hears in the phrase “There is a map!”, which he originally wrote “UNLO.” When Ray slowed down, he stretched the sounds out loud and wrote “L si u m” (see Figure 5). Ray needed prompting to edit both sight-words and letter-sound correspondence.

**Figure 5**

Ray’s Revised Illustration (added “Mikey” label and facial features)	Ray’s Edited Work (Edits in red crayon)
	

Jane, who had a strong mastery of applying her sight-word knowledge in her writing, was ready to be prompted regarding punctuation. For instance, in her tenth book, “What is Valentine’s Day?” Jane asked questions throughout, such as “Is Valentine’s

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Day a feast?” Each of these subsequently required the use of a question mark. After Jane read this book to me, I asked her a question: “What do we put at the end of a sentence that asks a question?” She then realized she needed to go back and add question marks. For Alice, I focused more on revision than editing at the time of the study. The triangulation of data demonstrated that the three participants displayed similarities in the planning, revising, and editing steps of the writing process.

### *Differences in Writing Process*

As the participants displayed similarities in the writing process, they also demonstrated differences. Drafting was the part of the writing process that most differed across the participants. For the purposes of this study, drafting referred to the initial process of writing words for their books. The differences in literacy skills between the participants was most evident during drafting. The participants implemented their own word-making strategies that enabled them to write words independently and which reflected their literacy skills.

**Alice.** Although Alice represented low-level literacy skills, she was able to independently implement several word-making strategies. The strategy she used most often was referencing the alphabet chart in the classroom. When writing, she would look up at the alphabet chart and write the letters she saw, most often not making the letter-sound connection. For instance, when I observed Alice write after she drew her illustration, she wrote the letter A, then looked up at the alphabet chart and wrote the string of letters “KLCIY”. When Alice later read her book, the string of letters “AKLCIY” represented the sentence “I like the sky” (see Figure 6). It was evident that she was unable to make the letter-sound connection, but she did independently use the

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resources around her to generate her approximations. Another strategy she implemented was writing either her name or a string of letters from her name. For instance, when writing her book about robots, she wrote “AOcyuoAudrey” to represent “spider robot” (see Figure 6). Alice used letters she knew to approximate her message. At the same time, there were several instances when Alice did write conventional print within her books. For instance, in her final book within the study titled “Zoo,” she copied the animal names (e.g., “tiger”) from the alphabet chart in the classroom.” Lastly, another strategy Alice used was referring to past books to spell words. For example, when she went to write “robot” in her book about what she likes, she returned to her first book and copied how she spelled “robot”, which was “RrBb.” Alice implemented word-writing strategies that dovetailed with her level of literacy skills.



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**Figure 6**

*Alice's Writing Samples*



**Ray.** As a student who had average literacy skills, Ray was able to independently implement a strategy to write words. Observations and writing samples showed that Ray wrote words by stretching out the sounds in words. I had taught the strategy to stretch out the sounds in words during daily journal writing and modeled it in a mini-lesson within the writing workshop. This strategy involves elongating the sounds in words to isolate sounds and then either encoding or writing the letters that best correspond to those sounds. When writing, Ray would softly elongate the sounds in words and quickly encode the sounds, writing the letters that he thought best corresponded to the sounds he could isolate. For instance, when he wanted to write "somebody came and killed the monster", he vocalized the sounds he heard in the words and wrote "SBKK the MBT" (See Figure 7). His writing showed he could both isolate and encode the prominent beginning consonant sounds, write the known sight-word "the", in addition to one of the ending consonant sounds, "monster." Ray used his letter-sound and sight-word knowledge to approximate the desired written message. Another example of Ray

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independently stretching sounds in words and using sight-word knowledge to approximate the written message was when he wrote “I U DNo u si u PLF” for “if you don’t know this is a pillow fight” (see Figure 7). Again, Ray quickly encoded using letter-sound knowledge and attempted to write the known sight-word “is.” What is interesting to note is that Ray did not use tools, such as individual or classroom sight-word charts, to assist in the word-making process. Data showed that during drafting, Ray relied on his independent ability to encode, or apply his letter-sound knowledge to write words, and his sight-word knowledge without the use of reference tools.

**Figure 7**

*Ray Writing Samples*



**Jane.** To write words, Jane independently implemented several word-writing strategies that aligned with her high-level literacy skills. Observations and writing samples showed that most often, Jane applied her ability to isolate sounds, letter-sound knowledge, and sight-word knowledge to write her message. For example, when writing words for a page in her book titled “Ballet Slippers”, she wrote “tHe BRlenas is on tHe SDaJ” for “The ballerina is on the stage” (See Figure 8). When drafting “tHe BRlenas is

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on tHe SDAJ”, Jane used her ability to isolate beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words and her letter-sound knowledge to phonetically spell “stage”. She also applied her mastery of the sight word “the”. In addition to activating her high-level literacy skills, she used tools to assist in the process. For instance, when writing “is”, she referred to the classroom sight-word board and when writing “on”, she consulted her individual sight-word chart. A third strategy Jane independently implemented was the ability to refer to a previous page to spell a word. For example, to spell “ballerina,” Jane flipped back to the previous page where she knew she wrote “BRlenas.” The data showed that Jane applied her high-level literacy skills and awareness to use available tools when needed to write words. Although the participants varied in literacy skills, they had more similarities than differences within the planning, drafting, revising, and editing parts of the writing process.

### Figure 8

#### *Jane Writing Sample*



**“The ballerina is on the stage.”**

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*Application of Conventions*

Data from the participants' writing samples, observations, and formal assessments showed patterns in each participant's ability to apply conventions when writing independently. For the purposes of this study, the conventions I focused on were spacing between words, directionality (writing left to right), phonetic spelling (spelling using letter-sound correspondence, spelling of known sight-words, and handwriting. After analyzing the formal assessments from Phase 3: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (HRSW) and Writing Vocabulary and the participants' writing samples, I noticed several conventions between the data sources for each participant were aligned. In contrast, some conventions did not align between the data sources. Alice and Ray had varying conventions that aligned and did not align to their writing samples while all the conventions Jane used in the data sources were aligned.

**Alice.** The conventions that aligned between her formal assessments, observations, and writing samples were spacing, directionality, handwriting, and the spelling of unknown words. The data sources showed that Alice was not yet able to consistently put spaces between words. Both assessments showed that Alice, at times, put space between words while during other times, no division was present (See Appendix L). Alice's writing samples also showed lack of spacing between words, such as when she wrote "AubrNQRyt" for "This is my heart" (See Figure 6). Observing Alice complete the formal assessments and write during writing workshop showed that she could write from left to right. For instance, when recording the dictated sentence for HRSW, she began the sentence on the left side of the page, continued writing left to right, and even knew to begin the next line of words underneath the first line, starting at the

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left. Alice exhibited similar directionality when writing independently. Although most of her writing was composed of one string of letters, she did start at the left side of the page and continued toward the right. The assessments and writing samples also presented similar evidence of Alice's use of a mixture of capital and lower-case letters when writing. For instance, in HRSW, she wrote "have" as "Hytm" and in her book about herself, she wrote "Sometimes I scribble" as "is Mimo dIQ" (See Figure 9). Lastly, both data sources revealed how Alice used a random string of letters to write unknown words. For example, in HRSW, she wrote "UtyiAg" for "that" and in her book about herself, she wrote "AiSRXIY xv MSYB" for "Me and my dad like to paint" (See Figure 9).

A comparison of Alice's writing samples with Phase 3 formal assessment data reveals that, in some skill areas, Alice applied the knowledge shown on the assessment to her story writing. The consistencies shown between the formal assessments, observations, and writing samples in regard to conventions showed that Alice was able to apply her level of skills with spacing, directionality, handwriting, and unknown word spelling strategies when writing independently.

**Figure 9**

*Alice's Aligned Conventions*

Spacing	Handwriting	Spelling of Unknown Words
 <p>"This is my heart."</p>	 <p>"Sometimes I scribble."</p>	 <p>"Me and my dad like to paint."</p>




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For Alice, not all assessment knowledge transferred to her authentic writing. The conventions that lacked alignment between her formal assessments, observations, and writing samples were sight-word knowledge and encoding beginning sounds in words. The assessments showed that Alice could spell sight-words “we, the, a, to” but not in her writing samples. For instance, she wrote “Awbiy”, for “Me and my dog like to play” (see Figure 10). Although her assessment showed she knew how to spell “to”, she was unable to apply that knowledge when writing independently. The second convention displayed in the assessments, but not in her writing samples, was her encoding of beginning sounds. In HRSW, Alice wrote “BE” for “boat” and “Hytm” for “have”, showing she was able to encode several beginning sounds. In contrast, Alice’s writing samples showed she wrote a random string of letters much of the time, such as “rbyem” for “silly star” (see Figure 10). One example that showed Alice was close to independently encoding the beginning sound of words was when she wrote “csrlx” for “Savior robot” (see Figure 10). For the most part, however, the instances when letter-sound correspondence was shown in her writing samples occurred either when she received assistance or when she copied words from the classroom alphabet chart. The inconsistencies in alignment between data sources demonstrated Alice struggled to apply her sight-word knowledge and ability to encode beginning sounds in words when writing independently.

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**Figure 10**

*Alice's Conventions that Lacked Alignment*

Sight-Word Knowledge	Encoding Beginning Sounds	Example of Close Encoding of Beginning Sound
 <p><b>"Me and my dog like to play."</b></p>	 <p><b>"Silly star."</b></p>	 <p><b>"Savior robot."</b></p>

**Ray.** Ray had varying conventions that aligned and did not align between his formal assessments and writing samples. The conventions that aligned between Ray's formal assessments, observations, and writing samples were directionality, handwriting, phonetic spelling patterns, and some sight-word knowledge. Observing Ray complete the formal assessments and write during writing workshop showed he could write from left to right. For instance, when recording the dictated sentence for HRSW, he began the sentence on the left side of the page, continued writing left to right, and knew to begin the next line of words underneath the first line, starting at the left. Ray exhibited similar directionality when writing independently. His writing samples and observations showed he began writing his words on the left side and continued toward the right. In contrast to Alice, Ray organized his print in different ways, such as writing left to right straight across the page or from top to bottom. Ray's handwriting also aligned between data sources. His reversals of the letters "a, s, d", found in HRSW, could also be found in Ray's writing samples. Similar to Alice, Ray's use of capital and lower-case letters in his

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

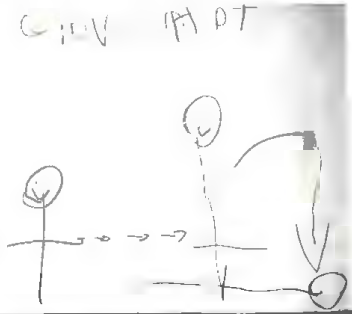


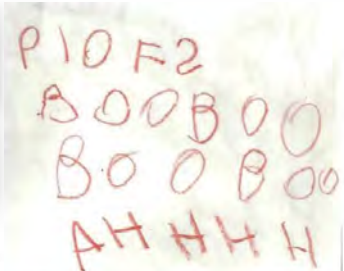

assessments aligned with his handwriting in his writing samples. For instance, in HRSW, for “ride”, he wrote “rD”, and in his writing samples, he wrote “Dt” for “dart” (see Figure 11). Ray’s phonetic spelling patterns, or what sounds in words he was able to encode, aligned between data sources. In HRSW, Ray displayed his ability to encode beginning and ending prominent consonant sounds, such as when writing “BT” for “boat”, “HV” for “have”, and “rD” for “ride.” When writing independently, Ray showed similar phonetic spelling patterns, such as when he wrote “SV” for “save” in his first book and “lF” for “life” in his last book of the study (see Figure 11). Although Ray’s writing samples did show he could encode beginning and ending consonant sounds, there were instances where he only encoded beginning sounds, such as when he wrote “F” for “fight” in his sixth book and “K” for “came” in his last book of the study (see Figure 11). Though inconsistent, Ray was able to show he could, at times, apply his encoding skills when writing independently. Lastly, some of Ray’s sight-word knowledge aligned between the data sources. The assessments showed that Ray could spell the sight-words “and, the, me, to, can, I, are, a, see, be, we.” His writing samples throughout the study showed he used “and, the, me, to.” Although Ray did not use all the sight-words he knew, he was able to apply four of the words consistently. Alignment of conventions between the formal assessments, observations, and writing samples showed Ray was able to apply directionality, handwriting, phonetic spelling patterns, and some sight-word knowledge when writing independently.



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**Figure 11**

*Ray's Aligned Conventions*

Handwriting	Encoding Beginning and Ending Sounds	
<p><b>"DT- Dart"</b></p> 	<p><b>"SV-Save"</b></p> 	<p><b>"IF-Life"</b></p> 
Encoding Beginning Sounds		
<p><b>"F-Fight"</b></p> 		<p><b>"K-Kame"</b></p> 

The convention that consistently lacked alignment between data sources was spacing. When he recorded the dictated sentence for HRSW, the words were clearly spaced, showing a concept of word. In contrast, his writing samples throughout the study consistently showed little to no space between words, such as "i U DNO usiu PIF" for "If you don't know that is a pillow fight" (see Figure 12). When writing on his own, Ray struggled to apply spacing between words.

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Figure 12**

*Ray's Lack of Spacing*



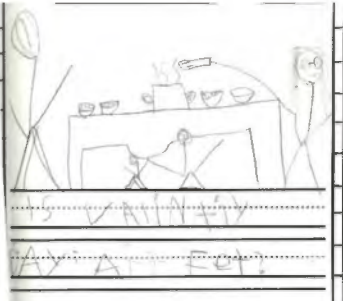
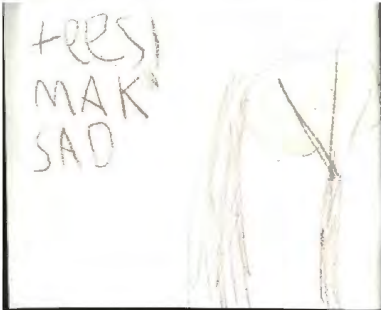
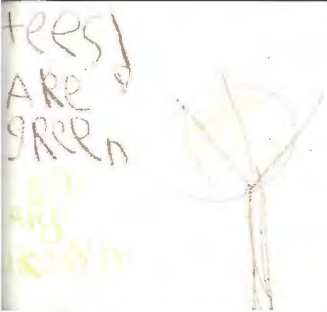

**Jane.** In contrast to Alice and Ray, the conventions shown in Jane's formal assessments and writing samples aligned most of the time. The data sources showed most of the time Jane was able to place spaces between her words. For instance, in HRSW, she spaced 10 of the 15 words accurately and between her 10 writing workshop books, there were only nine pages where her spacing between words was too close. The assessments and observations aligned in Jane's directionality when writing. When writing for her assessments and writing samples, I observed she wrote from left to right. The phonetic spelling patterns Jane displayed in HRSW also aligned with her writing samples. In HRSW, she could encode beginning and ending prominent consonant sounds and medial vowel sounds, such as writing "Bot" for "boat", "HAV" for "have", and "RiD" for "ride." Jane's writing samples also reflected her ability to encode beginning and ending prominent consonant sounds and medial vowel sounds, such as "Fet" for "feast" and "MAK" for "make" (see Figure 13). The sight-word knowledge shown in her assessments also aligned with her writing samples. The sight-words she could spell in the assessments were "I, can, see, the, we, are, go, to, a, in, see, it, like." When appropriate to her story, Jane was able to correctly spell the sight-words evidenced in the assessments, such as "tees ARE gReen And bRoWn" for "trees are green and brown" and "I like

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BLOS” for “I like balloons” (see Figure 13). In addition, her writing samples showed she could spell other sight-words correctly that were not shown in the assessments, such as “is, you, for, and.” Lastly, as shown in the previous examples of both her writing in the assessments and samples, her handwriting was a mixture of capital and lower-case letters, much like Alice’s and Ray’s. The alignment of all conventions between the data sources showed Jane could apply her skills when writing independently. Analysis across data sources revealed variance in how the participants were able to apply their skills in conventions from structured assessments to independent writing during writing workshop.

**Figure 13**

*Jane’s Conventions*

Phonetic Spelling Patterns	Sight-Word Knowledge
<p data-bbox="493 1037 649 1068"><b>“Fet-feast.”</b></p>   <p data-bbox="472 1766 675 1797"><b>“MAK-make.”</b></p>	<p data-bbox="943 1037 1349 1068"><b>“Trees are green and brown.”</b></p>   <p data-bbox="1029 1766 1260 1797"><b>“I like balloons.”</b></p>

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

*Clarity of Ideas*

An aspect of writing composition I analyzed was the participants' writing content. When analyzing writing content, I focused on how the participants were able to meet the expectation of writing books about one idea and the degree in which their ideas were clear throughout their books. Data from the participants' writing samples and conferences revealed all the participants wrote more than one book that clearly centered around one idea. It was also evident that the type of book, such as explanatory or narrative, may have played a role in the degree of clarity of ideas.

**Alice.** During the study, Alice wrote five explanatory books in which she sought to describe five separate subjects, such as robots, her mom, herself, and the zoo. Alice's books varied in how she was able to write about one idea clearly. Two of her five books were clearly about one idea throughout the work; in contrast, two others had a few pages that did not clearly align to the main idea and one book strayed from the main idea. The two books that had the most clarity of ideas included her book titles "Me" and "Zoo." In her book "Me", each page described something about her, such as "Me and my dad like to paint." and "This is my house." Although Alice had to explain each page to me, as her words were composed of a random string of letters, her illustrations and descriptions aligned with the central idea of herself. In her book titled "Zoo", each page had a picture and label of an animal, such as a tiger, zebra, puppy, and a cat. Although not all the animals are found in a zoo, each page had an illustration and a conventional label of an animal. An example of a book that had a few pages that did not clearly fit the main idea was her robot book. The majority of her book named different types of robots, such as a dog, spider, and an alien robot, but several pages did not clearly fit, such as a "spinning

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house” and a “blue blob.” When I asked how these pages related to the robots she had written, she explained “some aliens and some robots like the spinning house and the robots ate the blue blob.” Although a few pages lacked alignment to the main idea, the majority of Alice’s robot book was clearly about one idea. Her book that did not clearly display one idea was her book titled, “My Mom.” Of the seven pages, three were clearly about her mom but the other four strayed from the main subject, such as Alice eating her hair and picking up a snail when she was little. Although Alice had low-level literacy skills, she was able to write books about one idea with clarity.

**Ray.** Ray wrote seven narrative books during the study, in which he sought to create a series. In his seven books, he had characters, a problem, and at times a solution. As this was his first-time writing narratives, the degrees to which Ray clearly wrote about one idea varied. Of his seven books, two were consistently about one idea while the other five lacked clarity in alignment with one central idea. An example of a book that followed one idea throughout was his first book titled “Ray and Mikey’s Adventure.” In this book, Ray wrote about how he and his friend save dinosaurs and bring them to a safe island. The book had characters, a problem, and a solution. As Ray wrote more books, his ideas increased in complexity, resulting in a challenge to align his ideas clearly. For instance, Ray’s third book, titled “Ray and Mikey find James”, part of his story clearly illustrated one idea about how James was eaten by a T-Rex, saved by Ray, then turned into a T-Rex, but the remainder of the book included ideas that did not seem to connect. For instance, in the last three pages, Ray explained that a new character goes through a cycle of being eaten by a T-Rex, going inside a black hole in the sun, and returning to Earth. Then, Ray explained that in the last pages, an evil villain turns him into a dog.

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Although the first half of Ray's book aligned, the second half was difficult to understand and lacked alignment with the main idea. The reminder of Ray's book followed a similar pattern to his third, in that parts of the books aligned with one idea, but other parts strayed from the idea. A factor that may have contributed to the clarity of ideas was that for Ray, the illustrations carried the message or meaning of the story more than the words. For instance, in his fifth book called "Tiny Power", Ray only wrote sound effects, such as "ABBB", which he described was the sound of the animal gun turning a character into an animal, meaning the illustrations carried the majority of the message. Many member-checking sessions were required for me to formulate a complete understanding of his story. Overall, Ray was successful in writing more than one narrative book about one idea with clarity.

**Jane.** Jane wrote ten books during the study. Eight books were explanatory about subjects such as Jesus, trees, and ballet slippers. There was also one alphabet book and one narrative book about a unicorn. Eight of Jane's books clearly aligned with one idea. Two of her ten books included more than one idea or lacked clarity. An example of a book that clearly aligned with one idea was titled "Jesus". Jane told the story of Jesus' birth, such as how Mary and Saint Joseph rode to a barn to have Jesus. Although some pages were more detailed than others, the pictures and words clearly aligned with Jesus. Another book that followed one clear idea was her alphabet book on the letter "J". Each page she wrote "J is for..." and wrote a word that began with "J". Although many of Jane's books had clarity of ideas, several books did not. For instance, one of Jane's explanatory books was about three different topics: balloons, toilet paper, and sight-words. As Jane first titled the book "Balloons", the first two pages were about balloons,

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but then the next four described toilet paper and the remaining four pages listed sight-words. During an individual writing conference, Jane had explained she changed the topic several times because she ran out of ideas. Lastly, the one narrative book Jane wrote titled “Unicorns” lacked clarity of ideas in comparison to her explanatory and alphabet books. For instance, her story began with a unicorn in a forest and then switched to a superhero finding a creature. Overall, Jane was successful in writing books about one idea with clarity.

After analysis of the writing content of the participants’ books, all three had success in writing more than one book about one idea with clarity. In addition, the degree of clarity might have corresponded to the type of writing, as the explanatory texts of Alice and Jane were easier to understand and indicate the align of ideas.

Results and analysis of data revealed key themes regarding the research question: When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students’ writing engagement and composition? Data showed that the participants were most engaged in elements of the writing process that corresponded to their viewed strengths as a writer and preferences. For the participants’ writing composition, data showed the participants had more similarities than differences in their writing processes. They could all apply different levels of conventions when writing independently and succeeded in creating more than one book with clear ideas.

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### **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of engagement and the quality of my students' writing composition when I implement a writing workshop. The research question that guided the multiple-case study was the following: When I implement a writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, what will happen to the students' writing engagement and composition?

In this section, I will discuss how the results regarding writing engagement and composition when implementing a writing workshop were related to research found in the literature review. In addition, I will discuss possible limitations of the study and implications and next steps to classroom practice.

#### **Writing Engagement**

The results showed that the nature of the participants' engagement to write related to their writing identity, which is how they saw themselves as a writer. The engagement also related to their attitude toward writing, which is how they felt about writing. First, I will discuss how the results concerning writing identity and engagement compared to research and related literature. Second, I will discuss how the results concerning attitude and engagement compared to the research and literature. Third, I will discuss how an additional source of engagement aligned with my research. Finally, I will discuss comparisons between the participants' engagement from the beginning to end of the study.

#### ***Writing Identity***

Data showed that the participants were most engaged in elements of the writing process that corresponded to their viewed strengths as a writer. Alice, who identified herself as a writer through her ability to draw, expressed she liked to write during both journal writing and writing workshop because she received the opportunity to draw. Jane,



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who identified herself as a writer through her ability to create art when making books and notes, also voiced how she liked to write during the writing workshop because she discovered ideas for art through making books. The correspondence between writing identity and engagement aligned with research. For instance, Seban and Tavsanli (2015) – who investigated how high-, average-, and lower-level second-grade students developed a writing identity via a writing workshop – found a factor that related to the level of engagement was how the students perceived themselves as writers. The writing workshop provided opportunities for the participants to utilize their perceived strengths in the writing process, such as drawing and creating art.

Writing identity was not a strong source of engagement for Ray. Ray differed from Alice and Jane with respect to writing identity. Both before and after the study, he voiced that he only sometimes saw himself as a writer because he did not always like to write. As explained in Chapter 4, Ray's explanations of his ambivalent view of writing in the Phase 3 interview were unclear. With prompting, he did explain that he thought he had the ability to write, such as his ability to write (draw) dinosaurs and to write sight-words, but writing long sentences was hard. A possible reason Ray did not always like to write may have been that some elements were challenging, such as writing long sentences. His perceived strength in drawing, however, did correspond to a reason he liked writing workshop. Even though Ray did not have a clear writing identity, there was a link between a viewed strength in the writing process and what he liked about the writing workshop.

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### *Writing Attitudes*

Data across multiple sources revealed the participants' attitudes toward elements of the writing process corresponded to their level of engagement. The participants voiced a positive attitude toward parts of the writing process and consequently displayed an observed increase in engagement. As described in Chapter 4, Alice preferred drawing, Ray preferred social interaction, and Jane preferred both drawing and writing. I did not discover research that explained the direct correspondence between writing attitude and engagement. However, the specific parts of the process the participants preferred, and therefore were more engaged with, is supported by research.

Ray's preference for social interaction during the writing process is reflected in research. Dyson (2010), who studied the composing process of kindergarten and first-grade students, learned how children desired to use writing as a tool to communicate and formulate relationships with others. Dyson's findings correspond to how Ray would spend much of writing time collaborating with peers. In addition, Boscolo (2008) also articulates how students are engaged when writing links them to the social experiences in their classroom community. Ray's increased engagement when sharing his writing with others is reflected in research. For instance, Graham et al. (2018) emphasized that opportunities for collaboration, such as opportunities for sharing during the writing process, can spark engagement. Ray's heightened engagement working with others, rather than alone, during the writing process aligns with research findings.

One of Jane's preferences to write words has a possible link to research. In the Phase 3 interview, Jane voiced that she liked both daily journal-writing and writing workshop because she had the opportunity to write words and felt it was acceptable to

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

make mistakes. Her sharing that it was ok to make mistakes when writing words relates to research on sources of engagement. One source of engagement research supports is a positive learning environment where students feel comfortable making mistakes when writing. For instance, after conducting an interview with Donald Graves on how to create a successful writing classroom, Kaufman (2004) learned that there must be mutual respect and trust amongst students and teachers if students are expected to take risks when learning to write. It may be possible that Jane had a positive attitude and was engaged when writing words because she was comfortable taking risks within a positive learning environment. Jane's preference and engagement when drawing may link back to her writing identity.

Like Jane, Alice's similarly positive attitude toward drawing and increased level of engagement may be linked to writing identity. When I observed Alice during writing workshop, she spent more time adding detail to her illustrations and she independently went back to add more details later. Alice's desire to improve her drawing relates to research concerning writing identity. Ackerman (2016) explained when her students identified as writers, they strove to improve their craft. Alice spent more time and effort on her illustrations than writing words.

### ***Additional Source of Engagement***

For Ray, having the choice in what to write presented an additional source of engagement for him. In the Phase 3 interview, Ray shared that he liked writing workshop because he could make his own stories. Ray's appreciation for the opportunity to choose what he wrote aligns with research. Through Graves's (1983) research of the writing process, he observed when the writer chooses a topic of interest, his or her voice shines, resulting in enjoyment and an increased desire to have the writing reach its full potential.

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As Ray shared in a writing conference, all his books contain things he loves. In choosing what to write, Ray's passions and personality shined through his writing, sparking the desire to engage in the writing process.

### *Engagement Comparison*

From Phase 1 to Phase 3 of the study, the participants' voiced desire to write in general showed no change. Both before and after implementing the writing workshop, Alice and Jane shared they liked to write. In contrast, Ray stated he sometimes liked to write. As a result, it seemed that the writing workshop did not change the participants' voiced desire to write in general. In the Phase 3 interview, when asked whether the participants liked either daily journal-writing or writing workshop, Alice and Jane expressed that they liked both, while Ray clearly preferred writing workshop. Alice and Jane may have liked both forms of writing instruction for a potential reason: Both forms of instruction aligned with their writing identities and positive attitudes. Although writing workshop did not influence Ray's overall desire to write, he did vocalize a strong preference toward writing workshop compared with journal-writing. A possible explanation for his preference maybe that the writing workshop included increased opportunities for social interaction and choice compared to daily journal-writing.

Research aligns with findings that participants' writing identity and attitudes toward writing played a role in their level of engagement during the writing process. In addition, research aligns with Ray's preference for choice during writing workshop. Although the participants' voiced desire to write did not change across the study, the writing workshop did provide them ample opportunities for engagement within the writing process.

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### **Writing Composition**

To determine what happened to the participants' writing composition when I implemented a writing workshop, I analyzed their writing processes, conventions, and content. Data showed the participants had more similarities than differences in their writing processes. They all applied different levels of conventions when writing independently and succeeded in creating more than one book with clear ideas. I will discuss how results concerning the similarities and differences in writing processes, application of conventions, and clarity of ideas compared with research and related literature. Finally, I will discuss comparisons between the participants' writing composition from the beginning to end of the study.

### ***Similarities in Writing Process***

Across the spectrum of literacy skills, the three participants exhibited similarities in the planning, revising, and editing segments of the writing process. For the purposes of this study, the parts of the writing process I focused on were planning, drafting, revising, and editing. For the planning part of the writing process, the participants all used drawing as a tool to develop ideas for their books. Research and related literature reflect how emergent writers use drawing to generate ideas. For instance, Graves (1983) documented each stage of the writing process for three entities: himself, a fourth-grade student, and a first-grade student. He noticed how the first-grade student relied on drawing to plan or rehearse ideas. Ray and Cleaveland (2004), who specialize in the writing workshop for young writers, also explain how young writers often use talking and drawing during planning. Alice's, Ray's, and Jane's commonality in drawing during planning aligns with research and literature on how emergent writers participate in the writing process.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Another similarity during the planning process was found in the source of ideas for two of the participants. Alice and Ray used their interests as a source of ideas. Both Alice and Ray looking inward for ideas is supported by research. Graves (1983) explains it is typical for beginning writers to write about themselves as it corresponds to their egocentric, or self-centered, nature. In addition, their source for ideas aligned with my instruction. As Cleaveland and Ray (2004) recommend sharing where published writers get ideas, we explored that authors get ideas from daily situations and encounters, from their family members, and from specific life experiences. The similarities in how the participants worked through the planning part of the writing process aligns with research and related literature.

Another similarity among the participants regarding the writing process was how they all required guidance to revise and edit their books. Through my prompting during individual writing conferences, the participants were able to both add or take away details in their illustrations and words and check for proper conventions, such as the inclusion of known sight-words, known letter-sound correspondences, and basic punctuation (. ? !). Emergent writers who require support to begin revising and editing corresponds to my research and related literature. For instance, as Graves (1983) discusses how writers grow through problem-solving during the writing process, he explains a general order of challenges developing writers become conscious of: spelling, handwriting, conventions, topic, and revision. As revision is later in a child's consciousness when writing, it is not surprising that Alice, Ray, and Jane required support when revising. In addition, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) explains that students need a gradual release of support to learn strategies on how to be successful in each part of the writing process

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

(Graham et al., 2018). One piece of research that slightly differs from my findings regarding revision and editing is from Jasmine and Weiner (2007). Jasmine and Weiner (2007) discovered the first-grade participants within the writing workshop can both revise and edit their writing within peer conferences. There are several possible reasons for the differences in findings. First, the teacher of the first-grade participants teaches mini-lessons on peer-conferences, including revision and editing. In my study, which occurred within the first eight weeks of writing workshop in my kindergarten classroom, I did not include mini-lessons that explicitly taught students how to revise and edit within a peer conference. Throughout the course of the eight weeks, I did explicitly teach and model how students could reflect on their writing and begin to determine how they could improve their books, such as the addition of words and details and checking for sight-words and punctuation. Overall, the similarities in how Alice, Ray, and Jane worked through the planning, revising, and editing parts of the writing process aligned with research and related literature.

### ***Differences in Writing Process***

The part of the writing process that differed between the participants was drafting. As Sulzby and Teale (1985) describe, every child has his or her own journey in which he or she develops skills and works toward conventional print. The participants implemented their own word-writing strategies that enabled them to write words independently. The strategies the participants implemented related to their literacy skills. Research aligns with the participants' word-writing strategies and their level of literacy skills.

Alice, who had low-level literacy skills, used a combination of strategies, such as copying letters from the alphabet chart, writing letters from her name, and referring to past writing to write words. Alice's strategies reflect what Clay (1975) observed in emergent

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writers. For instance, Clay (1975) aligns emergent writing behaviors with principles or understandings of conventional print. Alice's word-writing strategies may reflect some of the principles. For example, Alice copied letters and animal names from the alphabet chart, which is an example of the copying principle. The principle describes emergent writers recording letters and words from a source. Also, when Alice wrote "AOcyuoAudrey" to represent "spider robot", she may have implemented a combination of the recurring and generating principle. The recurring principle, which aligns with the understanding that conventional print has repeated signs to form a message, describes how emergent writers who know a limited number of letters or words repeat the known letters and words over and over to create a message (Clay, 1975). Alice repeated the letters in her name, which could reflect the recurring principle. The generating principle, which aligns with the understanding that conventional print includes a set of symbols that can be arranged in different ways to create new meaning, describes how emergent writers take letters they know and arrange them in different patterns to create a message. Alice, who seemed to write her name twice, rearranged the letters at first "AOcyuo." Alice implementing these principles corresponds to her low-level literacy skills, as she subsequently found strategies to supplement her limited knowledge.

Ray, who had average literacy skills, wrote words by stretching out the sounds in words. When writing, Ray would softly elongate the sounds in words and quickly encode the sounds, writing the letters that he thought best corresponded to the sounds he could isolate. How Ray used oral language during the encoding process corresponds to research. After observing two six-year-old first grade students writing both alone and in a group setting, Dyson and Genishi (1982) found that both students used oral language to encode



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their desired message. Ray's word-writing strategy reflected typical behaviors of his age. As noted in Chapter 4, Ray did not use tools such as individual or classroom sight-word charts to assist in the word-writing process. I did not find research to support why Ray did not utilize tools as a reference. A possible reason could be that Ray did not want to take the time to use tools, which would correlate to the observed fast pace in which he wrote.

Jane, who had high-level literacy skills, applied her skills and awareness to use available tools to write words. Her ability to isolate and encode beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words aligns with research. Ganske (2014), who specializes in stages of spelling development, explains how increased knowledge of letters and sounds leads children to letter-name or phonetic spelling. As children progress through the letter-name or phonetic spelling stage, their writing shows evidence of an increased ability to encode beyond the most prominent beginning and ending sounds, such as encoding medial vowel sounds. Jane was not only able to encode beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words, but did so fluidly, without visible struggle and effort, such as when writing "SDaJ" for "stage". In contrast to Alice, who used tools to compensate for her lack of letter knowledge, Jane referenced the classroom and personal sight-word charts as a quick check. It was clear that Jane's high-literacy skills aided her in the drafting process.

### ***Writing Process Comparison***

When comparing evidence of the writing process between Phases 1 and 3, I indicated important differences. First and foremost, the greatest difference was in the level of ownership of the writing process the participants possessed. During daily journal writing, participants had little ownership of the writing process, as I dictated the topic, structure of their writing, when they would draw and write words, and what they needed to

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fix. The choice they had was how to complete the prompt. In contrast, during writing workshop, the participants had full ownership in choice of topic, when to draw and write words, how to structure their writing, and when and how to make changes. Another important difference was the number of opportunities for the participants to independently problem-solve and approximate through drafting or writing words. During daily journal writing, they had a total of 20 minutes at most to draw a picture, copy and complete the prompt. The only part of the writing they had opportunity to work through and approximate was the final word or words in the sentence. In contrast, during writing workshop, the participants had approximately 20-30 minutes each day to problem-solve and approximate all of their writing, rather than one or two words. As Clay (2013) and Graves (1983) articulate, it is important for emergent writers to have the opportunity to make approximations and problem-solve as they work through new understandings of written language. Lastly, the types of instruction differed in mindset of completion. For daily journal writing, the mindset was that within a 20-minute block, students copy and complete the prompt with no intention of returning to the journal entry the next day, a product approach. In contrast, the writing workshop had a process approach, in which the mindset was that students would return to the same piece of writing for at least several days to work through the writing process. It is clear that the writing workshop gave participants ownership of the writing process, opportunities to problem-solve and approximate during drafting, and a process approach mindset.

### *Application of Conventions*

Data showed patterns in each participant's ability to apply conventions when writing independently. Alice and Ray had varying conventions that aligned and did not

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align to their writing samples, while all the conventions Jane used in the data sources were aligned. Although I did not find research that explained the reasoning behind why Alice and Ray could not apply all conventions when writing independently, I do have a few thoughts of possible reasons. One possibility may be linked to the complex process from oral language to print. As Clay (1975) describes, emergent writers are just learning how to represent speech through print. When Alice and Ray were drafting or writing words, they had to take their complex ideas and approximate them into print. The complexity of that process may have made it difficult for them to apply all their skills, such as sight-word knowledge and encoding beginning sounds. In contrast, Jane, with high-level literacy skills, could have had an easier time turning her ideas into print. A second possibility may be due to the nature of the assessments. For instance, when Alice and Ray completed HRSW, I said one word at a time for them to write. Isolating each word may have helped them slow down, aiding them in remembering known sight-words, paying better attention to the sounds they heard in the words, and implementing proper spacing. Thirdly, Alice and Ray may have had less metacognitive, or self-reflective, skills than Jane. For instance, when drafting, Alice may not have had the ability to self-reflect that she did know sight-words, such as “to.” Additional research on application of conventions between varying writing experiences may help inform my findings.

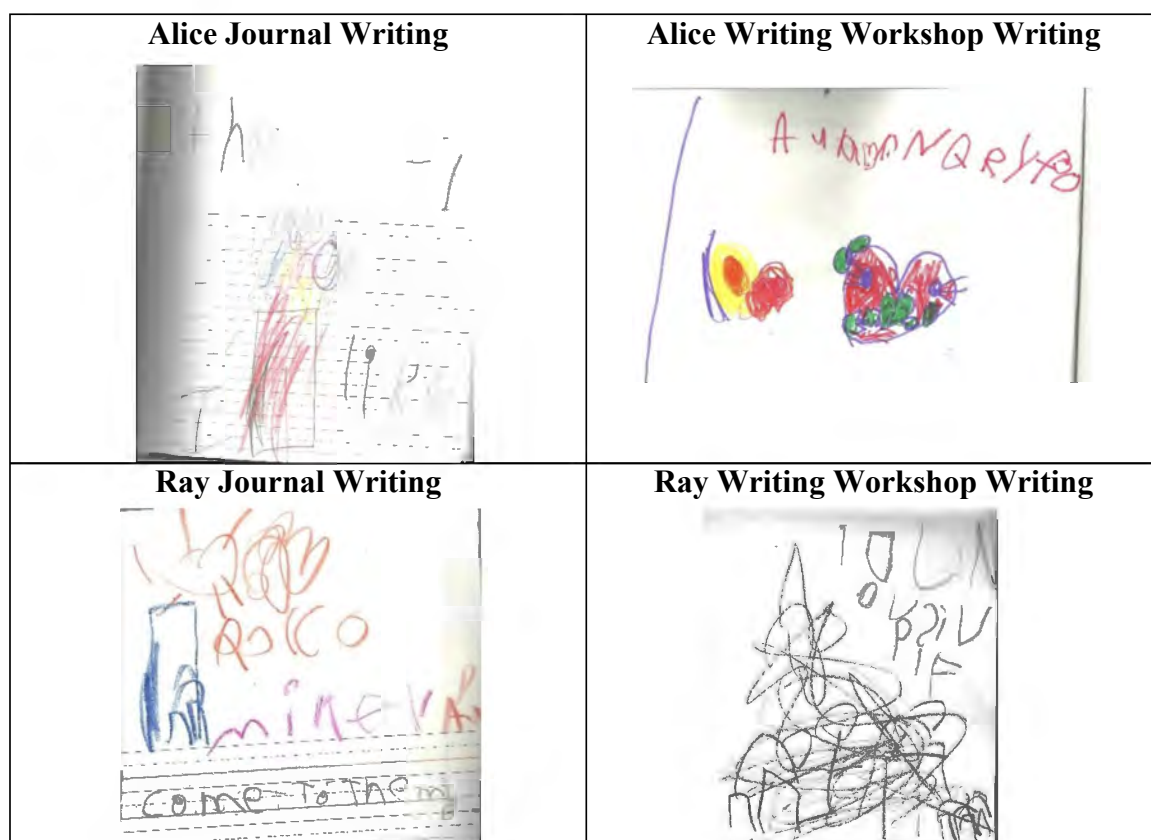
### ***Comparison of Conventions***

When comparing the participants’ writing samples from daily journal writing and writing workshop, it appeared the participants exhibited better conventions during journal writing than writing workshop. For example, their journal writing has sight-words, spacing, proper-handwriting, and evidence of encoding beginning sounds (see Figure 14). What is

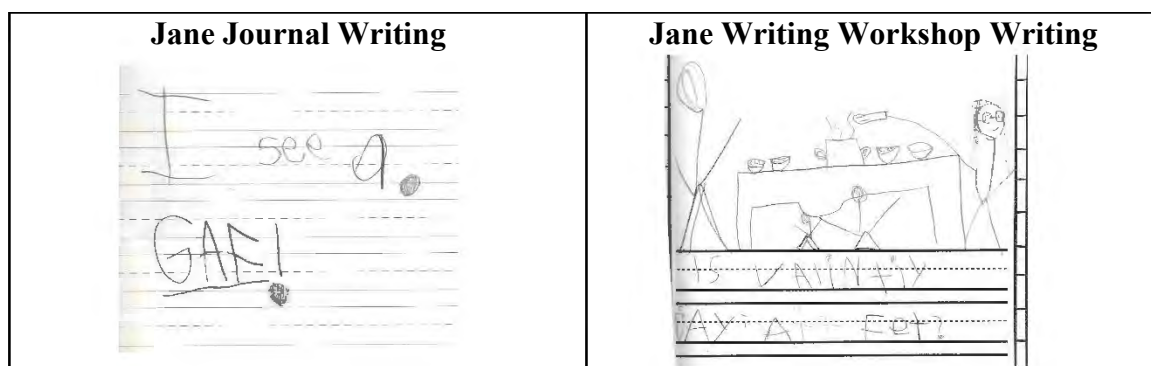
## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

key to understand, however, is that as previously explained, the majority of the journal entries were composed of a prompt the students copied as I provided prompting and explicit instruction on conventions. In contrast, the writing samples from the writing workshop are examples of the participants writing independently (see Figure 14). It is important to note that I did model and provide instruction on conventions within the context of drafting during mini-lessons, such as encoding sounds in words, implementing proper spacing, and spelling of known sight-words. In addition, I provided prompting during individual conferences. It is then possible to conclude that the writing samples from the writing workshop provided a clearer picture as to what conventions the participants could apply when writing independently.

**Figure 14**



## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN



### *Clarity of Ideas*

Data revealed all the participants wrote more than one book that clearly centered around one idea. Although they were successful in writing more than one book with clear ideas, each wrote several books that were difficult to understand without additional explanation. Research and related literature provide insight into the degree of clarity of ideas in emergent writers' work. One insight is for emergent writers; drawings carry most of the meaning and message, rather than their words (Graves, 1983; Calkins, 1994). When the meaning is found in the drawings, rather than in the words, it can be difficult for the reader to understand what the emergent writer wants to communicate. For instance, Ray's illustrations carried the meaning for his narratives rather than his writing, causing me points of confusion and subsequently making me clarify his intended meaning. Another insight research and related literature provide is the lack of alignment between the message emergent writers want to communicate and their ability to transform it into print (Clay, 1975; Ray & Cleaveland, 2004). The participants implemented their level of literacy skills to best approximate their intended meaning.

### **Limitations**

There were limitations that possibly influenced my results. The first possible limitation was time constraints. Within my 11-week study, I taught and collected data on

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

the writing workshop for eight weeks. An extended length of time to implement and collect data on the participants' engagement and writing composition over a longer length of time may have affected the results. For instance, the eight weeks of writing workshop instruction was only a portion of a full writing workshop curriculum. A second possible limitation could be due to my lack of experience teaching the writing workshop. For this study, it was my first time implementing the writing workshop, which could have influenced the quality of instruction, and therefore have affected the results. A third potential limitation was due to COVID-19 restrictions. To keep everyone safe, desks had to be placed six feet apart. Social distancing prevented students from working in groups during writing workshop. I let them walk over to read and discuss their writing with a few peers, but their desks still remained apart. If I could have had students work at tables or find spots around the room to work in small groups, Alice and Jane may have shown more social interaction during the writing process. Overall, time constraints, lack of writing workshop experience, and COVID restrictions may have influenced results.

### **Implications and Next Steps**

My findings can inform my classroom practice regarding writing instruction for emergent writers. I learned that the writing workshop provides students of all skill levels the opportunity to implement their perceived strengths as writers. Additionally, social interaction and choices in writing topics can help increase their engagement and willingness to participate in the writing process. Although two of the three participants communicated, they both liked both daily journal writing and writing workshop, all participants shared a positive attitude toward the writing workshop. The results concerning writing engagement encourages me to continue implementing the writing workshop in my

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

kindergarten classroom in the future. I also learned that the writing workshop enables students of all skill levels the opportunity to gain ownership of the writing process, apply conventions at their own pace and developmental level, and also develop the ability to communicate ideas clearly. Additionally, the results concerning the participants' writing composition encourages me to continue implementing the writing workshop. To further support my students' writing composition, I plan to provide additional support in literacy skills, such as the alphabetic principle, the understanding that letters represent sounds in words; phonemic awareness, the understanding that words are comprised of individual sounds; and concept of word, in which words are separated by space. I hope that further mastery of basic literacy skills can help all students apply conventions when writing independently. In addition, to further meet Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts for kindergarten, I plan to implement units within the writing workshop on narrative, opinion, and informative writing. I plan to do so because the standards expect kindergarten students to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to develop opinion, narrative, and informational texts by the end of kindergarten (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). Lastly, I plan to share my results with the other kindergarten teacher at my educational institution and possibly first-grade teachers to encourage implementing the writing workshop.

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## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix A

## Preliminary Data: Letter-Sound Assessment and Analysis

Alice

Figure A1: Assessment

	A	S	Word	I.R.		A	S	Word	I.R.
A	✓	✓			a	✓			
F	X	✓			f	✓			
K	X	✓			k	✓			
P	X	X			p	X			
W	✓	M			w	✓			
Z	✓	✓			z	✓			
B	✓	✓			b	✓			
H	T	X			h	C			
O	✓				o	✓			
J	X	X			j	X			
U	Y	Y			u	W			
					a	X			
C	✓	S			c	Z			
Y	✓	X			y	✓			
L	K	X			l	X			
Q	X	X			q	X			
M	W	W			m	X			
D	✓	X			d	b			
N	E	X			n	V			
S	E	X			s	Z			
X	✓	✓			x	✓			
I	C	X			i	C			
E	✓	X			e	X			
G	✓	X			g	X			
R	W	X			r	X			
V	C	X			v	Z			
T	X	X			t	C			
					g	X			

14/26 9/26

TOTALS 8/26

TOTAL SCORE

Confusions:

Letters Unknown:

Comment:

Recording:

A Alphabet response tick (check)

S Letter-sound response tick (check)

Word Record the word child gives

I.R. Incorrect response Record what child says

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Alice

Figure A2: Analysis

Age: 11 Alice October

Letter ID and sound Analysis

Capital Letters: 11/26

unknown: F, K, P, J, Q, T

confusions:

$\frac{T}{H}$	$\frac{Y}{U}$	$\frac{K}{L}$	$\frac{W}{M}$
$\frac{E}{N}$	$\frac{E}{S}$	$\frac{C}{I}$	$\frac{W}{R}$
			$\frac{C}{V}$

Interpretations of Confusions: (possible reasons)

$\frac{W}{M}$  - visual similarity

$\frac{Y}{U}$  - mouth feel - when saying letter U  
 $\frac{U}{U}$  - your mouth has similar feel when saying /y/

Lower case Letters: 8/26 (not counting different fonts for a and g)

unknown: p, j, l, q, m, e, r, g

confusions:

$\frac{C}{i}$	$\frac{z}{v}$	$\frac{C}{t}$	$\frac{k}{h}$	$\frac{c}{u}$	$\frac{w}{u}$	$\frac{z}{c}$	$\frac{b}{d}$	$\frac{z}{s}$
---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------

Lower-case ID

Interpretations of confusions

$\frac{W}{U}$  - letter name - "w" - say "u" at end of "w"

$\frac{z}{s}$  - visual similarity

$\frac{C}{I}$  - same confusion as with capital

$\frac{z}{c}, \frac{z}{v}$  - letter names - all have same /c/ at end of letter name

Sounds: 6/26

Known sounds: A, F, K, Z, B, X

confusions:  $\frac{M}{W}$   $\frac{Y}{U}$   $\frac{S}{C}$   $\frac{W}{M}$

Interpretation:

- confusion  $\frac{M}{W}$   $\frac{W}{M}$  - matches ID confusion of capital letters

$\frac{Y}{U}$   $\frac{S}{C}$  - /y/ and /s/ have same mouth position of letter names u/c

Letter ID - goal at this point in the year is 12/26 - almost there for capital but not lower-case

- sound confusions - developmentally appropriate

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

Figure A3: Assessment

	A	S	Word	I.R.		A	S	Word	I.R.	
A	✓				a	✓	✓			Confusions:
F	✓				f	✓	✓			
K	✓				k	✓	✓			
P	3				p	✓	✓			
W	✓				w	✓	✓			Letters Unknown
Z	✓				z	✓	✓			
B	✓				b	✓	✓			
H	✓				h	✓	✓			
O	✓				o	✓	✓			99 - change it to 2 help 2
J	✓				j	✓	✓			
U	✓				u	✓	✓			
					a	✓	✓			
C	✓				c	✓	✓			Comment:
Y	W				y	✓	✓			repeat the letter when trying to make the sound
L	✓				l	✓	✓			
Q	U				q	✓	✓			
M	W				m	✓	✓			
D	✓				d	✓	✓			Recording:
N	✓				n	✓	✓			
S	✓				s	✓	✓			
X	✓				x	✓	✓			
I	✓				i	✓	✓			A Alphabet
E	✓				e	✓	✓			S Letter-sat
G	✓				g	✓	✓			Word Record the
R	✓				r	✓	✓			I.R. child gives
V	✓				v	✓	✓			Record v
T	✓				t	✓	✓			says
					g	✓	✓			
22/26				TOTALS	19/26 15/26				TOTAL SCORE	



## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

Figure A4: Analysis

October

Ray Letter-Sound ID age 6

Capital Letters: 22/26

confusions:  $\frac{B}{P}$   $\frac{W}{Y}$   $\frac{U}{Q}$

$\frac{W}{M}$

Possible Reasons for Confusions:

$\frac{W}{M}$  - visual similarity

$\frac{B}{P}$   $\frac{U}{Q}$  - similar mouth feel and same sound at end of letter name

$\frac{W}{Y}$  - similar shape of mouth regarding sound of /w/

- dev. appropriate confusions

Lower case letters: 19/26

unknown: j

confusions:  $\frac{d}{p}$   $\frac{d}{b}$   $\frac{u}{y}$   $\frac{i}{l}$   $\frac{b}{q}$

Possible Reasons for Confusion

visual similarity:  $\frac{d}{p}$   $\frac{d}{b}$   $\frac{i}{l}$   $\frac{b}{q}$

mouth feel of letter sounds  
- letter u has similar mouth feel to /y/

Letter Sounds: 15/26

confusions

$\frac{/e/}{/a/}$   $\frac{/d/}{/w/}$   $\frac{/d/}{/b/}$   $\frac{/e/}{h}$   $\frac{/y/}{u}$

$\frac{/w/}{/y/}$   $\frac{/ü/}{/i/}$   $\frac{/k/}{/q/}$   $\frac{/ö/}{/i/}$   $\frac{/u/}{/e/}$   $\frac{/w/}{/r/}$

Possible Reasons for Confusion

vowel confusion:  $\frac{e}{a}$   $\frac{u}{e}$   $\frac{o}{i}$

letter name and sound confusion

$\frac{d}{w}$  - /d/ - beginning of /w/ letter name

$\frac{w}{y}$  - y - say letter name - mouth in position for /w/

visual similarity -  $\frac{d}{b}$ 

- when repeating letter name - trying to find sound

 $\frac{e}{h}$   $\frac{k}{q}$ speech?  $\frac{w}{r}$

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Jane

**Figure A5: Assessment**

	A	S	Word	I.R.		A	S	Word
A	✓	✓			a	✓	✓	
F	✓	✓			f	✓	✓	
K	✓	✓			k	✓	✓	
P	✓	✓			p	✓	✓	
W	✓	✓			w	✓	✓	
Z	✓	✓			z	✓	✓	
B	✓	✓			b	✓	✓	
H	✓	✓			h	✓	✓	
O	✓	✓			o	✓	✓	
J	✓	✓			j	✓	✓	
U	✓	✓			u	✓	✓	
					a	✓	✓	
C	✓	✓			c	✓	✓	
Y	✓	✓			y	✓	✓	
L	✓	✓			i	✓	✓	
Q	✓	✓			q	✓	✓	
M	✓	✓			m	✓	✓	
D	✓	✓			d	✓	✓	
N	✓	✓			n	✓	✓	
S	✓	✓			s	✓	✓	
X	✓	✓			x	✓	✓	
I	✓	✓			i	✓	✓	
E	✓	✓			e	✓	✓	
G	✓	✓			g	✓	✓	
R	✓	✓			r	✓	✓	
V	✓	✓			v	✓	✓	
T	✓	✓			t	✓	✓	
					g	X	g	
26/26	25/26			TOTALS	23/26	24/26		

**Figure A6: Analysis**

Jane 5 yrs old October

Letter ID Capital letters:  $\frac{26}{26}$

lower-case letters:  $\frac{23}{26}$  - didn't know

Potential reason for confusion: visual similarity:  $\frac{i}{l}$   $\frac{p}{q}$

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix B

### Preliminary Data: HRSW Assessment and Analysis

**Figure B1: HRSW Administration Directions**

#### Administration

The observer selects one of five alternative sentences to use in this observation. To avoid a practice effect use one of the five alternative forms for an initial assessment and another alternative form for a subsequent reassessment.

Form A	I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school.
Form B	Mum/Mom has gone up to the shop. She will get milk and bread.
Form C	I can see the red boat that we are going to have a ride in.
Form D	The bus is coming. It will stop here to let me get on.
Form E	The boy is riding his bike. He can go very fast on it.

Give the child a pen or pencil and a copy of the observation sheet on page 124 with the top folded under.

To introduce the task say to the child:

- *I am going to read you a story. When I have read it through once I will read it again very slowly so that you can write down the words in the story.*

Read the test sentence to the child at normal speed. Then say:

- *Some of the words are hard. Say them slowly and think how you can write them.*
- *Start writing the words now.*

Dictate slowly, word by word. When the child comes to a problem word say:

- *You say it slowly. How would you start to write it?*
- *What can you hear?*

Then add:

- *What else can you hear?*

If the child cannot complete the word say:

- *We'll leave that word. The next one is ...*

Point to where to write the next word if this helps the child.

Support the child with comments like those above to keep the child working at the task.



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Alice

Figure B2: Assessment

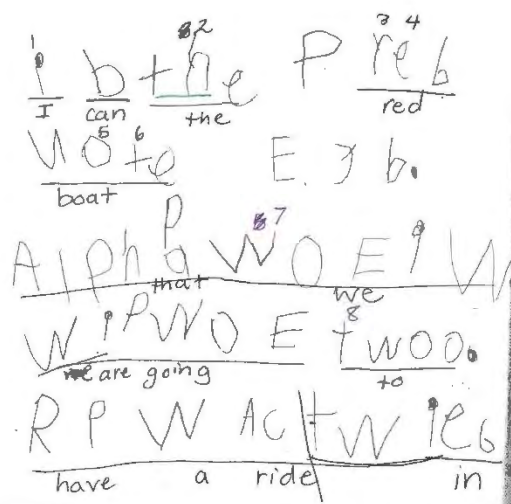
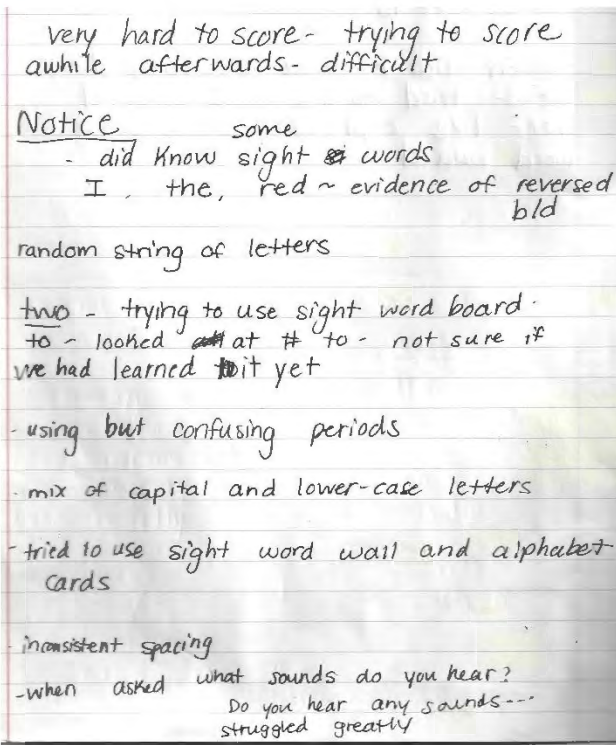


Figure B3: Analysis



- does show evidence of directionality - writes left to right
- when didn't know how to spell word - tried to use tools around her - like alphabet cards, sight word board

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

Figure B4: Assessment

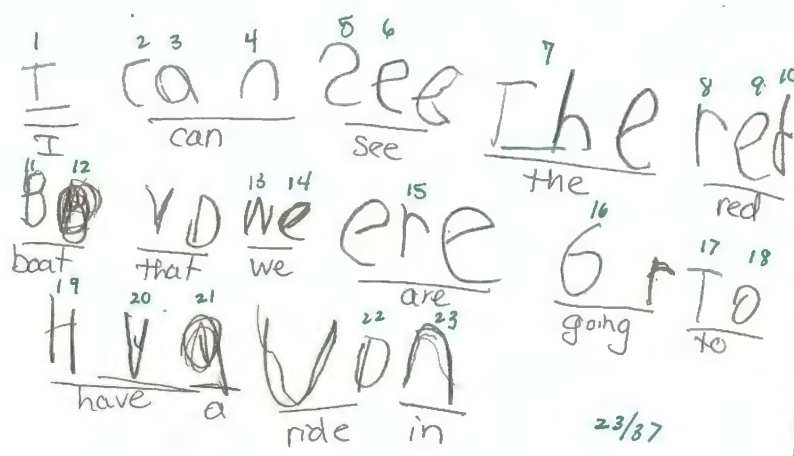
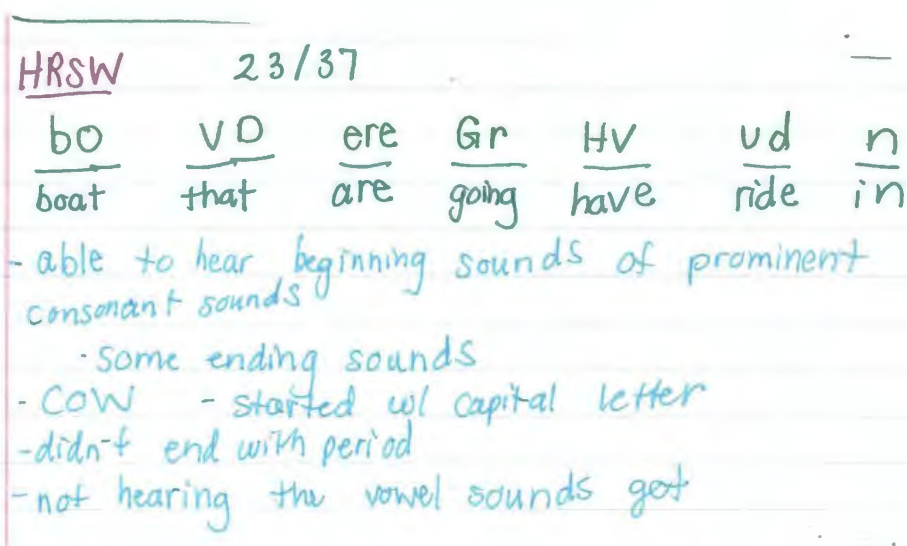


Figure B5: Analysis



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Jane

Figure B6: Assessment

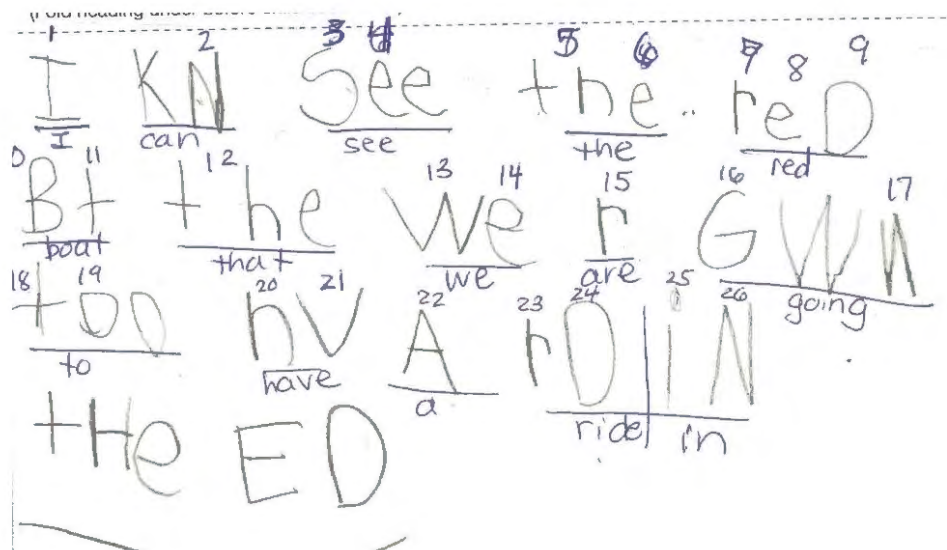
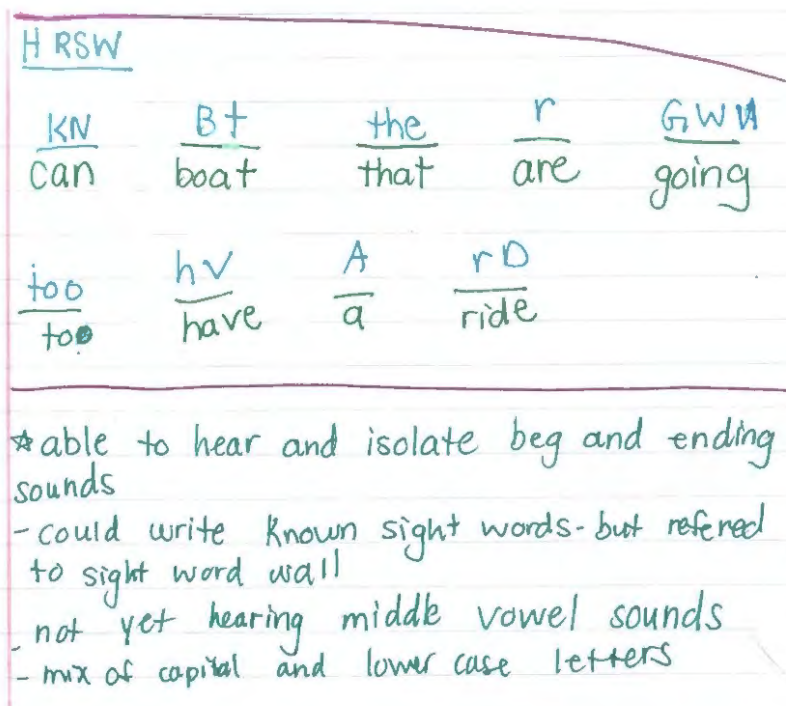


Figure B7: Analysis



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix C

### Preliminary Data: Writing Vocabulary Assessment and Analysis

**Figure C1: Administration Directions**

**Using the Writing Vocabulary observation task**

**Administration**

The child is allowed 10 minutes to complete this task. Give the child a pen or pencil and a copy of the observation sheet (page 111) with the top folded under.

To introduce the task, say to the child:

- *I want to see how many words you can write.*
- *Can you write your name?*

(Start the 10-minute timing here.)

If the child says 'No' see if he knows any single-letter or two-letter words. Say:

- *Do you know how to write 'is' (pause), 'to' (pause), 'I' (pause)?*

and then suggest other words that he may know (see below), pausing between each word for the child's response.

If the child says 'Yes' say:

- *Write your name for me.*

When the child finishes say:

- *Good. Now think of all the words you know how to write and write them all down.*

When he stops writing, or when he needs prompting, suggest words that he might know how to write, pausing between each word for the child's response.

- *Do you know how to write 'go' (pause), 'me' (pause)?*
- *Do you know how to write 'look' (pause), 'come' (pause)?*

Select words that the child might have met in his reading books or might be able to work out how to write; use some of the following words to get the writing under way.

I a is in am to come like see the my we and at  
 here on up look go this it me

(This is not a list to be dictated or used for teaching!)

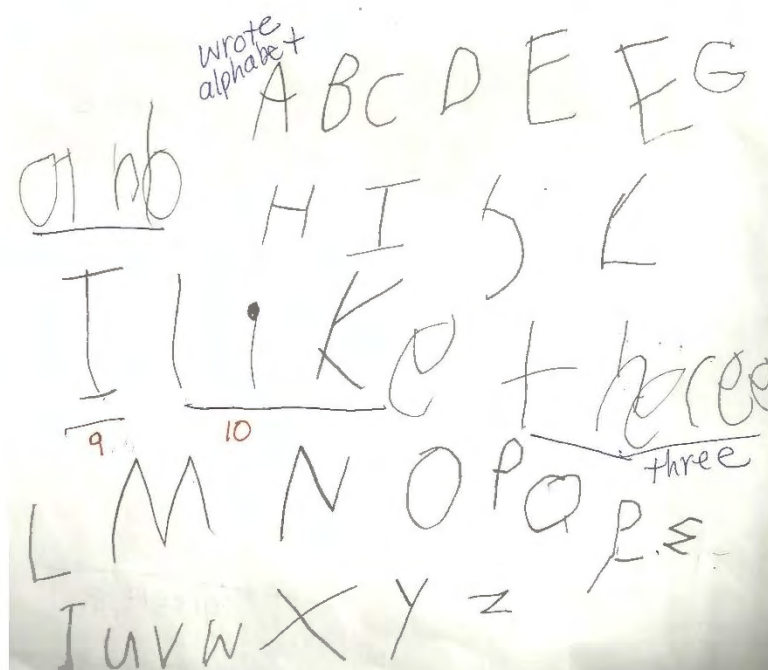
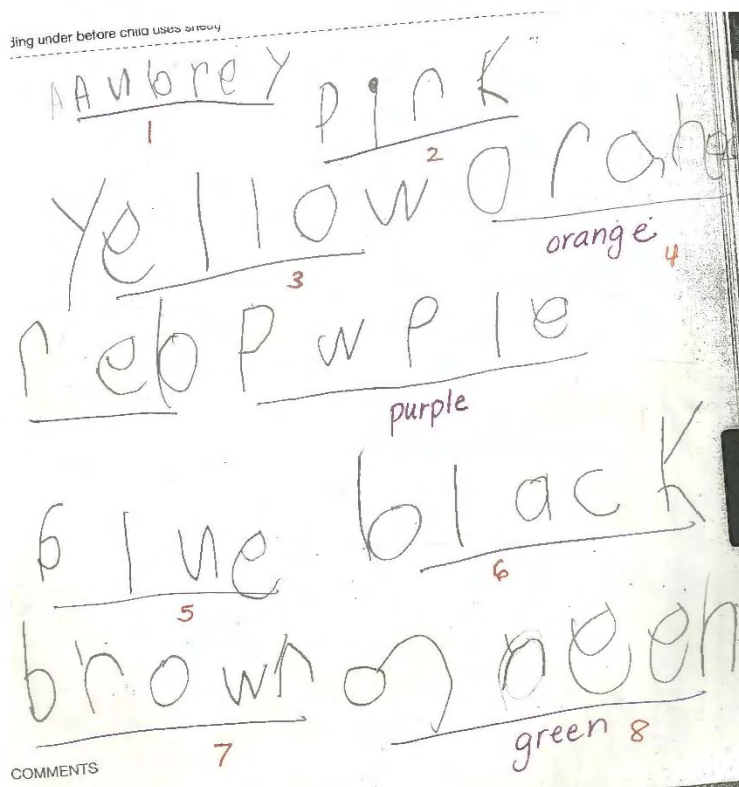
Continue for 10 minutes or until the child's writing vocabulary is exhausted. Prompt the child as much as you like with words he might be able to write. Be careful not to interfere with his thinking and his searching of his own repertoire.

The child should not be asked to read the words he has written.

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Alice

Figure C2: Assessment





# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Alice

Figure C3: Analysis

What features of print attending to?

- letter knowledge
- directionality
- Cow
- visual discrim.

What child knows/doesn't. putting print on the page

Features of print Attended to:	Almost - needs support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- directionality left to right - wrote words</li> <li>- used lower-case letters</li> <li>- wrote majority of letters correctly</li> <li>- could write name independently</li> <li>- did show some spacing between words</li> <li>- note - sight word wall was behind me - copied color words from back wall -</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- independently writing sight words w/out visual support</li> <li>- even when copying some written incorrectly</li> <li>- d/b confusion</li> <li>- Cow - some evidence of spacing</li> </ul>
<p>you probably doesn't know <del>whether</del> how to write the words w/out the support</p>	

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

Figure C4: Assessment

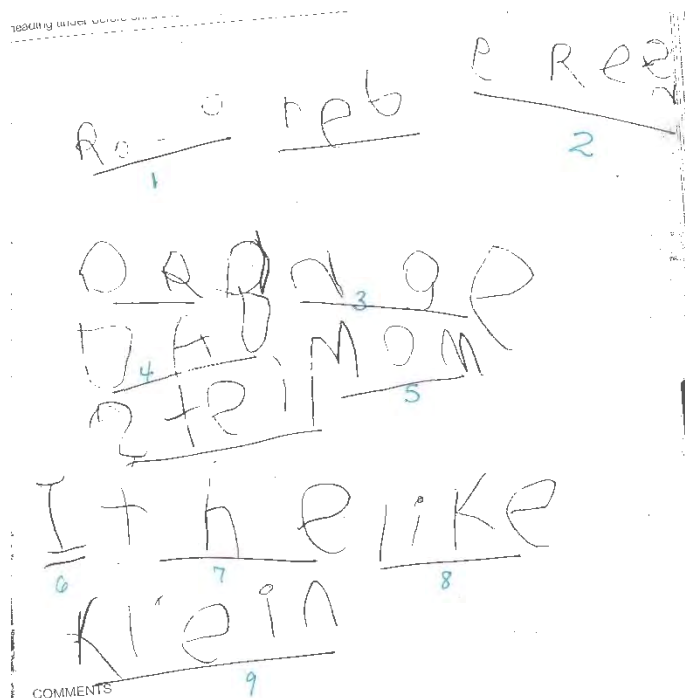
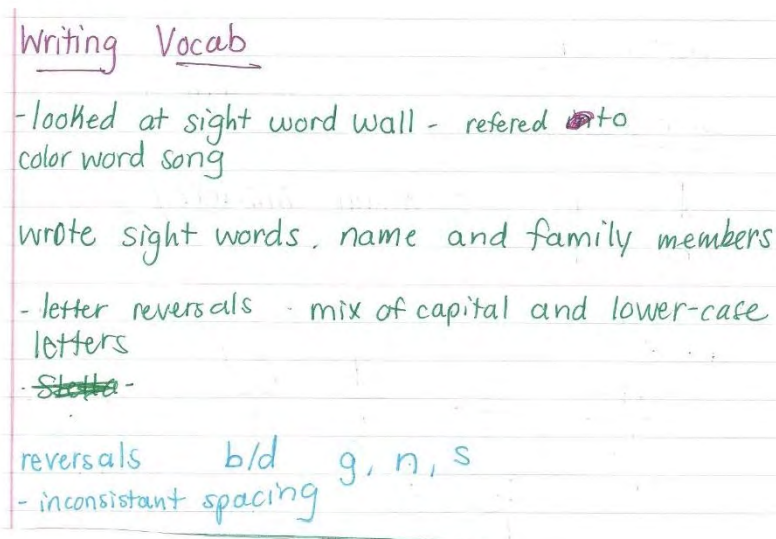


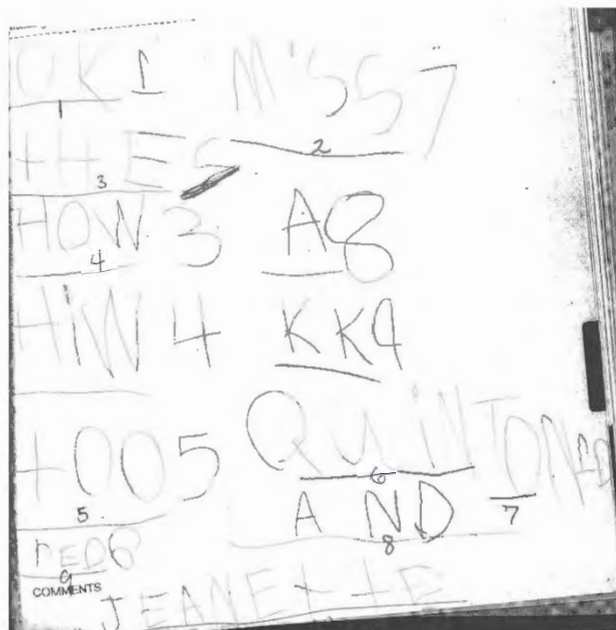
Figure C5: Analysis



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Jane

**Figure C6: Assessment**



**Figure C7: Analysis**

writing vocabulary

- wrote from left to right
- self organized list
- mix of capital and lower case letters
- referred to sight word wall

TKE: track or treat

- heard beg and end sound



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix D

### Phase 1: Interviews

#### Alice

**What is writing? Can you give me any examples of writing?**

Writing is like counting.

**Can you give me an example?**

Numbers.

**What does writing mean to you? Do you think it is important to write? Why or why not?**

Writing means letters. Writing is important because we can be strong when we grow up.

**Do you like to write? Why or why not?**

I like to write because you can make all things and flowers and stuff. Even you can make a storybook with a notebook or something. You can make your own book.

**Do you see yourself as a writer? Why or why not?**

I love to draw stuff and imagine stuff and it can really cheer me up when I'm sad. And it makes me like birds. I can even write princesses and stuff and I got my own Halloween book.

**What do good writers do well?**

I can write numbers and letters.

**Who do you know is a good writer? Why do you think?**

My dad is a good writer. He teaches me how to paint and write. Do you see him write? Yes. And he writes very good stuff and he paints and writes at the same time.

**How do you like doing the journals in class?**

They are wonderful.

**Is there any part of writing that's hard?**

Making dogs. It's like dinosaur doing stuff but I can kinda make cats. And my cousin taught me how to make cats and dogs.

**What about writing words?**

Words can make me like have, just like, imagine how to make like stories, like this story come alive with words. It makes the words bigger.

**Do you like writing words?**

Yes.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Ray****What is writing?**

Writing is like when you can, helps you as read. There won't be any

**Can you give me any examples of writing?**

T-H-E—that's "The" and A-N-D is "and." And T-O is "To." That's an example of how you write. Those are all sight words and I got the sight wrongs for this one.

**What does writing mean to you?**

I like writing but I don't really like writing all the time.

**Do you think writing is important?**

Yes.

**Why do you think it's important?**

Because there won't be any words if there was no writing.

**Do you like to write?**

Kinda.

**Can you tell me a little bit more, what you don't like and like?**

It kinda likes goes and makes words out of all of that. I don't like it sometimes because it's boring sometimes.

**What part is boring to you?**

Writing the letters.

**When we do our journal writing do you like it?**

I kinda like it.

**What do you like about it?**

It makes words and you can do all different kinds of things and make a collection of words.

**What do you not like about it?**

It's kind of I don't like writing the letters.

**Do you see yourself as a writer?**

Kind of.

**Why kind of?**

I don't like it and I like it, so it's kinda?

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Ray (continued):**

**Do you think you can write?**

yes

**So then do you see yourself as a writer?**

yes.

**So what do good writers do well?**

The letters.

**Any other things?**

If they should be good at writing they should be good at drawing.

**Anything else?**

No.

**Who do you know is a good writer?**

Stella, Mom, Dad, TT, Sonna, Nana, Papa and Clare and Novila.

**Are these all people in your family?**

They are.

**Why do you think they are good?**

They are kinda old and know how to write good.

**Have you seen them write before?**

Yes.

**What are some ways they write well?**

Novila knows how to write but she doesn't make words; she just writes random letters.

**Is that someone in your family?**

My cousin, Clare and Sarah. Cousins.

**Why do you think Stella is a good writer?**

She's 8 and she's older and good at writing. And she doesn't know how to write some words but she knows how to write good.

**WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN****Jane****What is writing?**

It's fun.

**Can you give me an example of what writing is?**

It's making other creation and beautiful art.

**What does writing mean to you?**

It means that I...(she didn't answer)

**Do you think it's important?**

It's important to me.

**Why is it important?**

My mom was an artist.

**So do you see writing as a form of art?**

Yes, I do.

**Is there any other reasons why writing is important?**

No.

**Do you like to write?**

Yes.

**Why do you like to write?**

I like to because my mom writes. My mom was an artist.

**What does your mom write?**

My mom writes notes. And when I grow up I'm going to be a mom.

**So do you want to write like she does?**

Yes.

**Do you see yourself as a writer?**

Yes.

**Why do you see yourself as a writer?**

I love writing and it's like, the colors are so beautiful.

**So do you think writing more of pictures or words or both?**

I like to write words. I practice words at my house so I can take a little boost to get to school to get to write. I like writing notes to other people. It's like my job.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Jane (continued):**

**What do you think good writers do well?**

They make lots of different pretty colors and they make pictures and words and all kinds of stuff.

**When you say pretty colors do you say in the drawings?**

Yes.

**Who do you know is a good writer?**

My mom. She was in art.

Before she got in college she was in art, but now she's a teacher.

**So is she a good writer as a teacher?**

Yes.

**What kinds of things do you see her write?**

I see her make words and pictures. One time my dad made a whale; that's crazy. He'd write notes that are from his job. His work isn't so far from here.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

### Appendix E

#### Phase 1: Observations of Journal Writing

### Alice Journal Writing Observations

#### Picture Drawing

- Asked students to draw a picture of where you would want your elf to come with you
- Alice started to draw one picture- lines crisscrossing
- but then turned the page and re-drew- looked up at the front of room- maybe found new page once I started drawing a picture
- Drew picture on the lines instead of blank portion of journal page
- Alice was quietly working independently, not talking to peers while drawing

#### Writing

*\*Prompt: Come with me to the...*

- As I was modeling writing the sight word come, Alice was watching but not writing along with me
- Tapping her pencil
- Started to spin on her chair
- Started to write below the picture- wrote come
- I introduced writing the word with
- I asked Alice what letter says /w/- she answered w
- Writing slightly behind me- looking around
- Ran out of room at the bottom of picture- wrote me at the top
- Turns around but doesn't talk with anyone
- Her pace didn't match mine- she was still writing me when I was on the
- Didn't finish writing- in the middle of writing the and decided to turn to a new page and start her writing over- she wrote on the top blank portion of the page
- Stopped at the same place "th" and then turned around
- Starts drawing picture under the words
- I came by and asked where she was taking her elf- she said gingerbread house
- I asked if she heard any sounds in gingerbread-she said w?- but didn't write it down
- She continued to draw- took her time adding detail to the gingerbread house

## Ray Writing Observations

### Picture Drawing

- Prompt- draw a picture of a place you would want to go with your friends
- Ray draws at the top of the page- blank area- doesn't talk to anyone at first
- In picture area, starts to write his friend's name- re-reads it to figure out final letter
- Turns around and shares with a peer that they are going to the Empire State Building in his journal- says he wants his friend to go with him
- Friend asks what it is and Ray explains it's the tallest skyscraper
- Starts to listen to other peers share who they are going with- decides to add another person
- Tries to sound out friend's name- asks friend if ok if he writes it a certain way
- Starts to draw people next to the empire state building
- Turns around to continue to talk to his peer about his drawing
- Continues to add more letters to his friend's name
- Friend asks him a question across the room about what animal he wants to be in his picture
- Shows a different peer his picture and tells him about how they are going to the Empire State Building

### Writing

- Prompt: Come with me to the...
- Writes "come" at same pace I am- begins to answer my questions to the whole class
- I re-introduce the sight-word "with"- ask what sound we hear- Ray answers /w/
- I ask- what letter should we see at the beginning- he answers "y"
- Followed along with me- after writing each letter he would put his head down
- As I was explaining the sound "th" makes he began to run his pencil down the crease of his journal
- Started to write "me"- erased and re-wrote his "m"
- Wrote "to" on his own- then erased and re-wrote
- Before writing "the" he asked if he could write it under the previous line- I said yes
- Wrote beginning sound for "empire"- added exclamation point because he was excited
- When done- he turned around and talked with peers
- Peer asks to see his picture- he explains its them at the empire state building holding badges

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Jane's Journal Writing Observations****Drawing**

- Prompt- draw a picture of what you tell your friend he or she can do
- Started drawing right away
- Starts talking with peer about who will be in her picture
- Used bin label to write another peer's name

**Writing**

- Prompt: You can...
- She correctly answered my question about using a capital letter at the beginning of the sentence
- Pace- ahead of mine as she knew how to spell "you"-sat waiting for the next word
- Wrote "can" with me- wrote in all capital letters
- Independently wrote DGRT for "decorate"- seems to isolate sounds in her head
- Did not put end punctuation
- Went back to work on her illustration-labeled with peer's name and referred to name tag
- When asked what her writing said- she was able to read it back-"you can decorate"
- Added color to her picture-"make the tree green"
- Commented that she gave herself curly hair in the picture so she knows that her-labeled the three other people she drew
- Asked aide "how do you make a star?"- for the top of the tree- aide encouraged her to try



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix F

### Phase 2: Conference Notes and Transcription

Alice

Figure F.1: Conference Notes

Conferences Notes

Alice

book 1- book about robots because she likes robots WP:P (idea)

Week 2 (WW)

- read robot book - while reading decided she wanted to go back and add to illustrations - WP:RF

1-14-21 (week 2 of WW)

- read 2nd book ~ title - My mom  
- needed prompting on how some pages related to her mom - ideas not all clear

Week 3 CT: IP

read book - Me - said she knows a lot about herself  
- ran her finger across her words  
- book - was about idea

Week 4

- worked independently  
- did turn around and share an idea for Jane to add to her animal book  
- started new book - didn't have idea yet but just started drawing cover w/ flowers WP:P - asked why? - said read

- drew house  
- wanted to make a house w/ a door  
- shared what she was thinking w/ me

Week 8 of WW WP:P ~ drawing to rehearsal/play

2-22-21

- started new book  
- didn't know what it would be about  
- had started drawing puppy  
- I asked if she thought her book would be about puppies/dogs  
- wasn't sure

2-25-21

- had new page - cat - used alphabet card - had pic of cat WP:D and label under it  
- for puppy - arde helped her WP:D sound it out

- book later - about zoo  
- cat - cheetah  
- cheetah  
- fox - picked animals on the alph. chart  
- purpose - teach all about animals  
- idea - she likes animals

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Alice Conference Transcription**

**Me:** So what are you working on today?

**A:** I don't know really. I was working on something yesterday and I'm working on it again today to finish it. I'm working on... I was talking to Mrs. Lewis about this but and Mrs. Lewis got me an idea about my dogs. I love dogs and I was talking about dogs and I'm writing about dogs.

**Me:** I love that. So you got your idea from talking with Mrs. Lewis and you realized you love dogs and wanted to write about dogs

**A:** Yes. I'm a dog person. Cause I got a dog. It was pregnant and now we have babies.

**Me:** So what are you doing first for your book?

**A:** I was coloring first. Sometimes I just write first.

**Me:** You said sometimes you write first?

**A:** And sometimes I color first.

**Me:** Alice, I like how detailed your illustrations are and I like how you got your idea from something you really like. Authors can get ideas from what they love.

**A:** Mrs. Lewis told me that.

**Me:** Yeah. That's great. Talking with other people can really help us. That's great, Alice. So you are working on this page and then.

**A:** I started writing this but I didn't know that was the story but this is the story. (showed a page in the middle of the book, then turned back to first page. )

**Me:** So another day you started writing?

**A:** Yeah like over here, like I thought it was the first page.

**Me:** Oh you thought that was

**A:** Then Mrs. Lewis showed me that this was the first page.

**Me:** Cool.

**A:** Sometimes I start with the first but sometimes I start with the last.

**Me:** So sometimes you start with the cover?

**A:** Yeah and sometimes the end.

**Me:** The back cover?

**A:** Yep

**Me:** Cool.

**A:** When I was in preschool, this is front, this is the middle, and this is the end. (showed me front, middle, and back of book) This is the front, this is the middle, and this is the back. And then we start reading it really.

**Me:** That's awesome so for this book you choose to start on the first page, not the cover? Is that right?

**A:** Yes

**Me:** Great!

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

Figure F2: Conference Notes

Ray Conference Notes

week 1 - first book working on WP:P  
 - Ray and Mikey's adventure WP:D  
 - trying to sound out adventure  
 - wants to make book series ~ WP:P  
 described 1st book of him and his friend saving dinosaurs

week 2 WP:P  
 - on second book ~ explained connects w/ first book  
 - how super hero got on island

book 3 - Rocco and Mikey find James WP:P  
 - explains how he first puts book #, writes title, then draws pictures  
 - next step - wants to add more detail  
 I asked how he decided to choose colored - said what characters touch turns blue (I had noticed his illustrations were one color)

week 3 ~ observed when WP: Sharing  
 W.W started he went straight to work with friends  
 - reads / explains book 4  
 - used sound affects when reading book

week 4 WP: sharing..  
 - brings book to show to friend - so far just illustrations  
 - another friend joined and read their book

week 5  
 - read book 5  
 - writing words - sounds  
 - many in speech bubbles  
 - prompted: How can you help reader understand what's going on in illustrations? WP:RF  
 - Ray - had idea could label who was in pic  
 - prompted - what else does person need?  
 - How can we know it's Christmas time?  
 - added detail

week 6  
 - went through book w/ me  
 - provided prompts to add to words - quickly added words - didn't refer to tools WP:E  
 - explained back cover preview of next book  
 \* needed prompt to recall he knows sight word

week 8  
 discussed book 8  
 - I asked what title was  
 - told me and wrote it  
 (WP:E) - prompted - do we know a sight word?  
 - how can you help reader know \_\_\_\_\_  
 - wanted to know which to use  
 - monster - BT - prompted - what is the 1st sound you hear?

## Ray Conference Transcription

**Me:** How did you come up with that idea?

**Ray:** I love dinosaurs so much. I love animals. I love dogs. Anything inside these books I love. So this is how I write books about me. I love everything in these books. I love movies (looking through a different book). I love movies coming to life. I like flip o ramas.

**Me:** Did you do the pictures first, then the words or the words then the pictures?

**Ray:** that

**Me:** Pictures then the words?

**Ray:** Yeah

**Me:** What do you think the purpose of this book is?

**Ray:** Well the purpose of this book is, well this book tells you about what all the other books are about. Book 3 tells you what all the other books are about.

**Me:** Is this a story?

**Ray:** Yes

**Me:** So would the purpose be to tell a story?

**Ray:** Yes

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Figure F3: Conference Notes

Jane Conference Notes

week 1

- making book about Jesus
- end of week - said done w/ book
- encouraged to look ~~up~~ back, add color
- got idea - saw word Jesus WP:P
- on our sight word chart
- she added color

week 2

started new book on unicorns

week 3

- discussed balloon book ~ more than one idea
- prompted how can we make title fit book - title tells us what book is about
- she explained how she ran out of ideas process - makes title - then does pic, words words - sounds out - doesn't refer to alphabet card WP:P

discussed - Shape book - shapes all around me

- some pages she didn't want words - seen other books w/ pages w/ no words
- some words missing this is a ○ said didn't know how to spell

week 4

- using dry erase board to think of ideas for writing alphabet - said she was doing it to help her w/ sounding out and writing words
- work on animal book - wasn't sure what to add - peer gave idea

week 5

week 6/7

- Valentine's book
- likes books w/ lines ~ helps her concentrate
- prompted - help her realize needs WP:E



## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Jane Conference Transcription**

**J:** Mia and me helped each other.

**Me:** So you wrote by Mia and Jeanette.

**J:** Um hum

**Me:** I like how you gave Mia credit. Like you are both authors.

**J:** That's my and sign.

**Me:** So how did you and Mia work together on it?

**J:** Because I was like, "Mia, what should I add to my book?" and she was like.. then I was like, what have you done? And she was like, "umm, let me see..

Started reading her book. "Is Valentine's day a game?" I need to fix this because it says game but I need it to say games.

Is Valentine's day a friend? Valentine's day is love. The end.

**Me:** So you worked with Mia, kind of asking her questions to help you make the book?

**J:** Yeah

I like it.

**Me:** So what was hard about... was there any part of making this book that was hard?

**J:** Umm, no. (looked back at first page- pointed to picture)- this one says "What?!")

**Me:** What did you do first to make this book? Do you remember?

**J:** I did this, then this.

**Me:** Ok so did you do the illustrations first or the words first? Which one did you do first?

**J:** I did words.

**Me:** You did words first.

**J:** No, I did pictures.

**Me:** You did pictures first and then words?

**J:** Yeah

**Me:** I always do pictures and then words.

You do pictures and then words, ok.

Can you tell me again how you got the idea for this book?

**J:** I just got it in my brain. I don't really know how to explain it.

**Me:** Did you see something that sparked your idea, or...

**J:** You can't see Valentine's day.

**Me:** I think last time you were saying you were looking at the calendar?

**J:** Oh yeah, February.

**Me:** So you looked at the calendar...

**J:** I looked at February.

**Me:** You looked at February?

**J:** And the hearts remind of Valentine's day.

**Me:** So the hearts reminded you of Valentine's day?

Awesome, so you saw the hearts..

**J:** Yeah

**Me:** And that kind of sparked your idea. Ok.

So what is your next step for your book?

**J:** What next step?

**Me:** So what do you think you will do next?

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Jane Conference Transcription (continued):**

**J:** I think it's all done.

**Me:** So how do you know when your book is done?

**J:** When the pages are all....

**Me:** Ok so when the pages are all done? Ok so after your pages are all done, what are some questions you need to ask yourself?

**J:** I don't know.

**Me:** So some questions you can ask yourself are:

Does every page have pictures and words?

Can you add more detail in the illustrations? Did you check it? (she looked through her book)

Did you use colors?

When someone is reading your book do they know what your illustration is?

**J:** Yeah, they can read my book.

Yep, pictures, check.

**Me:** Alright, can you add to the words?

**J:** (looked through her book) check.

**Me:** Did you think about sight words that you know?

**J:** A, and, the, is.. I don't know if Valentine's day

**Me:** But I like how I see you used the sight words that you know. Excellent.

Do you remember when we looked at your title you said this is a question so what did you put at the end?

**J:** A question mark.

**Me:** A question mark. So is there any other places in your story that you are asking a question?

(she went through and added question marks independently) I like how you are going through adding question marks. I love how detailed it is. Good job, Jane, so what are you adding?

**J:** A question mark.

**Me:** A question mark. Can you read this page to me?

**J:** Valentine's day is love.

**Me:** So is that a question?

**J:** No

**Me:** No, so we do need to know our sentence is done so what could you put at the end? You have a couple choices.

**J:** I don't want it to be loud.

**Me:** You don't want it to be loud, so what are you putting at the end?

**J:** Exclamation, no, I forget what its called.

**Me:** It's called a period. Excellent. I liked how your re-read and figured out if you are asking a question or not.

**J:** This is an exclamation point (drew one)

**Me:** Alright, but you didn't want it loud, so you did a

**J:** Yeah

**Me:** You did a period. I can tell you really thought about your book. That's wonderful.

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix G

### Phase 3: Observations of Writing Workshop

## Alice Writing Workshop Observations

### Writing Time

- Continued working on book she started in the past- started new page
- Using crayons to draw
- Working independently- not chatting with peers
- Taking her time using different colored crayons adding details- drawing a robot?
- Briefly looked around while working- looked at other peers talking
- Asked where our classroom aide was- maybe why looking around?
- Finished drawing blue robot then turned the page- blank background
- Next page- she used one color to draw the outline of the picture and then used one color to fill it in -star?- didn't spend as much time as she did drawing the robot
- Third page- traced her hand and colored it in- colored with looser strokes than the robot- then almost scribbling to fill the page- began to make curvy lines at the top of the page- used gray and black
- Took dark blue crayon- colored using large strokes all across the page
- Colored without talking to peers
- Got red crayon and began to write words on the blank page before the one she drew her picture
- Writing words: started with A- then looked up at the alphabet cards on the wall next to her- copied letters- didn't vocalize stretching out sounds
- Turned back to previous page to start writing- started to look up around at peers
- Looked back at her illustration, then began to write words- looked over at board and alphabet cards when writing letters-
- After writing words for that page- took yellow crayon and added to illustration
- Turned to robot page- was able to start writing- up then opened up her writing folder and took her first book out- which was about robots- copied title- robots from first book
- Turned to first page- started to write words- referred to alphabet cards on wall and board- for letter A
- Wrote "ll" and "b" without a reference- then looked up for next letter at boards and alphabet cards
- Turned to back cover- added drawing
- Looked up at me and said-"I'm done with my book"
- I asked her to read it to me- she first realized she needed to add a title before reading it to me



## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

### Ray Writing Workshop Observations

- Began by writing words- used crayon
- Writing “boo” 4 times- saying the words quietly to himself
- Then said out loud: “boo, boo, boo, boo”
- Added “AHHHH”- saying the letters as he wrote
- Re-read whole page- “pillow fight number 2, boo, boo, boo, boo, AHHHH- voice changed when reading the sounds
- Held up book and said- “I think I’m done”
- Holding book- walked and looked around
- Then heard peer telling classroom aide about his book- Ray put book down and went over to them

### Conversation with peer

**Ray:** Where’s me”

Peer: at the bottom

**Ray:** I’m in last place? Why can’t everyone be in first place?

Peer: Because that’s how it should go. You are in last place because you forgot your skills in the race car. This is what your car looks like. Let me draw it.

**Ray:** To you have an electric set at your house?

Peer: Yeah

**Ray:** A real life Technic set?

*They briefly talked about it*

- Ray walked away to another set of peers- briefly looked at what they were doing and walked away back to his desk
- Grabbed his book and asked peer he briefly went to before if he could read his book to him
- Asked peer again as peer was using dry-erase markers- other peer was asking him where he got them
- Peer said sure but kept using dry erase marker- didn’t look up at Ray
- Ray began to read book to peer- started at the cover
- Title: Book 6: Battle of the Black Moon and it’s a movie
- Peer he was talking with before interrupted and started to explain how Ray was in last place
- Ray and two peers discussed truck race- said Ray didn’t know it was a truck race and built tiny normal tires
- Peer writing race car book said other peer made better car than Ray
- Ray said- I’m a better inventor- I never forget how to build my inventions
- Peer with race car book- still talking about details in his book
- Ray tried to begin reading his book to other peer- “pillow fight! Fight fight fight fight
- Other peers came and interrupted- talking about other books

## **Ray Writing Workshop (continued):**

### **Reading book to new peer**

- Pg. 1- once upon a time Mikey lost his powers.
- Pg. 2- but he had to get his powers back by winning the pillow fight and he did- the power fight was super big to get Mikey's powers back
- Pg. 3- and then the big big big big everything turned black, the movie turned black, the movie turned black, everything turned black
- Pg. 4- then another pillow fight. Pillow fight 2, boo boo boo boo ahhhh!
- Pg. 5- five minutes later- here's your powers, Mikey, and a leader card, bye!
- Walked away from peer
- Grabbed a different book he wrote- the one before book 6
- Went back to peer he read book 6 to

### **Reading a new book to same peer**

- Title: book 5 Tiny Power
- Pg. 1- ahh boom boom- he is turning him into ... and him into a cheetah and you are the cheetah
- Peer- I'm the cheetah?! I can run fast!
- Pg. 2- Christmas tree season!!
- Pg. 3- A Pterodactyl?! Explained more to peer
- Pg. 4- someone wanted to be an ant. He was thinking in his mind, what are these guys doing?- explained that part without looking at the book
- Pg. 5- boom! He turned into a zebra!
- Then asked peer if he wanted him to read book 4 to him

### **Jane Writing Workshop Observations**

- Working on adding words to her ballerina slipper book- to write ballerina- referred to previous page to see how she spelled the word
- Looked at sight word board- wrote is
- Turned to me and said- I see 2 sight words I wrote down, “the” and “is”
- Ready to write next word, said- but I don’t know how to write..
- Picked up sight word chart
- Said- ahh, I can’t see where “on” is
- Then found it and wrote on page
- To write the word “stage”- was stretching the sounds out loud to herself
- Me: So what did you write?
- Jane: The ballerina is on the stage
- Pointed to “on” and asked, “does this spell on or off?”
- Me: You tell me, what do you think?
- Jane: on
- Me- Yes, you have /o/ /n/- on

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix H

### Phase 3: Reading Writing

### Alice Reading Writing

- Title: What I like
- Pg. 1: This is a box in the air.
- Pg. 2: It's a robot.
- Pg. 3: silly star
- Pg. 4: I like the sky.
- Pg. 5: skipped reading
- Back cover: The end

### Reading Writing Behaviors

- Started at the front cover
- Slid finger left to right under the title
- Pg. 1- slid finger left to right under word
- When reading Pg. 1- repeated several times, trying to fix what she was saying-
- First said- this is a pink or piece of box, no I mean, this is a kite, no not a kite, this is a box in the air.
- Pg. 2- It's a robot. Robot.-slid finger left to right when reading: It's a robot. Then went back to beginning of word and repeated it.
- Pg. 3- - read left to right- silly- slid finger under cby, then read star- em
- Pg. 4- slid finger right, left, right- pointed first at I, then lc for like, then "the sky"- slid under ak then went back over it from right to left

## Ray Reading Writing

**Words to Book:- asked Ray to pick a book to read to me**

**Title:** Rocco and Mikey save the dinosaurs book 2- words say- Rocco and Mikey find James

**Pg. 1:** The James got eaten by all the T-Rex's- actual words say- The Trex ate James

**Me:** What do your words say?

**Ray:** Once upon a time James got eaten by the T-Rex's

**Pg. 2:** and I had to fight the queen TREX because all the Jameses were in the queen TREX. I had to fight it and crack it open and I said "That was a piece of cake" Then I had to use my bare hands to take out James. There was blood all over the place.

**Pg. 3:** We shoot at all the dinosaurs.

**Me:** What did you say? Could you say that again?

**Ray:** Then we shoot all the dinosaurs away.

**Me:** You shot at the dinosaurs?

**Ray:** No, we were running out of gas because the dinosaurs were too heavy.

**Me:** Ok so what is this part? -pointed to top of page with letters

**Ray:** booo. Because I made this robot and I .....with it and it was break down.

**Me:** Who is saying that?

**Ray:** I made a robot so that is why I made it (the words) up here

**Me:** The robot is saying that?

**Ray:** No, this robot, that is James. James is transforming into a T-Rex

**Me:** So James is saying that?

**Ray:** Yes

**Pg. 4:** And then ... atten (eaten) by a black hole went inside the sun, came back down from Earth, and then he said yay! Then got eaten again and then went into a black hole, went into the sun, then back to Earth again and again and again

**Me:** so what were these words?

**Ray:** Giovanni got eaten by a Trex and did a really big cycle.

**Pg. 5-6:** Then an evil villain turned by into a dog.

**Me:** What is one this page (6)

**Ray:** Giovanni was in love with all the poisonous creatures

**Reading Behaviors: telling story through describing the pictures**

- Majority of pages- he pointed to the pictures and explained them-
- Pg. 2- he pointed to the words "that's a piece of cake"- didn't point under each word
- Turned back to previous page to reference what was happening on pg. 2
- Pg. 3- ran finger across speech bubble print- but from right to left
- Pg. 4- point to speech bubble and describe

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Jane Reading Writing**

**Title:** Balloons, toilet paper, sight words

**Pg. 1:** I like balloons. – when reading, repeated “I like”

**Pg.2-** Balloons are cool. -slid finger left to right- one motion

**Pg. 3-** Toilet Paper- didn’t point to words

**Pg. 4-** Toilet paper you use it- first time reading forgot “it”- then added once she relooked- fast sliding left to right- then pointed to “it” after she realized she forgot to include

**Pg. 5-** You buy toilet paper.

**Pg. 6-**Toilet paper attack!- described the picture- had no words- read with expression

**Pg. 7.** – sight words

**Pg. 8-** I like

**Pg. 9-** you are

**Pg. 10-** me

**Jane:** that was a short book

\*book opened right to left

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

## Appendix I

### Phase 3: Formal Assessments

Alice

Figure I1: HRSW Assessment

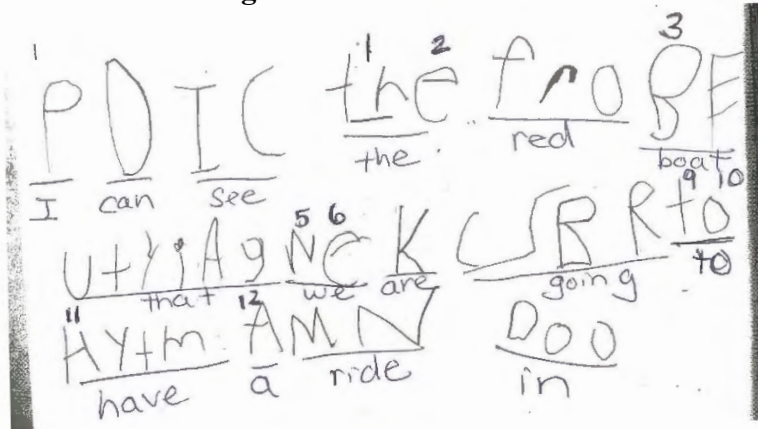


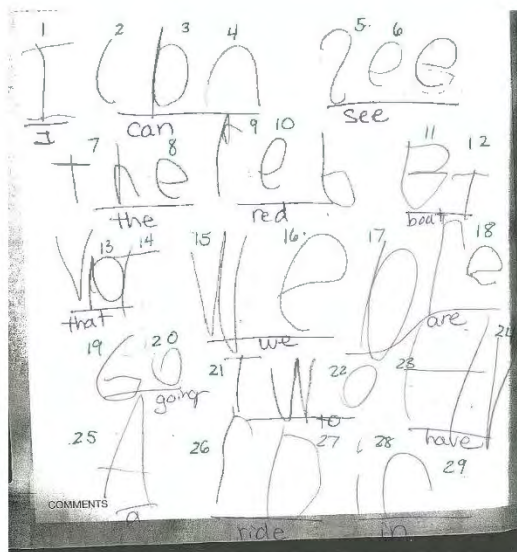
Figure I2: HRSW Analysis

<p>Alice HRSW 12/37 (I took down sight words on board)</p>	
<p>P D I C the I can see the</p>	
<p>fro BE utyia g we K red boat that we are</p>	
<p>c s b r to hyt m a m n D o o going to have a ride in</p>	
<p>Attends to</p>	<p>Not yet attending to working on</p>
<p>able to write known sight words: the, to, a, we</p>	<p>-spacing</p>
<p>able to isolate beginning sounds for Boat, have</p>	<p>consistently encode prominent beginning sounds</p>
<p>directionality - wrote from left to right</p>	<p>didn't know how to independently spell I, can, red - sight words we have learned</p>

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

**Figure I3: HRSW Assessment**



**Figure I4: HRSW Analysis**

Ray	HRSW	Feb.	..
reb	bt	vat	go
red	boat	that	going
two	hv	rd	
to	have	ride	score 29/37

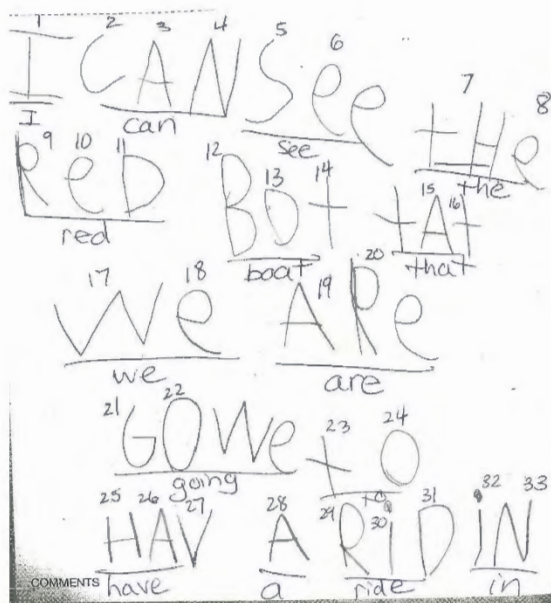
Attends to	Working on
directionality - left to right	hand writing - reversed a, s, d
able to spell	capitalization
Known sight words (except to)	difference between to / two / too
spacing - COW	
encode beginning and ending sounds of prominent consonant sound	



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Jane

**Figure I5:** HRSW Assessment



**Figure I6:** HRSW Analysis

Jane HRSW 33/37

bot tat gowe  
boat that going

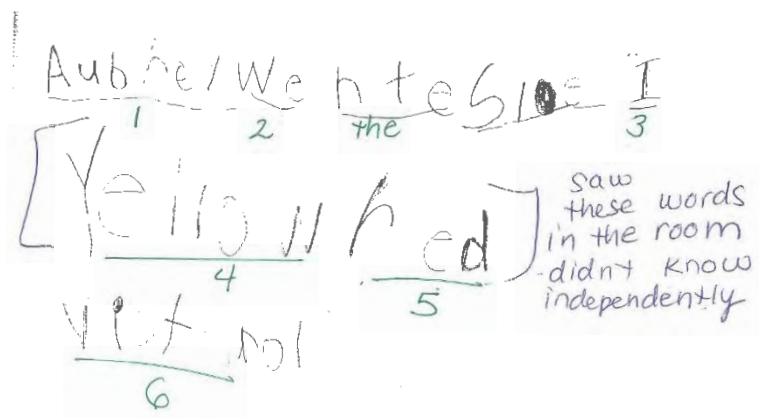
hav rid  
have ride

Attends to	Working on - not yet attends to
- can independently write sight words	- capitalization - wrote with mix of capital and lower-case letters
- consistently could encode beginning and ending sounds	- unknown sight words - that, have
- directionality	
- spacing	

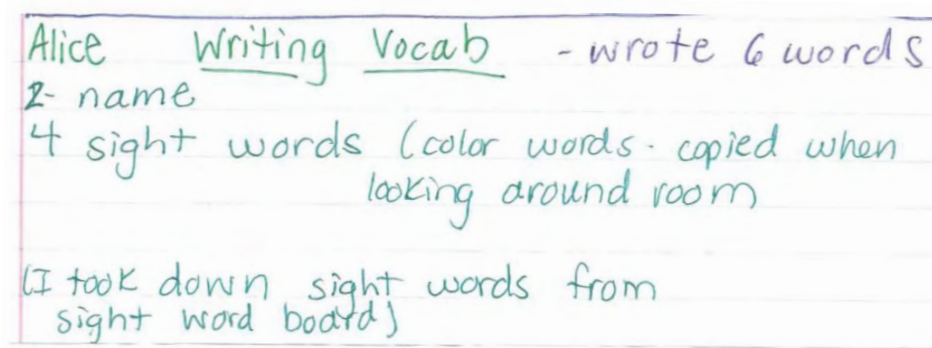
# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Alice

**Figure 17:** Writing Vocabulary Assessment



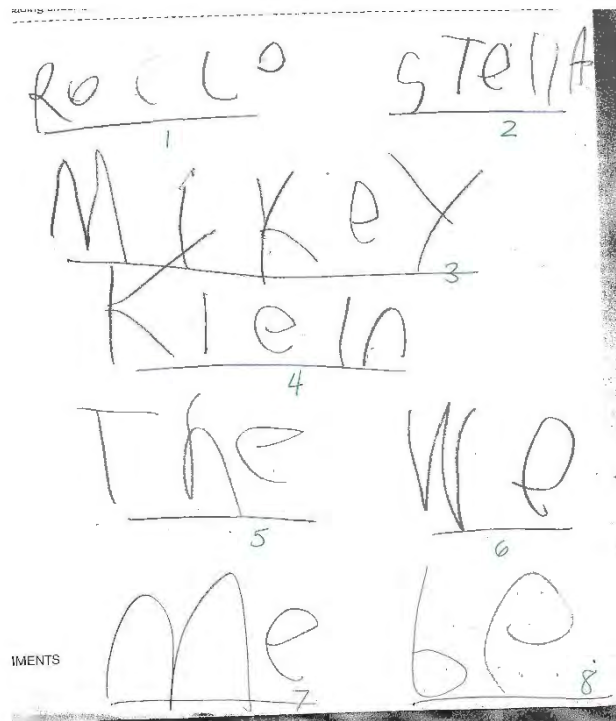
**Figure 18:** Writing Vocabulary Analysis



# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Ray

**Figure I9:** Writing Vocabulary Assessment



**Figure I10:** Writing Vocabulary Analysis

Ray

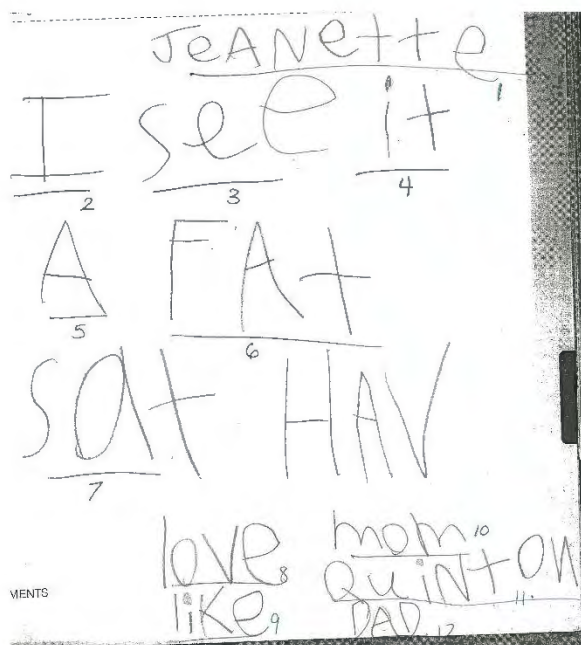
Writing Vocab - wrote 8 words

- I took down all sight words on board so they had to use their knowledge
- wrote 4 names
- wrote 4 sight words

# WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

Jane

**Figure I11:** Writing Vocabulary Assessment



**Figure I12:** Writing Vocabulary Analysis

Jane writing vocab. - 16 words

- 5 names
- 7 sight words
- 2-at word family
- 2 other known words (love, hi)
- tried to write have - wrote "hav"

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Appendix J**

## Phase 3: Interviews

**Alice Interview****What is writing?**

Writing is in all kinds of things we do. It's going to be in your imagination.

**What is an example of writing?**

An example of writing is do you want to write or not?

**If you are looking at something how do you know it's writing?**

Because it won't come to life, but you can imagine it coming to life (I assume she means the story)

**What does writing mean to you?**

Writing means my imagination.

**Can you tell me more?**

It means to me that I like it.

**Do you think it is important to write?**

Yes. It is important because you can have big poems and things and get more drawing. And then you'll be good at writing other sets.

**So you were saying it's important because?**

You might need it to get better and better.

**How do you get better?**

You keep on practicing.

**Do you like to write? Why?**

I do. It's so fun. You can draw everything you want.

**Any other reasons you like to write?**

It's so fun and I love it.

**Why do you love it?**

Because I like to draw it.

**Do you see yourself as a writer? Why do you see yourself as a writer? What do you write?**

Yes. I like to write. I write cats, dogs everything.

**WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN****Alice Interview (Continued):****How do you write cats and dogs?**

I just look at some of the pictures and I just think in my brain. Sometimes I learn some of these pictures and then I draw them. If I don't draw them then they stick in my brain.

**What do good writers do well? How do they write good?**

They write good. They practice a lot.

**Who do you know is a good writer?**

My dad is a good writer. He paints and writes. He's the greatest artist I know and I want to be like him.

**How do you like writing workshop?**

It's fun but sometimes I get bored and I don't know what to write. I think and think and think. I get an idea in my brain.

**When do you get bored?**

When there's 5-10 minutes and I'm trying to figure out what to write.

**What do you like about it?**

I like how we draw because I love drawing.

**What part do you not like?**

I don't like when it's over I keep on drawing but it stops.

**If you remember before we did writing workshop we wrote in journals each day. Do you like that better than writing workshop?****So you like both because you get to draw?**

My favorite thing is to draw.

**Is there anything else? So the daily journals we did; is there any part of the journals you didn't like?**

When it ends.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

### **Ray Interview**

#### **What is writing?**

Writing helps you. If writing didn't exist words don't exist. You need words to write. And some writing needs pictures. Writing can be lots of things. And that's it.

#### **Can you give me an example?**

Let's say if you are using a pencil, crayon or marker, it's writing.

#### **What does writing mean to you?**

Sometimes I really don't like writing but sometimes I do. Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't.

#### **Do you think it's important to write? Why so?**

I do think it's important. If writing didn't exist words wouldn't exist so we couldn't talk. Writing made the words.

#### **Do you like to write?**

Sometimes. Sometimes I like when my dad draws a picture and I cut it out and I add the drawings inside of it.

#### **Can you tell me more why sometimes you like writing?**

Sometimes I want to make him inventions.

#### **Do you like to write?**

Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't.

#### **When do you like to write?**

It depends. If I have stuff in my head going on I don't want to. If I don't have much stuff going on in my head I do.

#### **Do you see yourself as a writer?**

Sometimes. I don't really like to write but I kinda do.

#### **When do you see yourself as a writer?**

Sometimes at home, sometimes at school.

#### **When do you feel you are a writer at school?**

When I have nothing on my mind that I do at home.

#### **Do you see yourself as a writer? Do you think you can write.**

I know I can.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Ray Interview (Continued):****What do good writers do well?**

Writing.

**What else do good writers do?**

They also like drawing.

**Who do you know is a good writer?**

I know myself am a good writer, my sister, my mom, my cousins, well maybe not one of them.

**Why are you good at writing?**

I'm good at writing certain things.

**Can you give me an example?**

Like dinosaurs and monsters.

**Are you good at drawing?**

Yes, I'm good at drawing, and cutting

**What about writing?**

I'm kinda good at writing.

**What part of writing are you good at?**

Sight word writing

**What is something that is hard?**

Like writing "Oh my gosh!" and long sentences and hard ones- words monsters say

**How do you like writing workshop?**

I like it because I can make books and I share with my family. Everyone likes my books.

**What do you like about it?**

Writing the pictures in the books and hearing them. The first book was I like I copied a movie and some were different and some were the same.

**Is there any part that you like about writing workshop?**

Sharing them with the class.

**Anything else? Is there a part you don't like about writing workshop?**

No, and nothing wrong with the workshop.



## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Ray Interview (Continued):****Do you like the journaling or writing workshop more?**

I like the writing workshop. Journaling was really hard but I like writing books because I can make my own stories.

**What was hard about the journaling?**

Every single thing.

**WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN****Jane Interview****What is writing?**

To me, it's art.

**Can you give me examples?**

Art is beautiful things put together. Makes me want to be drawing and painting and everything is. Art is art to me.

**So you said writing is art too?**

Correct.

**What does writing mean to you?**

I'm making notes for people and I love making notes for people.

**Can you tell me more?**

Notes make me happy that I send them to people.

**What kind of notes do you make?**

Love notes and Easter and St. Patrick's notes. Lucky the Leprachaun. That was Mrs. Lewis's card.

**Do you think it's important to write?**

When I was born I thought art was my beauty so I liked drawing a lot. That's why my heart is filled with color. My heart will make a beautiful thing if it was outside in the world.

**Do you like to write?**

I love to write.

**Why do you love to write?**

I just do. It's my job.

**What do you like about writing?**

It makes me happy.

**How does it make you happy?**

I was born with art. I liked art for a really long time. I like making notes just like I made that to Mrs. Lewis.

**Do you see yourself as a writer?**

I do. I make books and I also make notes. I practice reading too. It makes me make books better.

## WRITING WORKSHOP IN KINDERGARTEN

**Jane Interview (Continued):****Can you tell me more?**

Books are kind of like art.

**How so?**

You make art inside a book. Books are just magnificent. Art is beautiful.

**What do good writers do well?**

I think they are good at making books and notes.

**Who do you know is a good writer?**

Me and my brother.

**Why do you think you and your brother are good?**

When we mix up colors on our driveway with chalk it makes a beautiful color. If we mix them all together it makes a rainbow but not a curved one, but a circled one. We like doing chalk with circles but we can't now because of the snow.

Just like my mask. That's why I bring this mask every day.

**How do you like writing workshop?**

I like it because I like making books.

**Why do you like making books?**

It gives me ideas for making art. My very first colorful book is toilet paper tag; they are colored everywhere.

**Is there a part of writing workshop you don't like?**

No.

**If you remember we wrote in our journals every day before. Do you like writing workshop or journaling better?**

I like both the same.

**Why do you like both?**

They make me write words and if I get them wrong it's ok. And if I hear a sight word then I'm like, "I know that sight word."

**Is there any part of daily journaling you didn't like?**

No I liked it.