

TOWARDS BETTER WRITING ASSESSMENT IN EARLY YEARS: ALIGNING
PURPOSE AND PRACTISE

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Dedication

To my little sister Kate – I beat you (and I love you).

Abstract

In early childhood education, writing assessments are typically structured to gather information about students' writing skills to evaluate if they are progressing toward the grade-level outcomes established by the curriculum. However, using the curriculum as the sole framework for defining these constructs can contribute to a limited understanding among teachers regarding student development and learning. This approach may also hinder their ability to effectively use assessment tools with validity, reliability, and fairness. This project was influenced by my reflection on my own assessment experiences and my engagement with research in the field to develop a writing ability construct. This construct serves as a framework to identify the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that young students need to successfully engage in writing tasks, ultimately facilitating the creation of a writing assessment based on scenario-based tasks. I sought to answer the question: how do I assess the choices made by first-grade students during the writing process to provide more targeted instruction? Based on my experience and research, I built a useful writing evaluation construct for early grades which focusses on contextual impact, cognitive resources and process, text resources and process, language resources, multimodal resources, personal resources, and developmental variation. These *resources* were then utilized to build assessment tasks aimed to immerse students in authentic writing experiences that align with real-world communication needs.

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Table of Contents

Dedication	iii
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vii
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	x
List of Abbreviations	xi
Chapter One: Introduction to Writing Assessment	1
Aligning Purpose and Practise	1
Rationale.....	5
Chapter Two: Writing Assessment Design Framework and Process	8
Theory of Action	9
Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework	17
Chapter Three: Construct Representation	23
Writing Ability Construct	23
Writing Ability Construct Applied to First Grade	46
Chapter Four: Developed Writing Assessment	63
Scenario-Based Tasks	63
Writing Assessment Outline	64
Teacher Resource Guidance	68
Narrative Story Writing Assessment Plan	71
Invitation Writing Assessment Plan	88
Chapter Five: Reflecting on the Assessment Process	102

Known Consequences of Developed Assessment	102
Unintended Consequences of Developed Assessment.....	105
Personal Impact and Path Moving Forward on Assessment	106
References	109

List of Tables

Table 1: Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework Phase 1	19-20
Table 2: Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework Phase 2	20
Table 3: Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework Phase 3	21-22
Table 4: Overview of the <i>Resource</i> Domains of Writing Ability.....	27
Table 5: Summary of Developed Writing Ability Construct Model	43-45
Table 6: General Writing Assessment Outline	67
Table 7: Writing Assessment Outline Alignment to Construct Model	68
Table 8: Narrative Story Writing Assessment Plan	70
Table 9: Invitation Writing Assessment Plan	87

List of Figures

Figure 1: Theory of Action Visual Model	11
Figure 2: Construct Model Visualization	28
Figure 3: Example of Person Characteristic	59
Figure 4: Example of Person Characteristic	59
Figure 5: Written Journal Response Rubric	71
Figure 6: Narrative Story Comparison Using a Venn Diagram	75
Figure 7: Parts of Narrative Story Chart	77
Figure 8: Narrative Writing Comic Strip	78
Figure 9: Narrative Writing Planning Sheet	81
Figure 10: Narrative Writing Single Point Rubric	85
Figure 11: I Can Narrative Writing Rubric	86
Figure 12: Invitation Writing Graphic Organizer	90
Figure 13: Invitation Writing Matrix Chart	93
Figure 14: Invitation Writing Planning Sheet	96
Figure 15: Invitation Writing Single Point Rubric	100
Figure 16: I Can Invitation Writing Rubric	101

List of Abbreviations

IDAF: Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework

ToA: Theory of Acton

Chapter One: Introduction to Writing Assessment

Aligning Purpose and Practise

Throughout my teaching career, there has been varying opinions on student learning experiences and assessment practices, which often spark debates about the best methods for facilitating learning and accurately measuring progress. This challenge is compounded by the complexities of the classroom environment. In response, I have worked to align teaching, learning, and assessment to better understand how these components interact and impact one another.

I have been teaching in an early childhood context for the entirety of my teaching career, two years in kindergarten and the last four years in first grade. These two teaching assignments were in two different school contexts, each with its own unique challenges and dynamics. I first fell in love with teaching working in a very small school that served students from kindergarten to grade nine. Many of the families were first- and second-generation immigrants and one third of our student population lived on traditional Treaty 7 territory Tsuut'ina Nation. Now, I work in a small K-6 school that primarily serves students from young middle-class households; many families are white. There is a small population of first- and second-generation immigrant students from various home countries. These contrasting school demographics and contexts provide a different teaching experience, especially when considering cultural diversity differences within and between the settings. However, creating an inclusive environment that acknowledges and values diverse backgrounds is arguably equally important in every school. It offers an opportunity for students to experience various perspectives, values, and norms to promote equity and understanding. This becomes particularly crucial when considering the assessment experience for students and for their families.

My assessment journey has not been easy or short. My confusion surrounding assessment have dated back to my first practicum experiences and educational courses, although I always thought my questions regarding assessment would be eventually answered. I specialized in early childhood education seeking to find the answers I needed as every previous evaluation course focused on older learners. As I progressed on and eventually graduated, I did not feel confident enough to say, 'I just don't get it'. My lack of confidence continued through my first years of teaching, so I followed the status quo incorporating the assessment forms provided to me by other educators, the district, and enforced by the province as well as regrettably using assessment strategies on the fly. I struggled to gain confidence in my assessment skills. Slomp labels these discussions as "it's complicated" (2020, p. 106).

This complexity led me to my graduate studies program where I have focused my efforts on exploring and researching assessment. Throughout my coursework, my efforts were focused on finding assessment opportunities for my students that are grounded in individualized experiences and promote life-long learning (Elmore, 2019). This shift of assessment is a time-consuming, isolating, and at times frustrating. Traditional assessments, which often center around curricular outcomes, benchmarks, and student management, met with resistance when initiating new conversations and proposing changes of practise norms. I frequently had to justify my decisions using theory and experience, as the assessments I used often did not provide scaled or numbered data. It became clear that both my administration and many families were more comfortable when they were provided with quantitative data to drive and facilitate the discussions on a student development. As a result, it was necessary for myself to advocate for the data collected in the classroom, as I believed it could help align goals, address gaps, and assist

with more informed decisions. Despite this, there remains a growing need to ask more questions, discover additional gaps, and challenge the current state of literacy assessment. My goal was to challenge traditional assessment methods to lead to a more collaborative and supportive environment within my own practice.

Many of the assessments enforced by my district and province, specifically writing assessments, are designed to gather information about students to conclude if students are achieving grade level outcomes determined by the new Alberta circular outcomes. Additionally, often what counts as a ‘writing’ is dependent on school or district curriculum, policy, programs, and assessments which then evolve in the classrooms (Kervin et al., 2020). Subsequently, skill-driven, and tightly scripted literacy programs are implemented to address classroom diversity and (perceived) learning *gaps* (Dyson, 2002). This approach utilizes a deficit lens and often excludes other aspects that contribute to a holistic view of writing development in early years. This further contributes to a lack of teachers’ professional understanding of writing development, student learning, and the capacity to use tools to assess with validity, reliability, and fairness.

As I critically looked at various writing assessment, it was evident that numerous assessments lacked a clear construct definition for what is being evaluated. After, researching my own writing ability construct it was clear that I needed to develop an assessment tool that was based on a clear construct model that represents a young student’s writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions that is developmentally appropriate. Bazerman and his collaborators call for more authentic writing assessments that can highlight the “full range and variation of student writing development” (2017, p. 358). By recognizing and assessing the various dimensions that both influence and progress writing ability, educators can foster confidence and enhance the skills of their student writers by

cultivating and promoting a variety of resources (Slomp, 2012) while understanding that these facets are complex and take time to develop (Bazerman et al., 2017).

I have contemplated what the assessment experience would be like in my literacy classroom for both me as the teacher and for my students. Likewise, it is important to consider how the information from the assessment would be communicated to both administration and to families. Hence, this project is an extension of my thinking and my work as I ask, how can I better align my purpose and my assessment practise? I ask this question for my own professional growth and inquiry. My aim is that this exploration influences my personal pedagogy and positively impacts my students educational experience particularly their participation within writing assessment.

This project is organized in five chapters: in chapter one (Introduction to Writing Assessment) I provide my own journey as an educator and establish key themes that underpin my project. In chapter two (Writing Assessment Design and Framework), I will address the design processes that structured my assessment including an articulation of the Theory of Action (ToA) framework that informs my design thinking. As well, I utilize the first three phases of the Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework (IDAF) to ensure effectiveness, fairness, and relevance of assessments across diverse educational contexts. Throughout chapter three (Construct Representation), I will outline the proposed writing construct model based on my extensive research, followed by its application to a grade one level. Then in chapter four (Developed Writing Assessment), I will present the assessment tool as well as provide educators with two exemplars of how to use the assessment for both a conventional and nonconventional writing event. To conclude, chapter five (Reflecting on the Assessment Process) will be a reflection on the consequences and realizations of undergoing this assessment process. This will address

the limitations of this work and the changes on my approach and thinking of this type of assessment work.

Rationale

The negotiation between learning and assessment is challenging as current educational trends argue the importance of early literacy learning as well as an increased pressure to academically assess students – creating an unusual pedagogical tension in the classroom. Currently within early year education, there is a heightened use of assessments, standardization, and levelling without considering the various ways of demonstrating and holding knowledge. As an educator within the midst of curriculum reform, classroom assessment has generally remained the same which Forzani and her colleagues describe as “traditional [and] print-based” that is inconsistent with recommended educational approaches” (2020, p. 352). I am experiencing what Buzzelli describes as a “moral dilemma” where my beliefs regarding learning, teaching, and assessment are not aligning, and now I have been forced to navigate a personal pedagogical pressure (2015, p. 159).

What is measured in these assessments validate what knowledge and skills are valued within the system which consequently becomes the literacies that are taught and further assessed in the classroom (Forzani et al., 2020). Curriculum and assessment reinforce the resources utilized in the writing process determined by the dominant cultural, economic, institutional, and political structures (Luke, 2012). This is exemplified in our province and school districts when assessment resources are provided with the intent to support teachers in their classrooms. The skills and procedures that are assessed are predetermined by educational policies and standards that dictate what is considered necessary for success as a writer within early years. Therefore, with increasing diversity

of students learning how to write, varying in knowledge and skills, teachers tend to focus on the building blocks of literacy that influence of writing development.

The consequence of focusing solely on the easiest-to-measure aspects of writing is that student writers often overlook other crucial factors influencing their abilities.

Quantifiable elements such as spelling, sentence structure, mechanics, and grammar have clear right or wrong answers, making them straightforward to assess—often with rubrics, checklists, or even online tools. Given time constraints, standardized testing pressures, and limited resources, this approach can simplify grading. However, other domains of writing are essential to the development of writing as a process, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and adaptable writing skills that ultimately enhance students' ability to write with purpose. These deeper skills and nuanced dimensions, though harder to quantify, are crucial for real-world writing and critical literacy.

Student writers begin to make meaning that is relevant based on the writing event and then builds capability and proficiency through experience (Bazerman et al., 2017). As students engage in these writing scenarios, they create additional opportunities for growth to broaden their capacity to tackle complex writing tasks, fostering continuous improvement, and adaptability in their writing skills. The hope is that these events enable them to effectively apply their acquired knowledge to various texts they create and across different contexts, demonstrating their evolving writing ability (Ryan, 2014).

Writing skills and proficiency continue to evolve in reaction to social environments, genres, and the shaping of social relationships and identities. Slomp (2012) argues that writers consistently make choices during writing events influenced by genre, subject, and context. Writers use various processes and techniques in making these decisions. The question then arises: how do we support, guide, and assess these choices?

Educator's ability to gain a thorough understanding of the resources that students utilize during their writing process can help them provide targeted and focused feedback as well as guide instruction. To ensure effective support for students' writing development and learning identities, teachers must not only accurately assess students but also strategically plan their programming. Without such careful consideration, mismeasurement can occur, which may lead to instruction that hinders growth rather than promotes it (Bazerman et al., 2017).

Thus, researchers have called for educators to incorporate various assessment forms and differentiated literacy instruction to respond to students' current abilities and support them in the next steps of development (Bazerman et al., 2017). Relatedly, Rowe advocates for assessments that demonstrate "multidimensional portraits of children that can assist teachers in building from children's strengths, while recognizing where instructional nudges are needed to support learning of other facets of writing" (2018, p. 105). This contributes to the idea that teachers need to embed assessment within their instructional context, demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between assessment and instruction, as well as using tools that will assess multiple objectives in various ways. Fundamentally, for assessment to be holistic, there must be multiple forms that "reflect student learning achievement, perspectives and ideologies" (Coles-Ritchie & Charles, 2011, p. 38).

Chapter Two: Writing Assessment Design Framework and Process

Assuming my role as a practitioner-researcher, the challenges I encounter in my classroom shape the questions I ask, which directly influences my practice. My hope is that these questions will continue to drive assessment reform within my own classroom and add to conversations surrounding assessment culture within my profession. Through reflecting on my own experiences and engaging with research within the field, I realized I was participating in my own qualitative inquiry. Consequently, this project was driven by the self-reflection of my pedagogy and my practice as I asked, how do I assess the choices made by first grade student during the writing process to deliver more targeted instruction?

The qualitative approach to my project integrates my own lived experiences and professional insights with foundational research from the field. This method values my own perspective, emphasizes the gaps I encounter, and establishes a clear foundation for my project both as an educator and a researcher (Leavy, 2017). Weaving my personal understandings with scholarly research, creates a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of assessment. Ultimately, this ensures that the strategies and tools developed are rooted in both practical experience and academic theory. This dual foundation allows for the creation of an effective framework that is adaptable to real-world classroom settings. I do find it ironic that much of our assessment forms within schools, even within early years, are based on generating quantitative information. As I am attempting to understand the teacher and student assessment experience, I hope this method allows for a richer perspective that numbers alone may not provide.

My research process began with gathering and analyzing research to develop a writing ability construct model and applying it specifically to a grade one context (chapter

three). This then guided the development the writing assessment resource and the exemplars (chapter four). Although the following section was developed after the assessment resource within my writing process, detailing it next establishes my intention to ensure that the assessment efforts are align with the intended, long-term outcomes and demonstrates a cohesive approach to implementation.

Theory of Action (ToA)

The next section will first briefly describe the method of using the Theory of Action (ToA) framework based on previous educational assessment research (Bennett, 2010; Oliveri et al., 2021; Slomp & Elliot, 2021). Then, there is a visual representation of the ToA model for the scenario-based writing assessment (chapter four). The visual in Figure 1 serves as a guide to map the assessment program elements, hypothesized actions, and their effects. Last, each component of the ToA is discussed, including the rationale behind the connections between the program elements, actions, and consequences. The primary objectives of applying the ToA model is to help achieve the assessment’s desired outcomes.

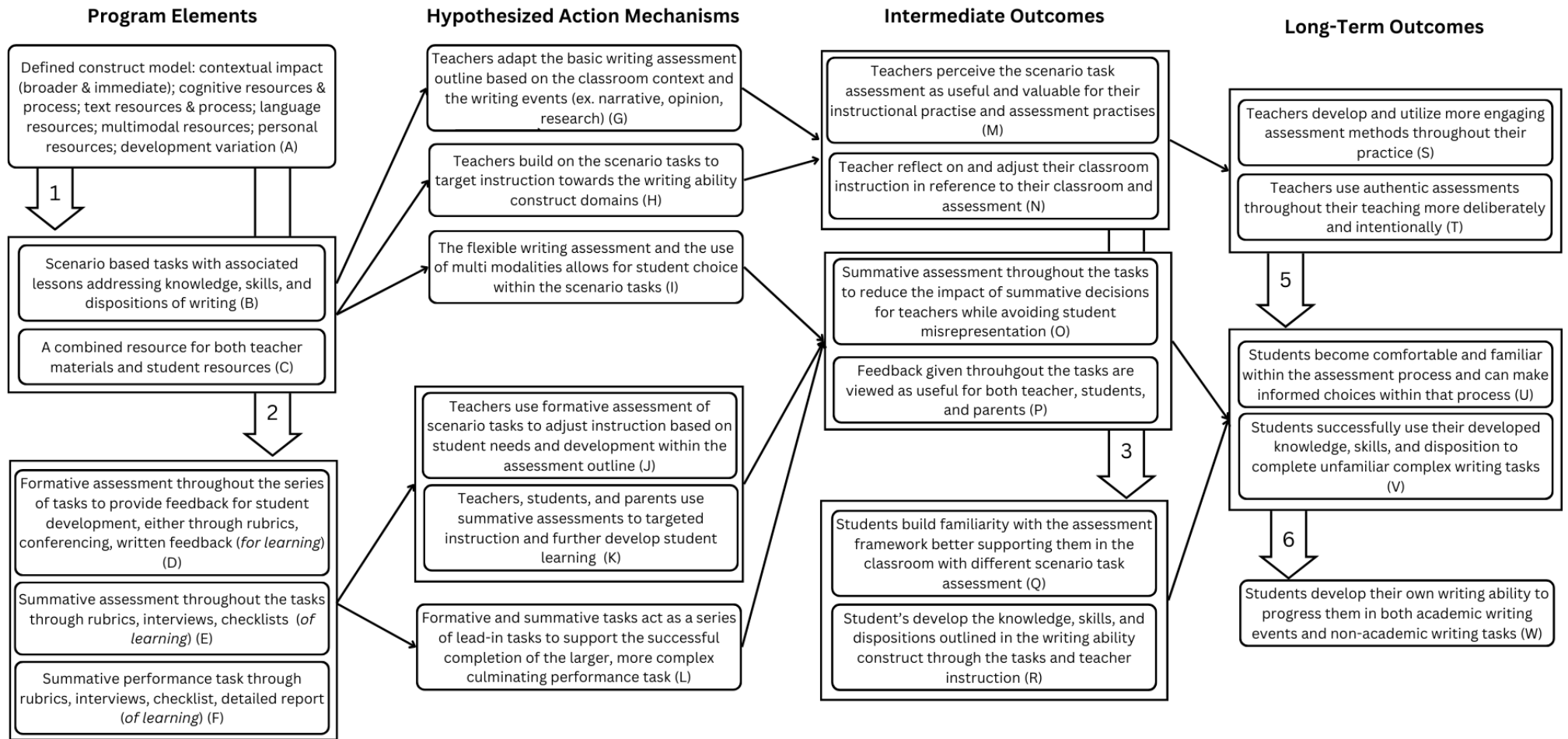
ToA when applied to educational assessment, can help identify the consequences that may occur, both intended and unintended (Oliveri et al., 2021). ToA uses both “graphical and textual modes” to demonstrate the relationship between the elements of an assessment program and the outcomes (Oliveri et al., 2021, p. 93).

The framework for ToA begins with identifying the program elements (Slomp & Elliot, 2021) and providing rationale for the components based on research and theory (Bennett, 2010). Bennett (2010) describes the components as strategically designed elements that work together to generate the intended effects of the assessment program. Next, is hypothesizing the action mechanisms, which include the strategies of

implementation (Slomp & Elliot, 2021) and the “types of decisions, behaviours, and solutions expected from different stakeholders using the scores and other information from the assessment program” (Oliveri et al., 2021, p. 93-94). The action mechanisms establish a connection between the components of the assessment and the impact that it will likely produce (Bennett, 2010). Last, is listing both the intermediate and long-term consequences that may arise for the stakeholders involved (Slomp & Elliot, 2021). The consequences should outline both the intended and unintended impact of the program. The ToA model also includes arrows between the components to demonstrate the connections between columns (Oliveri et al., 2021). Overall, ToA can determine the intended objectives of an assessment program by tracing the pathway through which those envisioned elements will be achieved, identifying cause-effect relationships (Oliveri et al., 2021).

In association to prior ToA models, specifically referencing the ToA developed by Oliveri and her colleagues (2021), Figure 1, designed by the author, overviews the ToA developed for a scenario-based writing assessment. The figure should aid as a roadmap that depicts the program components, the hypothesized action mechanisms, the intermediate outcomes, and the long-term outcomes. The arrows show the casual relationship among the components, both within and between columns.

Figure 1 Theory of Action Visual Model



Program Components

The first column in Figure 1 displays the program components of the scenario-based writing assessment which includes six elements:

- *Defined construct model (A)*: Includes the domains of the established construct model demonstrated in Table 4. The assessment outline and tasks are guided by the construct and the domains which will be measured including, contextual impact (immediate and broader), cognitive resources and process, textual resources and process, language resources, multimodal resources, personal resources, and developmental variation.
- *Scenario-based tasks (B)*: The assessment outline in Table 6 can be adjusted for a writing event to include six tasks reinforced by teacher lessons to support student writing ability and development.
- *Teacher resource and student materials (C)*: The coupled resource will provide the teacher with resources for both instruction and assessment and the necessary materials needed for students.
- *Formative assessment (for learning) (D)*: Throughout the tasks, teachers will gather and provide formative data. The feedback can be delivered through provided rubrics, student conferencing, or written feedback for students and parents.
- *Summative assessment (of learning) (E)*: Additionally, summative assessment opportunities will be used throughout the series of tasks. Summative assessments will include using provided rubrics and checklists as well as participating in student interviews.

- *Summative performance task (of learning) (F)*: The scenario-based tasks are used as scaffolds to facilitate the larger, more complex writing task. This culminating task will be measured based on a provided rubric, checklist, detailed report, or student interview.

Hypothesized Action Mechanisms

The second column in Figure 1 shows the hypothesized action mechanisms, which consist of:

- *Adaptable outline (G)*: It is intended that the outline be flexible to meet the needs of the classroom context, account for student diversity, and adaptable to the intended writing event or genre, such as a narrative, opinion, research, etc. Teachers can either use the provided outlines within the resources or adjust the basic outline to better match their classroom context to support the development of students.
- *Teacher instruction (H)*: Teachers can use the provided resource or develop their own learning materials to target instruction, based on the construct model and their student's developing writing ability.
- *Flexible assessment (I)*: The assessments, both formative and summative, are designed to be open-ended and focused on the use of multimodalities. This is expected to account for student choice within the process to increase engagement and success.
- *Formative assessment (J)*: The formative assessment opportunities within the scenario-based tasks are used to help inform teacher instruction and provide teachers with information on their students writing capabilities and

areas of improvement. Teacher's will develop extended instruction to students based on the insights gained to better focus on particular writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

- *Summative assessment (K)*: The embedded summative assessment tasks will inform development to students and parents. This can be used for more information to target student instruction and further develop student learning for all stakeholders.
- *Performance task (L)*: The previously fulfilled formative and summative tasks alongside with targeted teacher instruction act as a series of lead-in or scaffold events to support the culminating performance task. The tasks are “richly structured assessments that simultaneously measure critical component skills and model effective strategies for applying those skills to complex performance task” (Deane & Song, 2013, p. 99). The performance task can be implemented from the teacher resource or developed by the classroom teacher.

Intermediate and Long-Term Outcomes

The third and fourth column lists the intended intermediate outcomes (M – R) and the intended long-term outcomes (S – W). These effects can be categorized into three general categories of impact: teacher impact, assessment impact, and student impact.

Teacher Impact

In the context of this project, the teacher mentioned in the ToA is myself, serving as an active practitioner in the classroom. Over time, while implementing the scenario-based assessment tasks and progressing through the ToA model, then the term *teacher*

can transition to the teachers that are within my professional circle. Ultimately, the aim is to reform how assessment practises are used within the grade one classroom and to find more authentic methods that were more intentional and deliberate (T). This first begins within my practise and shared through my knowledge and understanding as I reflect, adjust, and transform the use writing assessment (N).

This intended effect drove the system design (Bennett, 2010) to develop and utilize a more engaging assessment practise (S) stemming from understanding the construct model (A) and creating the resource (C). This should lead to participating in a more reflective practice by adjusting instruction and assessment to the classroom context (N), which also functions as a means to re-evaluate the ToA system. The expectation is that the scenario-based assessments are valuable for both instruction and assessment (M) which expectantly improves teacher's professional practice (S) and develop student writing ability (W).

Assessment Impact

It is anticipated that the data collected from the formative and summative assessment would provide useful and comprehensive feedback to promote student development and learning for teachers, students, and parents (P). The information gathered should extend beyond the classroom as the assessment process can engage and empower students and families, fostering a collaborative approach to student development. The expectation is by having more intentional assessments, the data is more beneficial and can lead to better learning opportunities. This is supported by the design of the writing assessment outline (L) and using a variety of assessment techniques with specific purposes (D, E, F). Additionally, by embedding more summative assessment throughout the school year can enhance the teachers' ability to generate a more

comprehensive end-of-term/year report (O); ultimately enhancing their understanding of student knowledge, skills, and dispositions to reduce the risk of student misrepresentation, assessment examples can be found in Figure 10, 11, 15, and 16.

Student Impact

The primary focus was on the impact that a scenario-based assessment program would have on students. Ultimately, the hope is that students successfully use the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the construct model (A) to complete unfamiliar and complex writing tasks (R, V). This should support writing progress in academic, school-based writing events and writing that extends beyond the classroom (W). It is expected that the process will allow students to gain comfortability within the assessment process (Q) and decreasing the pressure of being evaluated. This familiarity utilizing the writing assessment outline for multiple and various writing events within the classroom can also give student's more opportunities to practice and demonstrate their ability to make informed choices within their writing (U). The capacity to adjust the outline (G) so the framework can be used multiple times was intended so students build confidence both while writing and while being assessed.

ToA Relationships

The interactions between elements, action mechanisms, and outcomes in Figure 1 are represented by arrows and numbers. The ToA model begins with a well establish construct model (A) to (1) lead the development of the scenario-based tasks (B) and the combined resource for teacher and student materials (C). As well, (2) the construct model guides the development of the assessment, both formative and summative, throughout the series of tasks (D, E, F). The program elements are then used by teachers (G, H) to assist

with planning and targeted instruction. The development of assessment opportunities will drive how tasks and information are utilized and applied (I, J, K, L).

The teacher's actions will impact their perspective on the scenario-based assessments (M) and teachers will adjust their instruction and assessment accordingly (N). The feedback from assessment is valuable for the stakeholders involved (P) and the data will assist teachers with summative reporting (O). Gradually, (3) the outcomes from teacher experience and the writing assessment outline will influence student's knowledge, skills, and dispositions (R) while gaining more support and certainty within the assessment process (Q).

This distinct approach to assessment can act as a foundation to teachers developing other methods of assessment within their classroom that are more authentic and intentional (S, T) which (5) impacts students utilizing their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to complete writing tasks and within the assessment process (U, V). Ultimately, (6) the long-term goal is to foster the enhancement of students writing ability both in academic and real-life writing events (W).

Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework

Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework (IDAF) is used as a comprehensive approach to developing and evaluating educational programs and assessments. IDAF critically examines the logic laid out by the ToA and is relevant across educational contexts by evaluating the potential outcomes of the assessment design for stakeholders (Slomp & Elliot, 2021). Oliverio and her colleagues describe the processes of IDAF and ToA as acting in corresponding ways to “allow designers, researchers, and developers to consider the array of central aspects of assessment that are needed when designing, developing, and using assessments of complex constructs” (2021, p. 74). Slomp and Elliot

argue that by “integrating the models provides teachers with a tool kit to draw attention of assessment stakeholders to the components and consequences of assessment implementation” (2021, p. 471). Overall, IDAF will tackle the impact assessments are expected to have on student learning as well as the larger educational system while embedding considerations of validity, reliability, and fairness (Slomp, 2016).

The subsequent section will work through the first three phases of IDAF applied to the proposed writing assessment outline. The three phases are influenced by Slomp’s (2016) *An Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework for Ethical Writing Assessment* as well as presentations by Forzani et al. (2024) and Slomp et al. (2024). The three phases address questions pertaining to the assessment focusing on the “rights holders” (Forzani et al., 2024, slide 9), identifying and articulating elements of the program (Slomp, 2016), and considerations regarding the development of assessment programs (Slomp et al., 2024). The tables and corresponding questions presented in the following IDAF phases are influenced by the two presentations and have been revised to meet the requirements of the writing assessment outline.

Typically, the IDAF phases are approached with the lens of the assessment designer, the educators, and the students; however, for the scope of this project the questions in each phase will be addressed as the designer of the assessment applied to my personal classroom context. As the main goal was to impact assessment within my classroom practise, the IDAF is intended to guide the design and evaluation process to ensure that the assessment is effective and aligned with the writing construct. Tables 1, 2, and 3 respectively cover the first three phases of IDAF to help address the wider questions about student development and the educational system within my personal context (Slomp, 2016).

Table 1 Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework Phase 1

Phase 1

Questions	Designer
Who are the stakeholders that have an interest in the assessment?	<p>The stakeholders include the classroom teacher, families and parents, and the students. The teacher is directly involved as I designed, will administer, and analyze the assessments aiming to improve instructional strategies and develop student learning. Students are the primary stakeholders, as the assessments directly impacts their learning experience, provides feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement as well as the information and data collected informs reporting. Additionally, the families and parents look to understand their child's progress and support their educational journey.</p>
Who are the rights-holders who will be impacted by this assessment?	<p>As both the classroom teacher and the designer of the writing assessment, the populations that will be subjected to the assessment must be considered. My school context is a small English elementary school housing just under 400 students in suburban southeast Calgary on traditional Treaty 7 territory. Our K-6 school primarily serves students from young middle-class households; many families are white. There is a small population of first- and second-generation immigrant students from various home countries. As the primary stakeholders, students may be impacted both immediately by the assessment outline and long-term overall. The immediate outcomes of the writing assessment including classroom reporting and grades which hold low stakes in comparison to the long-term outcomes for students (Slomp, 2016). If the scenario-based assessment enhances students' comfortability and confidence within the writing process then it may have the capability to foster student's ability to successfully complete unfamiliar and complex writing tasks (Slomp, 2016).</p> <p>As the teacher, I am also subjected to both immediate and lasting outcomes both having an effect on my pedagogy. Adopting an alternative way of instruction and assessment, both impacts the immediate teaching day and how assessment is viewed long-term. This does not occur without challenges as the approach to instruction and assessment must be adjusted myself and how it is communicated to the families served. Additionally, I may have to justify my shift in pedagogy to school administration and the division I work in. However, it is expected that I “develop a much deeper understanding of the writing construct and cultivate greater independence in their students (Slomp, 2016, p. 9).</p>

<p>What voice will the identified rights-holders have in the design, implementation, and use of this assessment to develop student centered and equity-oriented assessment culture?</p>	<p>The assessment was developed based on significant research focused on student development and learning as the focal point. This established construct model and along with others, were examined in relation to current writing assessment practises within early elementary classrooms. The aim was to create a flexible writing assessment that focused on student learning by emphasizing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for students to succeed in writing both inside and outside of school settings. As a stakeholder within the design of the construct model and the assessment, I have a professional obligation to ensure that writing instruction and remains student-centered and equitable. Central to this is the adaptable nature of the assessment which can accounts for educator’s professional judgement and student voice. Since stakeholders’ experience classroom assessment firsthand, the writing assessment outline was designed to be flexible to meet their needs.</p> <p>By embedding both formative and summative assessments throughout the writing outline, teachers can adjust instruction to better support learners, ensuring continuous feedback and evaluation of student progress. The scaffolding within the writing assessment allows students to practice and acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for the final performance task.</p> <p>Assessment inferences and decisions are informed by the construct model and the consideration of student needs. As the assessment outline is flexible both in time and activities, teachers can adjust their instruction and assessment accordingly. For instance, if students are struggling with a task or concept, educators can adapt within the outline to support understanding. Continuous summative assessments will provide teachers a more holistic and well-rounded viewpoint of what a student’s strengths and next steps. This aids teachers during final reporting as well as facilitates communication with parents about their child’s progress.</p>
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Table 2 Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework Phase 2

Phase 2

Questions	Designer
<p>For each population engaged in this system, what is the hypothesized pathway leading from program elements to envisioned outcomes?</p>	<p>The theory of action pathway was created considering the students, parents, and the teacher. The pathways begin with the program elements which lead to the hypothesized action mechanism impacting both intermediate and long-term outcomes. Refer to Figure 1 to review the articulated ToA.</p>

Table 3 Integrated Design and Appraisal Framework Phase 3

Phase 3

Questions	Designer
<p>How stable is each construct across social, cultural, or racial contexts?</p>	<p>The developed writing construct is based on extensive foundational research. Seemingly, much of the research referenced a variety of student demographics addressing multiple groups, which is relatable to many educators’ current classroom contexts. Many studies focused on minority groups including black and immigrant communities as well as L2 students. The aim is that the developed writing ability construct is stable across diverse contexts. However, social, cultural, and racial norms and identities can influence how the construct can be interpreted or applied. Having <i>Contextual Impact</i> intentionally included within the writing ability construct should help provide stability and flexibility across contexts. Both the broader and immediate impact gives opportunities for students to both question their educational experience and the construct itself as well as include their own perspectives, norms, and values into their composing experiences.</p> <p>Although, the research process revealed that there are large gaps in the current educational research working with other specific sociocultural groups. Based on this smaller scaled research project, the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit population was the least represented within the included studies. Their perspective and lens would be extremely relevant to building the construct model, especially within my context of an elementary teacher in Alberta with curricular and professional obligations to incorporate First Nation, Métis, and Inuit perspectives into our instructional and assessment practises. Thus, it is essential to approach assessment conclusions with caution as there are limitations of the data that the assessment is built on with students of these communities. As an educator and a researcher, I must ensure that I am not overgeneralizing findings and that I remain sensitive to the unique identities and needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students.</p> <p>With teachers decolonizing and shifting their curricular pedagogical practises– assessment also needs to shift as they are deeply integrated with one another. Alongside the need for assessment reform, there is a current increase on educator’s accountability relying on standardized assessments, which “are not capable of assessing non-Eurocentric curriculum content that includes Indigenous peoples’ learning objectives” (Johnston & Claypool, 2010, p. 124-125).</p>
<p>What impact will the design of the assessment have on educational</p>	<p>The design choice of the writing assessment outline was heavily influenced by the rights-holder impacted by the assessment. Primarily, considering their experience and participation within the educational system. The scenario-based tasks should provide many opportunities for students to both practice and demonstrate their</p>

programming and rights-holder outcomes?	<p>knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The teacher can use the assessment experience to better inform their instruction as they have more opportunities to understand the students' abilities. Both instruction and assessment can drive each other when moving through the assessment outline. The multiple forms of assessment and the data it provides gives teachers a more holistic view on their student's development both to inform instruction and communicate progress to families. Integrating multimodal opportunities also influences how students can demonstrate their learning. Slomp (2016) claims educators can reduce the risk of construct irrelevant variance by encompassing multiple modalities. The various forms of feedback are designed for the rights-holders to create a more positive assessment experience so students can better understand their progress, identify areas for improvement, and feel more motivated and engaged in their learning journey.</p>
How do scoring procedures influence educational programming and rights-holder outcomes?	<p>Using a series of tasks throughout the outline diversifies the scoring procedures as there are different approaches to both the formative and summative assessments. This was deliberate for the impact to the rights-holders. Thus, the multiple forms and procedures of assessment can better inform reporting and larger high-stakes decisions. Teachers can avoid misrepresenting their students using the predetermined assessment guide rather than more spontaneous assessment strategies. The various ways of scoring provide feedback that students and educators can use to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This continuous feedback loop supports ongoing learning and development.</p> <p>The reform of scoring procedures aims to drive systematic change as the present educational system is not serving or assessing students. Slomp argues that "no design choice is neutral" and that assessment designers who are aware of this can be more purposeful and unassuming (2016, p. 11). With this in mind, the development and implementation of the writing assessment outline is not neutral; however, the hope is that the variety of scoring procedures and the diverse assessment opportunities will better promote objectivity in evaluation. The scoring procedures can highlight differences in student performance across different social, racial, and cultural contexts, prompting efforts to address inequities and the stability of the writing construct. The use of multiple assessments helps the outline remain adaptable and responsive to the evolving needs of the classroom environment (Bennett, 2010). The goal is to shift the mindset around assessment so both students and educators feel empowered to actively engage within the process.</p>

Chapter Three: Construct Representation

Writing Ability Construct

Learning how to write is a series of “non-linear natural progressions that all children will make” (Kervin et al., 2020, p. 37). Understanding the various factors that influence one’s writing ability enhances teachers’ professional insight, student learning, and proficiency in utilizing assessment tools. The broader construct of writing ability is a set of “knowledge, skills, and dispositions” that are required by all writers to find levels of success (Slomp, 2020, p. 108). However, the progression and development of an individual’s writing ability is individualized and context-dependent thus making an established construct model more challenging (Applebee, 2000).

Rowe emphasizes this notion as she describes student writing ability as “variability [being] the rule rather than the exception” (2018, p. 99). Hence, demonstrating the difficulty to construct a model that represents all writers accurately. Slomp (2012) argues that the challenge in establishing a construct model determining the development of a student’s writing ability stems from its contextual nature, influenced by a magnitude of factors. He also describes writing ability to be a much more complicated and complex construct than just merely knowledge transfer to single composing events. Slomp's argument highlights the need for construct models that are flexible and adaptable to diverse contexts. Such models should consider the dynamic interplay between individual, social, and cultural factors that influence writing development.

Corrigan and Slomp further highlight the importance of having a “robust construct model” specifically to be used as the basis for an assessment design (2021, p. 142). Additionally, Rowe advocates for assessments to be built on “multidimensional portraits of children that can assist teachers in building from children’s strengths, while

recognizing where instructional nudges are needed to support learning of other facets of writing” implying the necessity of a strong writing construct model (2018, p. 105).

Having a strong framework grounded in a substantial foundation of research can assist teachers in making informed choices to influence writing instruction and assessment – a challenging yet crucial task.

Construct Model

The writing construct model presented in this paper is built on the concept that students make informed writing choices while participating in various writing events influenced by their expanding knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Ryan describes this as being “accorded the responsibility of choice” (2014, p. 61). This notion is further supported by Slomp (2012) who clarifies that:

“Writers constantly make choices about what processes they use, what rhetorical strategies they apply, what perspective to take on the subject matter they are addressing, and how they craft their texts to meet the genre expectations of their audience” (p. 87)

These choices that writers make is connected to Siegler (2000) concept of overlapping waves as students simultaneously use both newly acquired and old writing features within their process. While participating in writing events, students transition and navigate between new and more sophisticated writing techniques while continuing to use less sophisticated features (Rowe, 2018). Writers “draw on unique prior experiences and resource to identify, understand, and act in each new event, thereby further developing through the solving of new writing problems” (Bazerman, 2018, p. 328).

Students draw on their large repertoires of understanding and skills that influence their writing choices while navigating the various features and contexts of writing.

Writers adjust their strategies or choices to meet the requirements of the writing task or situation. Writing production is a “meaningful and well-planned action that pushes the boundaries of what one knows and itself becomes the substance of further development” (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 352) My personal perspective aligns with the principle put forth by Bazerman and his colleagues who describe writing as a “multi-dimensional process that continues across a lifespan” (2017, p. 352).

The strategy of the development of this construct model is influenced by the contributions of Corrigan and Slomp (2021). They concentrated on expertise in writing, critically analyzing research to synthesize seven interconnected domains for a construct framework. I undertook a comparable approach, on a smaller scale, that critically analyzed information from various research sources. This process highlighted overarching *resource* themes, that impact writing ability.

To begin, Table 4 is provided as an overview of the *resource* domains that influence writing ability, with each *resource* listed and briefly outlined. Next, there is a visual representation of the construct model, shown in Figure 2. The figure is then explained, detailing its influence and the rationale underlying its design. Following, I give a thorough description of each facet (*resource* theme) within the construct model. Last, Table 5 offers an overall summary of the writing ability construct model focusing on the key elements that represent the knowledge (*know*), skills (*do*), and dispositions (*be*) needed by a writer (Corrigan & Slomp, 2021).

Overall, the construct model was produced and designed to capture what a writer needs to *know*, *do*, and *be* to demonstrate their ability to write and be successful. By diverting attention away from an exclusive literacy focused model of writing and sharing emphasis on other influences helps build a more holistic, lifelong, purposeful, and

experiential perspective on ability. Devitt argues the need to understand writing as a “unified act [and] a complex whole” (1993, p. 573). By generalizing writing to one dimension of progress and ability, we overlook the variation of development of other facets of writing. As well, Rowe cautions using a generalized sequence or path of learning and writing as it risks “describing everyone in general and no one in particular” (2018, p. 100).

Table 4 Overview of the *Resource* Domains of Writing Ability

Construct Domain		Description
Contextual Impact	Broader	The influence of the social, political, economic, historical, and cultural factors shaping the systems and institutions that writer's engage in.
	Immediate	The influence of a writer's personal experience, background knowledge, cultural resources, as well as educational, social, and media norms.
Cognitive Resources and Process		The influence of the cognitive processes of a writer on their writing ability encompassing several components like planning, translating, and reviewing (Flower & Hayes, 1981). As well as the impact of both the working and long-term memory.
Text Resources and Process		The influence of distinctive textual elements such as genre, format, structure, organization, and vocabulary on writing proficiency.
Language Resources		The influence of a writer's language repertoire, such as their oral language, writing voice or style, community discourse, as well as including translanguaging opportunities (Garcia et al., 2017).
Multimodal Resources		The influence of multimodal communicative systems on a writer's ability to represent meaning in different forms and expressions including visual, audio, and other multimodal meanings.
Personal Resources		The influence of a writer's personal resources, such as their motivation, engagement, participation, goal setting, perseverance, and their belief and value system on their writing ability.
Development Variation		The concept that writing progression and development is individualized and complex demonstrating the non-linear characteristics of ability. This also includes the multifaceted nature of writing experience as students engage with both old and new writing resources, skills, knowledge, and content.

Figure 2 Construct Model Visualization

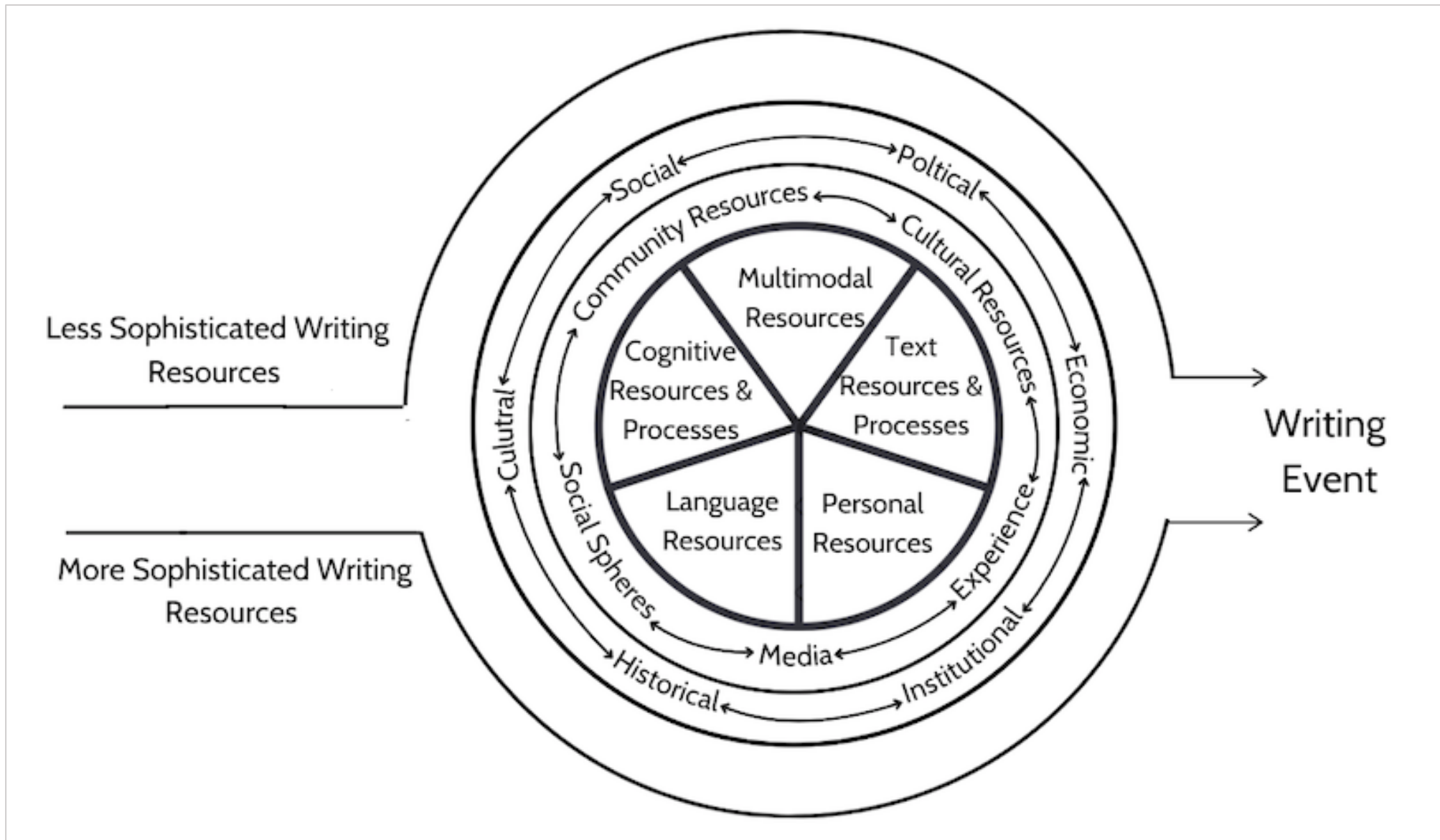


Figure 2 presents a visual representation of the construct model, I developed by combining multiple viewpoints from various research, both foundational and contemporary, to create a comprehensive framework. The two arrows on the outside of the main model represents the thought process and decisions that student's make while writing based on their understanding, knowledge, and skills. Rowe (2018) found that writers utilize a diverse range of writing elements, encompassing both less sophisticated, older features and advanced, newer resources – the resources a writer has access too will vary depending on the writer's stage of progress. These decisions, though, are impacted by the larger construct of writing ability represented within the middle circle. These two arrows are to symbolize both the non-linear progress of writing development and how these writing resources engage with the whole system during a composing event. This affects the various processes and techniques that writers choose that impact their level of ability and success.

The outer two circles are influenced by Graham's (2018) work on writing communities addressing the elements that influence how context affects capability. The outer most ring represents the broader contextual influences on writing and the second ring is the more immediate contextual influences. Each element within the two rings are connected by two-sided arrows representing the continual relationship between factors.

The inner most circle or wheel is made up of five portions representing the other impacts of writing ability, each slice building the full circle, representing a holistic view. These pieces all interact and influence one another within the circle, each bordering an essential component to ability and each intersecting in the middle. The wheel design is to demonstrate active movement, interactions and change between/within each portion

demonstrating that writing events are “the interplay between the person, the context, and the developmental product” (Ryan, 2014, p. 72). This interplay can occur through adjusting, asking questions, talking, rewriting, re-envisioning, talking, reimagining as the writing process is never stagnant.

Contextual Impact – Broader

Learning and literacy are shaped by power relations and have consequences for a writer’s identity. The “inequalities in our society - the economic and social injustices inscribed in race, ethnic, gender relations, relation that privilege the few and discriminate against many” shape the learning and writing experience (Berlin, 1992, p. 26). Learners are “engaging in resistance and negotiation with the cultural codes” representing the interests of the privilege system while simultaneously misrepresenting or omitting others (Berlin, 1992, p. 27). These embedded systems encourage certain means and discourage others, thus reflecting the version of culture, history, experience, and daily life that would be deemed as *official* (Luke, 2011).

The interests of these power structures impact the resources utilized by writers as they determine what *counts* as writing. These interests are dependent on school or district curriculum, policy, programs, and which then evolve in the classrooms (Luke, 2011; Kervin et al., 2020). Bazerman and his colleagues (2017) argue that the curriculum significantly shapes the development of writing skills. As “students are likely to learn those genres, skills, and strategies that they experience in school and less likely to learn those that are ignored or rejected” (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 356). Often, these writing skills and interests are based on the institutionalized pressures driven by assessments, such as standardized and high-stake testing. These types of prescribed assessments are

self-reinforcing, meaning the data from the measurement and testing is used to promote or justify more measurement and testing of writing (Elmore, 2019).

The shared significance of writing contributes to and sustains the pre-existing and deeply ingrained systems of society. Brandt (1986) explains that a writer's process reflects and embodies the resources and restrictions of their context and can help in providing evidence on how a writer is making decisions. However, "writing is inequitably distributed across populations" due to access, social practices, and purpose (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 355). So, learning and teaching how to write without including a critical awareness and contextual impact would be "detrimental to the writer and / or to those he or she write to, for and about" (Ivanič, 2004, p. 238).

Contextual Impact –Immediate

Writing as a practice involves the dynamic and socially constructed relationship between the writer and the context (Brandt, 1986; Kervin et al., 2020). Contexts are activities, rhetorical situations, and discourse communities that shape writing both in and beyond school and work settings (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Students use writing to demonstrate their world connecting their personal experiences, background knowledge, and the classroom (Kissel, 2008; Luke, 2011). A writer's sociocultural experience directly influences their writing ability and how they comprehend a writing event as they "stretch, re-organize, and rearticulate their everyday cultural resources (and appropriate new ones)" (Dyson, 2002, p. 546). Their personal and cultural practices effect their entry into literacy events, particularly academic composing, as these practises help create a common ground of understanding. Writers can draw from their everyday knowledge, materials, forms, and practises to develop and construct a more extensive and functional understanding of the written form (Dyson, 2003). For instance, Dyson (2002) found that

students were using influences of music to meet the requirements of a writing event. Everyday knowledge, words, and practises can help frame new literacy content and skills and can transferred between different contexts (Dyson, 2002; Kim et al., 2011). This connects to Moll and colleagues' term "funds of knowledge" to describe these specific capabilities, understandings, and skills that students acquire from their home and community (1992, p. 133). By using student's languages, thinking, and reasoning as resources not only provides educational connections but increases engagement and connection to the writing tasks and one's ability to be successful (Moll et al., 1992).

The immediate contextual influences on the development of writing are multifaceted and incorporates personal, educational, cultural, social, and media norms as the writer shares meaning within their context of human activity (Brandt, 1986). A writers set of "experiences, knowledge, dispositions and identities are shaped by socioeconomic, sociocultural, and sociolinguistic factors" (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022, Literature Review section). This collaboration between a writer's various worlds of understanding and their experiences influences the framework for writing ability. According to Brandt (1986), the interaction between the writer's context and the creation of text serves as both guiding and limiting factors. The process of writing is connected to the social reality which frames information for both writers and readers "with resources of written language that we have available" (Brandt, 1986, p. 152). This demonstrates their own personal comprehension of the world and this integration of knowledges and skills from their lives in and outside of the classroom (Kissel, 2008).

Cognitive Resources & Processes

Cognitive resources and process are vital components for writing proficiency which vary based on the skills needed at different stages of writing complexity (Decker et

al., 2016; Graham, 2018). The process of writing presents challenges as it “involves the execution and coordination of a variety of processes and skills” (Graham, 2018, p. 272). Flower and Hayes introduce three components of the writing process “planning, translating and reviewing” intending to be more dynamic as it does not adhere to a sequential approach to writing (1981, p. 369). These processes are controlled by the writer’s monitor which “functions as a writing strategist which determines when the writer moves from one process to the next” for example, from planning to translating and back to planning if needed (Flower & Hayes, 1981, p. 374). Flower and Hayes (1981) deem these components as dynamic as planning, translating, and reviewing can occur at any stage of the writing process. They emphasize the flexibility of a writer’s approach to a given writing event highlighting that planning, translating, and reviewing tasks are inherently recursive or that the components are embedded within other components, often, done unconsciously of the writer. In his research, Graham (2018) describes similar actions as executive control processes involving setting intentions, planning, monitoring, and reacting. He goes on to describe that writers have “the same basic cognitive architecture (long-term memory, control mechanisms, and production processes)”.

Gardner depicts writers “draw[ing] on long-term memory to generate ideas, plan text, transcribe and review” (2018, p. 14). Long-term memory holds information about the writing topic, audience, various writing plans and rhetorical representation (Flower & Hayes, 1981). It’s influence within composing process does entail certain burdens as Flower and Hayes (1981) depict long-term memory as complex:

“Long-term memory is a relatively stable entity and has its own internal organization of information. The problem with long-term memory is, first, getting things out of it - that is, finding the cue that will let you retrieve a network of

useful knowledge. The second problem for a writer is usually reorganizing or adapting that information to fit the demands of the rhetorical problem” (p. 371).

The knowledge and information from the long-term memory and information received through the external environment is processed within the working memory to utilize and respond to during the writing process (Graham, 2018). Translation involves converting ideas into “linguistic representations” using the working memory while “transcription involves translating those representations in working memory into written symbols on the printed page” (Abbott & Berninger, 1993, p. 480). Gardner (2018) states that the more knowledgeable and skilled the writer, for example one’s vocabulary, grammar and/or spelling knowledge, then the less toll on the working memory. If the task of translating is overwhelmed by the working memory it can interfere with the planning and reviewing process of composing (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

Text Resources & Processes

The conventions of writing and the specific features of texts should be altered based on different genres, contexts, audiences, and purpose as they demand a different criterion. Writers learn to generate a message and influence their audience by making choices of “text structure, sentence structure, grammatical features, and vocabulary” (Mackenzie et al., 2015, p. 569).

Gardner describes genres as being “socially constructed modes of textual meaning designed for specific social purposes” (2018, p. 14). Genres, overall, help writers respond appropriately; however, genre and the writing context are so interconnected that selecting a specific genre can narrow opportunities for composing and its purpose, especially if the genre is expected to have a strict method or structure (Devitt, 1993). Different genres have specific features of their form as they are socially constructed, negotiated, and

context specific (Gardner, 2018). Genre awareness is understanding an audience and purpose while using appropriate content, organization, and approaches (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022).

To just merely understand and compose specific genres and its set of forms overlooks the role of content and context. To classify writing products to a specific genre and adhere to those rules may inhibit the writing process (Devitt, 1993). Though, Devitt does explain that genre encompasses “purpose, participants, and themes” so writers can make informed decision based on the rhetorical and social dimensions (1993, p. 575). To be a successful writer, one must fully recognize the context, goals, and values of the event and use genres to carry out the writing goal of their respective discourse community (Beaufort, 2000). These goals of a community influence the “communicative purpose, the modes of communication, the norms for genres, and the writing roles” (Beaufort, 2000, p. 195). Writers must criticize genre forms and understand the flexibility within and between genres to effectively choose strategies to convey meaning (Corrigan & Slomp, 2021) as genre’s are not fixed but responsive to the purpose of the writer and audience (Beaufort, 2000).

Simply, organization enhances clarity and helps prioritize written ideas (Mackenzie et al., 2015). According to Flower and Hayes (1981), organizing ideas helps writers make meaning by the act of grouping ideas together and discovering new ones. Writers must create organized text, so meaning can be communicated effectively and clearly. This is accomplished through the knowledge of grammar, sentence structure, and sentence types as well deciding upon how ideas are presented, developed, and connected within a piece of writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Mackenzie et al., 2015). The process and products of writing can exist in various forms and organizations (Kervin et al., 2020).

Writing proficiency includes having the ability to clearly express ideas in a sentence using specific vocabulary and phrases (Mackenzie et al., 2015). Decker and his colleagues (2016) argue that a writer's vocabulary and word choice demonstrate higher levels of thinking when composing written text. Learning and applying a wide and varied vocabulary while composing helps to effectively convey meaning. Vocabulary choices are made based on writer's purpose or audience and can influence the development of ideas and engagement of readers (Mackenzie et al., 2015). This process is having the understanding that vocabulary choice should be tailored to suit the requirements for specific types of texts (Graham, 2018). Writers should use a range of vocabulary to add details to their writing including word choices that are topic specific, or use of academic, descriptive, and expressive language.

Language Resources

Berninger and Abbott (2010) determined that oral expression and language facets were correlated and impacted ones written expression. They claim that the development of oral language skills contributes to the emergence of written language. As a writer "master's more and more functions of language, [their] meaning potential broadens with respects to [their] options for expression" (Brandt, 1986, p. 145). The interactions between and within the oral and written language system play a role in the composition of written texts; hence, the growth of language skills leads to greater writing ability (Abbott & Berninger, 1993). Writers are then presented an expanding range of language resources, highlighting "language [as] a powerful communicative tool" capable of yielding both intended and unintended consequences (Ryan, 2014, p. 61).

Writers cultivate the skill of maneuvering through various language systems to express their inner thoughts and ideas to the external world (Berninger & Abbott, 2010).

According to Gardner, “language is the lens through which we see the world and empowers pupils to take control of language in order to refocus how the world is” (2018, p. 16). This holds significance for bilingual and multilingual individuals, as they should be encouraged to draw from and use their full language repertoire to communicate while writing effectively (Garcia et al., 2017). Bilingual and multilingual writers can leverage language as asset, using all language skills while writing as they “can switch their languages, discourses, and identities” based on the context or writing event (Ryan, 2014, p. 61).

Gardner elaborates on writing as a “process of learning about the world and what one think about the world as it is about communicating meaning” (2018, p. 12). The use of language in writing presents a “unique personal style that gives the reader a sense of who the author is” (Humphrey et al., 2014, p. 111). A writer's identity, which encompasses their unique voice expressed through writing, is shaped by both personal and academic literacy experiences (Gardner, 2018). Writers learn to use their own linguistic resources and develop an “awareness of how language is used to construct and to represent the world” (Gardner, 2018, p. 16). Humphrey and collaborators (2014) speak to having an “authorial voice” while composing which emphasizes the importance of not only what you say but how you say it. Once established, this voice can be adjusted and modified to suit the writing event and help be adaptable to tailor to the audience and articulate ideas, perspectives, opinions and arguments (Humphrey et al., 2014).

Multimodal Resources

While developing writing skills, students *negotiate* across and between communicative systems (“mathematics, art, music, movement, and drama”) to develop their thinking, communication, and literacy (Baghban, 2007, p. 24). Currently, texts and

methods of communication are growing increasingly complex through the integration of multimodal resources. Due to the ever-changing norm of composing, the characterization of writing development and skills should include multimodal means. This would encompass one's ability to "create, comprehend, and use written, visual, aural and multimodal texts" in our current society (Mackenzie & Veresov, 2013, p. 28). According to The New London Group (1996), multiple ways of representing meaning is to be used an asset as it prepares students to the demands of mainstream norms. A writer who successfully utilizes multimodal resources while composing can enrich a reader's experience (Hull & Nelson, 2005).

Understanding that words can be integrated with "images, sound, music and movement" will increase meaning of texts and contribute to a different degree of significance (Hull & Nelson, 2005, p. 224). By solely focusing on the written form within the classroom, we risk interrupting developing writing ability or potentially the loss of interest in writing (Mackenzie & Veresov, 2013). The New London Group (1996) describe literacy as not being constrained by just the written form but describes the meaning making process as actively using resources from multiple modes of representation. As the shift progresses the understanding of "what counts as texts and what constitutes reading and writing are changing" (Hull & Nelson, 2005, p. 224).

The use of visual, oral, technology, and other resources within writing events can allow writers to demonstrate one's influences, knowledge, and skills more clearly displaying a deeper comprehension of one's capability to convey meaning (Kissel, 2008). This restructuring of the writing process and one's ability to represent meaning across diverse forms leads to more complex writer ability while being flexible between modes to convey different messages (Hull & Nelson, 2005; The New London Group, 1996).

Personal Resources

Students position themselves in the system of writing with the knowledge set they have and “use the task as a means of learning to solve the varied problems or challenges” (Dyson, 2002, p. 561). Personal resources act as a driving force of writing ability as it impacts initiation, engagement, persistence, and a willingness to improve. Flower and Hayes (1980) claim that writers build and find a problem for themselves to then navigate the problem-solving process to discover new understandings and ideas. This process requires agency, exploration, creativity, participation, and motivation but it also can be facilitated and fostered during positive composing experiences. This allows students space to feel comfortable in their ideas as well as inspire of love for writing (Kissel, 2008).

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) describe the three types of “[p]erson characteristics” to be influential in the trajectory of an individual development. First, dispositions which are internal qualities that “set proximal processes in motion” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007, p. 795) and can either foster or interfere with learning (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). These qualities could be impulsiveness, distractibility, apathy, lack of interest, curiosity, and/or readiness (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). Next, “resources of ability, experience, knowledge and skills” that can operate either as a benefit or hindrance (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007, p. 796). Last, demand characteristics which are observable features of a person that elicit a reaction from the social environment which can either disrupt or facilitate their interactions within that environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). In research conducted by Driscoll and Zhang (2022) one’s person characteristics, either generative or disruptive, have positive or negative impacts on writing development. They determined that there is a significant

influence between developmental factors and the roles of personal characteristics, which play a contributing role in influencing and expressing those factors (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Writers must leverage their dispositions, resources, and demands as tools to navigate the complex act of writing, utilizing these elements to enhance their skills, adapt to various contexts, and effectively communicate meaning.

Writers set themselves goals that are used to develop texts, progress, and expand their own personal sense of authorship developing their own belief on success and identity (Graham, 2018). A writer's goals during the writing process plays a crucial role in moving forward, Flower and Hayes (1980) argue that a *good* writers' goals can be broken up into four groups: affecting the reader, representing oneself, create meaning, and using the conventions of writing. Goals established by the writer can be short-term or long-term – either recognizing the goal of a writing product or goals throughout the composing process. Writing is a “goal-directed thinking process” shaped by a framework of higher (long) and lower (short) level goals (Flower & Hayes, 1981, p. 366). These goals assist the writer in to making decisions, generating new ideas, and elaborating “not only in more breath, but in depth” (Flower & Hayes, 1980, p. 30). Goal setting supports writers in developing a sense of purpose while writers are readjusting their goals and creating new ones based on their development (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

Metacognition is having an awareness of one's own characteristics and the actions to leverage their own characteristics (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Teaching and using metacognitive strategies can help writers recognize and address their personal characteristics that can impede their writing progress (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Camp (2012) argues that writing development must include metacognitive data to provide a more holistic description of the progress of a writer.

Developmental Variation

Writers' progression is individualized and complex as students are writing or creating in a way that represents their own developmental process (Mackenzie et al., 2015; Oken-Wright, 1998). Variation exists as there are no "natural progressions that all children will make when learning to write" (Kervin et al., 2020, p. 37). Therefore, writing development does not follow a step-by-step manner but is a series of negotiations, turns, progression/regression as students are engaging within the process (Abbott & Berninger, 1993). Rowe (2018) found that progress in writing shows patterns of variability among writers and within individual writers themselves. This includes differences of starting points, timing of progress, and overall pacing between and within more and less sophisticated writing features. Writers develop at different rates and are on different learning paths – school curriculum both operational and official can also contribute to this diversity as "school does not level the playing field" (Murphy & Smith, 2018, p. 210).

Understanding the multi-dimensional nature of writing ability, as shown within the construct model, and recognizing that variation of writing is the norm not the exception the nature of writing ability cannot be solely judge on a single dimension of writing (Rowe, 2018; Camp 2012). The process is individualized and complex (Dyson, 2002) and student learning about writing features and their application is uniquely patterned and does not follow a particular sequence (Rowe, 2018).

Siegler discusses the overlapping wave theory proposing that learning occurs when a new more effective way of thinking or doing is acquired as learners use "increasingly fast, accurate, and effortless execution of strategies" to replace older and less effective ways (2000, p. 29). These strategies may overlap and compete, as student's problem solve and learn demonstrating flexibility and adaptability (Siegler, 2000). Rowe

(2018) writing research parallels this theory as students negotiated back and forth between writing skills, knowledges and strategies that were more and less advanced. Thus, variability occurred between students but also when writers simultaneously used more and less sophisticated writing strategies during a single writing event demonstrating a range in their repertoires.

Table 5 Summary of Developed Writing Ability Construct Model

Construct Domain		Knowledge <i>Know</i>	Skills <i>Do</i>	Disposition <i>Be</i>	Empirical Support
Contextual Impact	Broader	-Know the broader social, economic, historical, and political factors that shape writing and the “patterns of privileging among them” (Ivanič, 2004, p. 238) -Understand that there are consequences to writing as it shapes perspectives, influences attitudes, and can either reinforce or challenge societal norms and power structures.	-Use critical awareness and thinking skills when writing and consuming texts in relation to power structures.	-Recognize and question the social, political, cultural, and historical factors that perpetuates both marginalization and privilege. -Aware of the broader social, economic, political goals that writing can fulfill for individuals and larger institution.	Berlin, 1992; Bazerman et al., 2017; Camp, 2012; Dyson, 2002; Ivanič, 2004; Kervin et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2011; Luke, 2012; Murphy & Smith, 2018
	Immediate	-Understand your own personal value systems, experiences, and community practices.	- Create written work motivated by own cultural resources, social spheres identities, experiences, practices, background knowledge, and new knowledge.	-Writing is a participatory, collaborative activity -Transfer skills, knowledge, and experiences between different contexts.	
Cognitive Resources and Process		-Know the strategies to use for the writing processes. -Know strategies to utilize long term memory and working	-Use strategies during planning, translating, and reviewing processes while composing.	-Recognize that writing require different cognitive skills working simultaneously.	Flower & Hayes, 1980; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Gardner, 2018; Graham, 2018

	memory within the writing process.	-Allow for flexibility between and within writing processes.	-Be reflective during the writing process.	
Text Resources and Process	-Understand different genres, contexts, audience, and purpose demands a different set of criteria. -Know how organization, format, structure, and word choice can impact the meaning and effectiveness of written text.	-Construct a written text using strategies and knowledge of genre, organization, format, and structure. -Deliberately select words that can impact the message, argument, or stance.	-Aware of ability to create a product that is purposeful and has meaning. -Recognize that process of text creation is between person, product, and context.	Camp, 2012; Devitt, 1993; Graham, 2018; Kim et al., 2011; Mackenzie et al., 2015
Language Resources	-Know language is a powerful tool used for communication of ideas, opinion, thoughts and can have consequences, both intended and unintended.	-Draw upon entire linguistic resources to effectively communicate meaning and express complex ideas (translanguaging).	-Manage and allocate linguistic elements and tools from language repertoire during writing events.	Brandt, 1986; Gardner, 2018; Garcia et al., 2018; Humphrey et al., 2014; Ryan, 2014
Multimodal Resources	-Know stories, ideas, understandings, and knowledge can be represented in many different forms. -Know that different modes can convey different messages or meanings.	-Apply various knowledge system to develop their thinking and composing. -Create, comprehend, and share multimodal texts.	-Written, visual, oral construction can be used as a form of self-expression and literacy ability. -Different modes can convey specific tones, attitudes, mindset, or stance.	Baghban, 2007; Dyson, 2002; Hull & Nelson, 2005; Kissel, 2008; The New London Group, 1996

<p>Personal Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Know personal belief on success, goals, and writers' identity. - Know that writing takes time, support, and practice. -Know your own interpretations, experiences, and purpose when writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use challenges as an opportunity to learn and develop. -Use beliefs, motivations, and interests alongside the expectations of the contexts to produce writing. -Set personal and realistic goals to develop texts and progress learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You are a <i>good</i> writer and identifying as a writer is important. Be proud of what you can create. -Recognize that learning to write takes time, support, and practice. 	<p>Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Camp, 2012; Driscoll & Zhang, 2022; Dyson, 2002; Flower & Hayes, 1980; Graham, 2018; Ryan, 2014</p>
<p>Development Variation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Know there is no natural progression of writing development and systems are working consequently. -Know that writing is done and progresses in own way. One's process will look differently than another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use both new (more sophisticated) and old (less sophisticated) writing strategies within writing events. -Engage and collaborate with others (peers and adults) in drawing, talking, adjusting, writing, and asking questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Appreciate that progression in writing is individualized, complex, and never in a linear process. -Appreciate learning as a process. Writing can influence learning and learning can influence writing 	<p>Abbott & Berninger, 1993; Bazerman et al., 2017; Dyson, 2002; Graham, 2018; Kervin et al., 2020; Mackenzie et al., 2015; Rowe, 2018</p>

Writing Ability Construct Applied to First Grade

When considering early childhood writing experiences, educators must reflect on what the goal of teaching and assessing writing in early years is. Early year teachers tend to focus on the building blocks of literacy skills that influence writing ability. Consequently, when student writing is progressing or remains stagnant, literacy education, mostly phonological awareness, drives instruction based on a student's perceived abilities. This approach, one of a standardized, teachable set of skills and practises, excludes the other aspects that contribute to a holistic view of what influences writing ability. Adair stresses that the "single indicator systems focus[es] attention on only one marker of progress or success" and she explains how instructional time is then heavily influenced to improve that single marker (2014, p. 233). Thus, there is an importance to have a holistic view of student writing to understand a student's strength to build on their capability as well as the area's where students need support (Rowe, 2018). By diverting attention away from an exclusive literacy focused writing ability model and sharing emphasis on other aspects outlined in the construct model will help build a more holistic, lifelong, and purposeful writing experiences.

In accordance with arguments presented by Slomp (2012), I aim to display how the proposed construct model can flexibly adapt to a specific context. Writing tasks can transform an individual's roles and meanings in life as different forms of development emerge in various ways and at different times (Bazerman, 2018). Therefore, the following section will apply the writing ability construct model to a grade one context. This entails an examination of how the facets or *resources* of writing ability can be adjusted to meet the developmental needs and learning abilities of young writers. Each domain will include examples or observations drawn from my experience as a grade one teacher in

Alberta. In the examples shared, any student name used is a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. My objective is for the exemplars to underscore how the domain can influence or shape the ability and development of a young writer.

Contextual Impact – Broader

All students need a curriculum that is sensitive to their “individual variations in strength, abilities, interests, backgrounds, [and] culture” (Murphy & Smith, 2018, p. 211). Young students “[writing] development is shaped by emergent literacy curriculum” (Rowe, 2018, p. 103). The curriculum sets the “norms and expectations of the writing classroom to produce particular performances and products in writing” (Ryan, 2018, p. 72).

In 2022, Alberta Education implemented a new English Language Arts curriculum in K-3 classrooms province wide. Alberta Education claimed that the newly developed “English language arts and literature curriculum provides solid foundations in language, literacy, and literature that will support Alberta’s students in achieving personal and academic goals” (2022, p. 1). The curricular writing focus is on the development of student ability to “communicate effectively in a variety of contexts, to inform, persuade, or entertain” (Alberta Education, 2022, p. 1). Amid curricular changes, there is a continued reliance and endorsement of conventional products of writing being reinforced to develop writing skills to achieve grade level outcomes determined by the Alberta curriculum. A first-grade student’s writing instruction and assessment are limited to the curriculum objectives, as well as the resources endorsed by the school district in which they are enrolled. These larger decisions, outside of the classroom teacher, would influence the “norms and expectations of the writing classroom to produce particular performances and products in writing” (Ryan, 2018, p. 72). Subsequently, skill-driven,

and tightly scripted literacy programs are implemented to address classroom diversity and (perceived) learning *gaps* (Dyson, 2002) demonstrating that writing, mostly labelled as literacy development, is driven by “layers of decisions, choice, and resources which have complex histories beyond the individual teacher” (Kervin et al., 2020, p. 20).

Additional to curricular changes, Alberta Education enacted a new *Teaching Quality Standard (TQS)* in 2020 (amended in 2023). A significant change was the introduction of *TQS 5* which outlines that “a teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students” (2023, p. 5). Our current system is built on Eurocentric, colonial ideals that disvalues the whole learner, the connection to the land, and a student's history – which impacts the patterns of writing development occurring in different social and cultural contexts (Rowe, 2018). This relates to the question of what *counts* as writing as there has been a prioritization of truth and knowledge from privileged perspectives. Battise calls for education to “nourish the learning spirit” by embedding practises that are holistic, lifelong, purposeful, experiential, communal and spiritual countering the over-emphasized use of Westernized customs (2013, p. 181). This historical, social, and cultural educational landscape impacts the writing instruction, development of a writer's resources and their participation within composing events (Dyson, 2002).

Contextual Impact – Immediate

Young students use their “writing to show their understanding of their world, and their written texts display integration of various influences” (Kissel, 2008, p. 27). More often beginning writers rely on “knowledge telling” which uses the cues from the writing event to “retrieve relevant information for potential inclusion in the text” (McCutchen, 2011, p. 4). Dyson (2002) describes this process as students bringing what they feel as

relevant to help frame school composing tasks. This influences “writers [to] make decision in different ways for different reasons in different contexts” (Ryan, 2014, p. 63). Using a personal lens or frame of reference assists young writers to make sense of new content, written forms, and tools (Dyson, 2002).

The cultural continuity between home, school, and community helps build a bridge for children to make stronger connections, thus resulting in deeper understanding. Rowe describes writing as a “collaborative process occurring between people as they negotiate authoring processes, meaning, and textual forms during their everyday activities” (2018, p. 57). These activities include one’s social spheres, community resources, cultural resources, experiences, and media influences included in the second ring in Figure 2. The way students experience writing and the words that they select is influenced and shaped by the world around them (Dyson, 2002). The experiences and the identities of students outside of the classroom are crucial in understanding their writing development (Sternglass, 1997).

In Kissel’s (2008) observations of a pre-K classroom, a student added *Shrek* to a family portrait. Kissel labels *Shrek* as a “character, from a popular, animated children's film, had been a hot topic of conversation among the children” (2008, p. 30). Incorporating media norms into their writing is common among students, and often, early elementary teachers can readily identify these media trends in student work. Influences such as *Frozen*, *Wednesday*, and *Minions* along with seasonal stories and characters like *Elf on the Shelf*, leprechauns, and the tooth fairy are recent notable elements. A first-grade student, Ryan, was struggling to remember his letters and corresponding sounds. Despite this, when given a phoneme, Ryan could name a known word that started with that given sound. A specialized alphabet chart was created with Ryan to make connections between

these phonemes, known words, and letter names. For instance, in the *B* square instead of the standard picture of *bear*, *bike*, or *bird*, Nate chose *Bowser*, the *Mario Brothers* villain.

Writing events “must begin with the writer situated in personal and social experience” as writers are expressing ideas, values, and narratives that are shaped by their engagement with the world around them. (Gardner, 2018, p. 12). Dyson (2002) found that students were incorporating shared phrases or communal slangs while they were composing. Student writers incorporate their “important cultural life space, with identities, agendas, and practices informed by their cultural participation with each other and with wider institutions and communities” (Dyson, 2002, p. 571).

After the read aloud of *Our Table* written and illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds (2021), the class discussed the important times and celebrations that families would gather together and eat. In their writing, students were asked to write about their celebration, the food that they eat, and something special about that celebration to their family. Students were invited to share amongst the class if they wished. Justin, a more reserved student, told the class about his family’s celebration of Lunar New Year. He shared his writing and picture that showed the gathering, traditions, words, customs, and food. Many of the other grade one students made connections to celebrating New Year’s Eve; however, Justin was able to give examples on how the two celebrations were different. The student then became infatuated with their Lunar New Year animal, lucky colours, and lucky items. By incorporating his own personal and cultural life within his writing, Justin demonstrated how he can build meaning and connection during writing events as well as an opportunity to share with his peers.

Cognitive Resources & Processes

A collection of writing skills such as spelling, fine motor skills, phonological awareness, and orthographic information, are needed and developed during various developmental stages (Decker et al., 2016). Writing, especially during early composing events, is challenging because it “involves the execution and coordination of a variety of process and skills” and the cognitive mechanisms utilized for writing are subject to constraints (Graham, 2018, p. 272). Flower and Hayes (1981) explain that young writers overload their short-term memory as they navigate the processes of basic literacy skills which have yet to become automatic. If a writer is highly focused on the formation of letters, spelling, grammar, or other foundational skills (translation process) it may interfere with articulating what a writer wants to say or their planning process (Flowers & Hayes, 1981).

The development of writing ability often follows a series of interconnected stages transitioning between scribbles, letter-like forms, writing a string of letters, inventive spelling using phonological awareness and developing orthographic spelling (Sulzby & Teale, 1985). Orthographic spelling is when writers apply their knowledge of the “set of linguistic patterns and rules for sound-symbol relationships and sentence construction” to convey their messages and ideas (Ivanič, 2004, p. 227). The progression of these skills and knowledge that young students bring to a writing task can facilitate the writing process to become more independent (Abbott & Berninger, 1993). Sulzby and Teale (1985) argue that children use knowledge obtained both while reading and writing as they find will start to find contradictions between what they have written, what is read, and their knowledge of words from their reading. This is the application of the “set of linguistic patterns and rules for sound-symbol relationships and sentence construction” (Ivanič, 2004, p. 227). An example of this could be when writers begin to appropriately

use /wh/ to the start of words instead of solely applying /w/ (for words like what, white, and when). This further demonstrates that successful composing is one's ability capitalize and utilize their prior knowledge and skills to then adjust accordingly (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022).

As foundational strategies become more ingrained it allows the writer to apply their cognitive resources to focus on more higher-level skills which such as vocabulary choices, word retrieval, grammar, and syntax (Decker et al., 2016). Additionally, the cognitive capacities of the working memory required to oversee and implement those strategies diminishes (Gardner, 2018; Siegler, 2000).

In grade one, we were discussing adding details to our writing to make it more interesting and descriptive for the reader. We examined how certain words can help us visualize the text we are reading. We started to add details to our writing by including colour words, size and shape words, as well as our 'five-senses words'. Hayley struggled with segmenting the sounds she hears in words but has progressed this skill throughout the year. As well, she received occupational therapy support to help her develop more age appropriate fine-motor skills (letter size, formation, and legibility). During a journal task, Hayley wrote about a bunny stuffed animal. When reminded that she needed to add a detail, she added the sentence ' it iS pingc.' [displayed as her writing]. Her spelling of pink is impressive as she segmented the /ing/ phenome within the word. However, when she reread her work with me, she remembered that pink is a word on our 'word wall' as it was a 'spelling word' just a few weeks before. Hayley went back to correct the spelling of pink using the classroom tool but did not correct the use of uppercases in her sentence (it – It and iS – is). This small writing moment demonstrates how emerging writers utilize their short-term memory to carry out more basic literacy skills, in Hayley's case the

formation of letters and spelling. As other higher-level skills like grammar and the planning process (remembering to add a detail word to her writing) were not applied during her composing; nonetheless, based on Hayley's writing development and her progress the writing event was successful.

Textual Resources & Process

Writers learn the codes and rules of written language and their particular purpose (Mackenzie et al., 2015). This is then transformed to the belief that written work is purposeful and is for an audience to engage with (Camp, 2012; Kervin et al., 2020). Textual awareness is critical to a young student's development and their sense of accomplishment as they create something that can be *read* by others (Baghba, 2007). Early experiences with text solidify the *rules* of written text, such as writing left to right or that writing has a title which Sulzby and Teale describe as “distinctive features of the culturally elaborated writing system” (1985, p. 9). The awareness of these guidelines of the writing system sets the foundation for a writer and influences the *starting point* for authors. For example, Grade one students often do not start at the most left side of the page or need instruction on returning to the left side for a new line of writing rather than continuing to write vertically, which is a common behaviour. As children's understanding of the features of writing are not always equally developed these necessary understandings must be explicitly taught, modelled, and reinforced (Rowe, 2018).

A young writers' “competence in writing involves making unique meaning relevant and effective within the particulars of situations” as a student experiences more writing situations and forms this competence progresses (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 353). Effective writers utilize their prior knowledge and skills and adjust accordingly (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022) to compose “appropriate content for their written messages” (Rowe,

2018, p. 7). Frequently, in primary grades, genres are taught as structures and confined to a set of criteria “rather than arising from the social situation” (Beaufort, 2000, p. 217). Genre’s do provide framework; however, should be presented as dynamic as they are shaped by the values, expectations, and norms of a given community (Miller, 1984).

In grade one, genre knowledge is introduced as structure and organization to writing, for example, using narrative writing as a form that tells a story. In my classroom, the grade one student’s call this type of composing as “imagination brain pocket” writing (Gear, 2020). This language is derived from Adrienne Gear’s (2020) concept of writing with our brain pockets. The young writers learn that the beginning of a story introduces the setting and characters, the middle the characters encounter a problem, and the end will form the solution for the problem. This framework is first discussed during class read aloud outlining the beginning, middle, and end of the story. These discussions happen many times throughout the school years and then, with substantial scaffolding, the students apply this structure to their own writing. Though, this set of genre knowledge and the language used are the expectations within my classroom and constructed through our discussions and writing practice. If a student, changed schools or went to a different classroom, this terminology and form may be different, especially if the teacher was using a different resource. This demonstrates that “genre knowledge is tied to and dependent upon discourse community knowledge because it involves writers’ ability to understand the values and expectations of the discourse community” (Corrigan & Slomp, 2021, p. 164).

Language Resources

Writing is supported and related to oral language (Sulzby & Teale, 1985). Abbott and Berninger argue that “oral language is fundamental for writing achievement” as it

directly enhances compositional fluency (1993, p. 504). In her research Heath (1985) highlights the role of literacy practices in everyday life and their connection to oral language development. She demonstrated how literacy is embedded in social interactions, traditions, and community activities, and how children learned both oral and literacy skills through participation in these practices. In grade one, students are expanding their oral language skills alongside developing literacy skills. Their early experiences with oral language lay the foundation for later literacy development (Heath, 1985).

Patrick, a first-grade author, is an extremely talented and witty writer. Based on the narrative prompt ‘can a raindrop tell a story?’ he wrote a story about a raindrop falling from a cloud. Mid-air the raindrop realized he forgot his passport and the raindrop authorities were after him. After a funny highspeed chase, the raindrop escaped but evaporating himself. Also, when learning about writing with a beginning, middle and end, Patrick wrote another story about a squirrel who lost his nut. The squirrel went around and asked all the other woodland creatures if they had his nut, using hilarious dialogue and supporting details. In the end, the squirrel realized his nut was stored in his cheek the whole time. His writing ability has progressed past many of his grade one peers; however, I use Patrick as an example because his oral language skills mirrored his written narrative and authorial voice. He is witty, creative, and had a well-developed vocabulary repertoire which translated to a very distinctive and individualistic style displayed in his writing (Humphrey et al., 2014).

Bi/multilingual student, have multiple repertoires for them to choose from and must be empowered to do so (Ryan, 2014). Early elementary teachers must focus on direct instruction to the forms and features of text, allow opportunities for creative

writing, and encouragement to incorporate various influences into one's writing (Ryan, 2014).

A Ukrainian student, Petro, arrived midyear into the grade one classroom. As Ukrainian and Russian are his primary languages, Petro required adjustments in English language writing instruction as he was working on developing his English proficiency. It was discovered that Petro had the writing knowledge and skills in his home languages to respond to journal prompts, narratives, and informational writing tasks. As Petro was encouraged to use both Ukrainian and English text to participate in writing tasks and after his work was translated using online resources. He then transitioned to independently translating words for the reader such as when he wrote the word 'backyard' alongside the Ukrainian text. Petro's written work demonstrates how translanguaging can make our classrooms more equitable for all students when often schooling is designed to not serve our historically marginalized students. Garcia and Kleifgen state that translanguaging focuses on the way students "do languaging" in a critical and interactive process. So, when education is "guided by translanguaging theory" teachers do not compare their bi/multilingual students' literacy skills to their "monolingual white middle-class" counterparts but support the use of their entire language repertoire (2019, p. 558).

Multimodal Resources

By solely focusing on written form within the classroom, we risk interrupting development or a potential loss of interest in writing (Mackenzie & Veresov, 2013). Incorporating various ways of knowing and representing is essential, especially in early years development, as students may not have the foundational knowledge to express ideas in text alone (Mackenzie & Veresov, 2013). Promoting and employing multimodal approaches could help bridge the divide as students grasp the written form of

communication. Additionally, to allow for visual, oral, and other resources within the creation process can help students demonstrate and explain the multiple influences, knowledge, and skills (Kissel, 2008). Student texts and approaches to convey messages then become more intricate and enhance meaning as they incorporate multimodal resources (Oken-Wright, 1998).

During our ‘literacy workstations’ students were asked to think of how to develop a story using a ‘beginning, middle, and end’. Using puppets, student created a story and recorded it using an iPad. The group of students first planned their stories using pictures and a few words on a story board then practised their story using the puppets and the stage. The stories were recorded and presented to the whole class for viewing and discussion. This was a way for students to practise story elements without needing the knowledge and skills to *write* a story.

In early childhood classrooms, drawing is used to enhance messages and encourage development of fine-motor skills. Mackenzie and Veresov explain that “if children are taught to add written texts to visual texts their self-expression skills become flexible and allow for the creation of texts” (2013, p. 28). Therefore, drawing and writing can be both used to communicate meaning as they support and progress one another (Baghban, 2007). Additionally, if students are given the opportunities to explain their texts, their own description can also act as a lens onto their influences of writing and the process (Dyson, 2002). Having access to their entire repertoire, students can better portray their own “systems of meaning” that Serafini and colleagues describe as what student draw on to make sense of their own ideas and knowledge (2020, p. 286).

Further to drawing, is the influence of graphic novels on the writing process which is shown in Rebellion’s research (2017) as he reinforces the importance of using graphic

novels or *comics* as a writing tool for students. While creating a comic strip my first-grade students presented a story that showed how they can solve a problem in their lives. Student used both pictures, speech bubbles, and thought bubbles to present their story. Connor was emerging his written language skills as he was still developing his letter-sound correspondence. During the comic strip activity, Connor was able to produce an interesting and complex comic that met the criteria of the writing event. His pictures were detailed and in place of sentences within the speech and thought bubbles, Connor used simple words, letters to symbolize sounds effects, and punctuation to further demonstrate meaning. This writing process provided “opportunities for those [students such as Connor] with different creative strengths to explore the process of composing” (Rebellion, 2017, p. 82). This multimodal engagement of writing can not only represent traditional literacy skills but also gives students an opportunity to express themselves using various techniques to convey deeper meaning in “metaphoric, symbolic and figurative” ways (Tarbox & Abate, 2017, p. 11).

Personal Resources

The educational dynamics of writing can affect student development and can both inspire and drive learning (Beaufort, 2000). Composing requires student agency, participation, and motivation and students need a space to feel comfortable in their ideas as well as develop of love for writing (Kissel, 2008). Utilizing Bronfenbrenner and Morris model of “person characteristics” alongside the research design from Driscoll and Zhang’s (2022) I attempt to briefly compare two students of how “person characteristics” impact their writing development. Figure 3 and 4 displays the person characteristics of two female grade one students in the same classroom context.

Figure 3 Kate's Person Characteristics

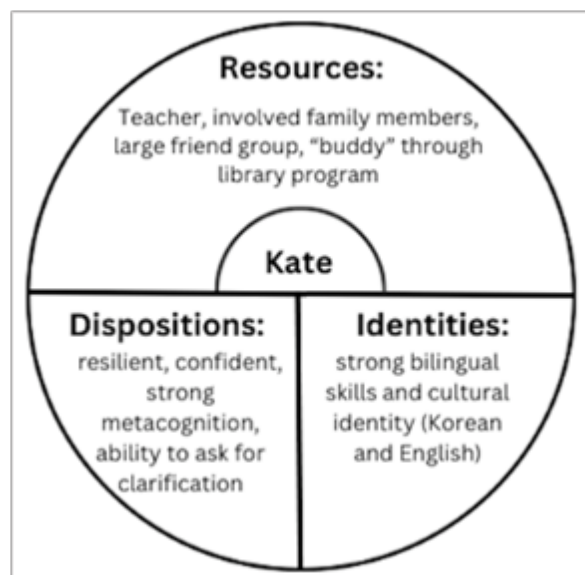
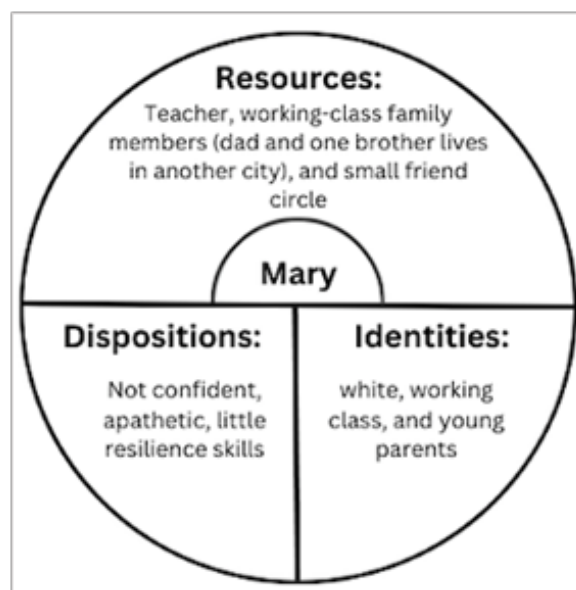


Figure 4 Mary's Person Characteristics



In Figure 3, Kate's resources, dispositions, and identity become generative factors that positively influence her writing ability. Kate's family members are extremely involved in her writing development, and she has many friends that she writes with, even during unstructured times of the classroom. Kate is involved in a literacy program at the library once a week. This time is spent with a volunteer buddy (hers, a university student) that reads and writes with Kate weekly. Additionally, Kate's demonstrates a range of dispositions that positively impacts her development as a writer. Driscoll and Zhang (2022) label linguistic backgrounds as a disruptive quality; however, in Kate's case, her strong cultural identity and her language proficiency in both Korean and English are generative qualities as she utilizes her identity within her writing to build deeper connections to the content.

Figure 4 shows Mary's resources, dispositions, and identity as a comparison to Kate's. Mary's family dynamic is distinct as she lives with her young mom, stepdad, and older brother. Her biological dad and eldest brother live in a town a few hours away and

she visits them periodically. Mary's mother and stepfather work long hours throughout the day and evening, often on opposing schedules due to childcare responsibilities. Mary's dispositions often inhibit her ability to start and maintain a writing tasks and often needs individualized check-ins during the writing process. Although, her identity as a white student and her native language as English are deemed as positive characteristics towards her writing development (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Mary must navigate her disruptive characteristics which poses particular challenges in her writing development and ability.

These differences between two students within the same classroom context exhibits how various personal characteristic can either foster on inhibit development. Personal resources can be identified and leveraged in conscious ways to enhance learning and development (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Identities can be expressed or rejected within particular contexts to either drive or impede development. Additionally, dispositions can be key motivators in development and can serve as catalysts within writing events (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). Sternglass (1997) suggest that educators understand the experiences and identities of student outside of the classroom as they are key to understanding their writing development.

Developmental Variation

In Rowe's work with children aged 4-6, she found "steady progression toward more sophisticated understanding about all features of writing... but that progress is marked by variability between children and within individuals" (2018, p. 87). The writing process is individualized, complex, and never in a linear process which often does not align with numerous writing programs that are specifically sequenced to teach to students (Dyson, 2002). Students' development is varied in "pacing and sequence of learning

having both forward and backwards movement” using both new and old strategies within writing events (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 355).

Driscoll and Zhang describe “writing development [as] variable; there is no single path and no single endpoint” (2022, Literature Review section). In order for teaching and assessment to foster writing ability the “unique and challenging paths of developing writers and the complexity of writing situations” must be recognized (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 353).

In many current classrooms, encountering various starting points for writing development is expected given the range of writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions among students. Writing is “approached in different ways by different writers” (Ryan, 2014, p. 60) and in the classroom each writing event presents a different set of choices. Between the various students within the grade one classrooms, the variation is apparent. Students come into the classroom with various writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions and progress throughout the year in different ways.

The non-linear progress is linked and reinforced by the other domains as it is dependent on flexibility within the ability and development system. A student could show strengths within their own writing ability of one of the facets of the construct model while another portion may be a student’s area of growth. For instance, a student could have great planning, translating, and reviewing skills (cognitive resources and processes) but struggle when asked to represent their ideas visually. Openness to the complexities of writing progression allows for personal growth within each domain and as a whole system (Mackenzie et al., 2015).

Variation within writing ability and their progress of writing development is demonstrated in all classrooms. Often, teachers think of the opposite ends of the

continuum of development when describing variation within the classroom. These are comments such as, 'I have a child who cannot write their name and someone spelling at a grade six level'. However, it is essential to recognize the small differences between students as these minor variations have a larger influence on one's development and the support needed to cultivate more advanced writing knowledge and skill.

Chapter Four: Developed Writing Assessment

In the following chapter, I briefly outline the approach and format used to develop a writing assessment framework relevant to first grade. I then present a general model for this framework, using the construct model as its foundation. Following this, I provide two examples of different types of writing events, both conventional and non-conventional, based on the general framework. These specific examples aim to be practical and accessible for teachers while inspiring creativity in applying the general writing assessment framework to a diverse range of writing activities.

Scenario-Based Tasks

Scenario-based tasks are specifically structured events that “simultaneously measure critical component skills and model effective strategies for combining skills to successfully manage complex performance tasks” (Deane & Song, 2014, p. 106) and can address the issues of a timed and/or a single writing sample (East & Slomp, 2024). By adopting this approach, this form of assessment demonstrates the effectiveness of integrating instructional activities with assessment tasks, ensuring that the development of skills is both targeted and contextualized within real-world scenarios.

The specific sequence can mimic a scenario for an overall goal often as a performance task as it “provides a context and purpose for all the specific tasks that it contains” (Deane et al., 2015, p. 2). This enables both the evaluation of targeted abilities and skills through separate items, as well as providing support to enhance performance further. Assessment and instruction are interconnected as tasks are crafted to align with instructional activities aimed to teach targeted skills (Deane & Song, 2014). This is coordinated appropriately to guarantee that students successfully complete the final cohesive task. Bennet argues that “multiple assessments should allow deeper coverage

than a single end-of-the-ear test could afford” (2010, p. 74-75). Additionally, obtaining multiple pieces of student evidence can impact teachers’ decisions as well as reduce the misrepresentation of student ability (Bennett, 2010).

The incorporation of specific elements is designed so students are given opportunities to achieve their best performance specifically when completing challenging writing tasks (Deane & Song, 2014). Bennett argues that “scenario-based task sets might better target depth-of-processing and some higher-order skills” (2010, p. 76) while Oliveri and collaborators (2021) used scenario-based sets to increase task authenticity and student engagement. Primarily, the assessment tasks can provide information about student achievement which can further be developed through classroom practices that can then scaffold students towards their next steps of ability.

Using assessment to inform instruction and learning is central to purpose of the assessment design. Aligning with Bennett’s (2010) assessment work, the developed assessment structure intends to report student achievement (*of learning*), assist teachers’ planning and instruction for student development (*for learning*), and emphasizes cultivating a rewarding educational process for the stakeholders involved (*as learning*).

Writing Assessment Outline

The important feature of scenario-based assessment design is “selecting targeted skills, developing items to measure those skills and determine tasks sequences” (Deane & Song, 2014, p. 99). Table 6 represents a general outline of a writing ability assessment. This provides a basis to accommodate and foster flexibility for specific contexts, writing events, as well as to account for student choice to offer a range of approaches to assessing writing. The table proposed is influenced by Deane and Song’s (2014) scenario-based

assessment developed to measure and support student's argumentative reading and writing skills.

This approach to assessment is to provide students with structured instruction and tasks that provide opportunities for both scaffolding and measurement (Deane & Song, 2014). Table 6 is arranged in a series of tasks represented by numbers 1 through 6. Each task lies within a phase of the assessment framework. The task is briefly described as well as presenting the overall writing element that will be assessed during that task, directly sourced from Table 5, which outlined the construct model. The outer right column aligns the task to a domain from the established construct model as it is vital that the outlined elements are relative to the construct that is being measured. To avoid construct underrepresentation and misrepresentation “the assessment [must] capture a balanced and representative sample of the construct being measured” both in breadth and depth (Slomp, 2020, p. 108). Table 7 provides an additional visual overview to demonstrate the alignment between the developed assessment and the complete construct model.

In order to successfully develop a writing assessment that can provide evidence about student learning, tasks are intended to be applicable to the context thus students are able suitable links of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Deane et al., 2015). Based on the defined construct model, “context plays a critical role in defining such scenarios” demonstrating how these domains needs to be recognized and accounted for within the assessment model (Deane et al., 2015). The adaptability of context within the outline is for students to “complete their writing in more authentic conditions, providing multiple samples of writing across a range of contexts and genres, and having opportunities to receive and incorporate feedback on the writing” (East & Slomp, 2024, p. 264).

The overall goals of the assessment tasks, structured within instructional opportunities is to (a) provide opportunities for student development and success (b) embed stages for specific instruction and scaffolding, aiding teacher planning (c) provide students with support and feedback throughout the tasks (d) remain adaptable and responsive to the evolving needs of the classroom environment and (e) empower students and educators to actively engage within the learning process

Table 6 General Writing Assessment Outline

Phase	Task	Task Description	Description of elements assessed	Relationship to construct model
Recognize that information can be conveyed through various means or modes	1	Generate ideas of various methods to communicate information based on a particular writing event	Understand different modes can convey specific tones, attitudes, mindset, or stance	Multimodal Resources; Text Resources & Processes
	2	Describe the purpose, beliefs, and expectations of the writing event	Apply beliefs, motivations, and interests alongside the expectations of the contexts to produce writing	Contextual Impact; Personal Resources
Evaluate and create various methods of information	3	Evaluate various sources of the writing event	Understand language is a powerful tool used for communication of ideas, opinion, thoughts and can have consequences, both intended and unintended	Cognitive Resources and Process; Language Resources
	4	Identify elements that are specific to the writing event	Understand different genres, contexts, audience, and purpose demands a different set of criteria	Multimodal Resources; Text Resources & Processes
	5	Formulate a visual or plan of the individual parts of the writing events	Know how organization, format, structure, and word choice can impact the meaning and effectiveness	Contextual Impact; Cognitive Resources and Process
Organize and convey information	6	Plan and communicate information for the particular writing event	Use strategies during planning, translating, and reviewing processes while composing	Entire construct model

Table 7 Writing Assessment Outline Alignment to Construct Model

Construct Domain	Contextual Impact	Cognitive Resources & Process	Text Resources & Process	Language Resources	Multimodal Resources	Personal Resources
<i>Task 1</i>			✓		✓	
<i>Task 2</i>	✓					✓
<i>Task 3</i>		✓		✓		
<i>Task 4</i>			✓		✓	
<i>Task 5</i>	✓	✓				
<i>Task 6</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Teacher Resource Guidance

Not every task is designed to be bound to one lesson or completed in a day. Some of the tasks could span over several teaching days or periods. This would depend on the classroom context and on the formative assessment data gathered by the classroom teacher throughout the tasks. Furthermore, the tasks that student’s complete are not intended to be rushed or completed unintentionally – the tasks may take longer or shorter based on the students in the classroom. It should be clarified that the tasks are designed to be adjustable and flexible to diversity and various learning needs. Likewise, it is anticipated that teachers use their professional judgement and leverage their knowledge of their students to effectively implement these tasks. The writing genres or events can be revisited and reassessed as students’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions develop and expand. These tasks can also be modified based on the writing event or genre that is being focused on. The aim is for the outline to be used for writing instruction throughout the

course of the year. Students can become comfortable within scenario task-based instruction and assessment; hopefully, providing many opportunities for students to be successful. The two outlines offered within this resource is both for teacher application and to demonstrate how the outline can be used for two different genres or events. It is expected that the outline is used for both more conventional writing genres and real-world writing opportunities.

All materials needed for the tasks described for the two outlines below will be provided for teacher use and student materials are provided in the task descriptions. Resources within materials encompass a wide array of supportive elements that enhance learning experiences and can be altered for student needs and diversity. Moreover, resources embedded within materials offer opportunities for students to engage actively with the content, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and independent inquiry directly connected to the construct model.

Table 8 Narrative Story Writing Assessment Plan

Phase	Task	Task Description	Specific descriptor	Items used to measure this skill	Relationship to construct model
Recognize that stories can be conveyed through various means or modes	1	Generate ideas of various methods to communicate stories or narratives (writing, movies, scripts, oral, videos, etc.)	Understands stories and narratives can be shared in multiple ways	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Mind map (<i>for learning</i>); Student journal response (<i>of learning</i>)	Cognitive Resources & Process; Text Resources & Process
	2	Describe the purpose of telling stories	Identify the purpose of a story or narrative	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Student conferencing; (<i>for learning</i>); Student video (<i>of learning</i>)	Contextual Impact; Multimodal Resources
Evaluate and create various methods of information	3	Evaluate various sources of narrative stories in different methods	Determine elements of a narrative that contribute to the purpose of a story and make a story more interesting	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Venn Diagram (<i>for learning</i>)	Language Resources; Personal Resources
	4	Identify elements that are specific to story writing/ telling/ narratives	Identify and expand on the specific parts of a story	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Student created comic strip (<i>for learning</i>); Student interview (<i>of learning</i>)	Multimodal Resources; Text Resources & Processes
	5	Formulate an outline of the individual parts of a narrative story	Create a plan/ outline of a narrative	Classroom Discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Graphic Organizer (<i>of learning</i>)	Contextual Impact; Cognitive Resources and Processes
Organize and convey information	6	Plan and communicate information a narrative story	Create a story that demonstrates a clear purpose and uses story elements to communicate an interesting and thoughtful narrative	Student story plan (<i>for learning</i>); Student story draft (<i>for learning</i>); Conferencing (<i>for learning</i>); Student story (<i>of learning</i>)	Entire construct model

Narrative Story Writing Assessment Plan

Play-Based Station: Teachers can expand story writing by setting up a writing station or centre in their classroom. The station can include writing materials such as paper, pencils, crayons, and markers, as well as a variety of writing prompts, story starters and picture prompts.

Task 1

Figure 5 Written Journal Response Rubric

Strengths	Stretches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Generated own ideas ○ Ideas based on own experience and on topic • Cognitive Resources & Processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sight Words ○ Letter-Sound Unknown Words (beginning, middle, end sounds) ○ Applied planning and reviewing • Text Resources & Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization ○ Vocabulary Choice ○ Appropriate to Genre ○ Capital and Periods • Language Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear writing <i>voice</i> ○ Engaging writing • Multimodal Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Detailed picture • Personal Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participation ○ Motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Generated own ideas ○ Ideas based on own experience and on topic • Cognitive Resources & Processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sight Words ○ Letter-Sound Unknown Words (beginning, middle, end sounds) ○ Applied planning and reviewing • Text Resources & Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization ○ Vocabulary Choice ○ Appropriate to Genre ○ Capital and Periods • Language Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear writing <i>voice</i> ○ Engaging writing • Multimodal Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Detailed picture • Personal Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participation ○ Motivation
Stars:	Student Goal:

Using an anchor book, introduce the topic of telling stories or narratives. This task is to focus on what a story or narrative is, and the methods used to tell a story. As a class, brainstorm the different ways that a story could be told using a mind map. While brainstorming, students can help phonetically sound out their brainstormed ideas. Teachers should prompt their students to expand their idea of what a story is or how a story could be told examples include: written story, video, audio, oral, pictures, movies, scripts/plays, etc. Students can write and draw a picture in their journals about their favourite memory of a time they had *listened/viewed* a story. Teachers can assess their written and visual response based on the rubric shown in Figure 5. *Strengths* and *stretches* can be highlighted on the rubric and a written response from the teacher can be added.

Teacher Tip: Teachers can model the journal prompt of their favorite memory of storytelling. Teachers can model how to phonetically sound out words or use the classroom resource on sight words or *no excuse words*.

Throughout the first task, students will broaden their idea of conventions of writing a narrative story. It is intended that students build a knowledge, skills, and dispositions within the *Text Resources and Process* of the writing construct model. The methods of *telling* a narrative story can change based on the contexts, audiences, and purposes expanding the students understanding of the genre. Narrative stories, as a genre, has specific features in content, organization, and approaches (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). The task is designed to help avoid constricting one's awareness of the genre therefore expanding the opportunities for composing (Devitt, 1993). Additionally, this task is connected to the *Cognitive Resources and Process* facet of the construct model. First, by modelling, the teacher can demonstrate how to set intentions, plan, monitor, and review while writing (Graham, 2018). Then, allowing students to work through the process of

planning, translating, and reviewing during their own response (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Often in early writing, translation and transcription overwhelms the writing process (Abbott & Berninger, 1993), so to allow time and support for students can assist within and between all stage.

Task 2

Using a video for reference, introduce how telling stories or narratives have a purpose. Authors get ideas for stories from an event or story that happened in their life (memory), an idea that they made up (imagination) or a mix between the two. The idea helps build the purpose of the story and readers can better feel connected to the story. Teacher can emphasize the main idea of the video and discuss where the idea could have come from. Either in small or a large group activity provide chart paper with the headings for memory, imagination, and mix. Students can add story ideas to the chart paper under the appropriate heading, these would be the main purpose for the story. In pairs, students will work on a script for a story that the two students will act and record using an iPad. Pairs will conference with the teacher before they record their video to ensure that the storyline has a clear purpose and can be given appropriate feedback. The teacher can record notes from the conversation with students and provide written feedback for the script and video.

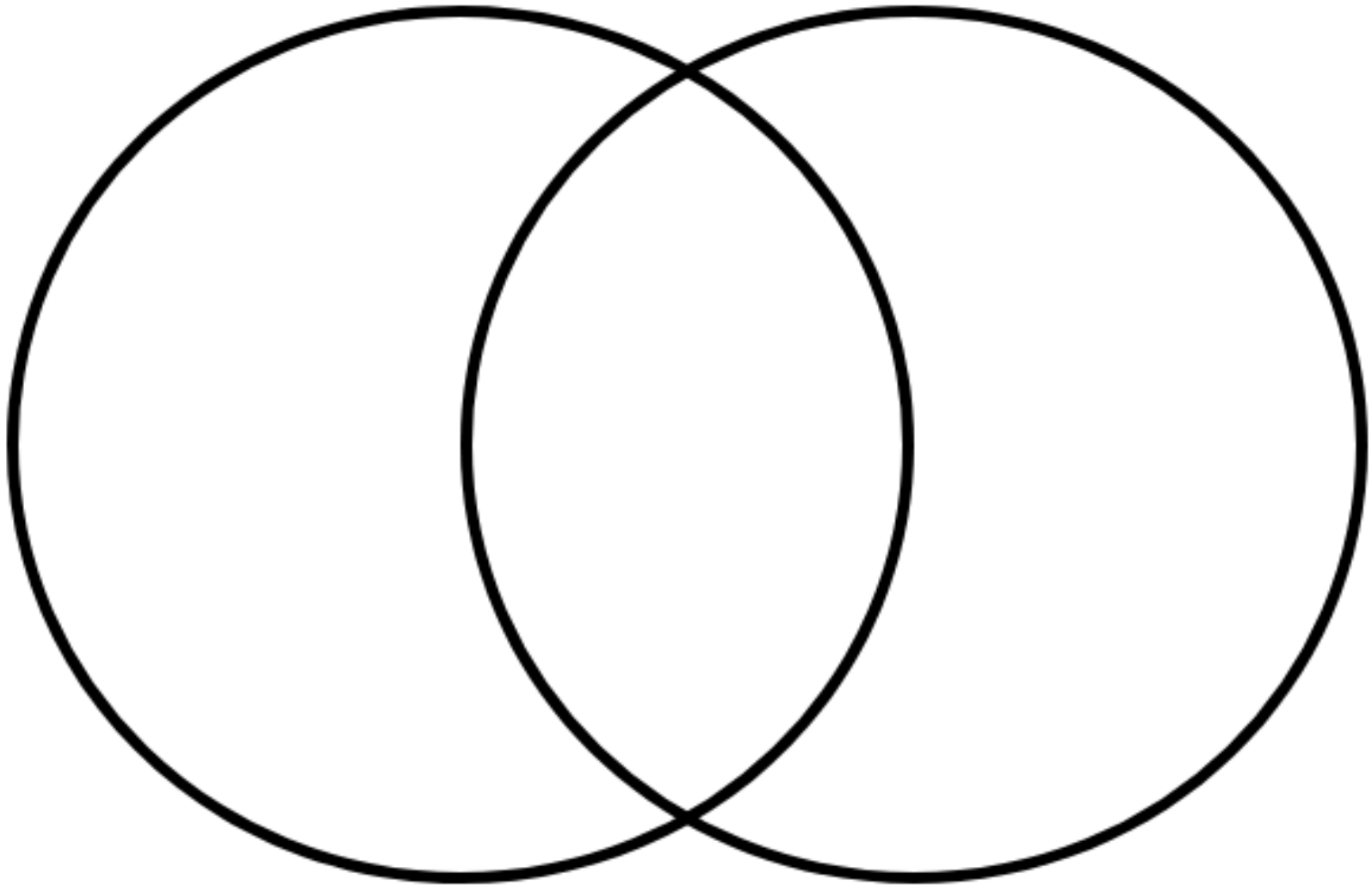
Teacher Tip: Show another story to the class to use as a non-example. This method would be a story that is *not so* interesting or a story without a clear purpose. Students can examine the example and describe what needs to be added to story to help its purpose.

This task is designed better connect to their own *Contextual Impact* to build student capacity to generate ideas for narrative stories that demonstrate their world such

as personal experiences, community knowledge, and the classroom experience (Kissel, 2008; Luke, 2011). By using student's experiences and thinking as resources for ideas helps build strong connections and engagement (Moll et al., 1992). The instructional component, along with the student work, aims to enhance students' ability to engage in storytelling beyond traditional academic literacy and narrative forms. It also seeks to develop their *Multimodal Resources*, challenging the power structures that dictate what is considered valid writing (Luke, 2011). Encouraging students to expand their communicative system, in this case using drama and video, can develop their thinking, communication, and literacy (Baghban, 2007).

Task 3

Figure 6 Narrative Writing Comparison Using a Venn Diagram



Students will view two different ways of sharing narrative stories. The objective is for the students to evaluate various sources of narrative stories in different methods. Teachers should show two methods that students have yet to be exposed to (examples could be play, oral story, podcast, puppet show). Teachers then can lead a classroom discussion on what elements in each story the students enjoyed and what helped make the story more interesting (details, dialogue, descriptors, etc). Students can compare two sources that have been viewed throughout the tasks using a Venn diagram, like in Figure 6, on a poster with a partner. Students are expected to discuss how elements add or take-away from the purpose of a story or make a story more interesting. This not only enhances their critical thinking skills but also encourages them to reflect on the various storytelling techniques they encounter.

Teachers Tip: This activity can be extended to an interactive bulletin board. Students can add pictures, words, objects, crafts, etc. to the bulletin board about what they can add to a story to make it interesting.

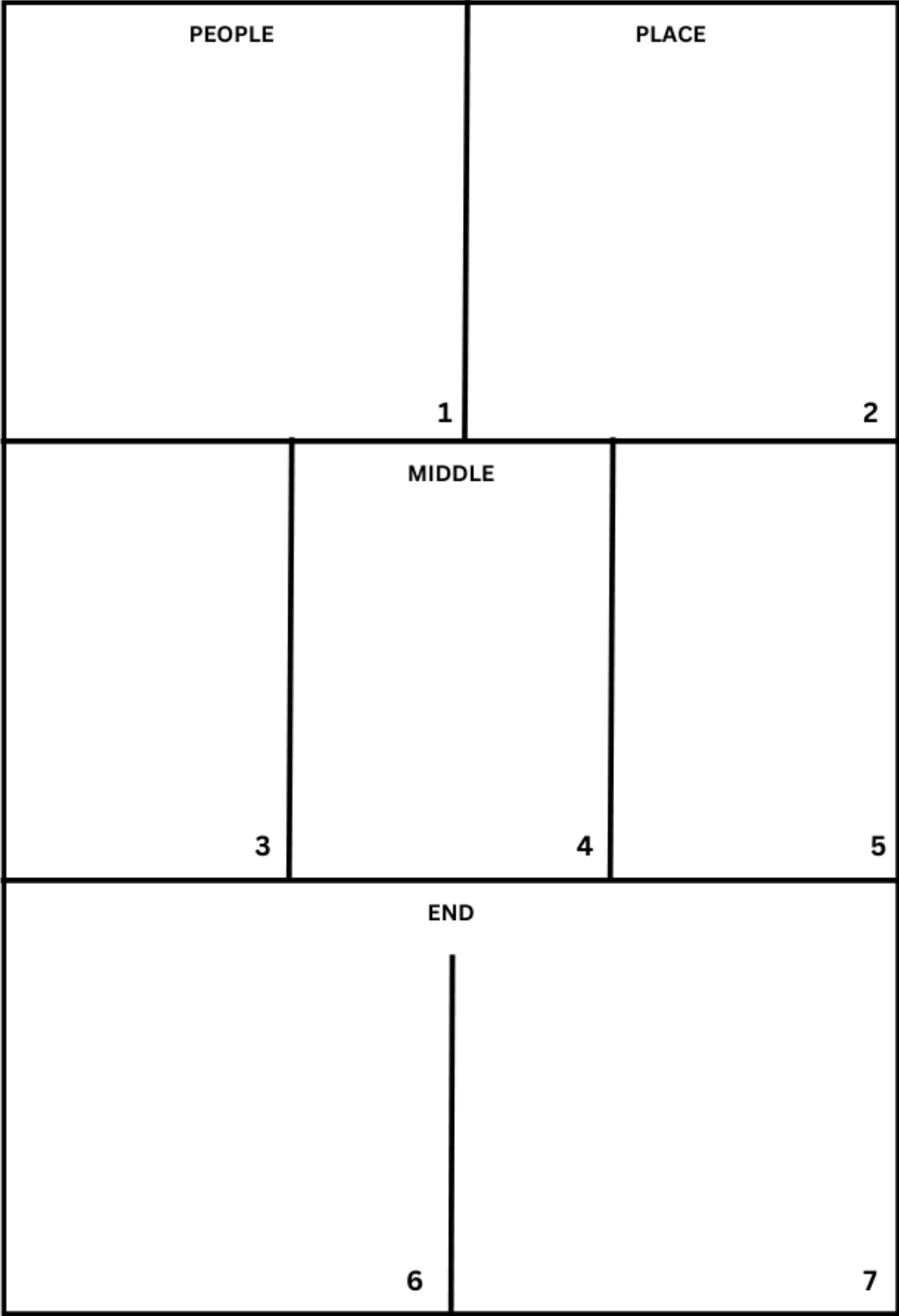
Students evaluate different methods and sources of narrative stories to expand their thinking. An author's *Language Resources* can be influential on a reader and the purpose of their story. Students can engage in discussions around Gardner (2018) idea that language is an essential tool to communicate meaning and engage readers. Thus, students are challenged to use strategies to analyse the writing situation and apply their own knowledge of writing practices to the task. The knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to a student's *Personal Resources*, particularly their ability to use metacognitive approaches to assess the rhetorical situation (Flower & Hayes, 1980). The evaluation task serves as a way to learn how to address similar writing tasks or problems (Dyson, 2002) to help with student engagement, persistence, and a willingness to improve.

Task 4

Figure 7 Parts of Narrative Writing Chart

BEGINNING	MIDDLE	END

Figure 8 Narrative Writing Comic Strip



Using an audio story, teachers will talk about the three main parts of telling a story: a beginning, middle and end. Teachers should discuss the main components of each part of the story. The beginning of the story introduces the peoples/characters and the setting/place (where, when, season). The middle of the story discusses the problem or the big event of the story. The end of the story addresses the solution and/or the emotions of the people at the end of story. Students can identify the introductory, middle, and concluding elements of the anchor book either independently or in a classroom discussion and fill in a table of each of the elements, shown in Figure 7. The student will complete a comic strip to first explore the concepts of beginning middle and end. The students will complete the comic strip using pictures and labels, using Figure 8. Throughout the task, students can conference with teachers to assist them to expand their thinking and adding more details. When the comic strips are complete, teacher can interview each student to discuss the elements of the story both speaking in general and specifically to their comic strip.

Teacher Tip: After all the comic strips are completed, display all the comics around the room for a museum walk can have two following activities. First, using post it notes students can complement their peer's work. Second, students can determine the beginning/middle/end of a peer's work based on their comic strip.

The focus of the task is to explore the structure of the narrative writing genre, to assist students in fostering their capabilities to participate in the writing event. The genre knowledge is introduced as structure and organization to writing and it is expected that the student writers utilize their prior knowledge and skills to adapt as needed (Driscoll & Zhang, 2022). Additionally, students would use the task as an opportunity to cultivate knowledge, skills, and disposition of their *Multimodal Resources*. It was designed with

the understanding that students may lack the foundational knowledge to convey ideas solely through text and that students need to learn how to create multimodal texts based on the complexities of our current culture (Mackenzie & Veresov, 2013). The use of the comic strip, alongside the student interview, offers a dynamic approach to developing these competencies and assess student understanding.

Task 5

Figure 9 Narrative Writing Planning Sheet

Title:	
Draw pictures to help you remember details of your story	
Place	People
Beginning	
Middle	
End	

Students will view a video of a story that is told by using toys, claymation, or puppets. Students will review the elements of the beginning, middle, and end of the story based on the video that was viewed using the same organizing table. The objective of this task is to discuss how an organized plan can help a writer develop the individual parts of a narrative story. The purpose of a plan is to help the author organize their ideas and ensure their story has a clear purpose and has a beginning/middle/end. Teachers should emphasize that a plan is not our *presentation ready* copy or a full narrative. We use a plan to get ideas first to help us when we start writing and creating. Using a graphic organizer shown in Figure 9 students will plan a story that they will tell a partner. Students can then practise completing their story by orally telling the story they planned to a partner. Students should focus on adding details and dialogue to their story to make it more interesting for their peer to listen to.

Teacher Tip: As a whole group try round robin storytelling. Arrange your students in a circle with the teacher. Start the round-robin by reading aloud one a sentence starter. Moving around the circle each student will add to the story. The teacher finishes off the story when it returns to the starting point.

Creating a plan is directly connected to the three components of the writing process “planning, translating and reviewing” presented by Flower and Hayes used within the *Cognitive Resources and Processes* domain of writing development (1981, p. 369). Student’s will navigate through each stage during task 5 as the stages are dynamic and do not follow a sequential approach to writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981). This implies that although the students will be creating a plan, they will be actively using strategies and making decisions that involve each stage of the process. The task will also broaden the student's skills in utilizing their *Contextual Impact* facet of writing ability. It is essential

that the students are encouraged to use writing as opportunities to draw on their own histories, experiences, social circles, languages, and community practises (Bazerman et al., 2017). Thus, beginning to *plan* a narrative story is to use their “funds of knowledge” as ideas and to inspire their stories (Moll et al., 1992). As well, the task uses knowledge and practises of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit *TQS 5* by incorporating oral storytelling as a method of narrative story (Alberta, 2023).

Task 6

For the culminating event, students will plan, draft, and create a narrative story using a method of their preference. The various multimodal methods of telling a story can be brainstormed as a class to assist students in choosing the method they will be using to complete the culminating activity. Elements shared on previous tasks can be revisited to include purpose, descriptors, details, and dialogue into the student’s narrative. Throughout the creation process teachers will have conferencing meetings as checkpoints with each child to discuss their story, provide time for feedback and guidance. Students will first create a plan for their story (similar to task 5 and using Figure 9), then start creating a draft, to finally create their *presentation ready* copy of their story. Teachers can assess the final project using the single point rubric.

Teacher Tip: When the student’s narrative stories are complete students can share their stories to their class if they wish or share with a buddy class.

The culminating task targets the whole construct model as students will need to make informed writing choices while participating in the writing events influenced by their expanding knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Student writers will utilize their experiences in the previous tasks to approach, comprehend and act within the writing event; however, is encouraged to use the new challenge for further development

(Bazerman, 2018). Student “overall growth relies on development in each of the dimensions that are brought together in writing” (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 357). Student’s draw on their writing repertoires, which shape their decisions in writing to navigate the specific features and elements to the writing task.

Figure 10 presents an assessment rubric designed to guide teachers in conducting end-of-year or term assessments. It is also intended for use during conferences with parents, providing a structured framework to discuss student progress and areas for improvement. The rubric supports the conversation by outlining specific criteria related to student performance, ensuring a clear and consistent approach to assessing key construct facets. Meanwhile, Figure 11 introduces a separate rubric intended for student use, which supports the development of their narrative stories. This "I Can" statement rubric helps students understand and self-assess their learning. Using simple, student-friendly language, it outlines the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students should demonstrate, phrased as "I can" statements. It empowers students to take ownership of their learning by clearly articulating what they are expected to achieve and providing a concrete way to measure their progress. This rubric also supports teachers in providing targeted feedback, helping them evaluate narrative writing based on established criteria and making it easier to identify areas where students may need additional support.

Figure 10 Narrative Writing Single Point Rubric

Stretches & Questions	Criteria	Strengths & Connections
	<p style="text-align: center;">Contextual Impact</p> <p>Writers use a critical awareness of contextual impact and leveraging personal, educational, cultural, and social norms to construct meaning and engage effectively in writing tasks across diverse contexts.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Cognitive Resources & Processes</p> <p>Writers navigate the dynamic components of the writing process (planning, translating, and reviewing) adapting their approach based for a narrative story.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Textual Resources & Processes</p> <p>Writers adapt the conventions of writing, (text structure, sentence structure, grammatical features, vocabulary) to a narrative, its audience and purpose.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Language Resources</p> <p>Writers navigate through language systems, drawing from oral expression and other language facets to enrich their writing. Demonstrate a clear authorial voice to effectively communicate thoughts, ideas, and perspectives.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Multimodal Resources</p> <p>Student effectively utilizes multimodal resources to enhance the complexity and depth of their story and enrich the reader's experience.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Personal Resources</p> <p>Student employs personal resources to navigate writing challenges, demonstrating agency, exploration, creativity, and motivation</p>	

Figure 11 I Can Narrative Writing Rubric

I CAN ...		Connection to Construct Model
... use a planning tool to plan my story		Cognitive Resources & Processes
... use words and sentences that make sense for my story		Textual Resources & Processes
... take my ideas and turn them into words and sentences to write a story		Cognitive Resources & Processes
... make my story clear and interesting		Language Resources
... organize my ideas to make an story that makes sense		Textual Resources & Processes
... make a creative and unique story		Personal Resources
... use what I know about people, places, and things to make a story		Contextual Impact
... share my message in different ways in my story		Multimodal Resources
... be a motivated writer that solves problems		Personal Resources

Table 9 Invitation Writing Assessment Plan

Phase	Task	Task Description	Specific descriptor	Items used to measure this skill	Relationship to construct model
Recognize that stories can be conveyed through various means or modes	1	Generate ideas of various methods to communicate invitations to something	Understands invitations can be shared in multiple ways and there are different events that require an invitation.	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Journal response (<i>of learning</i>)	Cognitive Resources & Process; Contextual Impact
	2	Describe the purpose, beliefs, and expectations of an invitation	Identify the purpose and the elements required to create a proper invitation.	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Graphic Organizer (<i>of learning</i>); Student invitation video (<i>for learning</i>)	Multimodal Resources; Text Resources & Process
Evaluate and create various methods of information	3	Evaluate various sources of an invitation in different methods	Determine elements of an invitation that contribute to the purpose of the invitation and make it more interesting	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Matrix chart (<i>for learning</i>)	Language Resources; Text Resources & Processes
	4	Identify elements that are specific to invitations	Understand different genres, contexts, audience, and purpose demands a different set of criteria.	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Student invitation (<i>for learning</i>)	Multimodal Resources; Personal Resources
	5	Formulate an organized outline of the individual parts of an invitation	Know how organization, format, structure, and word choice can impact the meaning and effectiveness of written text.	Classroom discussion (<i>for learning</i>); Event planning sheet (<i>for learning</i>); Student interview (<i>of learning</i>)	Cognitive Resources & Process; Contextual Impact;
Organize and convey information	6	Plan and communicate information within an invitation	Use strategies during planning, translating, and reviewing processes while composing.	Student invitation plan (<i>for learning</i>); Student invitation draft (<i>for learning</i>); Conferencing (<i>for learning</i>); Student invitation (<i>of learning</i>)	Entire construct model

Invitation Writing Assessment Plan

Play Based Station: Teachers can set up an invitation station or centre in the classroom. The station can include writing materials (paper, envelopes, craft materials, pencils, markers) so the station can offer students the tools they need. Teachers should include a variety of writing prompts, necessary vocabulary, and examples.

Task 1

Using an anchor book, introduce the topic of invitations. This task is to focus on what an invitation is, what events need an invitation and the methods used to send or deliver an invitation. As a class, brainstorm the different things that people would need an invitation for. Teachers should prompt their class with questions or scenarios to expand thinking examples include birthday parties, holidays, weddings, baby showers, volunteer event held by the school, concerts, recitals, sport team parties, picnics, etc. Students will then think of different methods that invitations are sent (cards, emails, videos, e-vites, posters, in envelopes, etc). In their journals, student can write and draw a response of when they received an invitation answering: a) what the invitation was? b) what the event was that they were invited too? c) what did they do at that event? Teachers can assess their written and visual response based on a rubric shown in Figure 5.

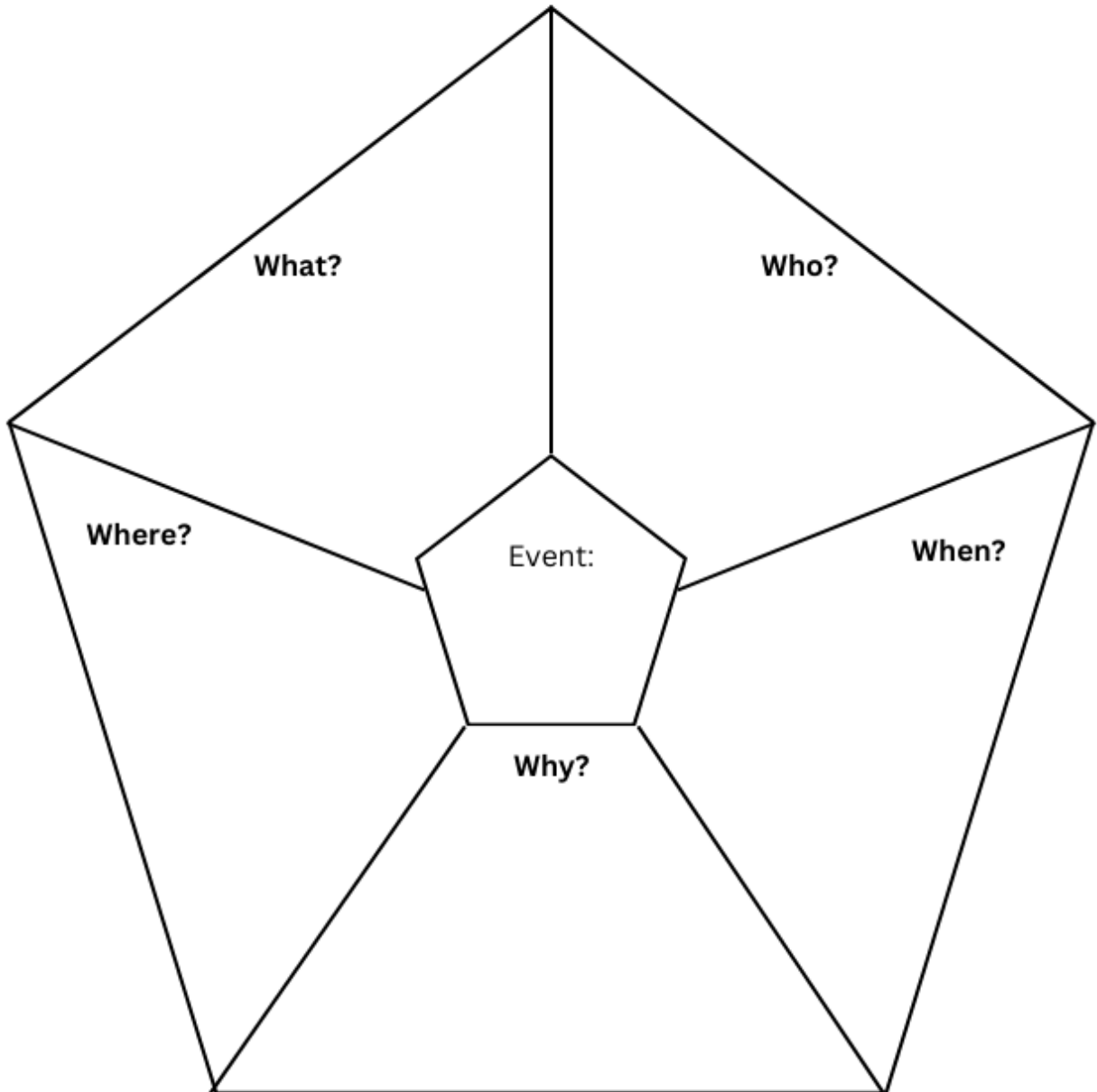
Teacher Tip: Students can respond to both questions and track the data: 1) Have you ever sent an invitation? 2) Have you ever received or been given an invitation?

Using invitation writing as a genre within the classroom helps make writing foundational to student social experience (Gardner, 2018). As well, challenges the continued emphasis on conventional products of writing being reinforced in the classroom to develop writing ability. Overall, invitations can better highlight how one's *Contextual Impact* can influence writing events in this case, planning an event that is

important to them or their social sphere. Leveraging personal experiences helps assists writers to make sense of the new content, genre, and guidelines (Dyson, 2002). Additionally, students will use grow within their *Cognitive Resources and Process*, specifically synchronising all of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to develop, expand, and record ideas in their student recorded journal response (Graham, 2018).

Task 2

Figure 12 Invitation Writing Graphic Organizer



Using an anchor video, pose the question why do we use invitations? The aim of this task is for students to focus on the purpose and expectations of an invitation. Sending an invitation there is important answers to the questions: Why? Who? What? Where? When? Using the organizer shown in Figure 12 students can answer the 5-W questions based on either the anchor video or another sample video invitation. Using the same organizer, they will first have to answer the questions to help plan their imaginary event. Encourage them to think about what they want to say in their invitation video based on their answers to the organizer questions. Provide writing/drawing materials for students to jot down key points or sketch ideas for their video invitation. Students will then make a video invitation inviting people to their event using an iPad or a Chromebook (student can work in pairs to help with filming). Allow students time to work together to create their video invitations. They can take turns speaking, use props or costumes, and be as creative as they like.

Teacher Tip: Teachers can show non-examples of invitations that are missing the answers to the 5-W questions. The class can discuss what will happen if their guests don't have the answers to those questions.

The student's will be working through the invitation writing assessment tasks to demonstrate how writing is essential to both in school writing tasks and writing that extends beyond the classroom. Invitation writing does require a particular set of *rules* that are distinctive to the genre (Sulzby & Teale, 1985). Using the assessment outline for non-conventional writing tasks presents writing events as "arising from the social situation" rather than something that is assigned (Beaufort, 2000, p. 217). By learning the standards of the genre students expand their genre knowledge impacting their *Text Resources and Process* domain. The use of *Multimodal* approaches to invitations allows students to

expand their capacity within their writing ability and help bridge the divide as students learn the new genre. Kissel (2008) argues that students can better demonstrate their knowledge and skills when they can use visual and oral modes (Kissel, 2008). By giving students a chance to experiment with both visual and oral methods promotes creativity and meaning.

Task 3

Figure 13 Invitation Writing Matrix Chart

	Who?	What?	Where?	When?	Why?	Appearance	Overall
Invitation #1							
Invitation #2							

Students will view two different invitations. The objective is for the students to evaluate various sources of an invitation in different methods. Teacher should show examples that are visually appealing, missing important information, hard to read, use of language, so students have many elements to compare and contrast. Teachers then can lead a classroom discussion on what elements in each invitation the students enjoyed and what helped the purpose of the invitation answering the 5-W questions. Students can compare two sources that have been viewed within the tasks using the matrix chart, shown in Figure 13 individually or in pairs. Students are expected to discuss the elements to enhance the critical thinking skills but also encourages them to reflect on elements that enhance the invitations.

Teacher Tip: Ask the student's if the events from the invitations were both on the same day which event would they attend? Why? Students can response in a journal response or in a classroom discussion.

Throughout the third task, students will utilize their *Language Resources and Process* and *Multimodal Resources* when evaluating the invitations. Students will discuss the power of language and how language can be used as a tool to deliver meaning (Gardner, 2018); however, students must use a critical lens as language can have both intended and unintended consequences in an invitation (Ryan, 2014). Similarly, having genre awareness within the *Textual Resources and Process* facet gives students the tools and language to critically analyze and compare the two invitations to enhance their understanding on the genre. Much of the information that is essential to an invitation is important to other genre's but maybe formatted or presented in a different way. The 5-W questions can be applied to other writing events creating opportunities for students to apply what they learned in one genre to help develop within another.

Task 4

Teachers will read an anchor book that highlights invitations. Teachers will introduce the idea of decorating invitations to make them more attractive/inviting to look like. Students will discuss elements of invitations that are appealing but ensuring that you can still read the important information. Providing craft materials for students they will decorate an invitation for a school event (dance, spirit day, party). Teachers should encourage creativity while ensuring that the main information remains clear and legible. During a classroom discussion, students can answer the Why? Who? What? Where? When? as a class for students to copy on their invitations.

Teacher Tip: Role-play invitation delivery by dividing students into pairs or small groups. Each student will take turns role-playing as giving and receiving invitations. Practice handing out and receiving invitations, using appropriate language and manners. Students can deliver their invitations to staff around the school.

Task 4 is centered around building capacity within the *Multimodal Resources* domain of writing development. The task is designed for students to discover that various aspects can either enhance or take away from the meaning of writing and students can distinguish between the two. Students are asked to comprehend more complex messages to help demonstrate the method providing convey deeper meaning (Kissel, 2008). Students should leverage multimodal means to better enrich their messages on invitations rather than distracting their reader. Additionally, students must leverage their own *Personal Resources* to take creative risks within the writing process and navigate the problem presented with motivation and resiliency (Flower & Hayes, 1980). A more creative task can create a positive experience and inspire of love for writing (Kissel, 2008).

Task 5

Figure 14 Invitation Writing Planning Sheet

What:		
Why:		
Theme:		
When:	Who:	Food:
Where:		Activities:

Students can view a sample of a e-vite. Students can discuss the 5-W questions and how planning an event is important before creating an invitation. Students will understand the necessity of knowing all the details about an event to effectively communicate them to invitees. Using sticky notes, brainstorm and write down different tasks or steps involved in planning an event (e.g., make a guest list, choose a theme, decide on activities). Have students work in small groups to organize the sticky notes into a sequence of steps for planning an event. Student's will then plan a picnic. When the planning page, Figure 14, is complete, teacher can interview each student to discuss the elements of their picnic by asking the 5-W questions.

Teacher Tip: Discuss what would happen if you were having a picnic and you forgot some key items (example blanket, food, drinks, games, sunscreen). This can help lead a discussion on why planning is essential.

Students are asked to plan an event influenced by their own *Contextual Impact*. They must draw everyday knowledge and practises to cultivate and build a more comprehensive understanding of the genre (Dyson, 2003). By using the students' funds of knowledge can frame the writing task which builds educational connections, increase engagement and connection to the genre and one's ability to be successful (Moll et al., 1992). Alongside students will engage their knowledge, skills, and dispositions of their *Cognitive Resources and Process* to successfully participate in the writing task. Flower and Hayes (1981) discuss the three stages of writing but do highlight that often in young writers focus on heavily focus on the translation process rather than planning what they want to say. This task gives student's opportunities to build independence during their own writing process while being supported by the outline of the task and the embedded teacher support (Abbott & Berninger, 1993).

Task 6

For the culminating event, students will plan, draft, and create an invitation for the volunteer tea, using a method of their preference. A volunteer tea at an elementary school is a special event designed to recognize and appreciate the contributions of parents, guardians, and community members who support the school. The various multimodal methods of sending or delivering an invitation can be brainstormed as a class to assist students in choosing their method. Elements shared on previous tasks can be revisited to include creativity, 5-W questions, and being visually appealing into the student's invitation. Throughout the creation process teachers will have conferencing meetings as checkpoints with each child to discuss their invitation, provide time for feedback, and guidance. Students will first create a plan for their invitation (similar to task 5 and using Figure 14), then start creating a draft, to finally create their *delivery ready* copy of their invitation. The invitations can be used by the school to invite the community to the volunteer tea and shared with the child's family. Teachers can assess the final project using the single point rubric.

Teacher Tip: Have students create thank-you notes to send after their event that they created invitations for.

The culminating task aims to address the entire construct model to present a holistic view of the student writer. It is important to demonstrate that writing extends beyond a school subject but can be used for communication and action in life (Bazerman, 2018). By giving students opportunities in writing tasks that extend beyond the classroom they “learn to gain place and voice in the world, to gain the benefits of participating, and to avoid the costs of exclusion” (Bazerman, 2018, p. 326). Specifically, Bazerman (2018) speaks to either participating or being excluded, my belief of the purpose of writing is

ensuring students can successfully participate in all writing events. Students can learn the codes and rules of written language to both create writing and comprehend for their particular purpose (Mackenzie et al., 2015). Writing for tasks outside of academic purposes can enable effective communication, facilitates the exchange of ideas, and drives development in both personal and academic contexts. It enhances student ability to express thoughts clearly, connect with others, and achieve goals.

Similar to the Narrative Writing Outline, Figure 15 is a single-point rubric designed to assist teachers with reporting and to guide conversations with families about student development, directly linked to the construct model. Figure 16 is a rubric composed of "I Can" statements, intended for student use. This rubric helps set expectations, guide conferences, serve as a checklist, and further support teachers in classroom assessment.

Figure 15 Invitation Writing Single Point Rubric

Stretches & Questions	Criteria	Strengths & Connections
	<p style="text-align: center;">Contextual Impact</p> <p>Writers use a critical awareness of contextual impact and leveraging personal, educational, cultural, and social norms to construct meaning and engage effectively in writing tasks across diverse contexts.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Cognitive Resources & Processes</p> <p>Writers navigate the dynamic components of the writing process (planning, translating, and reviewing) adapting their approach based for an invitation.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Textual Resources & Processes</p> <p>Writers adapt the conventions of writing, (text structure, sentence structure, grammatical features, vocabulary) to an invitation, its audience, and purpose.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Language Resources</p> <p>Writers navigate through language systems, drawing from oral expression and other language facets to enrich their invitation. Demonstrate a clear authorial voice to effectively communicate ideas.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Multimodal Resources</p> <p>Student effectively utilizes multimodal resources to enhance their invitation and enrich the reader's experience.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Personal Resources</p> <p>Student employs personal resources to navigate writing challenges, demonstrating agency, exploration, creativity, and motivation.</p>	

Figure 16 I Can Invitation Writing Rubric

I CAN ...		Connection to Construct Model
... use a planning tool to plan my invitation		Cognitive Resources & Processes
... use words and sentences that make sense for my invitation		Textual Resources & Processes
... take my ideas and turn them into words and sentences to write an invitation		Cognitive Resources & Processes
... make my invitation clear and interesting		Language Resources
... organize my ideas to make an invitation that makes sense		Textual Resources & Processes
... make a creative and unique invitation		Personal Resources
... use what I know about people, places, and things to make a invitation		Contextual Impact
... share my message in different ways in my invitation		Multimodal Resources
... be a motivated writer that solves problems		Personal Resources

Chapter Five: Reflecting on the Assessment Process

Reflection is a component that is heavily encouraged in the teaching profession to foster improvement, growth, and resiliency. This chapter acts as my conclusion addressing the inquiry process, the product developed, and any implications or challenges that presented itself along the way. I aim to show how personal reflection can enhance our ability to be effective within the system and highlight the value of this practice.

Campano emphasizes the importance of reflection as he discusses his former students and shares, “I will never feel as though I can do my job adequately” (a statement that many of us have likely felt looking back on our careers) (2007, p. 65). This project has become my response to my feeling of *inadequately*. Thus, reflecting on assessment – it is clear that a *one size fits all* approach to learning or assessment is *inadequate*. And though researching, developing, and implementing reformed assessments methods in the classroom can be challenging, the transformation becomes the joy of it.

Known Consequences of Developed Assessment

The transition to other assessment approaches can become problematic when considering the time, resources, and complexity of what this looks like in the system (East & Slomp, 2023). Many assessment programs utilized in our classrooms, districts, and province are marketed as having a meaningful purpose, yet they often represent a substantial investment. Plus, it is inevitable that assessments are imposed on literacy educators by exterior sources (Slomp, 2020). Such corresponds with Butvilofsky and her collaborators (2020) who claim that:

There is a fairly large price tag for these assessments and interventions not only in district and school expenditures and time but also in the loss of human capital

when students are not taught to their potential and when results of assessment give false negatives in terms of growth and progress (p. 67).

When it comes to standardized assessments, the trade-offs involving learning, time consumed, human resources, financial costs, or false negatives regarding growth and progress can be harmful. The significant investment and educational policies contribute to many assessment forms are mandatory and are immovable at a classroom level.

Additionally, using alternative forms of classroom assessment, such as the writing outline proposed in this project, can be problematic due to a school district's guidelines on end-of-term or end-of-year reporting. Reporting often centers on scaling or establishing benchmarks to show student ability, which contrasts with assessment methods that focus on individual growth and learning processes. Thus, systematic change is necessary for classroom assessment reform to have a substantial impact.

It is also significant to address that this type of work takes time and effort. Foremost, the process of examining and understanding the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to establish a strong construct model. Much of my construct work extended from my previous semester, which was re-researched, reorganized, and refined. After months, I finally felt I had developed a construct model that was both clearly defined and served as a clear illustration of early year writing ability. Without a clear understanding of the construct being measured, it would be challenging to build an appropriate assessment, interpret results, and draw meaningful conclusions on student learning. The construct and what is presented within an assessment may not be considered by the designer (either a classroom teacher, large-scaled, or pre-packaged assessment) but the consequences may be detrimental to student learning. Yet, I know and have experienced the limited time and resources generalist teachers have, as it is nearly

impossible for them to take on the professional responsibility of developing a strong construct model for every aspect of their student's learning experience. Along with the obligation of constructing, administering, and understanding assessments, both classroom and mandated it is challenging to critically question if the assessments used are serving the students as intended.

Participating in the design process has given me a deeper understanding of writing ability, significantly influencing my approach to teaching and assessing writing in my first-grade classroom. This experience provided me with the necessary tools to create assessment tasks that cultivate a holistic model of writing development. This new depth of understanding goes beyond what my provincial curriculum offers, highlighting the importance of this work. Additionally, I have strengthened my ability to advocate for more ethical, just, and valid assessments within my professional context. I am building the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to foster a more equitable assessment landscape, allowing me to question accepted standards and promote a more just educational experience for all.

Similar to my previous experience, committing to assessment reform can be a lonely, timely, and laborious process. Especially in what Slomp and Elliot describe as a "era of test-based accountability" where assessment methods frequently emphasize provincial standards and outcomes (2021, p. 468). Literacy educators, who are key stakeholders and often administer assessments, often identify the problem with the large-scale assessments yet these problems are rarely addressed (Slomp, 2020). This experience for teachers makes this work difficult. A focus on traditional forms of testing can overshadow more nuanced and effective approaches to assessment, making meaningful change even more difficult to achieve. It can be challenging to engage in productive

dialogue about how literacy assessment influences effective models of literacy education (Forzani et al., 2020) and to undertake creating, administering, and communicating other forms of assessment in the classroom presents its own challenges.

Unintended Consequences of Developed Assessment

The assessment process creates an interconnectedness with broader social, cultural, political, and economic systems, highlighting its role as both a product of and a contributor to educational dynamics. Acknowledging the diversity within educational contexts and among students who undergo assessments, issues regarding fairness is increasing (East & Slomp, 2024). The concern becomes if educators professionally coincide with our current assessment practices supporting all students regardless of their linguistic, cultural, and experiential background.

Using the ToA process for this writing assessment outline, the immediate and long-term outcomes outlined were those that were intended and strived for. The writing assessment outline was designed to be flexible for teacher use to account for diversity of knowledge, skills, and dispositions students held and were developing as well as cultural, social, and linguistic diversity. The assessment developed was guided by a strong, established construct model incorporating research that addressed assessment and literacy experiences from a variety diverse group. This required careful thought about the underlying construct. The hope is that this helps ensure equitable outcomes and address potential disparities; however, it is essential to proceed with caution as the history of the effects of assessment on diverse groups promotes deficit-framing language and contributes to marginalization (Randall et al., 2024).

Randall and her collaborators pose the questions: “do assessment results serve to further marginalize minoritized populations? What groups will be privileged by this

assessment” (2014, p. 214)? By undergoing the IDAF framework, the hope is that the assessment is more culturally relevant for students but without a clear understanding of the construct, a student’s background, and acknowledging one’s personal context and standpoint can impacts their perspective when reviewing and conducting assessment results. Educators must recognize that their perspectives are shaped by their experiences and perceptions; I understand that my own lens is influenced by privilege and that I have personally benefited from the colonial experience. Without establishing and addressing these understandings, the assessment might unintentionally marginalize some students while privileging others, failing to serve all students equitably.

The ToA also emphasized the importance of the student experience within the assessment process. As the designer, it was crucial for me to create an assessment that actively engages students, rather than imposing it upon them, even for early-year learners. It is hopeful to believe that students will develop familiarity and comfort with this process, enabling them to receive better support and make more informed decisions; however, this may not apply for every learner. It is recommended that teachers engage in self-reflection and seek feedback from their students to help them adjust and alleviate from these issues. Without this practise challenging educators to use their own professional knowledge and critical thinking, I fear that this assessment outline becomes another *pull and print* template, lacking the depth and adaptability needed to truly address diverse educational needs.

Personal Impact and Path Moving Forward on Assessment

Through striving to implement more effective and personalized approaches, particularly when in evaluating student writing, I have begun to find more opportunities where my purpose and practice align more cohesively. Through my reading, thinking, and

writing for this project, I have gained new insights that have altered some of my understandings surrounding assessment. This process has allowed for deeper understandings, and it also has presented other challenges. And though, I would be proud to say my inquiry has solved all of my assessment confusion and hostility, I still find myself questioning the assessment programming that I have used or that has been mandated in my classroom and I remain lacking in solutions to what I view as problematic. My assessment pedagogy has never been (and maybe never will be) straightforward; it is mixed with uncertainty, frustration, resolutions, and then elusiveness. Nonetheless, I understand that for assessment practices to change there must be changes to an educator's understanding of assessment. This project has become a part of my journey in transforming my perspective.

This personal exploration project expanded my understanding of the various forms that assessment can take and how it can be adapted to benefit both me as a literacy teacher and the students I support. But it must be noted that this project was completed within the summer months and has yet to be implemented within my first-grade classroom. The writing assessment outline that I developed is based on theory, research, and my own professional experience as a working teacher; however, as educators are aware, not everything goes according to plan. The assessment was built to be flexible; but I cannot speak to the effectiveness based on classroom application. Although, I am excited to find out.

My goal is to demonstrate a holistic view of student development through assessment, acknowledging that it has not always been a harmless practice. I hope to create a classroom writing culture that influences teaching, assessment, and student learning, leading to a collaborative effect among all three aspects. This influences not

only classroom instruction of how educators *teach* writing but also a student's identity as a writer (Kervin et al., 2020), rather than relying on conventional products of writing and assessment strategies that reinforces a narrow view of writing and development.

The most significant personal change involves working to avoid feel constrained by the outer pressures from the system of education. I recognize that I cannot alter the mandated assessments or the required reporting formats used in the classroom; however, the assessment I choose to use can be those align better with my own pedagogy. During a personal conversation, a colleague in my graduate studies cohort asked, "if I am not fighting for my students, does that count as a vote against them?" speaking to the idea that inaction might inadvertently contribute to the challenges our students face. As well, this represents the responsibilities educators hold, not just within the classroom, but in the larger context of educational system. This project acts as a culminating piece of the development and learning I have experienced these last three years of my graduate studies; yet it is also a commitment to continue learning, questioning, and challenging the system to further promote both the student and teacher experience. Assessment should contribute to a more comprehensive educational framework that enhances teaching, learning, and assessment across the entire system. It is important to consider how measurement and assessment tools are utilized to shape both the perception and the resolution of these problems (Elmore, 2019) and teachers must consider the reasons for using assessments, determine who they are serving, and define their purpose. What I do understand, is this work extends beyond writing assessment within my classroom, the challenges surrounding assessment is deeper touching on systemic issues that affect educational equity, student engagement, and the overall effectiveness of learning.

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