



## Apply Guidelines to a Classroom

In this activity you will read two sets of descriptions, one of a kindergarten classroom and the other, a second-grade classroom. Identify which of the following *Guidelines for Creating a Positive Writing Environment* are best represented in each classroom example.

### Guidelines for Creating a Positive Writing Environment

#### Writing Routine

- Establish a predictable writing time.
- Plan for writing throughout the day, in all subject matters.

#### Writing Environment

- Create a well-stocked writing center.
- Stock the classroom library with varied texts.

#### Writing Opportunity

- Guide students to write about topics that are important to them.

#### Writing Instruction

- Read aloud quality literature.
- Model writing forms and techniques.
- Provide direct instruction on matters of mechanics and the writer's craft.
- Provide guidance and constructive feedback.

#### Sharing Writing

- Become a writer yourself and share your struggles with writing.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their writing.

Adapted from Graves, M. F., C. Juel, and B. B. Graves. *Teaching Reading in the Twenty-First Century*, 413-414.

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Read the descriptions and check off which guidelines are best represented in the classroom example. Then compare your answers to the sample answers on page 4.

### Kindergarten

Jim St. Clair explores the properties of sand and water with his kindergarten class. Later he works with Thalia to help her write about the experiment.



**Jim St. Clair:** "We try to spend a lot of time talking about what we're reading. We also try and think about the things we do; the sand being an example. When they go to the sand table, by and large they're making sand castles. But we can begin to extend their thinking by doing things like observing what they did, observing how the sand holds together -- when it has water, when it doesn't."



**Jim St. Clair:** (talking to small group) "But remember how we're trying to write something about sand?"  
**Thalia:** (describing her picture) "This is the machine... This is my Mom...These are my clothes. I forgot to draw me."  
**Jim St. Clair:** (looking at Thalia's picture) "Is that the sand? Is that a sand castle?"



**Thalia:** (writing) "I went. Wh...Wh..."  
**Jim St. Clair:** "Leave a space. I went...to"  
**Thalia:** "To...to...the number?"  
**Jim St. Clair:** "No. Not the number. It's a word"  
**Thalia:** "Tee"



**Writing Routine**



**Writing Environment**



**Writing Opportunity**



**Writing Instruction**



**Sharing Writing**

Read the descriptions and check off which guidelines are best represented in the classroom example. Then compare your answers to the sample answers on page 4.

### Second Grade

Every Monday Stacey Soto's second-grade class writes about their weekend. William reads his entry about a weekend party.



**Stacey Soto:** "Every Monday they write about their weekend. It's something they own, it's their history. When they write about their weekend, they have to give it a rating: 4 being spectacular, 1 being not so good. So it teaches them how to differentiate so that when we see their writing and we say to them, 'This is a three,' that means it's very good: it's not bad, but it's not spectacular."



**Stacey Soto:** "Conferencing with them is the number one way that they can learn because we're right there to help them, to show them."

**Stacey Soto:** (listening to William read his journal) "That's one of our words from this weekend. And what's that letter? Remember like 'other'...'Another'."



**Stacey Soto:** "William puts a lot of details in. We've really been working on vivid vocabulary and using interesting words, so the reader doesn't get bored. And he's meeting every single goal more than I had anticipated."

 Writing Routine

 Writing Environment

 Writing Opportunity

 Writing Instruction

 Sharing Writing

Here are sample answers for the guidelines best represented in the kindergarten and second-grade classroom examples.

### Kindergarten Sample Answers

-  **Writing Routine**  
Teachers plan writing activities in all subject matters, such as a response to the science experiment.
  -  **Writing Environment**  
Students write at well-stocked work centers with accessible materials.
  -  **Writing Opportunity**  
Although writing in response to the sand experiment, students are able to expand their writing to their own experiences with sand.
  -  **Writing Instruction**  
Small writing groups allow the teacher to monitor students closely and provide direct instruction when needed.
  -  **Sharing Writing**
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### Second-Grade Sample Answers

-  **Writing Routine**  
Weekend Journals establishes a weekly writing activity.
-  **Writing Environment**
-  **Writing Opportunity**  
Weekend Journals allow students the freedom to write about their own experiences and topics that are important to them.
-  **Writing Instruction**  
Teachers are able to give each student direct instruction and address specific mistakes.
-  **Sharing Writing**