Recognize the signs of a successful writer.

Teachers look at six areas of a student’s writing to identify success, as reflected in the Provincial Achievement Standards for the end of Grade 9. The memoir on this page, about one teen’s first day of high school, is an example of acceptable writing by a student at the end of Grade 9.

Content is the overall topic, degree of focus and related details. In the memoir example, the writer has presented thoughtful ideas relevant to the topic (“Breathing deeply, I finish my bowl of...”), included relevant details that enhance the ideas and maintained focus (“Thousands of people...”).

Organization means the writing has a clearly established purpose in the engaging introduction, includes transitions to show sequencing and connections (“As I walk out the door...), and finishes with a definite conclusion (“So I sit here...”).

Word choice means that interesting words and/or technical or subject-specific language (“I glare into my friend Abby’s eyes and see...”) and figurative language (“Memories surround me”) are used to enhance meaning.

Voice means that the student has skillfully connected the audience to the topic (“The year seemed to go by faster than any other year...”) and has generated strong feeling, energy and individuality (“I agreed, knowing that I would be on the ATV news in the evening...”).

Sentence structure means different kinds of sentences with a variety of complex structures are used (e.g., “Where have I seen this face before? I wonder?”). The sentence “Could this day be any different?” helps give the piece rhythmic flow.

Conventions means spelling, punctuation and grammar. In the memoir example, the student uses internal punctuation (e.g., semi-colon, apostrophe, comma) that creates fluency in the writing. Almost all words are used and spelled correctly.

You can support your teen’s development of writing strategies and behaviors.

- Provide your teen many opportunities to read different genres of writers (e.g., science fiction, biography) written by different authors.
- Support a variety of sources in which ideas and information can be gathered.
- Encourage your teen to use the Writing Revision Checklist on the attached bookmark.
- If a part of your teen’s writing is confusing, point out the specific part and explain why it confused you.
- Encourage the use of a variety of publishing formats (e.g., online blogging, pamphlets).

Tear off these handy checklists for your teen. He or she will recognize the traits of good writing and the reading strategies from school. They will support strong independent reading and writing skill development.

Writing Revision Checklist

Content
- I selected a topic with a main idea.
- I included relevant ideas or events.
- I supported my ideas with details.
- I used transitions between and within paragraphs to connect my ideas.
- I provided an appropriate conclusion.

Word Choice
- I included interesting words and specific language (strong nouns and verbs, colourful adjectives and adverbs).
- I used figurative language (e.g., metaphors, analogies, symbols) where appropriate.
- I made my reader interested in my topic.
- I showed that I care about my topic.
- I created strong feeling, energy and individuality.

Voice
- I made my reader interested in my topic.
- I showed that I care about my topic.
- I created strong feeling, energy and individuality.

Sentence Structure
- I used a variety of sentence structures.
- I used a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to make my writing flow.
- I included internal punctuation (commas, semi-colons, colons, hyphens, parentheses and apostrophes) that creates fluency in the writing.

Conventions
- I used correct spelling.
- I used correct grammar (e.g., plurals, subject/verb agreement, verb tense, all parts of speech, numbers, contractions).
Recognize the signs of a successful reader.

In Grade 9, your teen will complete a variety of literacy and information-based texts written by many different authors. Your teen and you or her teacher can tell whether your teen is reading successfully by watching for growth in the following reading behaviours, drawn from the Provincial Achievement Standards for the end of Grade 9.

**Checking clearly for understanding and adjusting and using a wide range of strategies**
Encourage your teen to analyze, synthesize and evaluate what she reads and organize significant information in notes or with graphics or organizers.

**Quickly solving unfamiliar words using a variety of clues**
Encourage your teen to use new words or signs to find the meanings of unknown or technical words.

**Automatically reading and understanding more words in a range of contexts**
Encourage your teen to read and remember important vocabulary from grade-level texts and spoken language.

**Reading familiar texts with expression and confidence, and adjusting rates to match form and purpose**
Encourage your teen to use appropriate phrasing, pacing, and tone. Keep in mind that most reading at this level is silent.

**Using context clues, prior knowledge or experience, and knowledge of text forms and features**
Encourage your teen to verify and adjust predictions while reading, and to seek information from other sources when necessary.

**Using text features (e.g., glossary, captions, charts and diagrams) to interpret and locate information**
Encourage your teen to use all of the information in a text—not just the words in the paragraphs—to interpret, integrate, and locate information.

**Reflecting on reading processes and strategies to achieve deeper understanding of content**
Encourage your teen to use the reading and fix-up strategies checklists on the attached bookmark.

Did you know?
In Grade 9, your teen will complete the English Language Proficiency Assessment (E.L.P.A.), which measures reading comprehension and writing skills. Successful completion of the E.L.P.A. is a graduation requirement for a New Brunswick high school diploma.

**Provincial Achievement Assessment**
Studies show that students who read longer each day perform higher on reading tests. Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1998) report on this strong correlation:

- New Brunswick high school diploma.
- Many nouns and technical words that are difficult to decode.
- Complex plurals and spelling patterns (e.g., afflicted, aquiver).
- Many long, multi-syllable words (e.g., abandoment, tumultuously).

The language in reading material for your teen is challenging:

**Determining Importance**
- Why is the _____ event or action important in the story?
- Whose viewpoint is represented or missing?
- Whose interests are served?
- What was the chain of events in the story?

**Interpreting**
- Visualizing. The author describes the character ____ in ____.
- What was the theme or message of the selection?
- Whose viewpoint is presented or missing?
- Whose interests are served?

**Questioning**
- What did you know before you read the text?
- How would you have solved the problem?
- What were the weaknesses or strengths of the character?
- What is the chain of events in the story?

**Inferring**
- I think ___ because it ___.
- Why is the ______ event or action important in the story?
- Whose viewpoint is represented or missing?
- Whose interests are served?

**Synthesizing**
- This information ___.
- What were the key ideas in the information you read?
- Questions you can ask:
- How would you have solved the problem?
- What was the theme or message of the selection?
- Whose viewpoint is presented or missing?
- Whose interests are served?

You can support your teen’s development of reading skills.

Teen demonstrating appropriate achievement respond to three levels of comprehension tasks. Incorporating and evaluating what you need is necessary to reading at this level. The table offers sample questions you can ask to help support your teen’s comprehension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehension Task</th>
<th>Reading “the lines”</th>
<th>Reading “between the lines”</th>
<th>Reading “beyond the lines”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions you can ask:</td>
<td>What were the key ideas in the information you read?</td>
<td>In what ways did the weaknesses or strengths of the character affect the chain of events in the story?</td>
<td>How would you have solved the problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is the event or action important in the story?</td>
<td>What is the theme or message of the selection?</td>
<td>Whose viewpoint is presented or missing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading Strategies Checklist**
I can use the following strategies and thinking to help me understand what I am reading:
- Connecting – This reminds me of the character in ___.
- Questioning – I am confused because the chart (or another text feature) seems to say something different from the text.
- Inference – I think because it says ____.
- Visualizing – The author describes it in a way that I can clearly see.
- Determining Importance – Although I find this information interesting, it is not part of the main idea.
- Synthesizing – This information has made me reconsider how I thought. 

**Fix-Up Strategies Checklist**
I can use the following strategies to help me when the text becomes confusing:
- Adjust my reading rate: slow down or speed up.
- Stop and think about what I have already read.
- Use writing to reflect about what I have read.
- Reread what I have read.
- Notice patterns in text structure.
- Reflect on reading processes and strategies to achieve deeper understanding of content.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to your child’s reading and writing success. If you have any questions about your child’s progress or about how you can be an active part of his or her learning, contact your child’s teacher or the provincial literacy team at 506-453-2812.

Contact Us
www.gnb.ca/education