

Writing Strands Placement Guidelines

The curriculum is skills-based, so students should be placed in the level that most closely matches their writing skills.

Please use the following placement evaluation to determine which level is best for your students.

Part 1

Students should be able to complete all the tasks listed for that level before starting the level. If they cannot complete all the tasks, they need to be in a lower level. Students who cannot complete all the tasks for *Beginning 1* are not ready to start the curriculum.

Students starting *Beginning 1* should:

- Understand basic sentence conventions (beginning capitalization, ending punctuation, complete sentences)
- Know basic parts of speech—noun, verb, adjective, etc.
- Be able to comfortably write 2-3 sentences at a time
- Have basic reading comprehension skills
- Be able to perform basic analysis of characters in a reading passage

Students starting *Beginning 2* should:

- Understand basic sentence conventions (beginning capitalization, ending punctuation, complete sentences)
- Know basic parts of speech—noun, verb, adjective, etc.
- Be able to comfortably write 4-5 sentences at a time
- Have basic reading comprehension
- Be able to perform basic analysis of setting in a reading passage

Students starting *Intermediate 1* should:

- Understand basic sentence conventions (beginning capitalization, ending punctuation, complete sentences)
- Use sentence variety in writing (not all sentences start or are structured the same way)
- Be able to write a paragraph comfortably
- Understand how to organize paragraphs with a topic sentence
- Have basic reading comprehension skills
- Be able to perform basic analysis of plot in a reading passage
- Be able to work with abstract concepts like narrative voice

Students starting *Intermediate 2* should:

- Understand basic sentence conventions (beginning capitalization, ending punctuation, complete sentences)
- Use sentence variety in writing (not all sentences start or are structured the same way)
- Be able to write a couple of paragraphs comfortably
- Understand how to organize paragraphs with a topic sentence and effective transitions
- Have basic reading comprehension skills
- Be able to analyze a reading passage
- Be able to work with abstract concepts like narrative voice, theme, mood, and tone

Students starting *Advanced 1* should:

- Understand basic sentence conventions (beginning capitalization, ending punctuation, complete sentences)
- Use sentence variety in writing (not all sentences start or are structured the same way)
- Be able to write multiple paragraphs comfortably
- Be able to organize paragraphs well (with topic sentences and transitions)
- Be able to construct a written argument
- Be able to analyze a reading passage comfortably
- Be able to work with abstract concepts like narrative voice, figurative language, and rhetorical devices
- Be able to write a 1-page paper without research

Students starting *Advanced 2* should:

- Understand basic sentence conventions (beginning capitalization, ending punctuation, complete sentences)
- Use sentence variety in writing (not all sentences start or are structured the same way)
- Be able to write multiple paragraphs comfortably
- Be able to organize paragraphs well (with topic sentences and transitions)
- Be able to construct a written argument
- Be able to analyze a reading passage comfortably
- Be able to research
- Be comfortable working with abstract concepts
- Be able to write a 1–2 page paper with research

Determining Placement:

Students are ready for *Beginning 1* if they can write at least 2–3 sentences in response and all their sentences are complete, with proper beginning capitalization and ending punctuation.

Students are ready for *Beginning 2* if they meet the requirements for *Beginning 1* but write 4–5 sentences.

Students are ready for *Intermediate 1* if they meet the requirements for *Beginning 2* but also wrote a paragraph (at least 4–6 sentences) with a topic sentence and used sentence variety (not all their sentences started the same way or were structured the same way.)

Students are ready for *Intermediate 2* if they meet the requirements for *Intermediate 1* but also used effective transitions.

Students are ready for either *Advanced 1* or *Advanced 2* if they meet the requirements for *Intermediate 2* but also used specific examples and clear reasoning to explain their answer. For these students, those who are comfortable with completing research assignments should be placed in *Advanced 2*, but all others should start with *Advanced 1*.