

Dysgraphia: Beyond Typing and Templates

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Today's Objectives

- What is Dysgraphia and how it impacts written language
- Explore the theoretical/cognitive basis of dysgraphia and examine some research
- Discuss subtypes and analyze assessment instruments
- Understand how the IEP and 504 processes for written language identification impact students and their rights via a case study
- Evaluate various writing interventions by subtypes of Dysgraphia
- Provide resources for further reading/watching/listening

Professional & Personal Journey

- A public School Psychologist of 30 years
- A former co-chair of the ADHD Task Force for my District
- The grandmother of a neurodiverse 13-year-old

Developmental Dysgraphia, not acquired thru injury.

What we knew early 4th Grade

- Gifted with ADHD (tested in first grade, no meds)
- Read fluently with expression, read fiction and non-fiction
- Understood what he read according to STAR testing at a 6-7th grade level
- Math was also 2 years above grade level (Beast Academy)
- Handwriting barely legible, hated to write sentences, everything was spelled phonetically.
- Loves chess and other strategic games (win or lose)
- IEP for ADHD, scribed in class as needed, project-based learning

Dysgraphia Defined: Problems with written language

Signs and symptoms of dysgraphia can include messy handwriting, inconsistency in letter spacing and capitalization, pain or discomfort when writing, fine motor skill challenges, trouble with spelling, or **trouble with composing written work**. Often kids or adults with dysgraphia **are able to express themselves when speaking, but can't seem get their thoughts onto paper**.

Cognitive Constructs

**HOW CAN WE TALK ABOUT THE
NEUROPSYCHOLOGY OF WRITTEN
LANGUAGE DISORDERS?**

Cognitive Constructs?

...we do not yet have a comprehensive theory of the processes implicated in development of writing skill, or the cognitive capacities required by these processes.

[McCloskey, Rapp, 2017](#)

Cognitive Construct Slice that pie! Dysgraphia Subtypes



- Dyslexic, Spatial, Phonological, Lexical: www.structural-learning.com/post/dysgraphia
- Visual-spatial, Fine motor, Lexical: NCLD
- Dyslexic, Motor, Spatial, Phonological, Lexical: Occupationaltherapy.com
- Nope, not going there, too complex & don't forget ADHD: NIH 2020
- Dyslexic, Phonological Coding, Language: International Dyslexia Association

Cognitive Construct 3 Subtype Model:

Feifer Assessment of Writing (FAW)

1. Graphomotor,
2. Dyslexic,
3. Executive [Functioning]

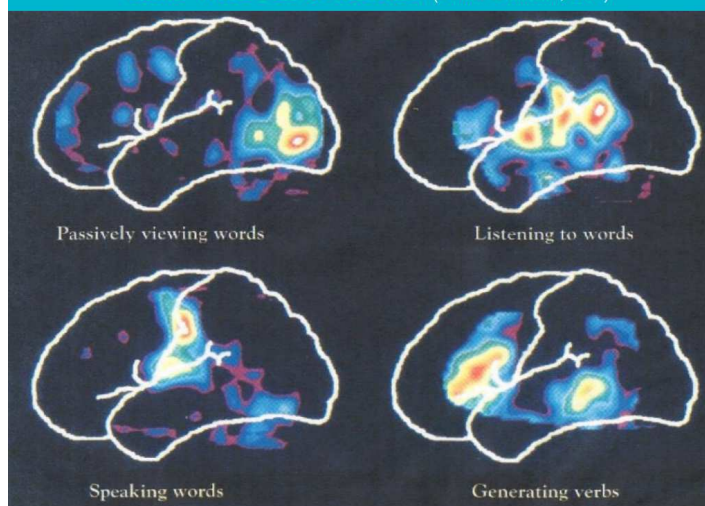
Dysgraphia is what the test measures;
You can have more than one subtype

[Feifer describes the FAW \(Video\)](#)

[NIH reviews the FAW](#)

Cognitive Construct: PET

THE WRITING BRAIN (Posner & Raichle, 1994)



[Neuropsych...written language disorders](#)

[From Dr. Feifer's webinar on FAW](#)

Cognitive Construct

Just because you're great at **reading words** doesn't mean you're great at **retrieving** and **writing** them.

HE CAN'T WRITE A COMPLEX SENTENCE...
BUT HE'S SUCH A FLUENT READER! AND HE
CAN COMPREHEND IT TOO.

How do we assess
students like this?

HE CAN'T WRITE A COMPLEX SENTENCE...
BUT HE'S SUCH A FLUENT READER!

Assessing Written Language

**ORTHOGRAPHIC, DYSLEXIC, EXECUTIVE
TESTS THAT FALL INTO THESE CATEGORIES**

Assessing Written Language
Orthographic, Dyslexic, Executive
From the *Feiffer Assessment of Writing*

1. Dyspraxia: A wide variety of motor skill deficits in which the voluntary execution of a skilled motor movement is impaired.

- Plan the execution of a motor response
- Guide motor movement
- Proprioceptive feedback
- Procedural Memory and Automaticity of Handwriting

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, Dyslexic, Executive

The DeCoste Writing Protocol - Handwriting vs. Keyboarding, plus other measures. Four Parts:

- #1&2 Comparing a student's handwriting and typing speed and accuracy for Alphabet, Best Sentence Copy, Dictated Sentence, Fast Sentence Copy, Composed Text
- #3 Spelling Skills
- #4 Extended Writing for AT evaluation
- Compared to grade level

Predictors of Dysgraphia: Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration (VMI)

Mayes 2017

- ADHD and Autism: **92%** had a weakness in graphomotor ability relative to other abilities

Mayes 2018

- **Used VMI to define Dysgraphia**
- IQ strongest correlation with Dysgraphia
- Medical Diagnosis of ADHD or Autism
 - ADHD (56%)
 - Autism (56%)
- **If ADHD or Autism student also had the following learning disabilities:**
 - LD Reading then 71% had dysgraphia
 - LD Math then 72% had dysgraphia

Special Issue on Developmental Dysgraphia

[Cognitive Neuropsychology. May/June 2017, Vol. 34 Issue 3/4, \(Prunty, 2017\)](#)

- Looking at kids with poor handwriting who **do not** have a cognitive delay
- 2 groups of kids with poor handwriting
 - With Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD-motor control)
 - With NO DCD
- 3rd group Neurotypical (NT) -- no handwriting problem, no cognitive or fine motor problem
- Using a digitized tablet for kids to write ...

ASSESSING HANDWRITING QUALITY WILL NOT TELL YOU WHAT IS GOING ON

No difference between poor handwriting of the diagnosed Developmental Coordination Disability group and...

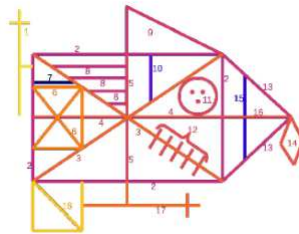
Just bad handwriting group with no DCD

How is the VMI unlike writing?



- Untimed
 - No erasing
 - Not much to write
-
- It can't answer the questions:
 - What speed are you writing (fluency)
 - Does your erasing improve your product?
 - Does writing quality decline over time (fatigue)?
 - Can you think about WHICH words to write and write at the same time? (multi-task, working memory)

Rey–Osterrieth complex figure



The classic task of copying the Rey–Osterrieth figure, where its structure is poorly perceived and incorrectly reproduced, as well as difficulties in mastering temporal notions

The Act of Copying an Entire Paragraph

- Handwriting and executive control Rosenblum 2018
 - Groups identified by a computerized system that analyzed a copied paragraph for pressure, speed, size, rewrites
 - Diagnoses of ADHD, Anxiety Autism excluded
 - BRIEF scores ARE significantly different from control group. Not Clinically significant on the BRIEF.
 - Highest correlation -- Working Memory
 - Lack of Automaticity

Summary: Handwriting Assessment:

Using a VMI alone to establish
if a student has a
written language disorder
is a very bad idea

Do not let an adequate VMI score stop you
from looking deeper

Summary: Handwriting Assessment

Intervention? Remediation?

Although efforts to improve handwriting should continue in school, dysgraphia is a neurologically-based weakness that is resistant to remediation and is present at all ages.

[\(Mayes et al. 2017\)](#)

Summary: Handwriting Assessment

Intervention? Remediation?

[In Dysgraphia] writing never reaches automaticity. It becomes one more thing that the student must think about when getting ideas on paper.

[Dr. Beth King video](#)

M's Orthographic Delays

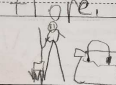
- Had a summer of 1st grade working on Handwriting Without Tears. Yielded no improvement.
- Writes several letters as disconnected parts, poor spacing and slowly.
- VMI -- 90 SS. School did not offer OT (5th).
- Types at an average rate for his age (5th).
- **Lacks automaticity despite intervention.**
- Accommodation of typing in the 4th grade, or speech to text.

Grade 3

Pick three words from your bag of words. Write three sentences of your own and draw a picture. Circle "short" if it is a short vowel sound. Circle "long" if it is a long vowel sound.

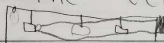
(Word) wipe short or long

Sentence: I wiped the floor.



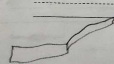
(Word) drip short or long

Sentence: The water dripped from the ceiling.



(Word) have short or long add ball

Sentence: I have pots.



Grade 5

Read these expressions and their meanings.

try to attempt
 try on to see how a piece of clothing looks on you
 try out to perform so that you may be chosen for a team, a play, or a music group

Which expression best completes each sentence?

1. My cousin wants to try out for the all-star band.
2. The dog tried to dig under the fence, but she couldn't.
3. May I try on that pair of shoes in size 6?

Write a paragraph using all three expressions in the box.

4. My 11 year Went to try out for the get the dog tried to dig the dog wanted to try on the dog costume

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, **Dyslexic**, Executive

- **Dysphonetic Dysgraphia:** Problems due to phonological-based spelling issues
- **Surface Dysgraphia** Trouble writing phonetically *irregular* words with intact phonologically based non-word spelling
- Some of **both**

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, **Dysphonetic-Dyslexic**, Executive

- **WJ IV Oral Language**
 - Phonological awareness, blending, segmenting
 - Rapid naming
- **CTOPP-2**
 - Segmenting, blending nonsense words
- **TAPS-4**
 - Phonological Process Index
- **WIAT Dyslexia Screener III, IV**

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, **Dyslexic**, Executive

Pearson Dyslexia Toolkit

SCREEN	ASSESS	INTERVENE	MONITOR
Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen™	Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement™, Third Edition (KTEA™-3) Comprehensive Form	Intervention Guide for LD (Learning Disability) Subtypes	Review360® for SLPs
aimswebPlus®	Process Assessment of the Learner, Second Edition™: Diagnostics for Reading and Writing (PAL™-II Reading and Writing)	Process Assessment of the Learner (PAL™) reading and writing lessons	aimswebPlus
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement™, Third Edition (KTEA™-3) Brief Form	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test®, Third Edition (WIAT®-III)	KTEA-3 teaching objectives and intervention statements WIAT-III intervention goal statements	Growth Scale Value (GSV) Scores
Dyslexia index scores from the KTEA-3 and WIAT®-III	Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests™, Third Edition (WRMT™-III)	SPELL-Links™ to Reading & Writing SPELL-Links Class links for Classrooms™	

OK School Psychological Association A. Kimbell, PhD 2019

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, **Surface Dyslexic**, Executive

OWLS II

KTEA III

TILLS

WIAT 5 (not 4): write phonetically irregular words (in person)

TOWL 4: write words, reg and irregular (elementary level)

Woodcock-J Tests of Ach: write words

For the rest, you must **READ** irregular words, not spell them.

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, **Surface Dyslexic**, Executive

Surface Dyslexia $=$ Surface Dysgraphia
BUT...
Surface Dysgraphia \neq Surface Dyslexia

**Reading (lexia) is Recognizing,
but Writing (graphia) is Retrieval**

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, **Dyslexic**, Executive

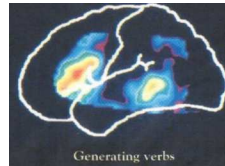
Surface Dysgraphia for M:

- Reads “cough, dough, though, through drought, taught” fluently and knows what they mean, without context.
- Writes *farm car send trap* correctly
- **Misspells phonetically irregular words**

M's SURFACE DYSGRAPHIA

- Misspells phonetically irregular words that he can read

riting
wrighting



"After I write a word, I look at it. I can tell it's misspelled. So I erase it and try again, and it looks wrong, so I try again. I spell by brute force."

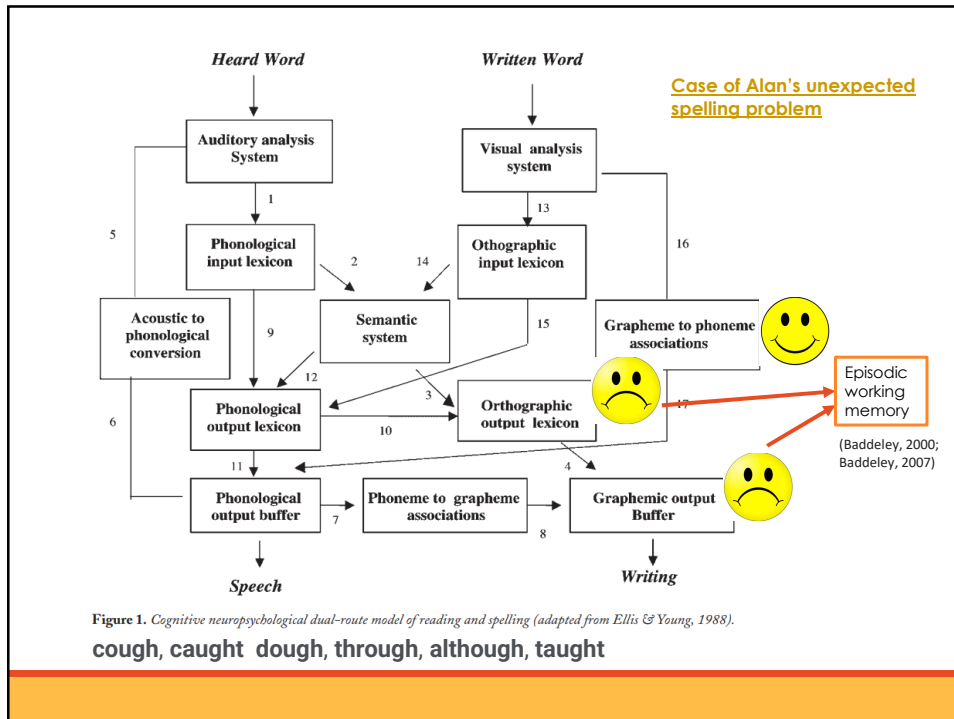


Figure 1. Cognitive neuropsychological dual-route model of reading and spelling (adapted from Ellis & Young, 1988).

cough, caught dough, through, although, taught

NOW WE KNOW THAT M HAS:

- a lack of automaticity in writing
- surface dysgraphia without dyslexia
- a weak grapheme output buffer (retrieving and holding onto letters)

...HE ALSO HAS ADHD

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, Dyslexic, **Executive**

- Retrieving words from your own thoughts
- Writing and thinking at the same time
- Holding multiple things in memory long enough to get them on paper
- Arranging thoughts in a logical, sequential way

Feifer Assessment of Writing

Assessing Written Language Orthographic, Dyslexic, Executive

- Retrieving words (elaborating, using advanced vocabulary)
- Writing and listening/thinking at the same time (note-taking)
- Holding multiple things in memory long enough to get them on paper (summarizing, reading multiple paragraphs then answering questions)
- Arranging thoughts in a logical, sequential way (putting main ideas and details in the right place)

Most of the above is also true of a **language-based learning disability**. Higher level oral language testing may catch these students.

Assessing Written Language Orthographic, Dyslexic, Executive

Initiating	* Poor idea generation * Poor independence
Sustaining	* Lose track of thoughts * Difficulty finishing * Sentences disjointed
Inhibiting	* Impulsive/Distractable
Shifting	* Perseverations * “Stuck” on topic
Poor Word Retrieval	* Limited word choice * Simplistic sentences

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, Dyslexic, **Executive**

STUDY:

- Students with and without dysgraphia (handwriting quality) were given the BRIEF.
- Kids with diagnosed Au, ADHD, & other diagnoses excluded.
- Age/gender match to controls.
- BRIEF score correctly sorted students in Dysgraphia & No Dysgraphia groups **98.4% of the time**.
- **Strongest difference was in BRIEF working memory.**

[Handwriting and executive control Rosenblum 2018](#)

Assessing Written Language

Orthographic, Dyslexic, **Executive**

- **BRIEF** working memory
 - [Handwriting and executive control Rosenblum 2018](#)
- The **Comprehensive Assessment Battery for Children – Working Memory** (CABC-WM)
- Phonological Working Memory, Visuospatial Working Memory, Binding tasks (nothing written)
- **WJ IV Tests of Achievement** (nothing over a sentence)

Assessing Written Language Try Parts of These:

TOMAL: Test of Memory and Learning

PAL II: Process Assessment of the Learner: Read-Write revised

WRMAL 2: Wide Ranch Assessment of Memory & Learning

KTEA: 3 Kaufman Test of Achievement: Complementary Tests

W-J 2: Woodcock Johnson: Retrieval Fluency

Slingerland Tests #2, 5

NEPSY: Memory and Learning Clusters

**Subtests: The *most* Retrieval, the *most* writing,
with the *least* Recognition; and are Timed,**

Assessing Written Language Orthographic, Dyslexic, **Executive**

Each section makes beautiful music but what's missing?



"Dad put Siggy's cat vest and his leash on him and we took him for a walk, but he mostly just sat down and refused to move. Dad said, "Look over there, do you see the bunny?". There was a little bunny under a bush scared to death that it might get eaten. His little ears were flat against his head and he was trying to make himself really small. But Siggy didn't make a move to eat him"



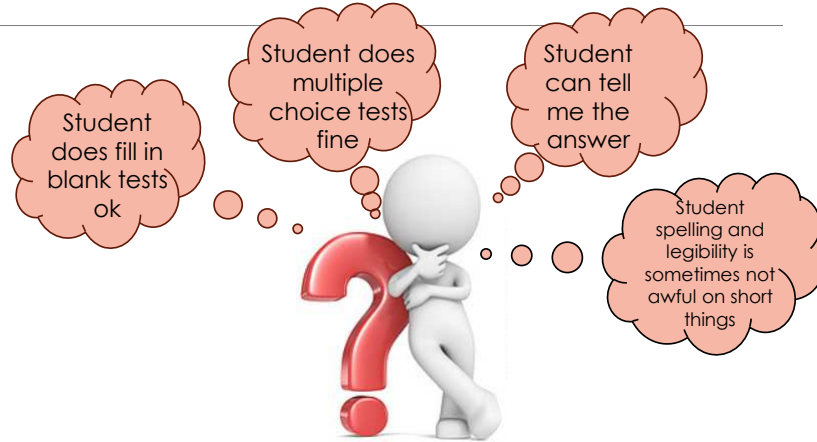
I walked my kiffon
Siggy. We went to d
has sydra. We saw
a very scared bunny.
after a while we
went back inside



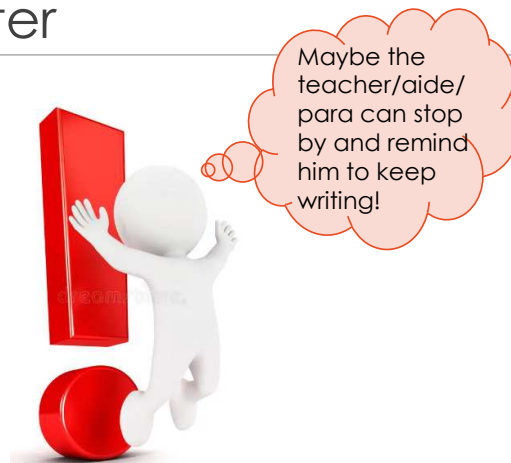
Now we know that M lacks automaticity of writing, has Surface Dysgraphia without Dyslexia, and has Executive Dysgraphia

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT THE TEACHERS SEE

Why is a child so bright with such great reading comprehension writing so poorly?



Maybe he's just a lazy, inattentive, unmotivated ADHD writer



We will give the student
Accommodations!



Hi. Here's your headset and computer with Grammarly and Speech-to-Text. Let me know if you need Google read/write. See you at graduation!



Oh, there's a Para in your class who will sometimes scribe and tell you to get back to work. Here are some templates too.

Who is going to help the student to:

- Find the right tools: speech to text apps, typing programs, and *learn how to use them?*
- Understand accommodations and practice asking for them?
- Learn to take notes in a modified way or find ways to enhance memory for new concepts?
- Make a simple sentence into a complex one?
- Find strong words that are hard to retrieve from memory that student uses in his oral expression?
- Use thinking maps and other templates and planners?
- Figure out how to modify a required project so it fulfills the goals?
- Figure out where to start and know what "finished" is?

Chalkbeat Colorado

August 31, 2023

These Latina moms in Boulder are concerned about equity in advanced courses. The district says it's listening and responding.

"Some moms say they've been told by teachers or school administrators that their children with Autism or ADHD who need support, can't receive assistance in advanced classes....they have been told they could get private tutoring outside school, or keep their children in general ed classes."

2007

IDEIA- kids with disabilities get access to accelerated GT services

Who is going to help M?

- In high school 50-60 percent of the day is spent writing
- Writing crosses all subject areas
- Even math and science requires written explanations

OCR Dec. 2007

Assess Cognitive

- **GAI** General Ability Index, which excludes the Processing Speed and Working Memory Indices from overall score
- **WMI** Is it a relative or absolute weakness?
- **PSI** is timed pencil work. Relative or absolute weakness?

Popular, Comprehensive Tests of Written Language

TOWL, WIAT4, CMAS, FAW

COMPREHENSIVE & STAND ALONE

Tests of Written Language

TOWL Test of Written Language

- **Contrived Writing:** writing individual sentences.
 - **Vocabulary:** measures skill in writing sentences with specific words.
 - **Spelling:** measures skill in writing dictated sentences.
 - **Punctuation:** scored from same dictated sentences. Also scored for capitalization.
 - **Logical Sentences:** edit illogical sentences.
 - **Sentence Combining:** combine sentences in the best way.
- **Spontaneous Writing:** Write a story about a picture.

Tests of Written Language

TOWL Test of Written Language

Composite	Composite Index	Percentile	Descriptive Term
Contrived Writing (Vocabulary, Spelling, Punctuation, Logical Sentences & Sentence Combining)	135	99	Very Superior
Spontaneous Writing (Contextual Conventions & Story Composition)	93	32	Average
Overall Writing (Vocabulary, Spelling, Punctuation, Logical Sentences, Sentence Combining, Contextual Conventions & Story Combining)	124	95	Superior

Individual Subtest Scores

Subtest	Scaled Score	Percentile	Descriptive Term
Vocabulary	18	99	Very Superior
Spelling	13	84	Average
Punctuation	12	75	Average
Logical Sentences	17	99	Above Average

Tests of Written Language

Doe vs Cape Elizabeth School District

First Circuit Court of Appeals ultimately found that a student's grades and overall school performance can be one factor considered in determining eligibility under the IDEA, the court also made it clear that the grades or school performance considered **must be narrowed to those components related to the student's suspected academic or functional deficiencies.**

Tests of Written Language

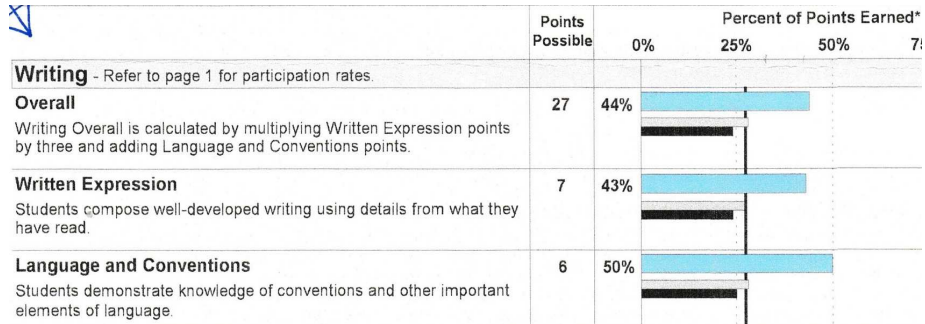
All have similar weaknesses

OWLS II	Combine grammar with paragraph writing
KTEA III	Provide cues such as pictures for paragraph writing
TILLS	Include lots of fill in the blanks and multiple choices, recognize, no retrieval
WIAT 4	
TOWL	Few items in spelling, no timed writing fluency. Easy for MS
CMAS	does separate out writing a paragraph

Tests of Written Language CMAS

Colorado Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies

4th Grade

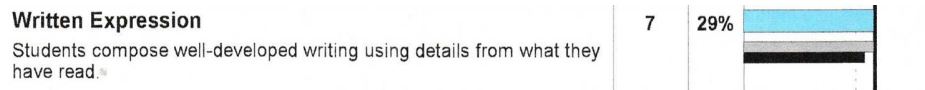


Tests of Written Language CMAS CMAS Written Expression for M

4th Grade



5th Grade



6th Grade



Tests of Written Language

Feifer Assessment of Writing

Description of Indices


- **Graphomotor Index:** Trace partial letters, like coding but colors to letters, copy letters, words, sentences in defined spaces.
- **Dyslexic Index:** Choose correctly spelled word with picture cue, Written Spelling test.
- **Executive Index:** Write one sentence using a prompt when given a choice of words to use and you have to use two, Sequence random cards to create a paragraph, Name four items in a category, Think of a category that three words belong to, Write a detailed paragraph on a specific topic in 5 minutes.
- **Compositional Writing Index (supplemental):** Copy Editing, Story Mapping, and expository writing

[Video summary of the FAW](#)

[Sample FAW scores and Report](#)

[Feifer Ppt to CASP](#)

FAW Score Summary

Subtest	Raw score	Standard score	Index standard score	Percentile rank	
Alphabet Tracing Fluency (ATF)	21	105		63	
Motor Sequencing (MS)	20	+ 95		37	
Copying Speed (CS)	17	+ 95		37	
Motor Planning (MP)	7	+ 75		5	
Graphomotor Index (GI)		= 370	90	25	
Homophone Spelling (HS)	31	86		18	
Isolated Spelling (IS)	53	+ 104		61	
ABC	Dyslexic Index (DI)		= 190	94	34
Executive Working Memory (EWM)	2	64		1	
Sentence Scaffolding (SS)	9	+ 86		18	
Retrieval Fluency (RF)	28	+ 102		55	
Expository Writing (EW)	6	+ 78		7	
Executive Index (EI)		= 330	76	5	
GI + DI + EI = FAW Total Index (TI)		= 890	83	13	
Supplemental Index					
Expository Writing (EW)	6	78		7	
Copy Editing (CE) <i>optional</i>	32	+ 106		66	
Story Mapping (SM) <i>optional</i>	7	+ 74		4	
 Compositional Writing Index (CWI)	= 258		82	12	

Note: "—" indicates the value could not be calculated due to missing data. "n/a" indicates the value could not be calculated because the examinee's grade falls outside the administration grade range for this subtest.

Tests of Written Language

Feifer Assessment of Writing

Compositional Writing Index				
Standard score: 82				
Index	Standard score	Absolute difference	Significance level	Base rate
Graphomotor Index (GI)	90	8	.01	≤1%
Dyslexic Index (DI)	94	12	.01	≤1%
Executive Index (EI)	76	6	.01	≤1%
Total Index (TI)	83	1	<i>ns</i>	>15%

Note. "—" indicates that the value could not be calculated due to missing data.
Discrepancies in bold are statistically significant at $p < .05$

EI interpretation Sample's overall Executive Index (EI) standard score was 76, which was in the Moderately Below Average range of functioning and in the 5th percentile compared to her same-grade peers. This score suggests that her executive skills were an absolute weakness.

CWI Interpretation Sample's overall Compositional Writing Index (CWI) standard score was 82, which was in the Below Average range of functioning and in the 12th percentile compared to her same-grade peers. This score suggests that her compositional writing skills were an absolute weakness.

Accommodations

- Scribe, Speech to text, Grammarly
- Due on following Monday instead of Friday
- Break apart the task and give intermediate deadlines. Midweek check on progress and on planner.
- Use templates specific to writing assignment.
- Fill-in-the-blank note-taking. Fill-in planner. Teach and check usage.
- When content important, alternative ways to demonstrate knowledge.

Dysgraphia Interventions: Research

There are no studies with a control group or matched subjects that compare two writing programs

...”the fact remains that there is a general lack of methodologically sound research into reading programs for those with dyslexia. In July 2010, the U.S. Department of Education reported that it had not been able to identify a single method or approach for dyslexia or learning disabilities that is supported by strong research. See more detail at the” [What Works Clearing House](#).

Dysgraphia Interventions

Quote from Denver Academic Tutor

“It’s a bit like the Wild West for writing in Colorado”

”Frankly, writing has only recently begun to be carefully monitored by schools and ... taught district wide, ... every teacher has their own interpretation of what needs to happen and I've seen a lot! Oh brother, I've seen a lot!”

A Denver academic tutor

Dysgraphia Interventions

Classroom Curricula

- **Six Traits of Writing:** This approach focuses on six traits of effective writing - ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. Teachers guide students through each trait to help them develop their writing skills, including paragraph formation.
- **Step Up to Writing:** This program often uses color-coded strategies to help students understand the different parts of a paragraph and how to structure their writing logically.
- **Writer's Workshop:** Writer's Workshop is a student-centered approach where students engage in the entire writing process, from brainstorming ideas to revising and publishing. It emphasizes individualized instruction and peer feedback.
- **Write from the Beginning and Beyond:** This program emphasizes writing across different genres and provides structured steps for teaching paragraph and essay writing.
- **Lucy Calkins Units of Study:** Developed by Lucy Calkins, this approach provides a framework for teaching writing through mini-lessons, conferencing, and guided practice.
- **Empowering Writers:** This program uses a step-by-step approach to teach writing skills, including paragraph construction, by breaking down the process into manageable tasks.
- **Write Source:** This program offers comprehensive writing resources for students and teachers, including guidelines for paragraph writing and essay development.
- **Handwriting Without Tears:** While primarily focused on handwriting, this program often includes components to teach early writing skills, which can include paragraph formation.
- **Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC):** Used mainly in high schools, this program is designed to prepare students for college-level reading and writing by focusing on expository and argumentative writing.

Dysgraphia Interventions

Structured Literacy vs Balanced Literacy (dyslexia)

Structured Literacy

Systematic, Diagnostic
Cumulative

Explicit: Phonology
Morphology

Syntax, Grammar, Semantics

Balanced Literacy

Text-based activities

Shared and guided reading

Use pictures and context to
guess words

Less focus on decoding

[Thrive Ed Services](#)

Dysgraphia Interventions

Balanced Literacy is inadequate for struggling readers **and writers!**

Students need a Structured Approach to writing

Dysgraphia Interventions

How does student get from...

Read this

Write if you agree/disagree

English has become an important language for several reasons. Firstly, it allows people from different nations to talk with each other. For example, if people can talk in their native language and know some English also, you can talk to them. Also, English is important in education. There are many academic books that are in the English language that students need to read. It is also an important language on the internet ...



Name: _____

PARAGRAPH PLANNER

Topic: _____ Purpose: Inform/Explain

Main Idea: _____

Detail #1 _____ Detail #2 _____

Detail #3 _____ Concluding Sentence _____

Dysgraphia Interventions

Small group, 1:1 interventions. Popular in Homeschooling

- **EIW:** Essentials in Writing
- **IEW:** Institute for Essentials in Writing
- **WriteShop** for Middle in High School

Dysgraphia Interventions

[EIW: Essentials in Writing](#)

- Each step is modeled with a separate video lesson
- Each composition begins with a graphic organizer to help students get their thoughts on paper visually without having to write any sentences
- Each composition is broken down into 5 steps (5 separate lessons) **brainstorm, organize, draft, revise, final draft**
- Paragraphs start with the details/facts of the composition. Student tries to include details from their writing plans. The intro and conclusion are written last.
- Starts with sentence structure before going into paragraphs

Dysgraphia Interventions

IEW Institute for Excellence in Writing

Sample Unit of instruction

—Pick 3 most important words from each sentence—

Key Word Outline _____

- I. _____
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____

- Strong Verb (s.v.)
- Quality Adjective (q.a.)
- -ly Adverb (-ly)
- Who/Which Clause (w/w)
- Prepositional Phrase (p.p)
- Because Clause (b/c)

History of Wild Cats

Cats in ancient Egypt were venerated for killing rodents and venomous snakes.^[23] The need to keep rodents from consuming or contaminating grain crops stored for later human consumption may be the original reason that cats were domesticated. The spread of cats throughout much of the world is thought to have originated in Egypt. Scientists do not agree on whether cats were domesticated in Ancient Egypt or introduced there after domestication.

Phoenician traders brought them to Europe for control of rat populations, and monks brought them further into Asia. Roman armies also contributed to the spreading of cats and eventually brought them to Britain.^[24]

Since then, cats continued to be introduced to new countries, often by sailors or settlers. Cats are thought to have been introduced to Australia in either the 1600s by Dutch shipwrecks, or the late 1700s by English settlers.^{[16][25]} These domesticated cats began to form feral populations after their offspring began living away from human contact.

Dysgraphia Interventions

WriteShop

<https://writeshop.com/writeshop-ii-overview/>

Unit 2: Informative Writing

8	Explaining a Process
9	Writing a Factual Paragraph
10	Writing a Concise Biography
11	Introducing Journalism

Unit 3: Narrative Writing

12	Writing a Narrative of an Emotional Event
13	Writing a Narrative of Another Person's Experience
14	First-Person Point of View
15	First-Person Point of View
16	Third-Person Point of View

-12-

Skills that are introduced OR reviewed and practiced

WriteShop I
grades 7-11*

WriteShop II
grades 8-12

Skills that are introduced OR reviewed and practiced	WriteShop I grades 7-11*	WriteShop II grades 8-12
BRAINSTORMING & ORGANIZING		
Narrow a topic from general to specific	✓	✓
Use brainstorming worksheets and graphic organizers	✓	✓
Use mindmaps and charts to plan and organize information	✓	✓
Answer <i>who, what, when, where, why, and how?</i>	✓	
Interview a subject about a personal experience	✓	
Make an outline		✓
STRUCTURE		
Write strong topic and closing sentences	✓	✓
Write complex sentences	✓	✓
Write a well-developed paragraph	✓	✓
Use transition words	✓	✓
Write a summary statement for a news article	✓	
Write a thesis statement		✓
Write 3- to 5-paragraph essays		✓
Use parallelism		✓
COMPOSITION WRITING		
Write original descriptive narratives and compositions	✓	✓
Start sentences in different ways and vary sentence length	✓	✓
Use concrete, descriptive vocabulary	✓	✓
Write concisely	✓	✓
Write in active voice and avoid "be" verbs	✓	✓
Use tense correctly	✓	✓
Choose a point of view	✓	✓
Develop voice and show emotion	✓	✓
Use figures of speech	✓	✓
NONFICTION AND ESSAY WRITING		

Dysgraphia Interventions

Not sequential or cumulative

- [From Talking to Writing 2nd edition](#), Haynes & Jennings (Landmark School)
- **[The Writing Revolution: A Guide to Advancing Thinking Through Writing in All Subjects and Grades](#)**, Hochman & Wexler
- [Touch-Type Read and Spell](#)
- [wvced.com](#)

Dysgraphia Interventions

Not sequential or cumulative

Research Based Strategies: not a program [Graham & Perrin 2007](#)

Writing Strategies

Summarization

Collaborative Writing

Specific product Goals

Word processing

Sentence Combining

Below . 32 (modest effect) Prewriting, Inquiry activities, [Process writing approach](#) (think, research, drafts, revise, edit, feedback), study models of good writing,

Dysgraphia Interventions

Not sequential or cumulative

Strategies for Writing from Academic Therapists

- Don't start with a blank page. Put the prompt on each page.
- Instead of working off the prompt, start with asking questions.
- Start by asking the student questions on the topic and write down what the student says.
- Include questions that reference the student's life.
- Just get a brain dump and organize later.
- Don't worry about full sentences. Fragments are fine. Later for spelling and mechanics
- Graphic organizers with sentence stems and/or questions.
- Build the introduction and the conclusion *after* you have the body.
- Find or draw a picture to spark thinking. Caption the pics.

[Learn Smarter Podcast](#)

Dysgraphia Interventions

Not sequential or cumulative

From the Landmark School

- Start with sentences and build more complex ones
- Create titles for short paragraphs
- Create talking bubbles for comics
- Put “brain dumps” into subject groups

[Video:Overcoming
Dysgraphia and Writing
Challenges](#)

Letter to the Teacher

- If there is an IEP or 504, mention it
- Give enough specificity that teachers know strengths and challenges
- Lots of practical suggestions for classroom instruction
- Something also for the SPED teacher
- Emphasizing home-school communication without being too demanding
- Include parent contact info

Dear Teacher, I hope this letter helps you understand our child, _____, who is in your class. _____ faces some challenges due to Dysgraphia, ADHD, and a Written Language Disorder. Here are some areas where he may struggle:

Coming up with ideas for writing: _____ sometimes finds it difficult to think of what to write about.

Recalling words: He may have trouble remembering and using high-quality words and phrases that match his strong oral vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Organizing his writing: Putting the main ideas and details in the right place can be challenging for him.

Spelling irregular words: _____ might have difficulty with spelling words that are not phonetically regular- not reading them

All of these challenges are part of the writing process, which can be particularly tough for someone with ADHD, and executive functioning problems. It can make writing and note-taking, which require both listening and writing, a frustrating task. As a result, you may notice moments of inattention and incomplete work. However,

_____ tends to do better with certain types of tasks, such as answering questions orally, taking multiple-choice quizzes, or completing fill-in-the-blank quizzes. These formats help with word retrieval and make it more about recognizing the right answer rather than recalling it from memory. To support _____ in your class, here are some accommodations and interventions that have been helpful:

Communication: Please let _____, the SPED teacher, and us, his parents, know if he's falling behind on classwork or if he hasn't turned in an assignment.

Technology: _____ can use his school computer to type and utilize Grammarly for writing assistance.

Special Paper: When handwriting is required, using lined or specially designed paper with boundaries can help him organize his writing.

Oral Assignments: Consider allowing him to complete some assignments orally or through recording.

Reduced Copying: Minimize the amount of copying required for assignments.

Note-Taking Support: Provide a notetaker, scribe, or copies of notes. Alternatively, scaffold note-taking with fill-in-the-blank notes.

Reminders: Gentle reminders to stay focused on his work can be helpful.

Word and Composition Support: Aid his word retrieval and composition organization with sentence stems, word banks, and questions, with the use of Thinking Maps, Templates, or outlines.

It's important to note that _____'s difficulty doesn't seem to extend to numbers or remembering what he has read. His challenges are specifically related to remembering how words are spelled and organizing written language.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact _____

SAMPLE

Assistive Technology

Read&Write for Google Chrome: Reads to you and predicts next word.

Inspiration Maps App Diagrams transform to outlines and back again. Built-in templates or create your own. Add hyperlinks, audio. Integrates with Dragonspeak.

Grammarly Does not work in Google Slides or MS Ppt. Yes Canva.

OrbitNote: Convert pdf to documents you can type on and put in Google Drive. Have it read to you. Put in drawings...

QuillBot: Synonyms for any number of words in your sentence - casual to professional. Shorten or lengthen sentences. AI and Plagiarism check.

Hemmingway: Will show you your weak phrases and words. Free version shows. AI (paid) version will correct.

Word Tune: Generative AI: Choose sentences from several suggestions. Works in Chrome.

<https://grammarist.com/category/writing-tools/>

Assistive Technology Math Apps

MOD MATH: For iPad

Kami: A suite of many apps, including math, pdf, etc.

GeoGebra: Tools and resources

Efofex: Can be used on SAT. Not for Elementary. Chemistry & Physics, too

Kiwiwrite: Elementary including equations, simple calculator

Kiddom: App works with Illustrative Math, Open Up Math, Open Sci education, Core knowledge, Odell Education

Assistive Technology

(Likely out date in 6 months)

- AI part of all apps
- Plagiarism checks outdated
- [Otter ai](#)
- [Glean](#)
- [My Homework](#) -- Planner pulls from Schoology, Google classroom

[Smart Kids with LD](#)

Assistive Technology

What will be the right help?

- Audio to text (transcribe)
- Transcript pairs with slides
- Create searchable pdf of text
- Create an outline of text
- Summarize text
- Pick out keywords
- Create Practice tests from materials
- AI answers questions you have about text

[Smart Kids with LD](#)

Take-aways: General

- Dysgraphia is NOT just bad handwriting!
- Accommodations are not enough for most students who struggle with Dysgraphia. They need a structured, intensive sequential intervention guided by special education.
- Any intervention must be individualized to the student and their unique pattern of gifts and challenges.
- Using technology helps free many students to tap into their higher-level thinking. It's not cheating.

Take-aways: Assessment

- A decent VMI does not rule out Dysgraphia or a written language disorder. Multiple-choice and short-answer assessments are also insufficient.
- If you screen/assess with fill-in-the-blank or use picture cues, you are providing accommodations for students with working memory and organization problems. You may not see the severity of their issues.
- If a subtest has **no time limit**, you are not calculating how painfully long it takes a child to come up with a response.
- Tasks performed well in isolation may be performed poorly when combined with others due to EF weaknesses
- If you combine a score for paragraph writing with grammar (generally a fill in blank or single sentence) to get an overall writing score, you will raise the composite score and **obscure weaknesses**

Additional Resources

in Ppt & Here's More

- Dysgraphia Life: Good info, great webinars
- Learn Smarter Podcast: Writing
- Support Dysgraphia in the classroom: Keep scrolling to see it all. Not all are right for every student or classroom.

Thanks for attending

More questions?

Got any advice for *my* dysgraphia journey?

Contact me: Sheila Lepkin
<srlepin@gmail.com>

Questions about Selective Mutism? I'm the Colorado Coordinator for the Selective Mutism Association.