1952

Evaluative criteria in written language for elementary grades

Loughlin, Marie Elizabeth

Boston University

http://hdl.handle.net/2144/23039

Boston University
Boston University
School of Education

Service Paper

Evaluative Criteria In Written Language
For Elementary Grades

Submitted by
Marie Elizabeth Loughlin
(B.S. in Ed., Framingham State Teachers College, 1945)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education

1952
First Reader: James F. Baker
Assistant Professor of Education

Second Reader: Donald D. Durrell
Professor of Education
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I  THE PROBLEM</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of the problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II  REVIEW OF RESEARCH</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III PROCEDURES</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the materials</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury members participating</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury criticisms</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative criteria in written language</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV  SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE CRITERIA</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BIBLIOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDIX</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem.-- This thesis has been developed to help set up criteria to evaluate the written language area of an elementary school. The criteria consist of specific statements indicating desirable conditions and procedures in the written language area of the elementary school program. Such statements should furnish a means for teachers to examine and evaluate the effectiveness of their own work.

Justification of the problem.-- The above problem may be justified by reason of the following three factors:

1. Effective written language programs have gone through a period of transition from emphasis on drill and so forth, which was practice ten years ago, to emphasis upon meaningful application of all written language activities.

2. Extensive research in area of written language reveals improved techniques, and thus indicates a need for evaluation of present written language in light of new developments.

3. Extensive use of the Evaluative Criteria of the Co-operative Study of Secondary School Standards indicates the validity of materials and procedures of this organization and points out the need of similar instrument in the elementary school.
In light of these three factors, it appears particularly important that teachers reevaluate instruction in written language in light of up to date theory and practice. As no device is available which indicates specifically these standards, there appears to be definite need for some such instrument as indicated in the problem which is the purpose of this service paper.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH

"Aside from signatures on various forms of written exercises and from labels and titles composed to identify pictures, objects, and written exercises, letters and invitations are likely to be the first kind of purposeful written language activities in which children engage."  

Paul McKee\(^2\) classifies written language activities as follows:

"(1) letter writing; (2) keeping records; (3) filling in forms; (4) writing announcements and advertisements; (5) writing reports, reviews, and summaries; (6) making a bibliography; (7) making notes, outlines, memoranda, etc. (8) creative writing; (9) theme writing; and (10) the use of standard scales."

Letters are the most important avenue of written expression for a great majority of people. Consequently the child must learn that the letter should be thoughtfully planned and carefully written in each specific situation.

James A. Fitzgerald\(^3\) states the following in his doctoral thesis:

"A survey of children's letters and a review of the common knowledge relative to letter writing in general suggest this brief summary concerning child letter writing:


3/Charles L. Robbins (Editor), University of Iowa Studies in Education, Doctoral Theses in Education I, 1934, Volume IX, Number 1, Published by the University, Iowa City, p. 47.
1. The child should realize that a long letter is not always to be desired; a short letter may be better.

2. He should see the value of sincerity in letter writing.

3. He should understand that his own experiences and activities are interesting to his friends.

4. He should recognize the obligations involved in the various specific occasions which demand letter writing.

5. He should learn to write sensitively and appropriately in the situations which call for expressions, such as condolence, congratulation, or thanks.

6. He should understand the possibilities for happiness in writing and receiving letters.

7. He should develop a style of his own. Charm and creative power in child letter writing are ideals not unattainable if supervisors, teachers, and pupils project a plan and co-operate in its execution.

The schools of today use many interesting situations to motivate letter writing.

"In addition to utilizing real situations that arise, the program in letter-writing must make provision for definite practice periods. During these periods the children should engage in direct practice upon the more technical aspects of letter writing." 1/

For example, the practice may refer to the capitalization and punctuation of the address or salutations. It may also involve the placing and punctuation of the address and return on sheets of paper cut the size of an envelope. Such work should involve only the skills that have arisen in connection with real situations.

1/Paul McKee, op. cit., p. 170.
To insure a greater carry-over to out-of-school hours, it would seem desirable to encourage children to use certain periods of school time to write letters that have their motivation and identification in life outside the school.

Children have real need for written records from time to time. For instance, they may need a list of pupil helpers, of classroom jobs to be done, and of materials to assemble for some enterprise. They may wish to keep a record of plans for an activity, or write down the story of some intriguing experience:

"In the beginning, the teacher does the writing for them; but, as the children gradually master manuscript writing, they acquire the ability to record their own ideas—usually through copying what the teacher has written for them, then through independent effort." 1/

In addition, records may help to build a feeling of the value of concrete experiences as a means of learning. All records should grow out of or occur in connection with numerous concrete experiences.

In most modern schools the child is frequently faced with the need of filling in forms. The proper teaching of content subjects and the utilization of numberous concrete experiences demand it. Paul McKee 2/ lists the following important ones:

"(1) writing money orders to various firms when purchasing materials to use in other school work;

(2) filling in library forms such as library loan cards and call slips; (3) filling in school questionnaires regarding personal history or health; (4) filling in school enrollment cards; (5) filling in the blanks of a standardized test; (6) filling in blank forms connected with the school bank such as a deposit slip, a withdrawal slip, application to become a depositor, etc.; (7) filling in a subscription blank for a magazine; (8) filling in a mail order blank or articles purchased; and (9) filling in a coupon offering free pamphlets for samples."

The teaching of filling in forms should be carried on in a fashion quite similar to that proposed for letter writing. Real situations arising in school in which forms should be filled in must be utilized.

"Authorities in language instruction recommend definite steps in building up the fundamental skills involved in independent writing. These are: (1) copywork, (2) studied dictation, (3) unstudied dictation, (4) the unfinished story and (5) independent writing."\footnote{Mildred Dawson states the standard for all copywork and studied dictation perfection- one hundred per cent accuracy.}

After copywork and dictation have been practiced the child works with an unfinished story. In an unfinished story, the beginning of a simple story is copied from the blackboard or chart, or written from dictation. The teacher then suggests that the children imagine how the story might end and supply the ending in their own words.

As soon as the more advanced children develop the ability to write down their own ideas, they should be permitted to do so. Naturally there will be some words that they cannot spell.
Miss Dawson suggests the following:

"1. The children may be asked to think through their proposed stories, and of the words they wish to use. They may then ask for any words they cannot spell.

2. Each child may go ahead with his writing. When he wishes to use a word he cannot spell, he may leave blank space and proceed. When the teacher has time to help him, he may ask for the spelling of the word.

3. The child may have a sheet of paper lying on his desk. He may try out the spelling of words that are troublesome. The word that 'looks right' may be written in the story; or, at least, the probable beginning letters may be recorded in the story, and the child may ask the teacher for the correct spelling later.

4. When there are unfamiliar words that the child is likely to use often, he may (and should) begin an alphabetical list. The pages of a notebook may be lettered successively A, B, C, and so on through the alphabet. All words beginning with a can be written on the A page, the b words on the B page, and so on."

Much of the written expression in the first grade and in the early part of the second grade consists of the cooperative work of the group.

In order to inspire all children and to help them clarify their thinking, there should be a group discussion for the purpose of planning and discussing what is to be included in the message. Following the discussion, each child dictates his individual message to the teacher and then makes a copy in his own writing. "The discussion is intended only to stimulate ideas, to release the creative spirit." 2

1/Ibid., pp. 71-72.  
continue to write from day to day, the content of their message, stories, poems or letters will become more and more individual.

Until such time as the children have learned to read sufficiently well, the teacher reads their compositions aloud and allows time for the group to make comments. The teacher encourages constructive suggestions and favorable comments.

Older children often need time for group discussions also, so their thoughts can be clarified and plans for writing can be made. Then each child writes his own story. Even after their best attempts have been made, a revision is necessary. As the teacher and child correct the work together, the teacher offers such teaching and suggestions as she thinks she can profitably use.

"Rewriting is an essential step in learning and is useful in writing important materials. It may be a valuable learning experience, if properly handled."1/ Rewriting should not be used as a punishment; it should serve a learning purpose recognized by the child. Merely copying the teacher's corrected copy has little value for older children.

"The elimination of errors has become an end in itself in many classrooms. The essential element in teaching correct English is to place less emphasis on errors and more emphasis

on worthwhile activities.\textsuperscript{1} From the very beginning the emphasis should be on how to help children think clearly, to express themselves effectively, to listen for ideas rather than to listen for mistakes and criticisms.

"There should be many opportunities for the children to read their compositions to the class. Often a good listener can become so sensitive to the elements of good writing that he naturally appropriates them as his own. After he, himself, has attempted to write, he listens with greater concentration and understanding because another child has done what he tried to do.\textsuperscript{2}"

In helping to develop creative writing a sympathetic atmosphere must be established. This atmosphere will come chiefly through encouraging the child to be free in thinking independently and in expressing sincerely his own thoughts and emotions.

"The teacher will need a great deal of patience... A considerable amount of shyness exists about the matter... Patience is needed to secure improvement in quality. In all creative writing the child must write about his own ideas and he must use his own language."\textsuperscript{3}

McKee feels the writer is doomed to mere puttering unless the teacher serves as a guide as well as a provider of chances to write.

"Through her realationship as confidant and audience, through her skill in leading children to work and play together so that a real social group evolves, the teacher

\textsuperscript{1}\textsuperscript{Fannie J. Ragland, op. cit., p. 13.}
\textsuperscript{2}\textsuperscript{Ibid., p. 15.}
\textsuperscript{3}\textsuperscript{Paul McKee, Language in the Elementary School, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1939, p. 214.}
frees her pupils from self-consciousness. She provides them with stimulus to express themselves, and security in knowing that their expressions are respected."

The classroom which is organized as a writing laboratory has as part of its equipment many kinds of help.

"There are lists of words peculiar to the topics under consideration for discriminating choice, lists which the children have helped to organize. There are lists for reference in spelling, examples of properly written letters showing headings, superscriptions, and closings appropriate to the age of the children in the room and to their specific needs. More highly organized helps are added as the children are ready to use them - dictionaries, handbooks and texts. The textbook is referred to when children need to follow a form for a bibliography, for a letter, or for proper punctuation and in other situations in which it may offer help."

Jean Haskell, a principal of the Magnolia School, Los Angeles, California, writes the following concerning groups.

"Group writing of invitations, classroom experience records, charts for reading, and expository 'stories' is one of the most effective devices for developing the background of attitudes, understandings, and skills, which is essential to maximum progress in independent writing."

In the creation of a poem by the group, the teacher will do well to work with the children, adding a word here or suggesting an appropriate phrase there.

"All share in the finished accomplishment and because of the guidance and the stimulation of the teacher a long, forward step may be taken by the entire group through the satisfaction they feel in their product."


3/The National Elementary Principal, Language Arts in the Elementary School, Twentieth Yearbook, 1941, Volume XX, Number 6, National Education Association, p. 345.

After several satisfying stories, poems or plays have been accomplished by the group, individual children are able to create independently, experiencing the joy of complete accomplishment.

The problem of evaluating children's verse is a delicate one. The teacher should always judge the child's work according to grade or age level and not according to her own adult criteria. The most satisfactory way seems to be the building up of poetic criteria in the child's mind so that he may evaluate his own attempts. Gradually there is developed a set of criteria by which the children may judge other poetry as well as their own.

"Essential factors in the business of evaluation seem to be (1) the ability to tell poetry from prose, (2) an understanding of imagery, (3) the realization that rhythm but not rhyme is essential, (4) the ability to recognize good rhyme, and (4) the placement of a premium on originality of thought and expression."1

In the written language program the teacher should make note of the specific skills suggested or required for her grade level, and plan activities which will call for the use of these skills.

"While drill and repetition are necessary for the acquisition of language skills, the day of isolated, unrelated drills, except perhaps for diagnostic and remedial work, is past. At present most good teachers use a motivated activity program based on ideas of interest to the child."2

1/i/bid., p. 359

2/i/bid., p. 376
Because of this program the class may wish to make up a set of rules including capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure and paragraphing. Every child will have a set of rules because of self-checking purposes. These rules will be necessary for the four plans of checking work; namely, self-checking, monitor checking, cooperative checking, and teacher checking. The self-check necessitates the set of rules for each child.

"The principles underlying this program for the improvement of technical aspects of written language may be stated briefly as follows:

1. Drill is necessary to obtain written perfection but may be greatly minimized by properly conducted activities.

2. The child must be made to feel a need for technical skills. The teacher should create life-like situations to bring out these needs.

3. The child should be encouraged to help formulate his own sets of rules for written work. He will then feel the responsibility of meeting suitable standards to a greater degree than if the teacher had merely dictated the rules to him.

4. The child needs motivation and teacher guidance, rather than teacher domination."

The following is a list of helpful hints set up by the Council of Teachers of English:

"1. Think of writing as an inseparable and essential part of living and learning in and out of school.

2. Accept as a major responsibility - helping children grow as persons.

3. Consider writing a by-product of thinking.

4. Recognize that learning to put ideas on paper is a

Ibid., p. 382
complex task.

5. Set as the goal for each child - improvement consistent with ability.

6. Grow as they study children and help each move toward the goal which represents maximum growth for him.

7. Make writing a vital part of their own living.¹

As a result of the important characteristics of a written language program presented in this review of research, a set of check list and evaluative items will be developed in Chapter III for use in self-evaluating the written language program in any elementary school.

CHAPTER III
PROCEDURES

Developing the Materials

A seminar group of twenty-five selected master's students met with Dr. James F. Baker to develop separate sections of an Evaluative Criteria patterned after the Evaluative Criteria of the Cooperative Study of Secondary-School standards.

Each member of the group was assigned a separate section of the Evaluative Criteria. The writer's responsibility was to review research which would identify important aspects of written language for adaptation into an evaluative instrument.

Specific checklists and evaluative items in written language were allocated under the following headings: statement of guiding principles, content, methods, materials and outcomes.

When the first draft of the area written language was completed, it was brought before the seminar group for helpful criticisms and suggestions. The revision of the checklist was made in terms of group thinking. Minor changes were made in the reorganization of some specific items for clarification purposes. A few important items were added and some minor items were either combined with major items or deleted.
The first draft was then revised and submitted to a group of qualified jury members for criticism.

During the research period, certain names were prominent as authorities in the written language area. These names were compiled to help make up the jury list of experts.

Since there was considerable overlapping of jury members in the language arts area (spelling, handwriting, speech, literature, oral and written language), the group decided to compile this material and send all sections of language arts to the experts in that field.

A letter was mailed to each qualified expert in the language arts area requesting his help in criticizing the tentative materials. A form was enclosed for his reply. A copy of the letters will be found in the Appendix of this paper.

Jury Members Participating

The following served as jury members in criticizing the written language area of the Evaluative Criteria.

Donald D. Durrell
Professor of Education
332 Bay State Road
Boston, Massachusetts

Frank N. Freeman
Dean of School of Education - Emeritus
University of California
825 Arlington Avenue
El Cerrito, California
Jury Criticisms

Upon receipt of materials it was found that jury members had not made any suggestions or criticisms which necessitated extensive revision of the material. Suggestions from jury members dealt with minor changes in wording and addition and deletion of a few items. The revised material which appears in the following division have incorporated these changes which were suggested.

Evaluative Criteria for Written Language
WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Statement of Guiding Principles

Written language in the elementary school includes purposeful writing activities centered around the needs and interests of children. The chief purposes of written language are: to record interesting and important facts and events; to communicate with people, as in letters, messages, newspaper and magazine articles; and to express one's original ideas and thoughts, as in plays, poems and stories.

Growth in written language begins in the early elementary levels. Much of the instruction on this level is on an individual basis under direct guidance from the teacher. The major goal in the early levels is the development of interest and appreciation.

The major goals of written language at the later elementary levels are to develop the ability to express oneself clearly and interestingly; to appreciate the good writing of others; and to provide a means of self-expression. Personal background and experience play a leading role in writing as these experiences provide much of the content of written language.

NAME OF SCHOOL

Checklist and evaluation ratings made by:

........................................................... ...........................................................

........................................................... ...........................................................

........................................................... ...........................................................

(Experimental copy; not to be reproduced)
When the features in this section are being checked and evaluated, persons applying the ratings should ask: "How well do the practices in this school meet the needs of the pupils and community?" The two-fold nature of the work—evaluation and stimulation to improvement—should be kept in mind. Careful, discriminating judgment is essential if these purposes are to be served satisfactorily.

The checklists consist of provisions, conditions, or characteristics found in good elementary schools. Although they are recommended provisions, a school lacking some of them may have other compensating features. Space is provided to record these features as additional items or under Comments. The checklist items should be marked as follows:

- ✓ if the provision or condition is made extensively;
- ✓ if the provision or condition is made to some extent;
- X if the provision or condition is very limited;
- M if the provision or condition is missing and needed; and
- N if the provision or condition is not desirable or does not apply.

Evaluations represent the best judgment of those making the evaluation after all evidence including results of observations, consideration of ratings on checklist items, and other data which may be available have been considered. Evaluations should always be made by the local staff members even though these evaluations may be checked later by a visiting committee. The evaluation ratings should be made by means of the scale defined below.

5—Excellent; the provisions or conditions are extensive and excellently.
4—Very Good;*
   a. the provisions or conditions are extensive and are functioning well, or
   b. the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive but are functioning excellently.
3—Good; the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive and are functioning well.
2—Fair;*
   a. the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive but are functioning poorly, or
   b. the provisions or conditions are limited in extent but are functioning well.
1—Poor; the provisions or conditions are limited in extent and are functioning poorly.
M—Missing; the provisions or conditions are missing and are needed; if present they would make a contribution to the needs of pupils.
N—Does Not Apply; the provisions or conditions are missing but do not apply or are not desirable for the children.

*Staff members may wish to use the symbols "4a" or "4b" "2a" or "2b".

of this community. (Reasons for the use of this symbol should be explained in each case under Comments.)
I. CONTENT

Checklist

Experiences in written language

1. Make provision for a variety of letter-writing activities (e.g., friendly, business, invitations).

2. Include opportunities for addressing envelopes and folding letters correctly.

3. Provide opportunities for individuals or groups to write poetry.

4. Help children establish the habit of proofreading to correct errors and improve ideas.

5. Encourage original writings (e.g., an interesting account of a personal experience, a note of appreciation, a vivid description, an original playlet).

6. Provide opportunities for vocabulary development.


8. Help children fill in and interpret forms (e.g., money orders, bank forms, library cards, and so on).

9. Provide opportunities for keeping records (e.g., a class temperature record, a progress record of some class project or activities).

10. Provide opportunities for writing bibliographies.

11. Make provisions for experiences in outlining.


13. Provide opportunities for writing captions for pictures.

14. Provide opportunities for labeling articles for an exhibit.

15. Provide opportunities for writing reports about slides, films, radio and television programs.


17. Help children understand the "complete thought" concept.

18. 

19. 
Evaluations

( ) a. How extensive is the variety of writing activities to meet the needs of children?

( ) b. How adequate is the content of writing activities to meet the needs of children?

Comments:

II. METHODS

Checklist

Methods of instruction

( ) 1. Provide for careful planning of all instructional activities.

( ) 2. Use content matter which meets the needs and interests of children (e.g., community excursions, invitations to the home and important events).

( ) 3. Provide opportunities for meaningful review to ensure learning.

( ) 4. Make use of samples of various kinds of letters (e.g., thank-you letters, invitations, business letters) for instructional activities.

( ) 5. Place about the room pictures and other materials which will enrich experiences and make the child wish to write.

( ) 6. Introduce skills when there is a practical need (e.g., writing an invitation to a class inviting them to a play).

( ) 7. Recognize individual differences of pupils in the selection and organization of instructional activities.

( ) 8. Use recordings to stimulate interest and provide ideas for writing.

( ) 9. Include a variety of purposeful exercises for drill and practice.

( ) 10. Encourage children to think clearly, to express themselves effectively and to listen for ideas.

( ) 11. Help children develop ability and standards to evaluate their own work and the work of others.

( ) 12. Encourage children to plan and carry out learning activities.
( ) 13. Provide opportunities as needed for group discussion and planning of writing activities.

( ) 14. Help develop an atmosphere in which children feel free to express their real thoughts and feel assured of an understanding interest.

( ) 15. Encourage children to develop suitable personal styles of writing.

( ) 16. Help children become aware of varieties of style among the group.

( ) 17. Plan trips that will provide suggestions for writing.

( ) 18.

( ) 19.

Evaluations

( ) a. How effectively do the methods of instruction meet the group needs of children?

( ) b. How effectively do the methods of instruction meet the individual needs of children?

Comments:

III. EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Checklist

( ) 1. A variety of textbooks, reference books and library books for children are provided.

( ) 2. Materials of interest to pupils are provided for descriptive writing (e.g., toys, costumes and pictures).

( ) 3. A class book of interesting writings is available.

( ) 4. Real or duplicated copies of money orders, bank forms, library cards for teaching purposes are provided.

( ) 5. Stationery for letter writing is available.

( ) 6. Audio-visual aid materials are provided.

( ) 7. A record player is available.

( ) 8. Children make available to the class materials of their own to use as writing sources.
( ) 9.

( ) 10.

Evaluations

( ) a. How adequate is the variety of instructional equipment and materials to meet the written language needs of all children?
( ) b. How adequate is the quality of instructional equipment and materials to meet the written language needs of all children?
( ) c. How effectively are instructional equipment and materials used?

Comments:

IV. OUTCOMES

(No checklist items are prepared for this division since they would be largely repetitions of checklist items in preceding divisions.)

Evaluations

( ) a. How effectively do pupils demonstrate their ability to express themselves clearly and correctly in their writing?
( ) b. To what extent have children developed originality in their writing?
( ) c. How effectively are children carrying over into their out-of-school life the writing techniques they developed in schools?
( ) d. To what extent do children realize the importance of writing as a means of communication?

V. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE

1. In what respects is written language instruction in this school most satisfactory and commendable?

   (a)

   (b)

   (c)

   (d)
2. In what respects is there greatest need for improving the teaching of written language?

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

(d)
CHAPTER IV

Suggestions For Using The Criteria

The Evaluative Criteria in written language is a self-evaluating instrument to be used by teacher, principal, supervisor or superintendent to help discover, as closely as possible, the strengths and weaknesses of the written language program in the elementary school and, in so doing, make provisions for improvement.

These criteria are useful to the individual teacher in ascertaining whether her teaching is in line with current educational needs. The statement of guiding principles gives an over-all picture of the written language program of today. The content section includes necessary items for an effective written language program. The methods section suggest up to date procedures in teaching written language. Equipment and materials section suggest purposeful ways of directing written language activities. The evaluations under outcomes can be best developed by purposeful activities centered around the interest and needs of children. Through self-evaluating, the teacher can discover her own strengths and weaknesses in the written language program and plan necessary improvements.

The Evaluative Criteria in written language aids the principal in getting an over-all picture of the practical needs of current written language activities. The principal can
evaluate his school to see if it is meeting the educational needs of the children of today. These criteria can be used in helping to develop more effective teaching methods within the school. The principal will know what is being and should be taught in his school and, as a result, will give helpful ideas and suggestions for improving the program.

The **Evaluative Criteria** will be a guide to supervisors in measuring the effectiveness of teaching methods within the schools of that district. The criteria will guide the supervisor in projecting valuable written language ideas throughout the system. The supervisor may judge the district as a whole and see where the needs are being met and developed correctly. Help and guidance may be administered to those finding it more difficult to meet the modern educational trends of today.

The supervisor, with the aid of the teacher, may use these criteria in planning the curriculum and in suggesting materials and equipment necessary for a desirable written language program. The criteria will aid the supervisor and curriculum committee in making a revision in the curriculum if necessary.

The **Evaluative Criteria** in written language can be informative to the superintendent. These criteria summarize the current and necessary written language activities. The superintendent will get a better understanding of written language instruction in the elementary school. The criteria
may be helpful in understanding the need for materials and equipment. The criteria may be an aid in helping a good school develop into a better one by encouraging these purposeful modern trends to spread throughout the schools. The superintendent will know where his elementary schools rate in written language.

By using these written language criteria, the superintendent can take further steps toward a more desirable written language program. Educational growth must continue in the schools. A purposeful written language program will greatly attribute to the growth of the children. These criteria attempt to meet this educational growth.

The above are some suggestions for using the written language criteria. The writer feels that this instrument, if used correctly, will be an effective means for teachers to help children carry over into their out of school life the writing techniques which are necessary for their success.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


12. Green, Harry Andrews, A Criterion for the Course of Study in the Mechanics of Written Composition, University of Iowa Studies, Volume 8, Number 4, University, Iowa City, Iowa, 1933.


15. Herrin, Lorena Brooker, "How to Teach Composition....to Boys Like Henry," The Grade Teacher (May, 1947), 64:52.


APPENDIX
A group research project is being conducted at Boston University to develop Evaluative Criteria for elementary schools. This project is under the direction of Dr. James F. Baker who served as Research Assistant to the Cooperative Study of Secondary-School Standards in developing the 1950 edition of the Evaluative Criteria now being used in secondary schools throughout the country.

One of the procedures which is planned is to have juries of interested and qualified persons criticize materials which will be prepared in tentative form by the research group. We hope that you will be willing to serve as a jury member to criticize materials in the area of

As this is a non-profit venture with the main aim in view to develop materials which teachers may use in evaluating their own educational endeavors, funds are not available for the professional services of jury members. Past experience in developing the secondary school instrument indicates that leaders in education will be glad to participate in such a study on a voluntary basis.

It is not expected that the time required of a member of the jury will be excessive. May we count on your cooperation? A form is enclosed for your reply.

Sincerely yours,

Type Name
Member Research Group
The checks in the parentheses below indicate my status regarding the evaluation research project discussed in the letter accompanying this form.

( ) 1. I will serve as a member of the national jury of experts in the work of developing Evaluative Criteria for elementary schools, insofar as those standards pertain to the area of

( ) 2. I understand the service will require criticism of tentative materials for the field of

( ) 3. I have access to a copy of the Evaluative Criteria 1950 edition pertaining to secondary education which will give me an idea of the format and scope of a similar instrument for elementary schools.

4. Comments:

(Signed) __________________________________________

________________________ (Official Position)

________________________ (Street and Number)

________________________ (City and State)
Name and Title
Street or Institutional Address
Town or City and State Address

Dear

Thank you for accepting the invitation to serve on a jury to examine and criticize materials being developed to evaluate elementary education. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

Enclosed please find the first draft of materials submitted for your criticism. Please feel free to change, delete, or add to any of the material in this form. Your suggestions will be studied carefully and compared with criticisms received from other jury members. As soon as replies have been received from all members of the jury, a revision will be made and sent to you.

Enclosed also is an outline indicating the sections now being developed. This outline is of course tentative but it may help you to see the materials on which you are working in relation to the entire Criteria.

We do not want to seem to be rushing you, but early attention on your part will be helpful. We hope to receive your criticisms by ( indicate a date, preferably a Monday, two or three weeks after you send out the draft of materials )

Very sincerely yours,

Type name
Member Research Group
Thank you letter to be sent to jury members

Dear:

Your comments and suggestions concerning the elementary school evaluation blank Section (G, School Plant,) have been received and will be incorporated in a revision of this blank. The interest you have shown in this project and the suggestions you have volunteered are deeply appreciated.

After all sections have been revised, a copy of the revision will be sent you by Dr. James F. Baker of Boston University.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Your name
Member of Research Group
Statement of Guiding Principles

Written language in the elementary school includes purposeful writing activities centered around the needs and interests of children. The chief purposes of written language are: to record interesting and important facts and events; to communicate with people, as in letters, messages, newspaper and magazine articles; and to create written materials, as in plays, poems and stories.

Growth in written language begins in the early elementary levels. Much of the instruction on this level is on an individual basis under direct guidance from the teacher. The major goal in the early levels is the development of interest and appreciation.

In the later elementary levels interest, needs and a greater independence are the major goals. Personal background and experience play a leading role in writing as these experiences provide much of the content of written language.
When the features in this section are being checked and evaluated, persons applying the ratings should ask: "How well do the practices in this school meet the needs of the pupils and community?" The two-fold nature of the work—evaluation and stimulation to improvement—should be kept in mind. Careful, discriminating judgment is essential if these purposes are to be served satisfactorily.

The checklists consist of provisions, conditions, or characteristics found in good elementary schools. Although they are recommended provisions, a school lacking some of them may have other compensating features. Space is provided to record these features as additional items or under Comments. The checklist items should be marked as follows:

- ✓ if the provision or condition is made extensively;
- □ if the provision or condition is made to some extent;
- X if the provision or condition is very limited;
- M if the provision or condition is missing and needed; and
- N if the provision or condition is not desirable or does not apply.

Evaluations represent the best judgment of those making the evaluation after all evidence including results of observations, consideration of ratings on checklist items, and other data which may be available have been considered. Evaluations should always be made by the local staff members even though these evaluations may be checked later by a visiting committee. The evaluation ratings should be made by means of the scale defined below.

5—Excellent; the provisions or conditions are extensive and functioning exceedingly.
4—Very Good;
   a. the provisions or conditions are extensive and are functioning well, or
   b. the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive but are functioning excellently.
3—Good; the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive and are functioning well.
2—Fair;
   a. the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive but are functioning poorly, or
   b. the provisions or conditions are limited in extent but are functioning well.
1—Poor; the provisions or conditions are limited in extent and are functioning poorly.
M—Missing: the provisions or conditions are missing and are needed; if present they would make a contribution to the needs of pupils.
N—Does Not Apply; the provisions or conditions are missing but do not apply or are not desirable for the children of this community. (Reasons for the use of this symbol should be explained in each case under Comments.)

* Staff members may wish to use the symbols "4a" or "4b", "2a" or "2b".

I. CONTENT

Checklist

Experiences in written language

( ) 1. Make provision for a variety of letter-writing activities (e.g., friendly, business, invitations).

( ) 2. Provide opportunities for individuals or groups to write poetry.

( ) 3. Help children establish the habit of proofreading to correct errors and improve ideas.

( ) 4. Encourage original writings (e.g., an interesting account of a personal experience, a note of appreciation, a vivid description, an original playlet).

( ) 5. Provide opportunities for vocabulary development.

( ) 6. Build an understanding of functional grammar.

( ) 7. Help children fill in and interpret forms (e.g., money orders, bank forms, library cards, and so on).

( ) 8. Provide opportunities for keeping records (e.g., a class temperature record, a progress record of some class project or activities).

( ) 9. Provide opportunities for writing bibliographies.

( ) 10. Make provisions for experiences in outlining.

( ) 11. Provide opportunities for planning and writing book reports.

( ) 12. Provide opportunities for writing captions for pictures.

( ) 13. Provide opportunities for labeling articles for an exhibit.

( ) 14. Include opportunities for addressing envelopes and folding letters correctly.

( ) 15. Provide opportunities for writing reports about slides, films, radio and television programs.

( ) 16. Make provisions for experiences in note taking.

( ) 17.

( ) 18.
Evaluations

( ) a. How extensive is the variety of writing activities to meet the needs of children?

( ) b. How adequate is the content of writing activities to meet the needs of children?

Comments:

II. METHODS

Checklist

Methods of instruction

( ) 1. Provide for careful planning of all instructional activities.

( ) 2. Use content matter which meets the needs and interests of children (e.g., community excursions, invitations to the home and important events).

( ) 3. Provide opportunities for meaningful review to ensure learning.

( ) 4. Make use of samples of various kinds of letters (e.g., thank-you letters, invitations, business letters) for instructional activities.

( ) 5. Place about the room pictures and other materials which will enrich experiences and make the child wish to write.

( ) 6. Introduce skills when there is a practical need (e.g., writing an invitation to a class inviting them to a play).

( ) 7. Recognize individual differences of pupils in the selection and organization of instructional activities.

( ) 8. Use recordings to stimulate interest and provide ideas for writing.

( ) 9. Include a variety of purposeful exercises for drill and practice.

( ) 10. Encourage children to think clearly, to express themselves effectively and to listen for ideas.

( ) 11. Help children develop ability and standards to evaluate their own work and the work of others.

( ) 12. Encourage children to plan and carry out learning activities.
( ) 13. Provide opportunities as needed for group discussion and planning of writing activities.

( ) 14. Help develop an atmosphere in which children feel free to express their real thoughts and feel assured of an understanding interest.

( ) 15. Encourage children to develop suitable personal styles of writing.

( ) 16. Plan trips that will provide suggestions for writing.

( ) 17.

( ) 18.

Evaluations

( ) a. How effectively do the methods of instruction meet the group needs of children?

( ) b. How effectively do the methods of instruction meet the individual needs of children?

Comments:

III. EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Checklist

( ) 1. A variety of textbooks, reference books and library books for children are provided.

( ) 2. Materials of interest to pupils are provided for descriptive writing (e.g., toys, costumes and pictures).

( ) 3. A class book of interesting writings is available.

( ) 4. Real or duplicated copies of money orders, bank forms, library cards for teaching purposes are provided.

( ) 5. Stationery for letter writing is available.

( ) 6. Audio-visual aid materials are provided.

( ) 7. A record player is available.

( ) 8. Children make available to the class materials of their own to use as writing sources.

( ) 9.

( ) 10.
Evaluations

( ) a. How adequate is the variety of instructional equipment and materials to meet the written language needs of all children?
( ) b. How adequate is the quality of instructional equipment and materials to meet the written language needs of all children?
( ) c. How effectively are instructional equipment and materials used?

Comments:

IV. OUTCOMES

(No checklist items are prepared for this division since they would be largely repetitions of checklist items in preceding divisions.)

Evaluations

( ) a. How effectively do pupils demonstrate their ability to express themselves clearly in their writing?
( ) b. To what extent have children developed originality in their writing?
( ) c. How effectively are children carrying over into their out-of-school life the writing techniques they developed in schools?
( ) d. To what extent do children develop, recognize, and appreciate good writing?
( ) e. To what extent do children realize the importance of writing as a means of communication?

V. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE

1. In what respects is written language instruction in this school most satisfactory and commendable?
   (a)
   (b)
   (c)
   (d)

2. In what respects is there greatest need for improving the teaching of written language?
   (a)
   (b)
   (c)
   (d)