

**Every Child a Reader & Writer**  
**Writing Workshop Implementation Scale: INDEPENDENT WORK TIME**

<b>Description</b>	<i>An essential component of the workshop structure is work time. At this time, students have ample opportunities to engage in the practice of writing, confer with the teacher, or work in response groups. During independent work time, teachers have an opportunity to differentiate instruction with individuals and small groups based on needs. This time is the largest single part of the workshop time and should be designed so that students learn to independently work on writing projects – or sometimes to work in collaboration with their peers. The establishment of rituals and routines in a literate environment is essential to all parts of the writing workshop. It is during independent work time that their success becomes most visible.</i>
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Getting started	Effective	Highly Effective	Creative adaptations	Misconceptions
<p><b>The teacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has begun to develop rituals and routines for work time (including balance between quiet work time and productive talk)</li> <li>• May allow students to line up to ask questions before getting started on their work</li> <li>• May post charts and rubrics, but students rarely consult them</li> <li>• Has begun to develop a collection of books to use as touchstone and mentor texts; they may not always be accessible or used by the majority of students</li> <li>• Has sorted and labeled classroom books into general categories</li> </ul> <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the teacher as being in charge of their writing</li> <li>• May wait to get teacher’s approval before proceeding with a plan</li> <li>• See work time as completing an assignment from the mini lesson</li> <li>• Often see their writing as completing assignments rather than on going work on topics of their choice</li> <li>• May depend on teacher prompting to form groups and complete the process</li> <li>• Use opportunities for peer response as a social activity or hand off their writing for a peer to fix</li> <li>• May use framed responses in response groups</li> <li>• May not ask for specific feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>The teacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses the literary environment to support students’ independence</li> <li>• Uses independent work time to confer with individual and small groups of students</li> <li>• Provides students with an appropriate balance between quiet time and opportunities for purposeful talk</li> <li>• Encourages students to solve their own writing dilemmas by pointing to resources in the room (e.g. charts, rubrics, mentor texts, other students)</li> <li>• Models accountable talk</li> <li>• Provides strategies that students can use to get the teacher’s attention without disrupting the flow of work time</li> <li>• Allows students to make decisions about the focus of their work</li> <li>• Periodically observes and facilitates response groups to improve the level of practice</li> </ul> <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can get started on their own work, but may look to the teacher to resolve writing dilemmas when they get stuck</li> <li>• Students have access to several different kinds of charts posted in the room that capture initial noticings, rubrics from attribute charts, specific types of craft moves and text structures</li> <li>• Access books and other materials as models for their writing</li> <li>• Demonstrate stamina and engagement in their writing</li> <li>• Seek out their peers for conferences and take turns during the conference</li> <li>• Talk and collaborate about writing in respectful ways</li> <li>• Focus their responses to assist peers</li> <li>• Specify feedback they need and later which advice to follow</li> </ul>	<p>Meets the criteria for <b>EFFECTIVE</b> and in addition <b>the teacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains expectation that students will continue to work independently</li> <li>• Functions as a facilitator for individual learning and small groups because students work independently</li> <li>• Confers with students with minimal interruption as students solve their own writing dilemmas</li> </ul> <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake work that moves writing forward (eg. students feel free to read with a writerly purpose, confer with peers and use room as a resource during the work time)</li> <li>• Know how to independently use resources in room to solve writing dilemmas</li> <li>• Move freely about the room to access resources without disruption</li> <li>• Routinely engage in writing about topics of their choice</li> <li>• View other students as resources and take responsibility for supporting the learning of others</li> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of writing craft and strategies in responses to peers</li> <li>• Are persistent in clarifying their understanding of the feedback they receive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Stops class on occasion for additional teaching based on observations</i></li> <li>• <i>Provides soft music to accompany work time</i></li> <li>• <i>Teacher and students modify procedures as needed to meet students’ needs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Insufficient time is allocated for independent work</i></li> <li>• <i>Views this period as time for students to accomplish an assigned writing task</i></li> <li>• <i>Students do not follow rituals and routines; the teacher must constantly monitor behavior.</i></li> <li>• <i>Rituals and routines are restrictive and don’t necessarily foster student independence and learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Often interrupts the writing time with directions for the whole class</i></li> <li>• <i>Students are not taught to be respectful in giving and receiving feedback</i></li> <li>• <i>Students don’t seem to see any value in the opportunity for feedback, but comply with a request to participate in peer groups</i></li> </ul>