

**TERAKKI FOUNDATION SCHOOLS
FORMATIVE WRITING FEEDBACK
GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS**

adapted from The Extended Profile Criteria¹

Since the criteria descriptors are only shorthand reminders of larger concepts in composition, a clear understanding of them is essential for effective use of the PROFILE. The concepts embody the essential principles of writing -- the rules, conventions, and guidelines -- that writers must observe to create a successful piece of writing. This section presents a detailed description of the concepts represented by the PROFILE criteria descriptors at the *Excellent to Very Good* mastery level. The other three levels of competence should be thought of as varying degrees of these extended criteria for excellent writing, with the primary distinguishing factor being the degree to which the writer's intended *meaning* is successfully delivered to the reader or is diminished or completely lost by insufficient mastery of the criteria for excellence. The PROFILE's first two mastery levels in each component (*Excellent to Very Good* and *Good to Average*) both indicate that successful communication has occurred (although differing in degree), whereas the two lower levels (*Fair to Poor* and *Very Poor*) suggest there is a communication breakdown of some sort -- either partial or complete. *Effect on meaning* thus becomes the chief criterion for distinguishing the degree to which the writer has mastered the criteria for excellent writing.

CONTENT (approximately 25%. if you're very into numbers)

	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable* substantive* thorough development of thesis* relevant to assigned topic
	<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject* adequate range* limited development of thesis* mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject* little substance* inadequate development of topic
	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject* non-substantive* not pertinent * OR not enough to evaluate

DESCRIPTOR	CRITERIA
Knowledgeable	Is there understanding of the subject? Are facts or other pertinent information used? Is there recognition of several aspects of the subject? Are the interrelationships of these aspects shown?
Substantive	Are several main points discussed? Is there sufficient detail? Is there originality with concrete details to illustrate, define, compare, or contrast factual information supporting the thesis?
Thorough development of thesis	Is the thesis expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness? Is there a specific method of development (such as comparison/contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience)?
Relevant to assigned topic	Is all information clearly pertinent to the topic? Is extraneous material excluded?

ORGANIZATION (approximately 20% if you're very into numbers)

	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression* ideas clearly stated/supported* succinct*well-organized*logical sequencing*cohesive
	<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy*loosely organized but main ideas stand out*limited support* logical but incomplete sequencing
	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent* ideas confused or disconnected* lacks logical sequencing and development
	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY POOR: does not communicate* no organization*OR not enough to evaluate

DESCRIPTOR

CRITERIA

Fluent expression

Do the ideas flow, building on one another? Are there introductory and concluding paragraphs? Are there effective transition elements -- words, phrases, or sentences -- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs?

Ideas clearly stated/supported

Is there a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus to the paper (a thesis)? do topic sentences in each paragraph support, limit, and direct the thesis?

Succinct

Are all ideas directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digression?

Well-organized

Is the overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated? Is there a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper?

Logical sequencing

Are the points logically developed, using a particular sequence such as time order, space order, or importance? Is this development indicated by appropriate transitional markers?

Cohesive

Does each paragraph reflect a single purpose? Do the paragraphs form a unified paper?

VOICE (approximately 15% if you're very into numbers)

	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: topic springs to life* author's excitement about topic clearly evident* strong personal appeal to the reader
	<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD TO AVERAGE: writer is engaged with topic* writer engages the reader
	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR TO POOR: limited involvement with the topic* writes to fulfill the assignment* only slightly engaging to the reader
	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY POOR: no hint of author's involvement with the topic* writer could be anyone* not engaging to the reader

DESCRIPTOR	CRITERIA
Excitement	Can you sense a passionate/highly interested writer who attracts the reader?
Engaged	Can you feel the writer trying to connect his reader and his subject?
Limited involvement	Does the writer only minimally express the significance/import of the matter at hand?
No involvement	Do both the writer and the subject remain distant from the reader?

VOCABULARY (approximately 15% if you're very into numbers)

	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range* effective word/idiom choice and usage* word form mastery * appropriate register
	<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range* occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage <i>but meaning not obscured</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR TO POOR: limited range* frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage* <i>meaning confused or obscured</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY POOR: essentially translation* little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form* OR not enough to evaluate

DESCRIPTOR	CRITERIA
Sophisticated range	Is there facility with words and idioms: to convey intended information, attitudes, feelings? to distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions? to convey shades and differences of meaning? to express the logic of ideas? Is the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied?
Effective word/idiom choice and usage	In the context in which it is used, is the choice of vocabulary accurate? idiomatic? effective? concise? Are strong active verbs and verbals used where possible? Are phrasal and prepositional idioms correct? Do they convey the intended meaning? Does word placement give the intended message? emphasis? Is there an understanding of synonyms? antonyms? homonyms? Are denotative and connotative meanings distinguished? Is there effective repetition of key words and phrases? do transition elements mark shifts in thought? pace? emphasis? tone?
Word form mastery	Are prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively? Are words correctly distinguished as to their function (noun, verb, adjective, adverb)?
Appropriate register	Is the vocabulary appropriate to the topic? to the audience? to the tone of the paper? to the method of development? Is the vocabulary familiar to the audience? Does the vocabulary make the intended impression?

LANGUAGE USE (approximately 20% if you're very into numbers)

<input type="checkbox"/>	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions* few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions
<input type="checkbox"/>	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions* minor problems in complex constructions * several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions <i>but meaning seldom obscured</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions* frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions * <i>meaning confused or obscured</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules* dominated by errors* does not communicate* OR not enough to evaluate

DESCRIPTOR	CRITERIA
Effective complex constructions	Are sentences well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements? Are single-word modifiers appropriate to function? Are they properly formed, placed, sequenced? Are phrases and clauses appropriate to function? complete? properly placed? Are introductory <i>It</i> and <i>There</i> used correctly to begin sentences and clauses? Are main and subordinate ideas carefully distinguished? Are coordinate and subordinate elements linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation? Are sentence types and length varied? Are elements parallel? Are techniques of substitution, repetition, and deletion use effectively?
Agreement	Is there basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary and verb? subject and verb? pronoun and antecedent? adjective and noun? nouns and quantifiers?
Tense	Are verb tenses correct? properly sequenced? Do modals convey intended meaning? time?
Number	Do nouns, pronouns, and verbs convey intended quality?
Word order/function	Is normal word order followed except for special emphasis? Is each word, phrase, and clause suited to its intended function?
Articles	Are <i>a</i> , <i>an</i> , and <i>the</i> used correctly?
Pronouns	Do pronouns reflect appropriate person? gender? number? function? referent?
Prepositions	Are prepositions chosen carefully to introduce modifying elements? Is the intended meaning conveyed?

MECHANICS: (approximately 5% if you're very into numbers)

	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions* few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing
	<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing <i>but meaning not obscured</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing * poor handwriting* <i>meaning confused or obscured</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions* dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing* handwriting illegible* OR not enough to evaluate

DESCRIPTOR	CRITERIA
Spelling	Are word spelled correctly?
Punctuation	Are periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, and question marks used correctly? Are words divided correctly at the end of lines?
Capitalization	Are capital letters used where necessary and appropriate?
Paragraphing	Are paragraphs indented to indicate when one sequence of thought ends and another begins?
Handwriting	Is handwriting easy to read, without impeding communication?

¹Jacobs, H. L., Hartfiel, V. F., Hughey, J. B., & Wormuth, D. R. (1981) . Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach. Boston, MA: Newbury House.