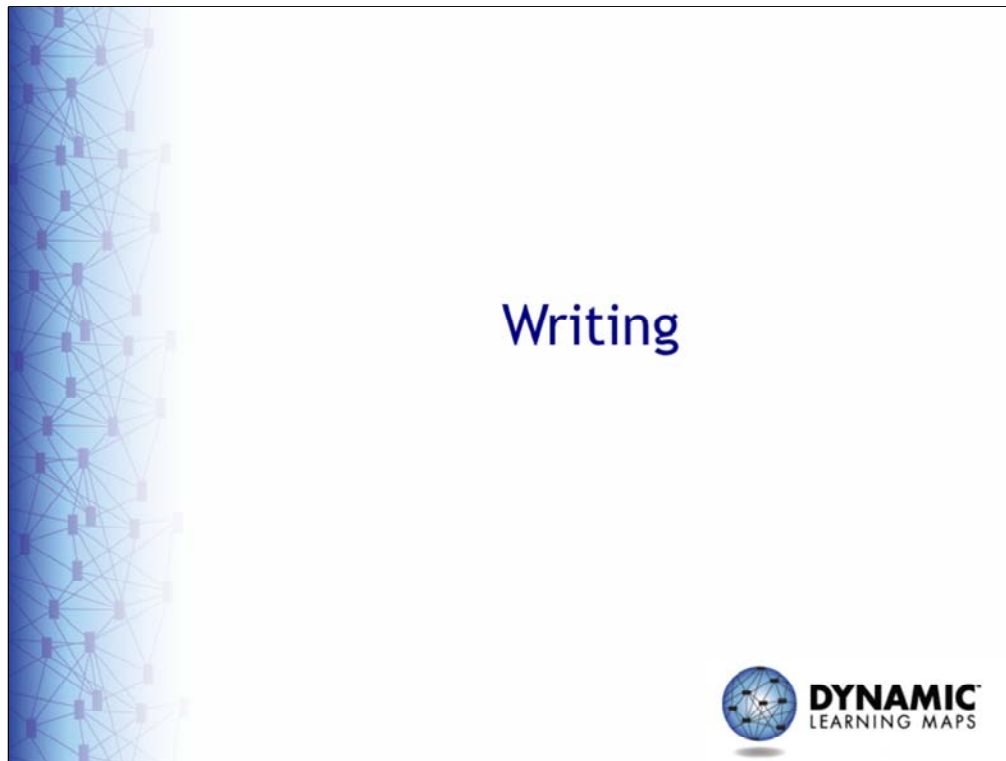
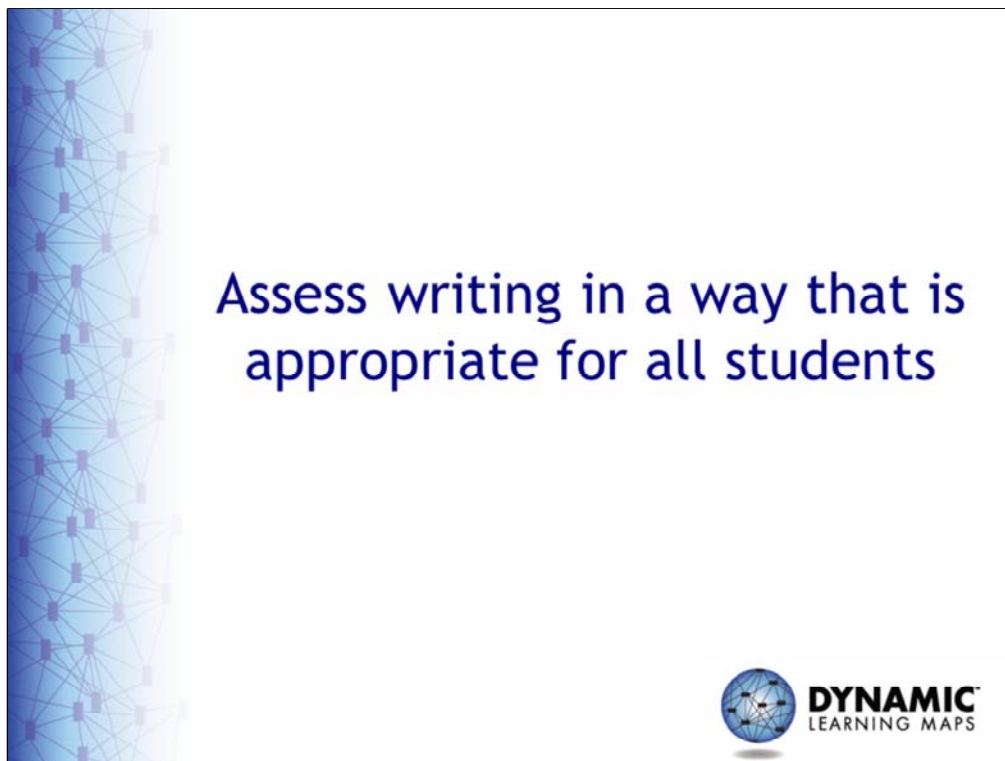


This video, Dynamic Learning Maps Writing Testlets, is designed to provide test administrators with specific information about the writing testlets in the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System.



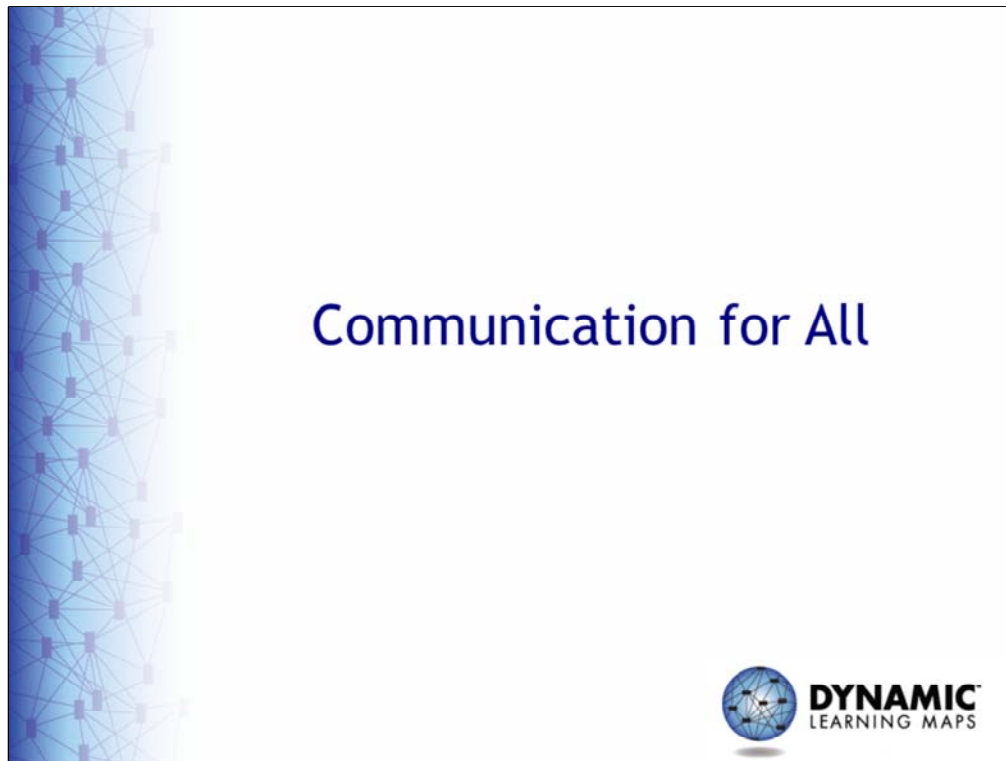
Writing refers to the process of constructing texts in traditional print or braille that communicate thoughts, feelings and understandings for diverse purposes and audiences.



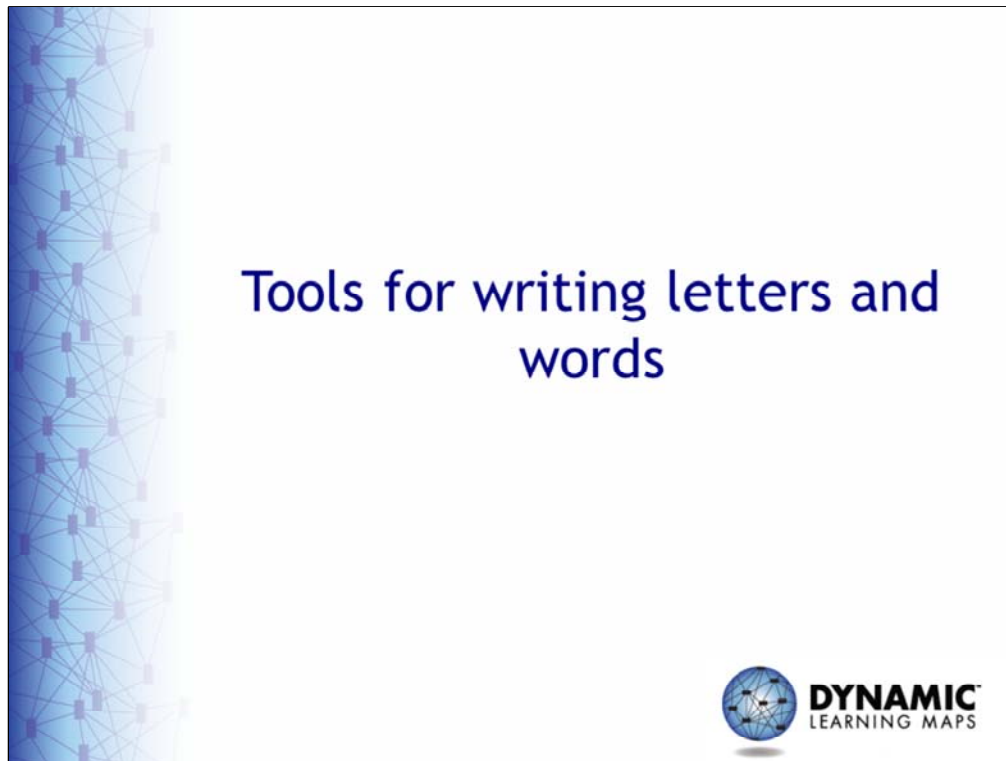
In DLM, our goal is to assess writing in a way that is appropriate for ALL students who participate in the Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Achievement Standards.



We want to do it in a way that maximizes student independence



We also want to make sure that all students are provided with an opportunity to communicate meaningfully about the topics they choose to write about



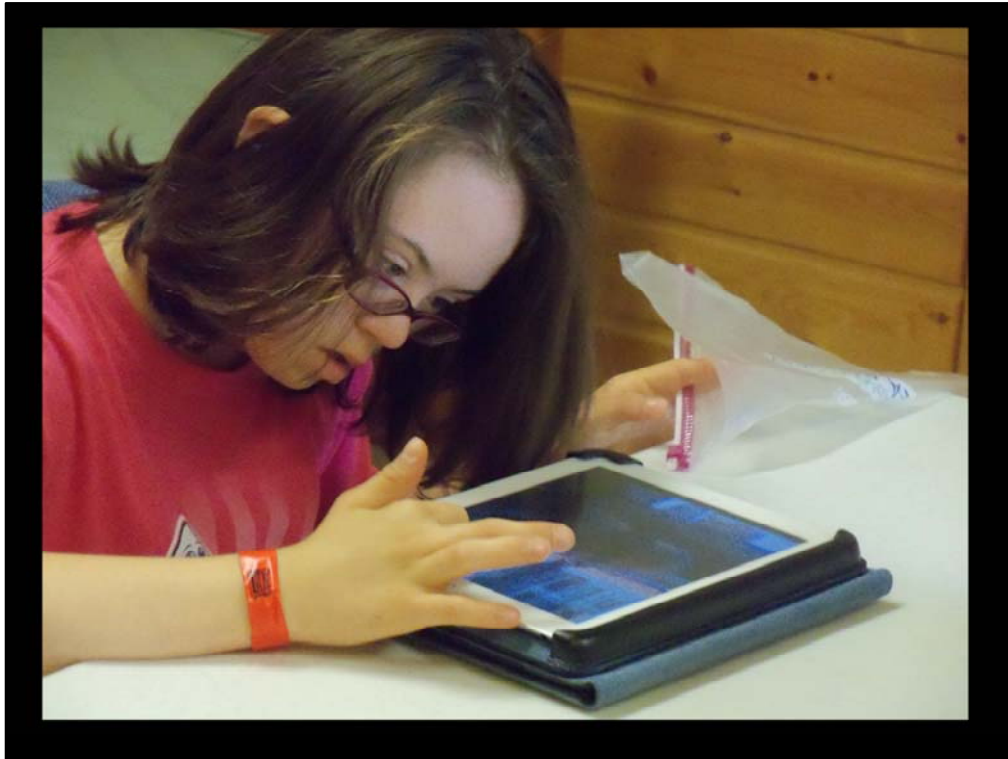
And that all students are given access to tools they can use to write letters and words today or one day in the future.



For some students, the best tool is a standard pencil.



For others, a computer with a standard keyboard will suffice.



Still others will find that accessing the pop-up keyboard on a tablet works best.



Each of these standard tools provides students with access to the 26 letters of the alphabet and can be used in the writing testlets that are part of the DLM assessment system. In addition, students who cannot use these standard tools will need alternate access to the letters of the alphabet for writing.



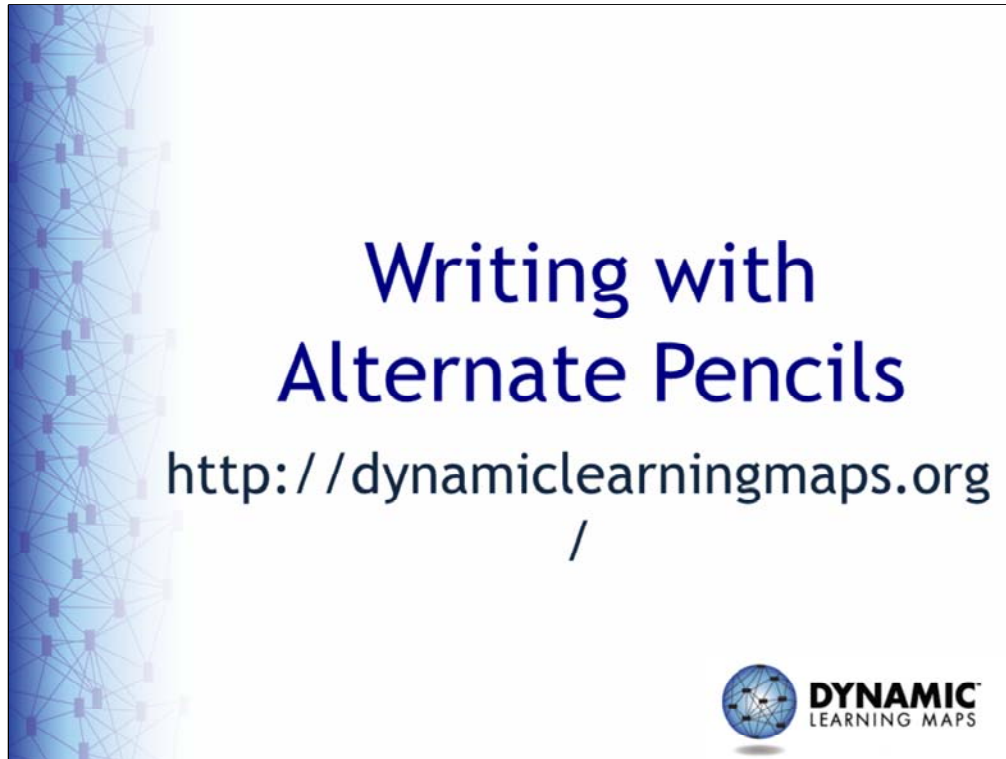
For example, this boy has an alphabet display built into his communication notebook. His teacher uses partner assisted scanning. She points to each of the letters and says the letter name. The boy uses his switch to stop her when she is pointing to a letter he wants.



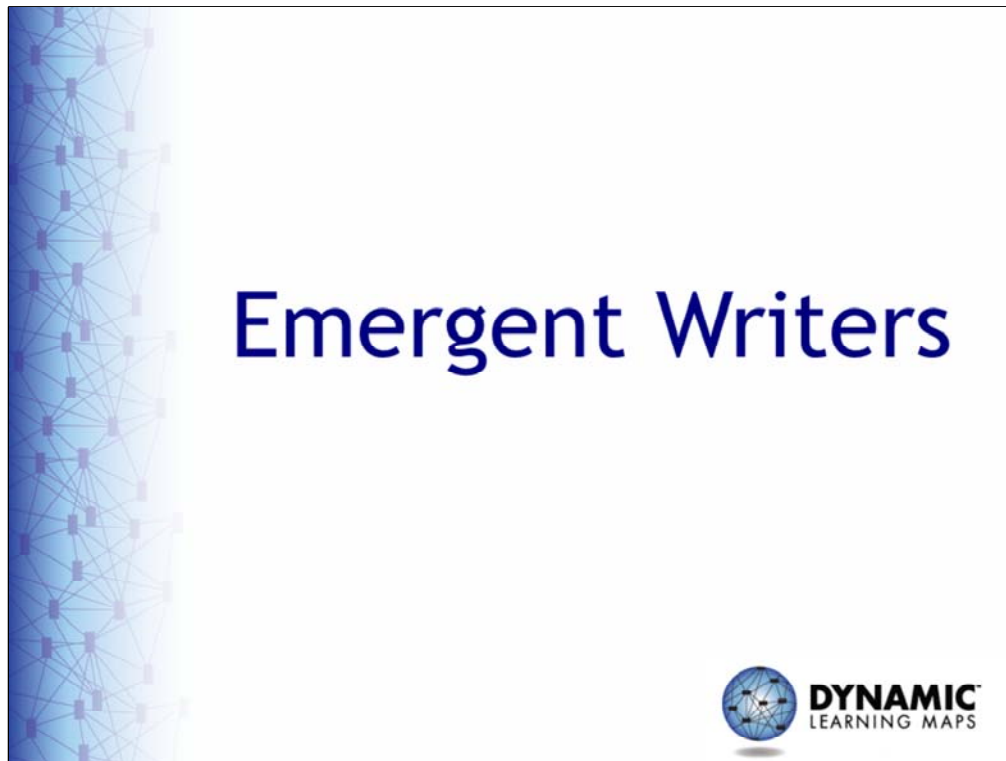
This boy uses a print alphabet flip chart with two switches. His teacher points to a letter and the boy uses one switch to say, “Go to the next letter” and the other to say “write that one.”



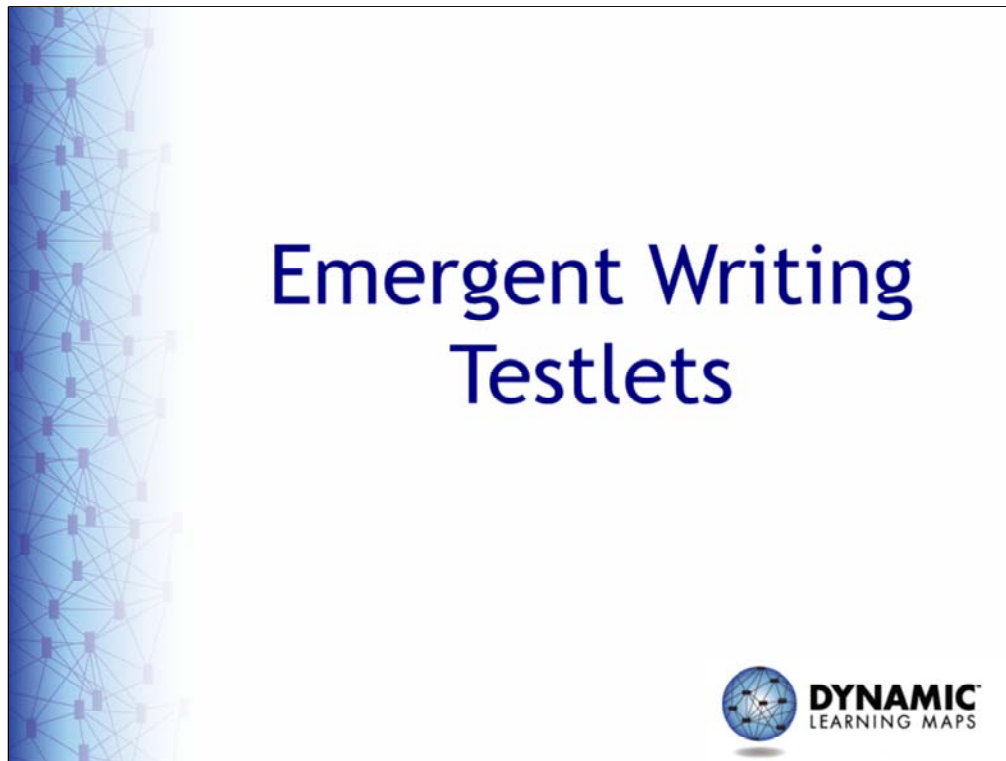
The flip chart the boy uses has the letters arranged in small groups. It also has two symbols on the left that the boy can use to tell his teacher to go to the next group of letters or add a space, and it has a symbol on the right that the boy can use to say he is finished.



If you have a student who cannot use a standard writing tool because of physical disabilities, and you have not been able to figure out a way for them to access the alphabet for writing, be sure to complete the Instructional Professional Development Module on Writing with Alternate Pencils and check out the free resources on the Virtual Community of Practice. Both are accessed through the Professional Development Tab on the Dynamic Learning Maps web site.



Some of the students you'll assess cannot spell or write words in a way that others can read. These students are emergent writers.



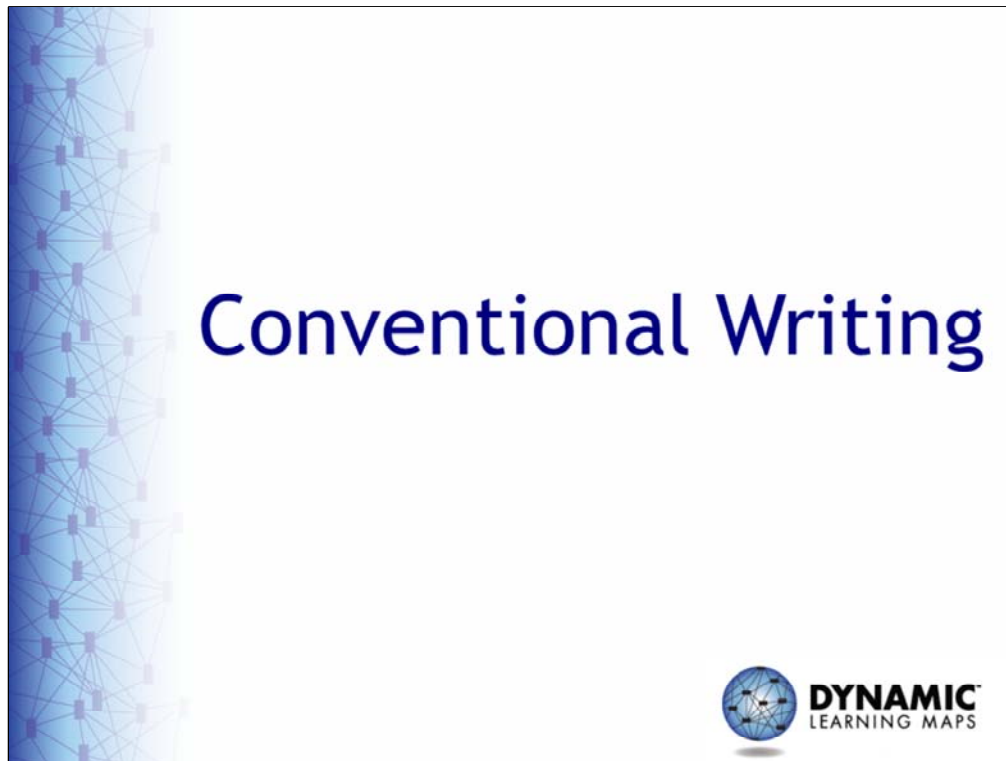
They will be assessed, regardless of their grade level using Emergent Writing testlets.

Emergent Writing Testlets

- Focus on nodes that are linked to grade level Essential Elements
- Important precursor skills on the way toward conventional writing



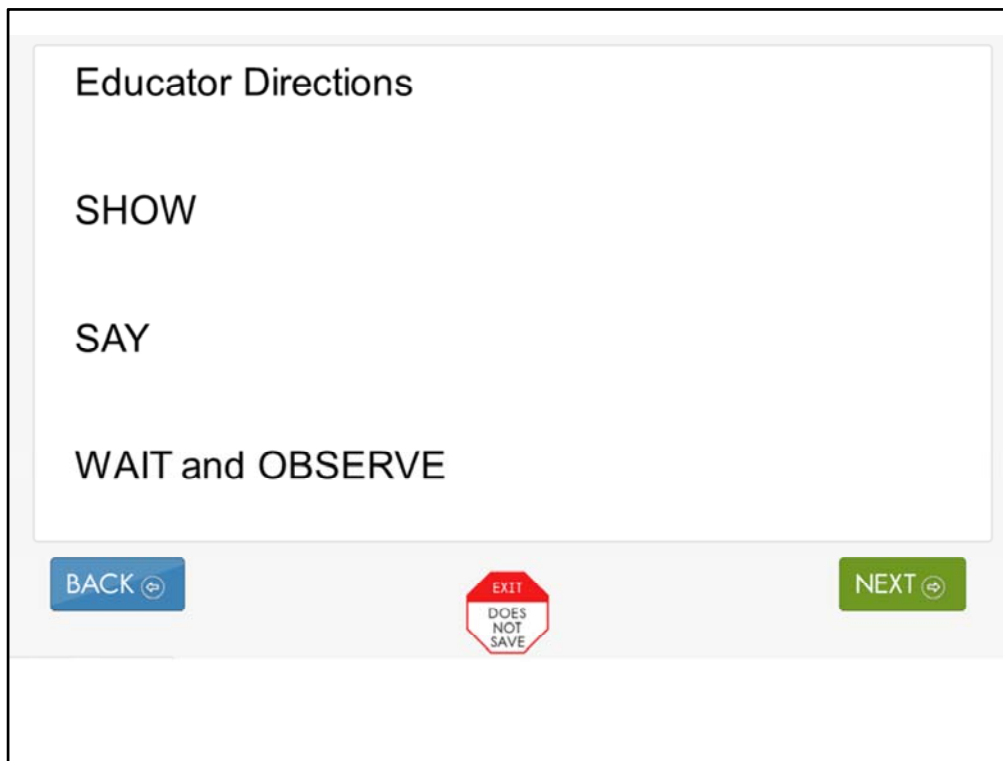
The emergent writing testlets focus on nodes in the learning map that are linked to the grade level Essential Elements and are important precursor skills that lead toward conventional writing.



Students who have symbolic communication skills and understand something about how letters and words work will complete Conventional Writing testlets.



All emergent and conventional writing testlets are Teacher Administered Testlets. This mean the student does not interact directly with the KITE system during the writing testlets – just the test administrator.



The screenshot shows a software interface for a writing testlet. At the top, the title "Educator Directions" is displayed. Below the title, there are three lines of text: "SHOW", "SAY", and "WAIT and OBSERVE". At the bottom of the interface, there are three buttons: a blue "BACK" button on the left, a red octagonal "EXIT DOES NOT SAVE" button in the center, and a green "NEXT" button on the right. Each button has a small circular icon with a right-pointing arrow.

These teacher administered writing testlets include directions for the test administrator, called Educator Directions. They tell the test administrator exactly what to SHOW the student, what to SAY to the student and exactly what behaviors or writing product to OBSERVE.

Educator Directions:

SHOW: the object.
SAY: **"What is a word that tells about the (object)?"**

WAIT AND OBSERVE: Give the student time to communicate a word. If the student is able to write the word, encourage him or her to do so. After you have given the student an opportunity to write or communicate a word, select "NEXT."

BACK ↩




EXIT
DOES NOT SAVE

NEXT ➡

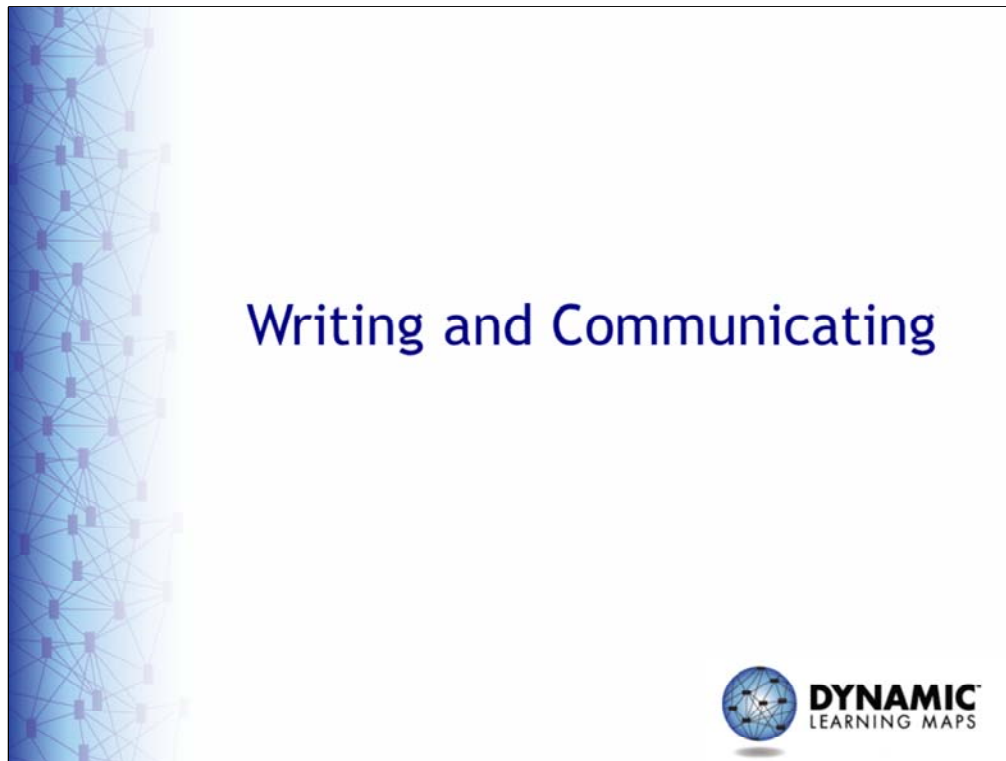
For example in this sixth grade, emergent writing testlet, the test administrator is directed to SHOW an object that the student has selected as the topic of his or her writing. It also tells the test administrator to "SAY" What is a word that tells about the object? The word OBJECT appears in parentheses because the test administrator is supposed to insert the actual name of the object the student selected. Finally, the test administrator is directed to "Wait and observe". Specifically, the test administrator is told to, "Give the student time to communicate a word. If the student is able to write the word, encourage him or her to do so. After you have given the student the opportunity to write or communicate a word, select "NEXT."

Choose the highest level that describes your observation.

- ☐ Writes the word that describes the object
- ☐ Communicates the word that describes the object
- ☐ Writes or communicates a word that is unassociated with the object
- ☐ Attends to other stimuli
- ☐ No response

BACK   NEXT 

On the next screen the test administrator is provided with a list of statements that describe a range of possible student responses. The test administrator is directed to choose the highest level that describes your observation. In this case, the statements read: Writes the word that describes the object; Communicates the word that describes the object'; Writes or communicates a word that is unassociated with the object; Attends to other stimuli; No response



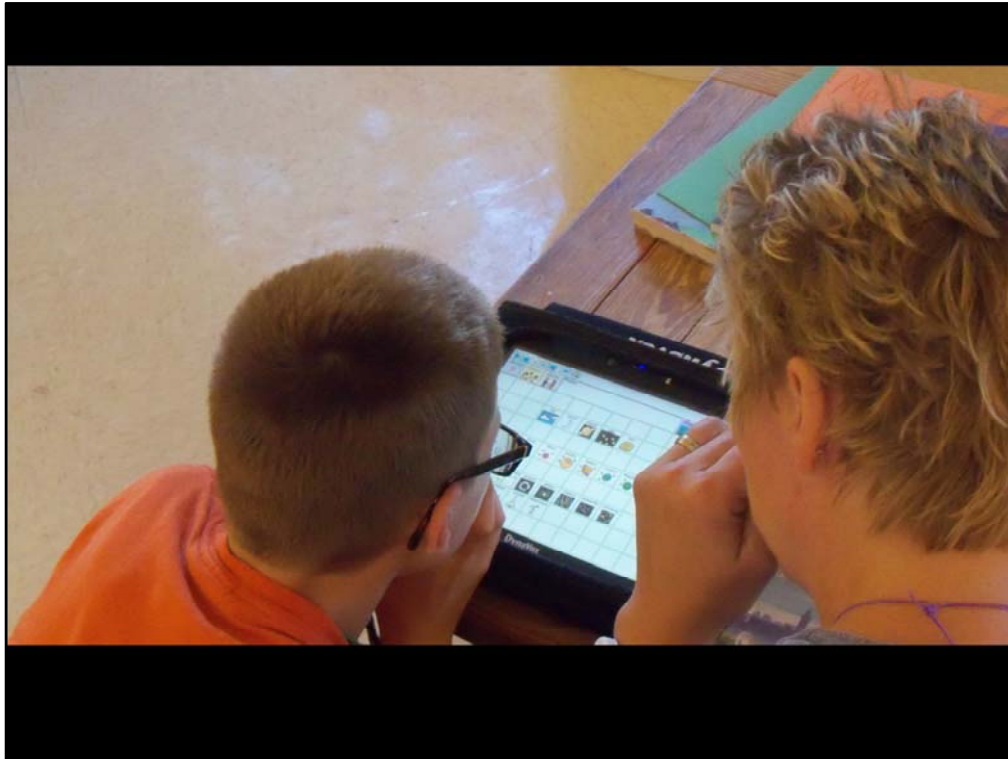
In the DLM writing testlets, a clear distinction is made between writing using a pencil, keyboard, or letters of the alphabet access in some other way, and communicating.



In all of the writing testlets, students will be asked to use their everyday communication system to select topics and communicate about those topics. Many students will accomplish this using speech.



Others will use sign language.



Or an augmentative communication device.




A few may use objects that are familiar to them. The important thing is that students select topics and communicate about those topics using the communication approach they use in their every day instruction.



If you have students who are still developing symbolic communication, you may want to complete the Professional Development Modules on Beginning Communicators and Symbols. You can also find supports for using picture communication symbols on the DLM Virtual Community of Practice.




After students have selected a topic and communicated about it, they will be asked to write. Scoring of the Emergent Writing Testlets has taken into account the fact that the students are not yet using letters to spell words that communicate with others, but they are still required to engage in writing using a tool that provides access to the letters.




What counts as writing?

- Permitted:
 - Writing using any writing tool
 - Letter by letter dictation
 - Use of alternate pencils
 - Word prediction




It is permitted for students to use a pen, pencil, computer, tablet or any other approach that allows the student to print, select or dictate letters. This includes the use of an alternate pencils accessed with switches or partner assisted scanning. It also includes the use of word prediction.



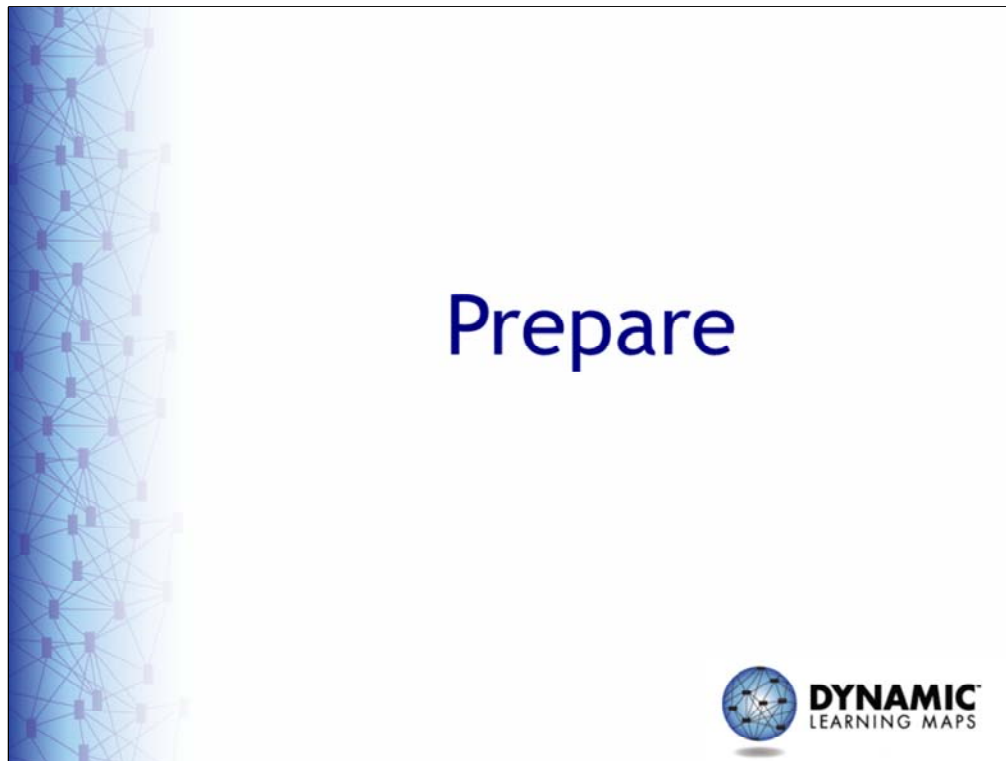
What Counts as Writing?

Not permitted:

- Word banks
- Selection of symbols or pictures
- Dictation to test administrator (scribe)



In contrast, it is not permitted for the student to select words from a word bank or select symbols or pictures to communicate their ideas when the task is writing. It also is not permitted for students to dictate whole words, phrases or sentences for the test administrator to write.



DLM has created several supports to help you prepare for the writing testlets in the DLM Alternate Assessment.

Resources for Preparation

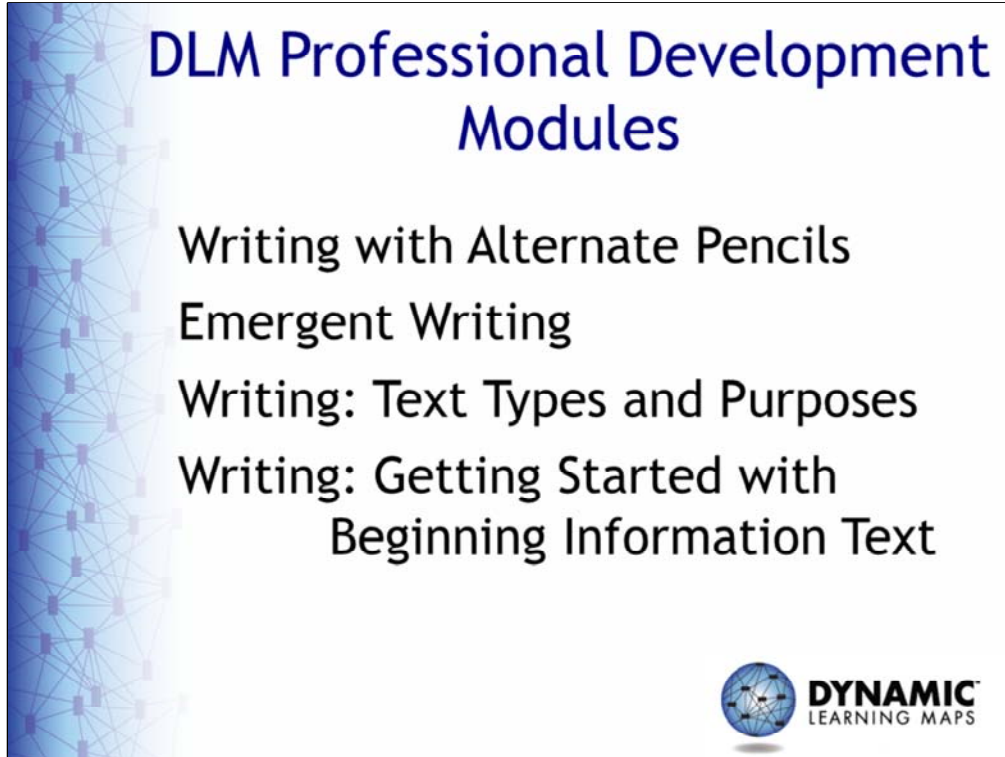
- DLM Writing FAQ
 - Educator Resource Page
- Practice Writing Testlet
 - Writing FAQ
 - Testlet Information Page



All of the resources can be access from the DLM web site (dynamiclearningmaps.org). On the Educator Resource page you'll find a DLM Writing FAQ. It will be a helpful next step in answering your questions about the writing testlets. There are also practice testlets available to use in the KITE system. You can try them on your own and with your students so that you both feel more comfortable with the actual assessment. Instructions for how to access the practice writing testlets are found in the Writing FAQ and on the testlet information page.




You can also refer to the section of the Test Administration Manual that describes the writing testlets.

A graphic with a blue background on the left side featuring a network of interconnected nodes and lines. The right side is white with blue and black text. The title 'DLM Professional Development Modules' is in large blue font. Below it, four module titles are listed in black font. At the bottom right is the 'DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS' logo, which includes a globe icon and the text 'DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS' in bold.

DLM Professional Development Modules

- Writing with Alternate Pencils
- Emergent Writing
- Writing: Text Types and Purposes
- Writing: Getting Started with Beginning Information Text

 **DYNAMIC**
LEARNING MAPS

Finally, to get more information about teaching writing so that your students can be more successful with the DLM assessment, you can complete a variety of professional development modules available in the DLM Professional Development system. The most relevant modules for the purposes of the writing testlets are:

Writing with Alternate Pencils, Emergent Writing; Writing: Text Types and Purposes; and Writing: Getting Started with Beginning Information Text.



<http://dynamiclearningmaps.org>

Thank you for viewing this video. To learn more about the DLM Alternate Assessment System, please go to dynamiclearningmaps.org.