The Opinion Writing Rubric is designed to help teachers provide students with continuous assessment, feedback, and goal setting. The rubric is organized around a K-5 continuum of opinion writing progression. Its purpose is to provide guidance for teaching points, conferring and strategically moving students forward. The rubric will help teachers evaluate students’ work and establish where students are in their writing development.

Elements of the standards are embedded in the descriptors; however, the exact wording is not always included. The rubric is intended to help teachers better understand the grade level expectations of writing. At times, it does not repeat the work in the previous grade level. In order to be at a specific criteria level (Exceeds Standards, for example), it is assumed the student has mastered the previous grade level descriptors.

This is a formative/instructional rubric. It is not designed for summative/assessment purposes.

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| **Opinion Writing Rubric – Kindergarten** **ELACCKW1** | | | | |
|  | **Exceeds Standards** | **Meets Standards** | **Progressing Toward Standards** | **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| **Organization** | | | | |
| **Lead** | The writer wrote a beginning in which he got readers’ attention. He introduced the topic or text he was writing about and gave his opinion. | The writer wrote her opinion in the beginning. | The writer started by drawing or saying something. | There was no evidence of writing. |
| **Transitions** | The writer said more about his opinion and used words such as *and* and *because*. | The writer wrote his idea and then said more. He used words such as *because*. | The writer kept on working. | There was no evidence of writing. |
| **Ending** | The writer wrote an ending for his piece. | The writer had a last part or page. | The writer ended working when he had said, drawn, and “written” all he could about his opinion. | There was no evidence of writing. |
| **Structure** | The writer wrote a part where he got readers’ attention and a part where he said more. | The writer told his opinion in one place and in another place he said why. | On the writer’s paper, there was a place for the drawing and a place where he tried to write words. | There was no evidence of writing. |
| **Development** | | | | |
| **Elaboration** | The writer wrote at least one reason for his opinion. | The writer put everything he thought about the topic (or book) on the page. | The writer put more and then more on the page. | There was no evidence of writing or copied from a text. |
| **Craft** | The writer used words and labels give details. | The writer had details in pictures and words. | The writer said, drew, and “wrote” some things about what he liked and did not like. | There was no evidence of writing. |
| **Language Conventions** | | | | |
| **Spelling** | The writer used what he knew about words and chunks of words (e.g., at, op, it, etc.) to help him spell.  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly most of the time and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | The writer could read his writing.  The writer wrote a letter for the sounds he heard.  The writer used the room resources to help him spell. | The writer read his pictures and some of his words.  The writer tried to make words. | There was no evidence of writing. |
| **Punctuation** | The writer capitalized dates and names of people.  The writer used end punctuation for sentences.  He used commas in dates and lists. | The writer put spaces between words  The writer used lower case letters unless capitals were needed.  The writer wrote capital letters to start every sentence. | The writer can write his name.  The writer can label pictures. | There was no evidence of writing |

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| **Opinion Writing Rubric – First Grade** **ELACC1W1** | | | | |
|  | **Exceeds Standards** | **Meets Standards** | **Progressing Toward Standards** | **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| **Organization** | | | | |
| **Lead** | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only gave his opinion, but also set readers up to expect that his writing would try to convince them of it. | The writer wrote a beginning in which he got readers’ attention. He introduced the topic or text he was writing about and gave his opinion.  . | The writer wrote her opinion in the beginning. | The writer started by drawing or saying something. |
| **Transitions** | The writer connected parts of his piece using words such as *also*, *another*, and *because*. | The writer said more about his opinion and used words such as *and* and *because*. | The writer wrote his idea and then said more. He used words such as *because*. | The writer kept on working. |
| **Ending** | The writer wrote an ending in which he reminded readers of his opinion. | The writer provided some sense of closure to his piece. | The writer had a last part or page. | The writer ended working when he had said, drawn, and “written” all he could about his opinion. |
| **Structure** | The writer’s piece had different parts; he wrote multiple related sentences for each part. | The writer wrote a part where he got readers’ attention and a part where he said more. | The writer told his opinion in one place and in another place he said why. | On the writer’s paper, there was a place for the drawing and a place where he tried to write words. |
| **Development** | | | | |
| **Elaboration** | The writer wrote at least two reasons and wrote at least a few sentences about each one. | The writer wrote at least one reason for his opinion. | The writer put everything he thought about the topic (or book) on the page. | The writer put more and then more on the page or copied from a text. |
| **Craft** | The writer chose words that would make readers agree with his opinion. | The writer used adjectives to give the reader details. | The writer had details in pictures and words. | The writer said, drew, and “wrote” some things about what he liked and did not like. |
| **Language Conventions** | | | | |
| **Spelling** | To spell a word, the writer used grade appropriate spelling patterns (*tion, er, ly*, etc).  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | The writer used what he knew about words and chunks of words (e.g., at, op, it, etc.) to help him spell.  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly most of the time and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | The writer could read his writing.  The writer wrote a letter for the sounds he heard.  The writer used the room resources to help him spell. | The writer read his pictures and some of his words.  The writer tried to make words. |
| **Punctuation** | The writer may have used quotation marks to show what people said.  When the writer used words like *can't* and *don't*, he used the apostrophe. | The writer capitalized dates and names of people.  The writer used end punctuation for sentences.  He used commas in dates and lists. | The writer put spaces between words.  The writer used lower case letters unless capitals were needed.  The writer wrote capital letters to start every sentence. | The writer can write his name.  The writer can label pictures. |

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| **Opinion Writing Rubric – Second Grade** **ELACC2W1** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Exceeds Standards** | | **Meets Standards** | | | | **Progressing Toward Standards** | | | | **Does Not Meet Standards** | |
| **Organization** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Lead** | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only set readers up to expect that this would be a piece of opinion writing, but also tried to hook them into caring about his opinion. | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only gave his opinion, but also set readers up to expect that his writing would try to convince them of it. | | | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he got readers’ attention. He introduced the topic or text he was writing about and gave his opinion. | | | | The writer wrote her opinion in the beginning. | |
| **Transitions** | The writer connected his ideas and reasons with his examples using words such as *for example* and *because*.  He connected one reason or example using words such as *also* and *another*. | | The writer connected parts of his piece using words such as *also*, *another*, and *because*. | | | | The writer said more about his opinion and used words such as *and* and *because*. | | | | The writer wrote his idea and then said more. He used words such as *because*. | |
| **Ending** | The writer wrote a concluding section (multiple related sentences), ending with a thought or comment related to his opinion. | | The writer wrote an ending in which he reminded readers of his opinion. | | | | The writer provided some sense of closure to his piece. | | | | The writer had a last part or page. | |
| **Structure** | The writer wrote several reasons or examples why readers should agree with his opinion and wrote at least several sentences about each reason.  The writer organized his information so that each part of his writing was mostly about one thing. | | The writer’s piece had different parts; he wrote multiple related sentences for each part. | | | | The writer wrote a part where he got readers’ attention and a part where he said more. | | | | The writer told his opinion in one place and in another place he said why. | |
| **Development** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Elaboration** | The writer not only named his reasons to support his opinion, but also wrote more about each one. | | The writer wrote at least two reasons and wrote at least a few sentences about each one. | | | | The writer wrote at least one reason for his opinion. | | | | The writer put everything he thought about the topic (or book) on the page or copied from a text. | |
| **Craft** | The writer not only told readers to believe him, but also wrote in ways that got them thinking or feeling in certain ways. | | The writer chose words that would make readers agree with his opinion. | | | | The writer used adjectives to give the reader details. | | | | The writer had details in pictures and words. | |
| **Language Conventions** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Spelling** | The writer used what he knew about grade appropriate spelling patterns to help him spell and edit.  The writer got help from others to check his spelling and punctuation before writing his final draft. | | To spell a word, the writer used grade appropriate spelling patterns (tion, er, ly, etc).  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | | | | The writer used what he knew about words and chunks of words (e.g., at, op, it, etc.) to help him spell.  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly most of the time and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | | | | The writer could read his writing.  The writer wrote a letter for the sounds he heard.  The writer used the room resources to help him spell. | |
| **Punctuation** | The writer may have punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks.  While writing, the writer put punctuation at the end of every sentence. The writer wrote in ways that helped readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another. | | The writer may have used quotation marks to show what people said.  When the writer used words like *can't* and *don't*, he used the apostrophe. | | | | The writer capitalized dates and names of people.  The writer ended sentences with punctuation.  He used commas in dates and lists. | | | | The writer put spaces between words.  The writer used lower case letters unless capitals were needed.  The writer wrote capital letters to start every sentence. | |
| **Opinion Writing Rubric – Third Grade** **ELACC3W1** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | **Exceeds Standards** | | | **Meets Standards** | | | **Progressing Toward Standards** | | **Does Not Meet Standards** | |
| **Organization** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Lead** | | The writer wrote a few sentences to hook his reader, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information.  The writer stated his claim. | | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only set readers up to expect that this would be a piece of opinion writing, but also tried to hook them into caring about his opinion. | | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only gave his opinion, but also set readers up to expect that his writing would try to convince them of it. | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he got readers’ attention. He introduced the topic or text he was writing about and gave his opinion. | |
| **Transitions** | | The writer used words and phrases to glue parts of the piece together.  He used phrases such as *for example*, *another example*, *one time*, and *for instance* to show when he wanted to shift from saying reasons to giving evidence and *in addition to*, *also*, and *another* to show when he wanted to make a new point. | | | The writer connected his ideas and reasons with his examples using words such as *for example* and *because*.  He connected one reason or example using words such as *also* and *another*. | | | The writer connected parts of his piece using words such as *also*, *another*, and *because*. | | The writer said more about his opinion and used words such as *and* and *because*. | |
| **Ending** | | The writer wrote an ending for his piece in which he restated and reflected on his claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what he had written. | | | The writer wrote a concluding section (multiple related sentences), ending with a thought or comment related to his opinion. | | | The writer wrote an ending in which he reminded readers of his opinion. | | The writer provided some sense of closure to his piece. | |
| **Structure** | | The writer separated sections of information using paragraphs. | | | The writer wrote several reasons or examples why readers should agree with his opinion and wrote at least several sentences about each reason.  The writer organized his information so that each part of his writing was mostly about one thing | | | The writer’s piece had different parts; he wrote multiple related sentences for each part. | | The writer wrote a part where he got readers’ attention and a part where he said more. | |
| **Development** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Elaboration** | | The writer gave reasons to support his opinion. He chose the reasons to convince his readers.  The writer included examples and information to support his reasons, perhaps from a text, his knowledge, or his life. | | | The writer not only named his reasons to support his opinion, but also wrote more about each one. | The writer wrote at least two reasons and wrote at least a few sentences about each one. | | | The writer wrote at least one reason for his opinion or copied from a text. | | |
| **Craft** | | The writer made deliberate word choices to convince his readers, perhaps by emphasizing or repeating words that made readers feel emotions.  If it felt right to do so, the writer chose precise details and facts to help make his points and used figurative language to draw readers into his line of thought.  The writer used a convincing tone. | | | The writer not only told readers to believe him, but also wrote in ways that got them thinking or feeling in certain ways. | The writer chose words that would make readers agree with his opinion. | | | The writer used words and labels give details. | | |
| **Language Conventions** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Spelling** | | The writer used what he knew about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit.  The writer used classroom resources (word wall, if applicable, and dictionaries) to help when needed. | | The writer used what he knew about grade appropriate spelling patterns to help him spell and edit.  The writer got help from others to check his spelling and punctuation before writing his final draft. | | To spell a word, the writer used grade appropriate spelling patterns (*tion, er, ly*, etc).  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | | | The writer used what he knew about words and chunks of words (e.g., at, op, it, etc.) to help him spell.  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly most of the time and used the room resources to help him spell other words. | | |
| **Punctuation** | | When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.  When using dialogue, quotation marks were used correctly.  The writer used periods to fix his run-on sentences. | | The writer may have punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks.  While writing, the writer put punctuation at the end of every sentence.  The writer wrote in ways that helped readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another. | | The writer may have used quotation marks to show what people said.  When the writer used words like *can't* and *don't*, he used the apostrophe. | | | The writer capitalized dates and names of people..  The writer ended sentences with punctuation.  He used commas in dates and lists. | | |

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| **Opinion Writing Rubric – Fourth Grade ( ELACC4W1)** | | | | | | | |
|  | **Exceeds Standards** | | **Meets Standards** | | **Progressing Toward Standards** | | **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| **Organization** | | | | | | | |
| **Lead** | The writer wrote an introduction that lead to a claim and got his readers to care about his opinion. He got readers to care by not only including a cool fact or jazzy question, but also figuring out what was significant in or around the topic and giving readers information about what was significant about the topic.  The writer worked to find the precise words to state his claim; he let readers know the reasons he would develop later. | | The writer wrote a few sentences to hook his reader, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information.  The writer stated his claim. | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only set readers up to expect that this would be a piece of opinion writing, but also tried to hook them into caring about his opinion. | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only gave his opinion, but also set readers up to expect that his writing would try to convince them of it. | |
| **Transitions** | The writer used transition words and phrases to connect evidence back to his reasons using phrases such as *this shows that*…  The writer helped readers follow his thinking with phrases such as *another reason* and *the most important reason*. To show what happened he used phrases such as *consequently* and *because of.*  The writer used words such as specifically and in particular to be more precise. | | The writer used words and phrases to glue parts of the piece together.  He used phrases such as *for example*, *another example*, *one time*, and *for instance* to show when he wanted to shift from saying reasons to giving evidence and *in addition to*, *also*, and *another* to show when he wanted to make a new point. | The writer connected his ideas and reasons with his examples using words such as *for example* and *because*.  He connected one reason or example using words such as *also* and *another*. | | The writer connected parts of his piece using words such as *also*, *another*, and *because*. | |
| **Ending** | The writer wrote a conclusion in which he connected back to and highlighted what the text was mainly about, not just the preceding paragraph. | | The writer wrote an ending for his piece in which he restated and reflected on his claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what he had written. | The writer wrote a concluding section (multiple related sentences), ending with a thought or comment related to his opinion. | | The writer wrote an ending in which he reminded readers of his opinion. | |
| **Structure** | The writer grouped information and related ideas into paragraphs. He put the parts of his writing in the order that most suited his purpose and helped him prove his reasons and claim. | | The writer separated sections of information using paragraphs. | The writer wrote several reasons or examples why readers should agree with his opinion and wrote at least several sentences about each reason.  The writer organized his information so that each part of his writing was mostly about one thing. | | The writer’s piece had different parts; he wrote multiple related sentences for each part. | |
| **Development** | | | | | | | |
| **Elaboration** | The writer gave reasons to support his opinion that were parallel (of equal importance) and did not overlap (similar yet not the same). He put them in an order that would be most convincing.  He included evidence, such as facts, examples, quotations, anecdotes, and information to support the claim. | | The writer gave reasons to support his opinion. He chose the reasons to convince his readers.  The writer included examples and information to support his reasons, perhaps from a text, his knowledge, or his life. | The writer not only named his reasons to support his opinion, but also wrote more about each one. | | The writer wrote at least two reasons and wrote at least a few sentences about each one or copied from a text. | |
| **Craft** | The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on the reader by using precise phrases, a metaphor, or image that would convey his ideas.  The writer made choices about how to angle his evidence to support his points.  The writer attempted to use an expert voice and varied his sentences to create the pace and tone of the different sections of his piece. | | The writer made deliberate word choices to convince his readers, perhaps by emphasizing or repeating words that made readers feel emotions.  If it felt right to do so, the writer chose precise details and facts to help make his points and used figurative language to draw readers into his line of thought  The writer used a convincing tone. | The writer not only told readers to believe him, but also wrote in ways that got them thinking or feeling in certain ways. | | The writer chose words that would make readers agree with his opinion. | |
| **Language Conventions** | | | | | | | |
| **Spelling** | | The writer used what he knew about word patterns to spell correctly and he used references to help spell words when needed.  He made sure to correctly spell words that were important to his topic. | The writer used what he knew about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit.  The writer used classroom resources (word wall, if applicable, and dictionaries) to help when needed. | The writer used what he knew about grade appropriate spelling patterns to help him spell and edit.  The writer got help from others to check his spelling and punctuation before writing his final draft. | | To spell a word, the writer used grade appropriate spelling patterns (*tion, er, ly*, etc).  The writer spelled frequently occurring irregular words (high frequency words) correctly and used the room resources to help him spell other words | |
| **Punctuation** | | The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences, such as *At this time in history,* and *it was common to…*  The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix run-on sentences.  He used punctuation to cite his sources. | When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.  When using dialogue, quotation marks were used correctly.  The writer used periods to fix his run-on sentences. | The writer may have punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks.  While writing, the writer put punctuation at the end of every sentence.  The writer wrote in ways that helped readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another. | | The writer may have used quotation marks to show what people said.  When the writer used words like *can't* and *don't*, he used the apostrophe. | |

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| **Opinion Writing Rubric – Fifth Grade** **ELACC5W1** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Exceeds Standards** | | | **Meets Standards** | | **Progressing Toward Standards** | **Does Not Meet Standards** | |
| **Organization** | | | | | | | | |
| **Lead** | | The writer wrote an introduction that helped the reader to understand and care about the topic or text. He thought backwards between the piece and the introduction to make sure that the introduction fits with the whole.  Not only did he clearly state his claim; he named the reasons that he developed later. He also told how his text will unfold. | | | The writer wrote an introduction that lead to a claim and got his readers to care about his opinion.  He got readers to care by not only including a cool fact or jazzy question, but also figuring out what was significant in or around the topic and giving readers information about what was significant about the topic.  The writer worked to find the precise words to state his claim; he let readers know the reasons he would develop later. | The writer wrote a few sentences to hook his reader, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information. The writer stated his claim. | | The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only set readers up to expect that this would be a piece of opinion writing, but also tried to hook them into caring about his opinion. |
| **Transitions** | | The writer used transitional phrases to help his reader understand how the different part of his piece fit together to support his argument. | | | The writer used transition words and phrases to connect evidence back to his reasons using phrases such as *this shows that*…  The writer helped readers follow his thinking with phrases such as *another reason* and *the most important reason*. To show what happened he used phrases such as *consequently* and *because of.*  The writer used words such as specifically and in particular to be more precise. | The writer used words and phrases to glue parts of the piece together.  He used phrases such as *for example*, *another example*, *one time*, and *for instance* to show when he wanted to shift from saying reasons to giving evidence and *in addition to*, *also*, and *another* to show when he wanted to make a new point. | | The writer connected his ideas and reasons with his examples using words such as *for example* and *because*.  He connected one reason or example using words such as *also* and *another*. |
| **Ending** | | The writer wrote a conclusion that restated the main points of the essay and may offer a lingering thought or new insight for readers to consider.  The ending adds to and strengthens the overall argument. | | | The writer wrote a conclusion in which he connected back to and highlighted what the text was mainly about, not just the preceding paragraph. | The writer wrote an ending for his piece in which he restated and reflected on his claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what he had written. | | The writer wrote a concluding section (multiple related sentences), ending with a thought or comment related to his opinion. |
| **Structure** | | The writer arranged paragraphs, reasons, and evidence purposefully, leading readers from one claim or reason to another. The writer wrote more than one paragraph to develop a claim or reason. | | | The writer grouped information and related ideas into paragraphs. He put the parts of his writing in the order that most suited his purpose and helped him prove his reasons and claim. | The writer separated sections of information using paragraphs. | | The writer wrote several reasons or examples why readers should agree with his opinion and wrote at least several sentences about each reason.  The writer organized his information so that each part of his writing was mostly about one thing. |
| **Development** | | | | | | | | |
| **Elaboration** | | The writer included and arranged a variety of evidence to support his reasons.  He used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic.  He explained how his evidence strengths his argument.  He explained exactly which evidence supports which point.  He acknowledged different sides to this argument. | | | The writer gave reasons to support his opinion that were parallel (of equal importance) and did not overlap (similar yet not the same). He put them in an order that would be most convincing.  He included evidence, such as facts, examples, quotations, anecdotes, and information to support the claim. | The writer gave reasons to support his opinion. He chose the reasons to convince his readers.  The writer included examples and information to support his reasons, perhaps from a text, his knowledge, or his life. | | The writer not only named his reasons to support his opinion, but also wrote more about each one or copied from a text. |
| **Craft** | | The writer chose words deliberately to be clear and to have an effect on his reader.  He reached for precise phrases, metaphors, analogies or images that would help to convey his ideas and strength his argument.  He chose *how* to present evidence and explained why and how the evidence supports his claim.  He used shifts in his tone to help readers follow his argument, and made his piece sound serious. | | | The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on the reader by using precise phrases, a metaphor, or image that would convey his ideas.  The writer made choices about how to angle his evidence to support his points.  The writer attempted to use an expert voice and varied his sentences to create the pace and tone of the different sections of his piece. | The writer made deliberate word choices to convince his readers, perhaps by emphasizing or repeating words that made readers feel emotions.  If it felt right to do so, the writer chose precise details and facts to help make his points and used figurative language to draw readers into his line of thought.  The writer used a convincing tone. | | The writer not only told readers to believe him, but also wrote in ways that got them thinking or feeling in certain ways. |
| **Language Conventions** | | | | | | | | |
| **Spelling** | | The writer used resources to be sure the words in his writing were spelled correctly, including returning to sources to check spelling. | The writer used what he knew about word patterns to spell correctly and he used references to help spell words when needed.  He made sure to correctly spell words that were important to his topic. | | | The writer used what he knew about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit.  The writer used classroom resources (word wall, if applicable, and dictionaries) to help when needed. | | The writer used what he knew about grade appropriate spelling patterns to help him spell and edit.  The writer got help from others to check his spelling and punctuation before writing his final draft. |
| **Punctuation** | | The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help include extra information and explanation in some of his sentences. | The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences, such as *At this time in history,* and *it was common to…*  The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix run-on sentences.  He used punctuation to cite his sources. | | | When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.  When using dialogue, quotation marks were used correctly.  The writer used periods to fix his run-on sentences. | | The writer may have punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks.  While writing, the writer put punctuation at the end of every sentence.  The writer wrote in ways that helped readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another. |