IDENTIFYING STANDARDS-BASED LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

When identifying learning objectives, make sure you consider your overall group of students and their individual needs and abilities. Think broadly about what you hope to accomplish in your classroom across each component of the *First Author Writing Curriculum*. Some examples include:

Lesson Time	• Build self-confidence and intrinsic motivation • Learn and use concepts about how to be a better writer and communicator • Contribute during Lesson Time
Writing Time	• Consider multiple topics and make a clear topic choice • Write independently • Communicate ideas in writing • Engage in peer and teacher conferences
Author's Chair	• Share writing with others • Comment or ask a question about another student's writing

STANDARDS-BASED IEP GOALS

Increasingly, teachers are asked to not only develop standards-based IEP goals for students, but also to identify how each aspect of the curriculum links to national standards.
Each First Author Lesson provides information at the top of the lesson about the national standards that are addressed for that day.

To enable measurement accuracy, and support educational staff in attaining optimal student performance, standards-based IEP goals must contain five components:

- Identify the student
- Pinpoint the targeted student skill
- Describe the learning context (including adult scaffolds and other supports)
- Report how it will be measured
- Describe the timeframe

FIVE COMPONENTS OF A GOAL	DEFINITION	DESCRIPTION
Who	The student involved	The student's name
Do Statement	What the child will do	Observable and measurable behavior
Conditions Statement	Context in which the desired behavior will be demonstrated	Conditions described for: • Linguistic Contexts • Social Contexts • Instructional Scaffolds • Technical Scaffolds
Criterion Statement	How well a child will perform a particular skills, demonstrate knowledge, or use a strategy	Stated in percentages, ratios, frequencies, duration
Timeframe	In what length of time will the goal be achieved	Time descriptors (e.g., end of the school year, number of writing sessions)

Based on Nelson, N.W. (2010) and Erickson, K. (2014)

Identifying Meaningful Standards–Based IEP Goals
Across Writing, Language, Speaking and Behavior

When identifying writing goals based on individual student needs, use the **Developmental Writing Scale** (starting on page 83) as an anchor measure for both non-conventional and conventional beginning writers in order to understand the student's written linguistic ability. For all levels of writers, the **Developmental Writing Scale** is a measure that focuses on higher processes of writing (e.g., fluency and organization) rather than lower-level processes of writing (e.g., mechanics and conventions). The additional **First Author Writing Measures** provide insights into Text Type Diversity and writing quantity (e.g., Total Intelligible Words and Total Unique Words). These writing quantity and quality measures are product-based, targeting specific aspects of writing and supporting progress monitoring of student outcomes by assessing writing artifacts produced by students over time.

As goals are identified to meet individual student needs, it is also important to include targets that show positive change in the students writing process. Positive changes in the student's writing process (e.g., independent, strategic application of skills) may occur before you see progress in the **First Author Writing Measures**. For example, some students' writing outcome data may appear stable; however, a student may have become much more independent when engaged in all aspects of the writing process (e.g., planning and composing). Standards-based goals should be written to achieve student skill benchmarks that result in decreases in instructional scaffolds and increases in overall writing skills.

As you identify standards-based IEP goals for each student, observe the student in the writing process (e.g., planning and composing). Think about his or her behaviors and strategies. Be sure to note the levels of instructional support typically needed for him or her to write. Reflecting at this level will provide information to guide you in writing the goals that support changes in the writing process. Using both **writing process** information (e.g., student strategies and instructional scaffolds) and **writing product** information (e.g., writing quantity and quality measures) assists in selecting the individualized *observable and measurable behaviors* and the *ideal contexts and conditions* necessary to achieve each standards-based IEP goal for an identified student.

Important!

To be successful writing goals, you will need to become knowledgable of the **First Author Writing Measures** (located in the Assessment section, starting on page 81).

An IEP Goal Non-Example

Students who struggle with writing are at risk for having IEP goals that focus on surface aspects of writing (e.g., spelling and mechanics). The goals below were the writing goals for an eight-year-old boy with severe speech and physical impairments who used a speech-generating device as his primary form of communication and used a word processor to compose text.

He also had access to Co:Writer word prediction to ease his text production, however, his resource room teacher was hesitant to allow him to use it because she viewed this assistive software as a crutch. His actual IEP goals were as follows:

> Given a list of ten words at the 1st and 2nd grade level, <student> will be able to spell the words on his computer with at least 80% accuracy.

> <Student> will be able to learn and use the following rules of capitalization with at least 80% accuracy (people's names, days, months, holidays, streets, cities, and states).

> <Student> will learn and be able to use the following rules of punctuation with at least 70% accuracy (periods, question marks, exclamation marks).

Now take a look at a writing sample composed independently by this student—

Kraz Anems

I like kraz anems. My favoert anem is a meke.
I like to wach thm sweg.

When considering the writing goals and text produced by this student, think about the skills of a typically developing second grade writer. Many students at this grade level can generate multiple cohesive and coherent paragraphs on a single topic.

An IEP Goal Example

To foster development, and align with state core curriculum standards, appropriate IEP goals for this student should target higher level writing skills (fluency, vocabulary, text types, and organization) rather than surface level writing skills (spelling, mechanics, and conventions). *Ideal goals for this student would be to increase fluency, vocabulary, and, as text length increases, to target organization.*

One last lesson from this student case links to ways in which we assist students with improving fluency and organization, and moving them up the **Developmental Writing Scale**. Initially, in his writing program, this student was required to write from a picture prompt. One day in March, he was provided a picture of a pink bunny and asked to write. He became extremely frustrated with this topic, cried, and refused to write. This is an excellent example of the "Dead End" instructional approach described by Cunningham, Cunningham, Hall, and Moore (2005).

Facilitating overall writing fluency in beginning writers necessitates self-selection using topics that are motivating. Over time, together with his Speech-Language Pathologist, this student planned for his writing by choosing a topic of interest to him. The SLP then read expository text related to the topic aloud, and the student signaled for important content to be recorded by the SLP, who then made this core vocabulary available on an alternate keyboard. Using this improved process, the student began to write multiple paragraphs on favorite topics like the solar system *with minimal adult cueing.*

Initial baseline information regarding students' abilities and needs can be identified using the Student Accomplishments for Communication and Classroom Behavior tool (located in the Teacher Tools folder and on the Teacher Resource USB drive). Once student skills are profiled, review the communication skills and behaviors, identify potential benchmark skills over time, and generate future standards-based goals for the student.

Again, write the goals collaboratively with the student, post them prominently, and support the student's self-reflecting on the achievement of his or her goals. If the student is unable to collaborate in goal setting, use student-friendly word choices to write 1-3 goals and post them in his or her Author's Toolkit. Provide positive verbal feedback and praise to all students, reinforcing when they have met or exceeded their goals!

A Case Example—Monitor Student Progress, Set Goals, and Show Student Outcomes

Meet Michael, a talkative engaging 14-year-old student who is placed in a self-contained high-school classroom for students with moderate cognitive impairments. While Michael enjoys verbally communicating with others, there is a significant mismatch between his oral and written language skills. Michael's teacher, said that the writing curriculum for students in her classroom, including Michael, had focused on basic functional writing skills (e.g., copying and tracing, writing first and last name). Throughout their school years Michael and his peers had not received systematic explicit writing instruction, nor had they had frequent meaningful opportunities to write and share text.

This baseline sample was produced by Michael in one of the first writing sessions before the *First Author Writing Curriculum* and the First Author Software were used together. Notice his difficulty with mechanics and letter formations—he was unable to produce text that is legible to a reader.
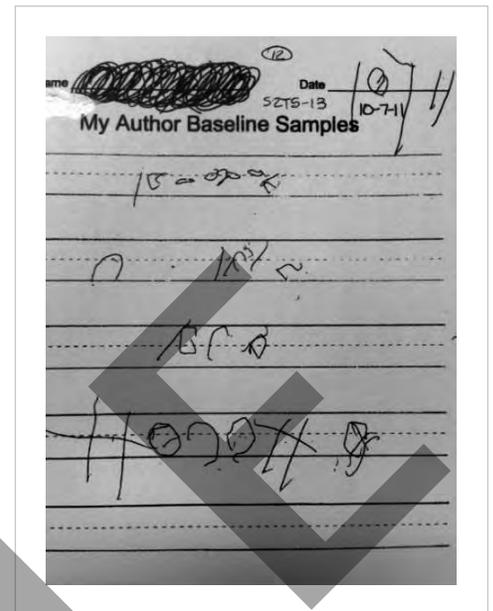

The table below shows measurement of Michael's baseline writing sample:

WRITING QUANTITY AND QUALITY MEASURE	OUTCOME DATA
Developmental Writing Scale	Level 3
Total Intelligible Words	0
Total Unique Words	0
Topic Diversity	Unclear
Text Type Diversity	Emergent

During Michael's first day using the First Author software he independently chose the topic below and said, as he was writing, that he wanted to be a famous actor someday like Miley Cyrus. When he finished the writing sample he excitedly told his teacher, "Hey Mrs. K! I just wrote a short story about Miley Cyrus!" Notice that the first three words in this sample are labeling the photo chosen for his writing. The remaining words demonstrate some of Michael's exploration of word bank words on his first day.
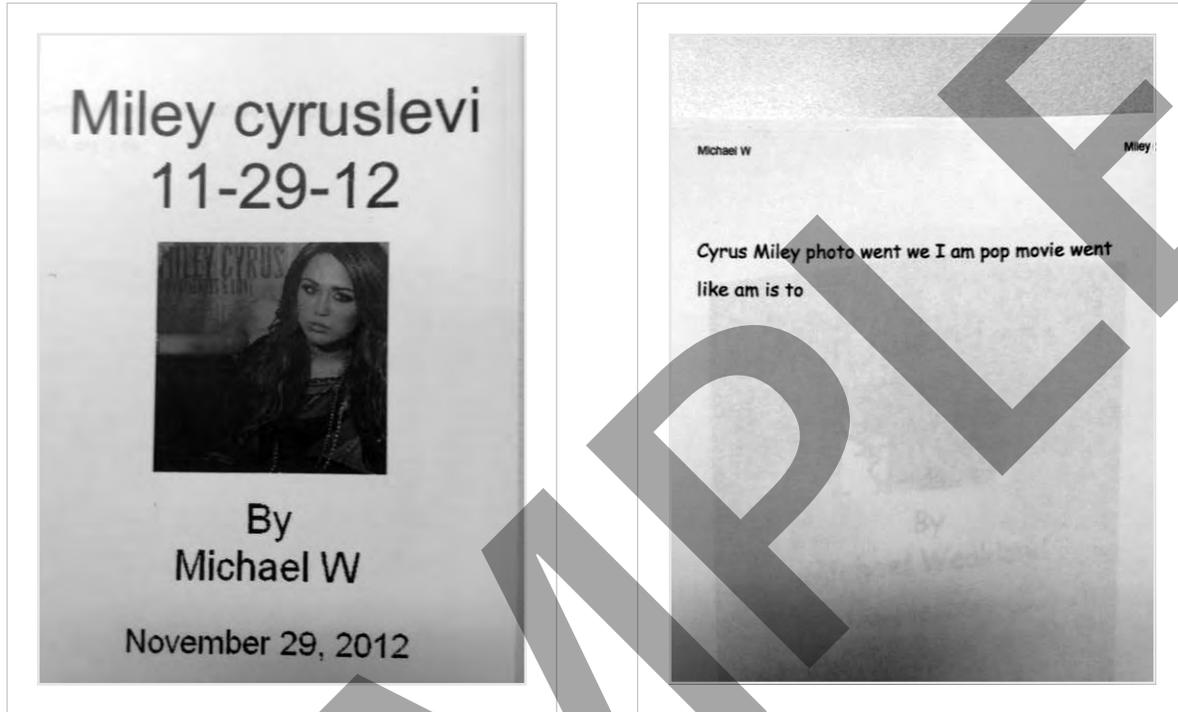
The table below shows measurement of Michael's writing in this first sample using the First Author software:

WRITING QUANTITY AND QUALITY MEASURE	OUTCOME DATA
Developmental Writing Scale	Level 8
Total Intelligible Words	14
Total Unique Words	12
Topic Diversity	Miley Cyrus
Text Type Diversity	Label

The final sample shown below shows the progress Michael made when using the First Author software during a second school year. He is making significant strides in closing the gap between what he can say verbally and translating that content in his writing product. This sample not only shows his gains on the **Developmental Writing Scale** it also shows Michael's Text Type Diversity as he writes a plan for the future.

movie star

By
Michael W

May 16, 2013

I become famous million fans I want be famous actor. I will act
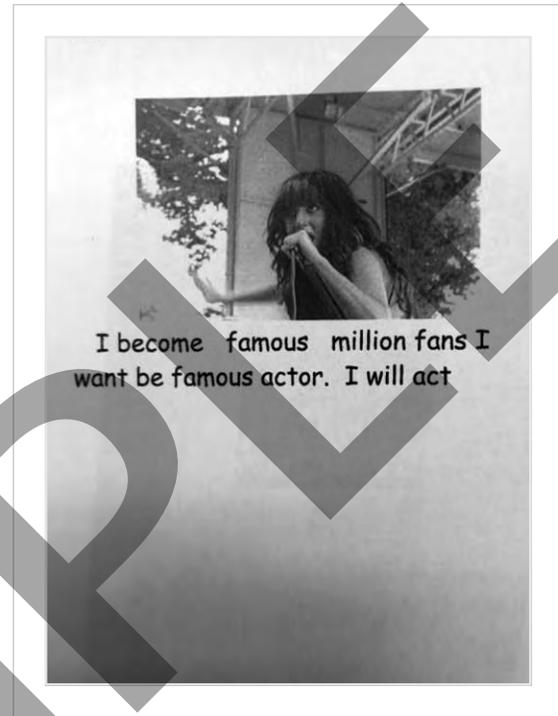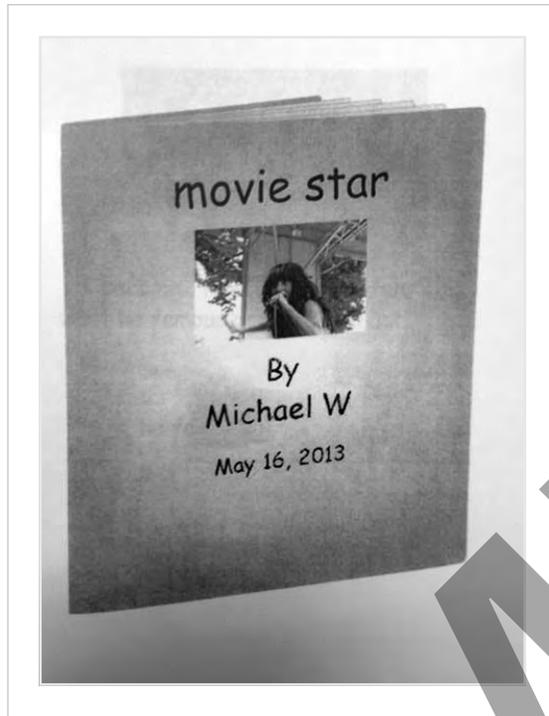
WRITING QUANTITY AND QUALITY MEASURE	OUTCOME DATA
Developmental Writing Scale	Level 11
Total Intelligible Words	13
Total Unique Words	10
Topic Diversity	Acting
Text Type Diversity	Plan

Michael W   Gravedigger5-21

I like it because it is scary
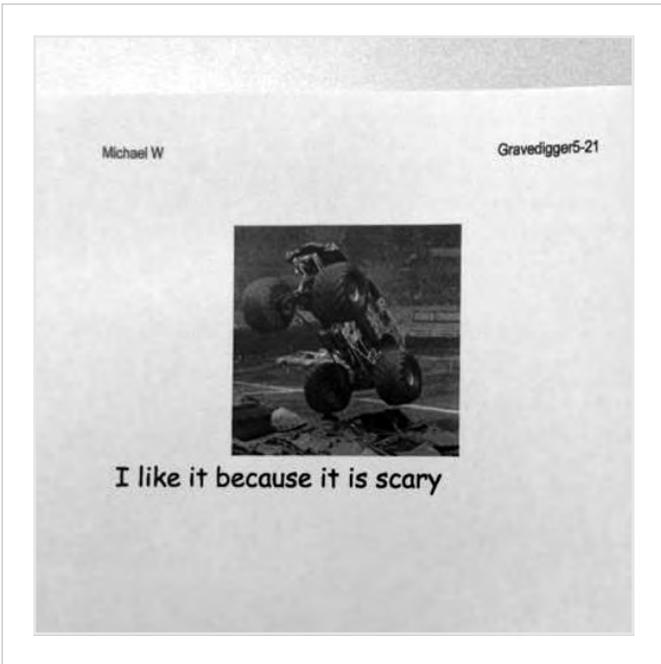
Michael continues to express himself using different topics and text types. While this sample is not as long as the previous one, the Text Type Diversity classification would be persuasion because of his complex sentence including his reason why he likes Gravedigger.

Two examples of alternate standards and corresponding IEP Goals for Michael are shown below:

EE.W.9-10.2.C	
Use complete simple sentences as appropriate.	By the end of the school year, Michael will move to Level 12 on the Developmental Writing Scale during four out of five writing probes obtained during writing time.
EE.W.9-10.1	
Write claims about topics or texts.	By the end of the school year, Michael will compose persuasive text during writing time, examined using the Text Type Diversity measure, on ten occasions.