DIRECTIONS: 1-Minute Writing Context Checklist

Overview: The 1-Minute Writing Context Checklist is designed to support teachers of students with significant disabilities, supporting them in saving writing samples that permit comparison across time. These writing samples should be kept in the student's Literacy Folder, with items checked and notes supporting how the sample was obtained, so that the writing sample is truly 'stand-alone.' The checklist is about tracking students' understandings of writing. In order to be useful student data, the checklist should be used with writing samples for which students have received very little or no help. If they have received too much help, then the students' true writing abilities may be masked, making it difficult to get a clear picture of their abilities.

Why? Often, students with significant disabilities do not write using a traditional pencil. Instead, their 'pencil' might be a communication device (word-based or letter-based writing), an eye-gaze frame, an alphabet flip-board, etc. In addition, they may receive prompting beyond that given to typical students. It is crucial to capture the context of the writing sample, so that progress can be viewed across time. For example, Jim might have dictated a writing sample using symbols that he selected, with significant prompting. Two years later, he might be using the alphabet, using eye gaze. While the 2nd sample may look less sophisticated, with many invented spellings, knowing the **context** will let observers see that his writing skills have grown significantly across time.

What Purposes Does The 1-Minute Writing Context Checklist Serve?

1) *Showing change across time*, from month to month, and even year to year.

2) *Giving teachers and parents id*eas. For example, just using the checklist can help teachers see that they should use more variety in: topic selection, types of writing, and models provided.

3) *Noting the influence of context.* This checklist can show patterns that influence writing, such as setting, grouping, topic selection, or type of writing. This information can influence planning.

How Often Should the 1-Minute Writing Context Checklist Be Used? This should be used at least once a month, but preferably more often. Ideally, every writing sample in the Literacy Folder will have a checklist stapled to it. *Tip:* Print multiple copies of the double checklist on the following page. Fill out each student's name, then place copies (w/ names) in each student's Literacy Folder, so it is available when needed.

1-Minute Writing Context Checklist

Student:_____ **Partner Writing with Student:**_____ **Date:**_____

STUDENT: *Notes* (ex: not feeling good, forgot glasses, mad because came in early from recess, loved topic)

ENVIRONMENT: • **Grouping:** ☐individual ☐small group (2-7) ☐large group (8+) •**Time of Day:** _____

• **Setting:** ☐gen ed class ☐resource room ☐self-contained class ☐home ☐other_____

TASK: • **Person setting topic**: ☐adult ☐peer ☐target student ☐other _____

• **Topic Selection:** ☐verbal choices ☐remnant book ☐topic list ☐story (read) ☐pics ☐objects
• **Type of writing**: ☐letter/note ☐reading response ☐poem ☐photo desc. ☐story ☐review ☐list
☐journal entry ☐Blogging ☐Social Networking (Facebook, etc) ☐Other _____ *Notes:*

• **Model provided:** ☐modeled with student's pencil ☐showed finished sample ☐Other_____

TOOLS: Light tech: ☐standard pen / pencil ☐alternative pencil (print flip chart, eye gaze frame)_____

☐symbols for dictation (describe: ex: 4 PCS symbols; Print & Communicate) _____

High tech: ☐computer keyboard ☐alternate keyboard (ex: IntelliKeys) ☐onscreen keyboard

☐portable writer (AlphaSmart, Writer) _____ ☐communication device _____

☐software support (ex: TextHelp, Solo, Classroom Suite) _____

Other: (Context from school/home experiences that impacted student's writing)

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