

# Comment Framework

## Progress Reports and Report Cards

*When parents read the comment can they see their child?  
When students read the comment can they see themselves?*

### Big Ideas for Building Comments

Teachers should write comments that:

- focus on what students have learned
- describe significant strengths
- identify next steps for improvement

Comments should:

- describe in overall terms what students know and can do
- avoid language that simply repeats the wordings of the curriculum expectations or the achievement chart
- use language that parents/guardians will understand
- provide parents/guardians with personalized, clear, precise, and meaningful feedback
- help parents/guardians understand how they can support their children at home

Growing Success (2010), p. 64



### The Purpose of the Comment Framework

The comment framework has been developed to provide teachers and principals with a common process for creating comments that reflect the intent of *Growing Success*. Individual school boards may adapt the Comment Framework to meet their local needs. The purpose of report card comments is to communicate individual student learning to both students and parents.

The Progress Report and Provincial Report Cards provide opportunities to communicate descriptive feedback. Descriptive feedback helps students learn by providing them with precise information about what they are doing well, what needs improvement, and what specific steps they can take to improve. According to Davies (2007, p. 2), descriptive feedback “enables the learner to adjust what he or she is doing in order to improve.” Ongoing descriptive feedback linked specifically to the learning goals and success criteria is a powerful tool for improving student learning and is fundamental to building a culture of learning within the classroom (Growing Success, 2010, p. 34).

It is important that teachers have the opportunity to compose and use personalized comments on report cards (Growing Success, 2010). Personalized comments include more than specific names and pronouns. Personalized comments communicate student progress, indicate specific individual evidence, and vary from student to student.

Comment Framework for Progress Reports and Report Cards

Developed by: London Region MISA PNC, Revised February 2011

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# Comment Framework

1

*Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.*

- The teacher identifies big ideas related to a learning goal developed from clusters of expectations or learning skills and work habits.
- The qualifiers on the progress report should reflect the student's progress toward curriculum expectations or development of Learning Skills and Work Habits. (See Appendix 1.)
- The qualifiers on the report card should reflect the student's level of achievement of curriculum expectations or attainment of Learning Skills and Work Habits. (See Appendix 1.)
- The descriptors take the tasks and learning goals into account to clarify and more specifically define effectiveness. (See Appendix 2.)
- Growing Success says, "focus on what students have learned."**

2

*Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.*

- The teacher uses information gathered from observations, conversations, and student products to share specific examples of what the student has done to demonstrate his/her strengths.
- This information should be personalized and connected to the success criteria for the learning goal(s).
- Growing Success says, "describe significant strengths."**

3

*Communicate next steps to students and parents.*

- The teacher should communicate success criteria the student still needs to accomplish or extend their learning.
- These next steps should be connected to the learning goal and be meaningful, clear, and attainable.
- Growing Success says, "identify next steps for improvement."**

## The Comment Framework Promotes:

### Moving Away From...

Commented on a large number of expectations.

Comments unrelated to Learning Skills and Work Habits or Curriculum Expectations.

Comments generated from impersonal comment banks.

Comments used educational jargon.

Comments were created with strengths, areas of concern and next steps.



### Moving Towards...

Commenting on one cluster of expectations.

Comments directly relate to Learning Skills and Work Habits or Curriculum Expectations.

Comments reflect personalized, clear, precise, and meaningful feedback.

Comments use parent and student friendly language providing specific classroom examples.

Comments are created with strengths, specific examples, and next steps personalized to the student.

**Sample Learning Skills and Work Habits Comments (Appendix 3)**

**Sample Progress Report Subjects and Strands Comments (Appendix 4)**

**Sample Elementary Report Card Subjects and Strands Comments (Appendix 5)**

**Sample Secondary Report Card Subjects and Strands Comments (Appendix 6)**

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## Students with Special Education Needs

When writing comments for students requiring an Individual Education Plan, the following considerations must be taken:

### Students with Accommodations Only

If the student's IEP requires only accommodations to support learning in a subject and/or strand, teachers will **not** check the "IEP" box. The letter grade or percentage mark and comment are based on the regular grade expectations.

### Students with Modifications

If the expectations in the IEP are based on expectations outlined for a grade in a particular subject and/or strand in an Ontario curriculum document, but vary from the expectations of the regular program for the grade, teachers must check the "IEP" box for that subject/strand on the Elementary Progress Report Card and the Provincial Report Card.

On the Provincial Report Card, teachers must also include the following statement in the section "Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement":

#### Elementary:

*"This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on achievement of expectations in the IEP that vary from the Grade X expectations (and/or) are an (increase/decrease) in the (number and/or complexity) of curriculum expectations."*

#### Secondary:

*"This percentage mark is based on achievement of the learning expectations specified in the IEP, which differ significantly from the curriculum expectations for the course."*

### Students with Alternative Learning Expectations

On the provincial report card, teachers must include the following statement in the section "Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement":

#### Elementary:

*"This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on achievement of alternative learning expectations in the IEP, which are not based on the Ontario curriculum."*

#### Secondary:

*"This percentage mark is based on achievement of alternative learning expectations specified in the IEP, which are not based on the Ontario curriculum."*

When using an alternative format, teachers should indicate the student's progress/achievement relative to the expectations identified in the IEP, and should comment on the student's strengths and next steps for improvement.

Growing Success (2010), p. 61-63

## Comment for Students with ESL/ELD

### Elementary:

For Grades 1 to 8, when a student's achievement is based on expectations modified from the grade level curriculum expectations to support English language learning needs, teachers will indicate this by checking the "ESL/ELD" boxes on the progress report cards and the provincial report cards for the appropriate subject(s)/strand(s).

### Secondary:

For Grades 9 to 12, when a student's achievement is based on expectations modified from the course curriculum expectations to support English language learning needs, teachers will indicate this by checking the "ESL/ELD" box on the provincial report card for the appropriate course. Where a modification is made to course curriculum expectations, the principal will work collaboratively with the classroom teacher to determine the integrity of the credit.

If only the ESL / ELD box is checked:

#### Elementary and Secondary

The ESL/ELD box is checked to indicate that modifications have been made to curriculum expectations to address the language learning needs of English Language Learners. No specific statement is used in the comments section when the ESL/ELD box is checked. This is a change in policy from the past and has been made because modifications for students with language learning needs are usually made on a more temporary basis.

If the ESL / ELD box and the IEP box is checked:

#### Elementary and Secondary

For an English Language Learner, when modifications to curriculum expectations have been made to address both language learning needs and special education needs, the teacher will check both the "ESL/ELD" box and the "IEP" box. Ministry policy for English language learners states that students can be eligible for both ESL/ELD and special education services. In this case, the statement would be included in the comments related to the modifications made for the IEP.

# Appendix 1: Qualifiers

## Qualifiers for Learning Skills and Work Habits

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Excellent         | adaptable, astutely, autonomous, can model, caring, clearly, committed, completely, consistently, discerning, distinguished, divergent, easily, effectively, extensively, exemplary, flawless, flexible, giving, impressive, innovative, insightful, inspirational, kindly, masterfully, meticulously, positively, precisely, proficiently, reflective, reverent, secure, seeks challenges, self-assured, servant leadership, synthesizes, thoroughly, uniquely, virtuous |
| Good              | accomplished, comfortably, competent, confidently, constructively, credible, developed, frequently, generally, influences, knowledgeable, manages, more, most, often, regularly, skilled, successfully, usually   |
| Satisfactory      | acceptable, adequate, approaching, at times, developing, fair, inconsistently, learning to, limited, occasionally, sometimes, passable, periodically, some, suitable  |
| Needs Improvement | avoids, clarification needed, disengaged, few, hardly, indifferent, infrequently, illogical, literal, little, minimal, minor, naïve, numerous attempts, only, poor, rarely, reflection needed, reluctantly, review needed, seldom, simplistic, when required, with difficulty, unclear, unsure  |

Planting Seeds for Success, EOCCC (2010), p. 28

## Qualifiers for Subjects and Strands: Elementary Progress Report

- Very Well
- Well
- With Difficulty

\*Note: The qualifiers on the progress report should reflect the student's progress **toward** curriculum expectations

## Qualifiers for Subjects and Strands: Provincial Report Card

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| High Degree  | accurately, consistently, almost always, clearly, precisely, confidently, proficiently, very successfully, all or almost all concepts, complex, logical, sophisticated, thorough understanding, wide range of context, consistently accurate, with no minor errors or omissions, high level of proficiency, extends, expands, self corrects |
| Considerable | usually, often, routinely, regularly, frequently, most concepts, fair range of context, very good, good, firm understanding, strives, grasps, applies   |
| Some         | sometimes, adequately, some concepts, some specific purpose, simple purposes, some appropriate strategies, some understanding, appropriate but incomplete, attempts familiar, require review / practice, beginning to demonstrate, developing, several minor omissions / sometimes major errors   |
| Limited      | rarely, seldom, with monitoring, few purposes, few contexts, incomplete unclear, imprecise, basic, limited understanding, limited range, inconsistently, with difficulty, few conventions, major errors, simple ideas   |

This list of qualifiers is not exhaustive or exclusive. The list is meant to provide initial direction for the creation of comments.

# Appendix 2: Descriptors

The following tables have been provided to clarify and more specifically define effectiveness when writing a comment.

## DESCRIPTORS of Effectiveness<sup>1</sup>

| Descriptor  | Definition   | Clarifying Words or Terms   | Questions to Consider   |
|---|--|---|---|
| * Effectiveness   | Having a definite or desired effect; having the intended outcome                                 | useful<br>explicit<br>relevance<br>pertinent  | Have you produced the desired or intended result?   |
| <sup>1</sup> The descriptors below more specifically define effectiveness. Teachers are encouraged to use the more specific clarifying words in task-specific rubrics |  |   |   |
| Descriptor  | Definition   | Clarifying Words or Terms   | Questions to Consider   |
| Accuracy  | Conforming exactly with the truth or with a given standard; lacking errors                       | accurate<br>verify<br>correct<br>true<br>valid<br>exact   | How could we check that?<br>How could we find out if that is true?<br>How could we verify or test that?   |
| Appropriateness   | That which is suitable to the outcome; is to the point.  | relevance<br>applicable<br>proper<br>suitable   | Have you produced a result that is applicable to the situation?<br>Is there a result that could be more suitable?   |
| Breadth   | Freedom from limitations (opinion, interests); extent, range.                                    | insight<br>perspectives<br>comprehensive<br>liberality of view<br>elaborate (ideas, perspectives)<br>range<br>exhaustive<br>qualities | Do we need to consider another point of view?<br>Do we need to look at this from another perspective?<br>Is there another way to look at this question?<br>What would this look like from the point of view of...?  |
| Clarity   | That which is without ambiguity (unambiguous).   | clear<br>elaborate<br>detail<br>illustrate<br>lucidity<br>define<br>concise<br>explicit   | Could you elaborate further?<br>Could you express that in another way?<br>Could you illustrate what you mean?<br>Could you give me an example?  |
| Depth   | That which explores the very foundations of a thing or idea; that which goes beyond appearances. | complexity<br>sophisticated<br>layers<br>comprehensive<br>levels (of understanding)<br>thorough<br>intensity<br>profound<br>insight   | What factors make this a difficult problem?<br>What are some of the complexities of this question?<br>What are some of the difficulties we need to deal with?<br>Is that dealing with the most significant factors? |

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| Descriptor   | Definition   | Clarifying Words or Terms  | Questions to Consider  |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Flexibility  | Change direction of thought; vary ideas.   | adaptable<br>not rigid   | Do other factors need to be considered?  |
| Fluency      | Generate a quantity of ideas; offer many alternatives.   | ease of use<br>effortless<br>unconstrained<br>ease of generating<br>ready...ease...grace   | Have many ideas been considered?<br>Are there other alternatives?  |
| Logic        | Describes events or data that are heavily inter-dependent; conclusion depends on the premises.   | make sense<br>reasonable<br>mutually supporting<br>organization<br>internal consistency tied together<br>order...sequence...flow | Does all this really make sense together?<br>Does that follow from what you said?<br>How does that follow?<br>But before you implied this and now you are saying that; how can both be true? |
| Precision    | That which leaves no room for indecision.<br>That which is clearly defined and corresponds to an identifiable notion. That which is performed or which operates in the safest possible manner, with the minimum likelihood of error. | detail<br>degree<br>explicit   | Could you be more specific?<br>Could you give more details?<br>Could you be more exact?  |
| Relevance    | Fits a purpose, conforms to reason and common sense, having a bearing on the matter in hand.   | pertinent<br>relatedness<br>connected  | How does this relate to the problem?<br>How is that connected to the question?<br>How does that bear on the issue?   |
| Significance | Of great importance or consequence.  | so what?<br>implications<br>importance<br>consequences of  | Is this the most important problem to consider?<br>Is this the central idea to focus on?<br>Which of these facts are most important?   |

Part Four: Effective Classroom Practices (B) The Planning Cycle - (ii) Gathering the Evidence

CODE: Effective Elementary Assessment and Evaluation Classroom Practices

## Appendix 3:

### Sample Learning Skills and Work Habits Comments

Responsibility – ‘Good’

1 Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

John usually demonstrates responsibility by fulfilling commitments within the classroom. He comes to class prepared and ready for learning by bringing his agenda and learning materials. John needs to volunteer for more classroom responsibilities.

2 Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3 Communicate next steps to students and parents.

Initiative – ‘Needs Improvement’

1 Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

John avoids taking initiative during opportunities for learning. When tasks become routine (e.g., Independent Reading), he participates. He needs to extend his participation to new experiences such as engaging in reading buddy activities.

2 Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3 Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Collaboration – ‘Satisfactory’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

2

John sometimes models collaboration skills by working with others to build consensus. He participates willingly and listens to others in group conversations. John needs to work through conflict with his peers.

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

# Appendix 4:

## Sample Progress Report Subjects and Strands Comments

### Language (Reading) – ‘Progressing Well’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

John understands important ideas when reading new texts and cites supporting evidence well in his reading responses. During partner discussions, he summarizes the main ideas in “Fly Away Home”, “Owl Moon”, and science-related newspaper articles. John needs to record the ideas from oral discussions in his written reading response through the use of graphic organizers.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

### Language (Writing) – ‘Progressing Well’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

John generates ideas and classifies them well into his recount writing. His “Our Field Trip” recount organized ideas on a timeline. John needs to refer to the Recount Anchor Chart in order to include an important summary of the main events.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Mathematics (Number Sense & Numeration) – ‘Progressing With Difficulty’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

In Number Sense and Numeration, John has difficulty applying the correct operation (e.g. addition or subtraction) when solving problems. He is able to add and subtract 2-digit numbers, using manipulatives and on his white board. However, when solving tasks in his math journal, John needs to re-examine the problem highlighting key words to help him choose the correct operation.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## French Immersion (Oral Communication) – ‘Progressing Well’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

In French, John participates well in classroom activities by voicing his opinions, and expressing ideas on familiar topics. When discussing pastimes and hobbies he is able to say why he likes hockey. When recounting an event that took place in the past, John needs to correct errors in the *passé composé*.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

### How the sample comments look on the Progress Report:

| ESL/ELD – Achievement is based on expectations modified from the curriculum expectations for the grade to support English language learning needs.   |                             | IEP – Individual Education Plan<br>NA – No instruction for subject/strand |                       |   |
|--|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Subjects   | Progressing With Difficulty | Progressing Well  | Progressing Very Well | Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement  |
| <b>Language</b><br>Reading, Writing, Oral Communication, Media Literacy<br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> NA   |                             | ✓   |                       | John understands important ideas when reading new texts and sites supporting evidence well in his reading responses. During partner discussions, he summarizes the main ideas in "Fly Away Home"; "Owl Moon" and science-related newspaper articles. John needs to record the ideas from oral discussions in his written reading response through the use of graphic organizers.            |
| <b>French</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> NA<br><input type="checkbox"/> Core <input type="checkbox"/> Immersion <input type="checkbox"/> Extended |                             | ✓   |                       |   |
| <b>Native Language</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA   |                             |   |                       | John generates ideas and classifies them well into his recount writing. His "Our Field Trip" recount organized ideas on a timeline. John needs to refer to the Recount Anchor Chart in order to include an important summary of the main events.  |
| <b>Mathematics</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French  | ✓                           |   |                       | In Number Sense and Numeration, John has difficulty applying the correct operation (e.g. addition or subtraction) when solving problems. He is able to add and subtract 2-digit numbers, using manipulatives and on his white board. However, when solving tasks in his math journal, John needs to re-examine the problem highlighting key words to help him choose the correct operation. |
| <b>Science and Technology</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French   |                             | ✓   |                       |   |
| <b>Social Studies</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French   |                             | ✓   |                       |   |
| <b>Health and Physical Education</b><br>Health Education<br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French  |                             | ✓   |                       |   |
| Physical Education<br><input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French  |                             | ✓   |                       |   |

# Elementary Report Card

## Appendix 5:

### Sample Elementary Report Card Subjects and Strands Comments

| Ontario Ministry of Education  |  |  |  | Elementary Provincial Report Card  |  |  |  | Student:   |  | OEN:  |  | Grade:  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Date:  |  |  |  | Subject  |  | Report 1   |  | Report 2   |  | Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement  |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Student:   |  |  |  | Language   |  | % Mark   |  | % Mark   |  |   |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Learning Skills and Work Habits</b></p> <p><b>Responsibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment.</li> <li>Completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines.</li> <li>Takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.</li> </ul> <p><b>Independent Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals.</li> <li>Uses class time appropriately to complete tasks.</li> <li>Follows instructions with minimal supervision.</li> </ul> <p><b>Initiative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning.</li> <li>Demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks.</li> <li>Demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning.</li> <li>Approaches new tasks with a positive attitude.</li> <li>Recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement</b></p> |  |  |  | <p><b>Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks.</li> <li>Establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals.</li> <li>Identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group.</li> <li>Responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others.</li> <li>Builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions.</li> <li>Works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals.</li> <li>Shares information, resources, and expertise, and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-Regulation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them.</li> <li>Seeks clarification or assistance when needed.</li> <li>Assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests.</li> <li>Identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals.</li> <li>Persists and makes an effort when responding to challenges.</li> </ul> |  | <p><b>Reading</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA                     |  | <p><b>Writing</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA     |  | <p><b>Oral Communication</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA         |  | <p><b>Media Literacy</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA       |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | <p><b>French</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Core <input type="checkbox"/> Immersion <input type="checkbox"/> Extended <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA   |  |  |  |  |  | Oral Communication, Reading, Writing  |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | <p><b>Native Language</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA   |  |  |  |  |  | Oral Communication, Reading, Writing  |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | <p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> French  |  | <p><b>Number Sense and Numeration</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA |  | <p><b>Measurement</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA |  | <p><b>Geometry and Spatial Sense</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA |  | <p><b>Patterns and Algebra</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA |  | <p><b>Data Management and Probability</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> NA |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | <p><b>Science and Technology</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/EFL <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> French  |  |  |  |  |  | Life Systems, Structures and Mechanisms, Matter and Energy, Earth and Space Systems   |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |

### Grade 1: Social Studies – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Rob is able to describe how rules and responsibilities change and are different because of a new event. When talking about his peanut rule poster, he was able to explain the change in rules and responsibilities before and after the peanut ban. Rob needs to connect the new event (new student with peanut allergy) and why the rules and responsibilities have changed. It is suggested that Rob talk with his parents about simple cause and effect relationships around the house.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 2: Language (Reading) – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

When reading stories with unfamiliar words, John is currently unable to retell the main ideas from the story due to challenges with reading fluency. He is able to orally retell ideas from stories (e.g., My Favourite Pet) that use familiar words from the classroom word wall (e.g., dog, cat, fish, home). John should look at the whole sentence and read it out loud to help him understand the meaning of unfamiliar words.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 2: Language (Reading) – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Most of the time, John makes inferences by predicting relevant events when reading non-fiction texts. During class, he was able to predict by using the title page of Volcanoes of the World and photos in the text Forest Animals. At home, when reading the newspaper, John could further build these inferring skills by making predictions using the headlines.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 2: Mathematics – ‘Level 2’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Kelly can represent and compare fractions using concrete materials. She inconsistently represents money amounts to a dollar. When using fraction circles, she can demonstrate that one fraction is greater than another (e.g.,  $\frac{3}{4} > \frac{1}{3}$ ). Kelly should use coins to practice creating various values to a dollar. She can create simple patterns that use one attribute (e.g., colour, shape). Kelly was able to develop a variety of patterns using a number line and hundreds chart. Using pattern blocks, Kelly could practice creating patterns that involve two attributes. Kelly is inconsistent when measuring length and perimeter using non-standard units (paperclip) and standard units (ruler). In small groups, she is able to use paperclips to measure the length of a line. Kelly needs to align the zero mark on the ruler with the starting point of the line being measured. Kelly is able to identify three-dimensional figures and sort these figures into simple categories (e.g., “it is like a square”). She is able to name and describe simple properties of each figure. Kelly needs to use specific geometric properties (e.g., number of faces) when describing and sorting three-dimensional figures.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 3: The Arts (Visual Arts) – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Using the elements and principles of design, Julia is able to create artwork that expresses her personal feelings and ideas about a local event. After viewing a video clip about Terry Fox, she designed a promotional poster contrasting warm colours to emphasize her positive emotions, with bold lettering to denote enthusiasm for the upcoming Community Walk/Run. Julia needs to make use of space (e.g., foreground, middle ground, background) to provide an illusion of depth.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.



## Grade 4: Science (Pulleys and Gears, Light and Sound) – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Marie is unclear in her understanding of the functions and structures of pulleys and gears. In her poster board presentation on the characteristics of a pulley system, she correctly identified the differences between pulleys and gears only after referring to the classroom anchor chart. Marie had difficulty describing the properties of light and sound. In small group discussions, she was able to identify natural light sources using her textbook as a guide. To reinforce concepts taught in class, Marie would benefit from further investigation of ways in which light is used at home and in the community.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 4: Science (Pulleys and Gears, Light and Sound) – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Marie clearly understands the function and structure of pulleys and gears. In her multimedia presentation comparing and contrasting pulley systems, she correctly identified different examples of pulleys and gears (e.g., flagpole, clothesline, crane) and explained their impact in everyday life. Marie understands and is able to describe most properties of light and sound. She accurately designed, built and tested a kaleidoscope listing the properties of light involved. Marie needs to keep in mind the purpose of her presentations and use appropriate scientific language.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 5: Mathematics – ‘Level 1’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Pat investigates relationships involving simple whole number rates. Using a calculator, he was able to determine the cost of a class set of books when provided with simple rates (i.e., 1 book costs \$3.00). Pat needs to make use of a table of values to relate his solutions to fractions. He determines the perimeter of a rectangle when given the length and width and is working toward an understanding of area. Using tiles, Pat was able to calculate the area of a shape by counting squares. Pat needs to identify the appropriate formula to solve perimeter and area problems efficiently. He is able to solve simple rates by determining the missing value in equations involving addition and subtraction. When given the total number of students in a class and the number of boys, Pat can identify the number of girls. He inconsistently represents, using a common fraction, the probability that an event will occur in games. Pat determined the fairness of a spinner by playing the game repeatedly. Pat needs to use fraction circles to express the likelihood of an event as a fraction.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 5: Mathematics – ‘Level 3’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Sue investigates relationships involving whole number rates and how these relate to fractions and decimals. Using diagrams and Cuisenaire rods, she was able to calculate the cost of a class set of books when provided with the rate (i.e., 2 books cost \$6.00). She determines how the length and width affect the area and perimeter of a rectangle. Using grid paper to build arrays, Sue was able to develop working formulas (i.e.,  $A = \text{length} \times \text{width}$ ). Sue is able to solve simple rates by determining the missing value in equations involving operations. When given the area and length of our school gymnasium, Sue correctly identified the width. Sue represents, using a common fraction, the probability that an event will occur in games. She was able to express the likelihood of an outcome as a fraction to determine the fairness of a spinner game. Sue should use additional learning tools to help her accurately express solutions as both fractions and decimals when appropriate (e.g., use a calculator to check answers).

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 5: Health and Physical Education – ‘Level 1’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

In Health, Faizal shows a basic understanding of what is needed for healthy living, and makes some connections between personal choices and health in a few very familiar contexts. In his poster on healthy choices, he identified a few effects of substance abuse and provided few examples of media influence on students' choices. Faizal is encouraged to develop a wider variety of personal strategies to assist him in dealing with peer pressure and making healthy choices. In Physical Education, Faizal is beginning to understand the importance of being physically active. He participates in familiar games, and is developing movement strategies to help him participate successfully in non-familiar games. Faizal is encouraged to set personal fitness goals to improve his overall level of physical fitness and personal enjoyment of a wider variety of physical activities.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 5: Core French – ‘Level 1’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Rebecca is able to follow and give basic classroom instructions such as *Comment ça va?* and *Quel temps fait-il?* She is experiencing some difficulty in giving an oral presentation on an assigned topic. Rebecca is encouraged to use available resources and seek feedback from the teacher and her peers. Rebecca reads a simple story and is able to give brief oral responses. In her oral response to the story “Au zoo”, Rebecca used pictures to help with comprehension. She will continue to benefit from an opportunity to read short texts and restating it in her own words. Rebecca is experiencing challenges in writing simple, short sentences on assigned topics. In her journal, she wrote a few simple sentences that followed the pattern “Il y a un/une ...” and added some illustrations to enhance her writing. A next step for Rebecca will be to follow the model presented in class.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 6: Language – ‘Level 3’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Michael selects and applies various reading strategies to extend his understanding during independent reading. In his reader’s notebook, Michael summarizes main events from non-fiction texts and explains his rationale for the selected strategies (e.g., predicting from pictures). Michael should choose strategies from the anchor chart that connect his knowledge with the ideas presented in the text. Michael researches and gathers information to write a science report. In his report on Chris Hadfield, he identified Hadfield’s contributions using supporting details. Michael needs to use strong verbs and concrete specific nouns (e.g., Space Shuttle Atlantis) to enhance the impact on the audience. He orally communicates his research to his peers with linked ideas, appropriate language and non-verbal cues. In his mock radio announcement, Michael used appropriate tone of voice and clear ideas. He should include more interesting facts to further engage the audience.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 7: History (New France) – ‘Level 2’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Liam compares and contrasts a few viewpoints from French settlers, First Nations peoples and fur traders as they relate to the fur trading industry. He designed a webpage based on his inquiry that showed some attitudes that First Nations peoples and fur traders had regarding trapping, by embedding a Venn diagram to compare and contrast. During future inquiry projects, he should formulate more precise questions to gather more information.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 8: Mathematics – ‘Level 2’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Kyle applies simple strategies to solve multi-step problems involving whole numbers, decimals and fractions. Kyle is able to compare and order fractions and decimals to thousandths with some accuracy. He needs to apply these skills to solve real life problems. Kyle is developing an understanding of the relationship between area and volume. He is able to use a sheet of paper to investigate how increasing the dimensions of a cylinder affects its volume. Kyle shows a partial understanding of geometric properties. He can sort and classify quadrilaterals using pattern blocks. Kyle inconsistently represents linear growing patterns with concrete materials. He determines an equation that represents simple patterns. Kyle needs to make sure he understands the task by highlighting key words before he chooses a strategy to solve the problem. He needs to look back and check the reasonableness of his answer.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 8: Mathematics – ‘Level 4’ in all strands

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Jack applies unique strategies to solve multi-step problems involving whole numbers, decimals and fractions. In small group tasks, Jack orally communicates his thinking to his peers by selecting learning tools to solve real life problems involving fractions and decimals. Jack has a clear understanding of the relationship between area and volume. During computer investigations, he demonstrates how increasing the dimension of a cylinder affects its volume. Jack has a thorough understanding of geometric properties. He accurately sorts and classifies quadrilaterals using geometry software. Jack consistently represents linear growing patterns. He determines an equation using manipulatives and computer graphing software. He needs to develop a variety of ways to represent his thinking and strategies in written form (e.g., concept map, math journal entry or sequential steps).

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 8: Core French – ‘Level 2’ in Oral Communication and Reading

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Jean is able to read familiar texts in French with some understanding. He is able to make personal connections to texts when learning about technology that aid people with special needs. He has some ability to speak in French but struggles to sustain spontaneous conversation. He would benefit from regular practice of vocabulary and expressions at home and at school to increase his confidence.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

# Appendix 6:

## Sample Secondary Report Card Subjects and Strands Comments

### Grade 9: Applied Mathematics – ‘Below 50’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Jamie does not yet understand relationships between values using graphs. When graphing relations (e.g., cell phone use), he is able to plot values, however the scales used lead to a misrepresentation of data and an inability to determine relationships. To complete his assignments, Jamie needs to take initiative to utilize the supports provided to him in class (e.g., scaled graph paper).

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

*Note:*

*The above comment could be used on the midterm report card. Individual districts may have their own statements that are to be included. The final report card comment could be adapted to include in the following statements:*

Jamie was successful in achieving the knowledge and skills for Number Sense and Algebra, however he did not meet the minimum expectations of Measurement and Geometry, and Linear Relations. Jamie should meet with the guidance counsellor for next steps.

### Grade 9: Applied Mathematics – ‘Level 2’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Ava determines some of the characteristics of relations by constructing graphs. She identifies correlation (e.g., airtime vs. cell phone cost) and constructs lines of best fit. Ava needs to seek clarification about how a table of values, a graph, and rate of change determine if a relation is linear. Ava’s understanding may improve by referencing online classroom notes and resources at home.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Civics – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Robbie is able to identify few issues that are currently impacting global affairs. On the international issues assignment, he focussed on the Haiti earthquake statistics. Robbie needs to understand that there are numerous issues impacting global affairs and that decisions made by individuals and organizations have an effect on world matters.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Civics – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Robbie understands and explains how decisions of individual citizens and organizations impact global affairs. On the International Issues assignment, he was able to clearly analyze and evaluate the civic actions of “Doctors without Borders” in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake. When researching, Robbie should challenge himself to look beyond the perspective presented by the Canadian media.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.



## Grade 10: Applied English – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Kim identifies the elements of an persuasive opinion piece and uses a few of these elements appropriately in her writing. As shown in her opinion piece on whether students should have part-time jobs, Kim had many persuasive ideas but she had difficulty maintaining one consistent opinion (i.e. staying on one side of the issue). Kim, in the development of her organizational skills, needs to focus on information and ideas that support her opinion by using graphic organizers.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Applied English – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Kim clearly organizes ideas and includes simple supporting details in her written work. As demonstrated in her opinion piece on the use of cell-phones in schools, she used persuasive language (e.g., reasonable, respect, inappropriate use) to express her opinion. Kim should use the available graphic organizers to include more details that support her opinion.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Academic Mathematics – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

When applying the principles of trigonometry such as the sine law, cosine law, and Pythagorean Theorem, Juan had difficulty finding the correct measures of unknown angles and sides. This was seen in his construction assignment when creating a model of a building where he was able to correctly identify few of the angles and side lengths. Juan needs to double-check his responses for accuracy and reasonableness (i.e. the last step of the problem-solving model).

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Academic Mathematics – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Juan understands and applies the principles of trigonometry to find all unknown angles and sides in different types of triangles (i.e., right and acute). Throughout the construction assignment, he applied the sine and cosine laws to solve real life problems in surveying and construction. Juan should use the four-step problem solving process to assist in the solving of unfamiliar complex problems.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Technology – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Kelly-Ann prepares materials for projects using construction tools (e.g. hammer, square, measuring tape), however, she has difficulty assembling these materials. In her wall construction project she was able to cut and measure wood safely. When fabricating walls, Kelly-Ann needs to follow the sequence of steps in wall construction (i.e. aligning, squaring, nailing, etc.) to ensure proper assembly.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 10: Technology – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Kelly-Ann prepares and assembles construction materials using the appropriate tools with ease. She pays close attention to project details by following accepted industry techniques such as measurement, alignment, assembly, and safety. In the future, Kelly-Ann should challenge herself to consider non-traditional techniques and style-guides to create unique design plans.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 12: University Biology – ‘Level 1’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Ben has difficulty in linking chemical processes and nervous signals as they relate to maintaining internal balance. On his homeostasis unit test, he showed inconsistent understanding of human chemical processes and was able to identify a few types of human hormones. Ben is encouraged to use the homeostasis resource materials developed in class (e.g. flowchart) to support his understanding of chemicals/hormones and their effect on the human body.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

## Grade 12: University Biology – ‘Level 3’

1

Write key learning with qualifiers and descriptors.

Ben understands and is able to explain the importance of chemical processes and nervous signals related to maintaining internal balance. In his homeostasis unit test essay, he was able to clearly identify long-term risks and benefits of performance enhancing steroids on bodily functions. In future research, Ben is encouraged to investigate other reasons that influence decision-making surrounding the use of any chemicals that affect human processes.

2

Share specific examples that demonstrate the learning.

3

Communicate next steps to students and parents.

# Appendix 7:

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q: Is the Comment Framework a formula?

A: No, the Comment Framework is not a formula. *A framework is a broad overview or outline of interlinked items which supports a particular approach and serves as a guide that can be adapted.*

The Comment Framework is meant to provide guidance and support for teachers to use their professional judgement to develop comments that are consistent with the intent of Growing Success (2010). The framework allows for the three key components from Growing Success to be embedded:

- 1) focus on what students have learned;
- 2) describe significant strengths;
- 3) identify next steps for improvement.

### Q: Are learning goals and success criteria required to develop a comment?

A: Assessment information derived from learning goals and success criteria that are developed throughout the year assist teachers in linking classroom instruction to the report card. They are not necessary for building comments but make the process of developing meaningful, personalized report card comments easier and quicker.

### Q: If the Comment Framework and the instructions from my Principal are different, what do I do?

A: The decision to approve the report cards and comments rests with the principal. "Teachers will benefit from leadership by the principal to ensure that there is a common understanding among all staff about the process for determining the final grade. The principal will work with teachers to ensure common and equitable grading practices that follow ministry policy and board guidelines." (Growing Success, 2010)

**Q: What do I do when there is not enough room in the comment box?**

A: For certain subjects there is limited space within the subject's comment box. Revising the comment to make it more succinct is helpful. It is important to focus on what students know and are able to do; however, when space is limited the other components of the framework can be adapted using professional judgement to reflect what needs to be stated about the student.

**Q: What do I do if I share the subject comment box with another teacher and there is not enough room?**

A: Some report card software may attempt to provide a technical solution; however, these issues are best resolved with a face to face collaborative discussion. The shared space could be divided equally or the space could be divided in a mutually agreed upon manner.

**Q: Do I have to use specific qualifiers from the Comment Framework?**

A: The list of qualifiers, identified in the Comment Framework, is not exhaustive or exclusive. The list is meant to provide initial direction for the creation of comments and can be adapted to meet local needs. Each comment should accurately explain the student's achievement in language that is clear and meaningful for parents and students. Growing Success (2010) states that teachers should avoid repeating language from the achievement chart.

**Q: What verb tense should I use?**

A: Previously, comments may have been written with a consistent verb tense. When you are using the Comment Framework the verb tense may vary throughout the comment. Past tense may be used when referring to specific examples and future tense when communicating next steps. It is important to review verb tense to ensure clarity and readability of comments.

**Q: Does the Comment Framework apply to learning skills and work habits?**

A: In elementary, the Comment Framework can be applied in the learning skills and work habits section of the report card. In secondary, the comments may incorporate learning skills and work habits, especially next step statements.

**Q: How do I develop next steps for a student who is already achieving at a high level?**

A: It is important to identify the success criteria that have not been fully met by this student in this reporting period. Often the success criteria may have been met within the knowledge and understanding category of the achievement chart, but could be extended into the communication or application categories. This process allows for the comment to be personalized specific to the needs of an individual student.

**Q: How do I pick which expectations to comment on when I teach many overall expectations throughout the term?**

A: When commenting on what the student is able to know and do, it is important to choose a cluster of expectations that best reflect the student's overall achievement in the course of study/subject area.

**Q: How can I learn more about the comment framework?**

A: Additional supports are available at <http://ae.misalondon.ca>.







# Comment Framework

Elementary Progress Report Card  
Elementary & Secondary Provincial Report Cards

The **purpose** of this Comment Framework is to provide school districts with a resource in the implementation of *Growing Success: Assessment and Evaluation in Ontario Schools (First Edition, Covering Grades 1-12, 2010)*.

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**This Comment Framework has been developed by:**

*London Region MISA PNC, Assessment and Evaluation Focus Group.*

**Authored by:**

Brenda Courey, St. Clair Catholic District School Board  
 Kim Crawford, Avon Maitland District School Board  
 Robert DiPersio, Niagara Catholic District School Board  
 Brian Englefield, Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board  
 Ben Hazzard, Lambton Kent District School Board  
 Sandy Lee, Avon Maitland District School Board  
 Scott Mitchell, Avon Maitland District School Board  
 Kelly Power, Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board  
 Michael Sendrea, Waterloo Region District School Board  
 Joe Sisco, Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board  
 Michael Townsend, London Region MISA PNC  
 Linda Vandeven, London District Catholic School Board

Comment Framework for Progress Reports and Report Cards

*Developed by: London Region MISA PNC, Revised February 2011*

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