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Dear Parents:

This year your child will be doing a great deal of writing in my class. I strongly believe that writing is critical to language development and the development of thinking skills. We will be writing stories about ourselves and about things we are learning in all subject areas.

In my writing program, we do what I refer to as five different kinds of writing. You will probably hear about these Five Types of Writing from your child, so I wanted to briefly explain them in this letter.

**Type One** writing is the type we use just to get ideas down on paper. It is not a composition, but rather a "quick-write" to generate ideas, express an opinion, make a prediction, or reflect on an event. I will not be grading Type One writing for spelling or writing conventions. I will be evaluating it basically to ensure that your child did it. We will be doing Type One writing frequently because I feel it contributes significantly to your child's learning and language development.

We will also be doing a great deal of **Type Two** writing, which is also a quick-write. With Type Two writing, your child will be answering a specific question about something we are learning about in class. In evaluating Type Two writing, I will be judging only the content of the writing—not the conventions. Type Two also contributes significantly to your child's writing fluency.

**Type Three** and **Type Four** writing are compositions done to produce ideas and develop specific writing skills. With Type Three and Four writing, I use a strategy called focus correcting. Focus correcting is based on the belief that writing improves more quickly when students work to improve a few skills at a time. You will know what the focus correction areas are on any writing project your child does because they will be listed at the top of the paper. On Type Three and Four writing, I will be evaluating only the focus correction areas. This strategy keeps your child focused on key aspects of writing and avoids giving too much negative feedback.

We will also do some **Type Five** writing. This is the most difficult type for all writers, especially young, developing writers. Type Five writing is writing that is revised and edited to be as free as possible of all types of errors. This kind of "publishable" writing requires multiple drafts. Most of the Type Five writing we do will start as Type Three or Four. Then over time, your child will polish it so that it becomes a publishable Type Five piece of writing.

You can help at home in several ways. First, encourage your child to write as frequently as possible about a wide range of topics. Second, be aware of the Five Types of Writing your child does at school. Remember that all writing does not have to be perfect and free of errors to be of value to your child's language development. Third, be a helper and encourager of your child's writing efforts. Talk about your child's writing and ask that it be read out loud (a strategy we use in class) as a way of checking it.

If you have questions or comments about our writing program, please call.

Sincerely,