

HELP BUILD THE EDSTEPS CONTINUUMS

EdSteps is intended to be a large, public library of student work samples in key skill areas. For each skill area, student work will be presented in a continuum — a gradual progression — from emerging to accomplished work.

EdSteps is a grassroots effort to create a resource for teaching and assessment. Rather than assessing work based on a pre-set rubric, EdSteps uses student work as the starting point. After collecting thousands of work samples in each skill area, EdSteps uses a unique process to assess the student work samples, rank them, and create the continuums. (Visit www.edsteps.org to learn about the research-based process that will be used to create the continuums.)

The EdSteps continuums will be valuable tools for teaching and assessment — tools that will be useful to you in the classroom. The Writing Continuum will give you and your students:

- An unprecedented look at what readers of varied ages and backgrounds value in writing.
- Access to a wide range of writing examples from across the country that illustrate effective writing.
- Reference points to determine student growth in writing.
- The ability to chart improvement in students' writing over the school year and over their entire educational careers.

You can help build the EdSteps Writing Continuum. Building the continuum will require at least 5,000 writing samples. The samples will have to represent a broad spectrum of student work in terms of grade level, demographics, ability level, and geography. Writing samples are welcome:

- From students in early childhood and elementary, middle, and high school.
- From college and graduate students.
- From writers in the workplace.
- From teachers of all subject areas.
- For any audience or purpose.
- In any form, genre, or media. Writing samples can include images, charts, or other graphics.
- From students in the United States and around the world.



HOW TO SUBMIT WRITING SAMPLES

Writing samples can be submitted through at least June 2010. You can participate either by encouraging students to upload their writing samples online or by uploading work on behalf of your students. Participation is easy. While you are welcome to create assignments specifically for this effort, you also can use samples of work from your regular lesson plans.

- **Create an EdSteps account at www.edsteps.org.** Having an account will allow you to easily upload student work samples and have the opportunity to review student work. All of the personal contact information you provide when you register and upload work samples will be **confidential** and not shared or sold to any third party.
- **Submit your students' writing.** Submit writing on behalf of your students either through your EdSteps account or by clicking the "Submit Work" button on www.edsteps.org.
- **Encourage your students to submit writing.** Your students can upload their own writing by creating an EdSteps account or by clicking the "Submit Work" button on www.edsteps.org. Students must be 13 years of age or older to create an EdSteps account, but students of any age can submit work.
- **Read the collected writing samples starting in summer 2010.** Once thousands of pieces of writing have been collected, teachers and other adults will be invited to read and evaluate the work. By creating an EdSteps account, you will automatically be notified when the work is ready to be read.

Every EdSteps continuum will be different because each continuum is generated from the work samples collected. To see an example of the way an EdSteps continuum may appear, visit www.edsteps.org.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SUBMITTERS

Questions. The submission process includes three questions that should be answered by the student who created the sample. Please note that the student should answer the questions even if someone else is uploading the work.

The Writing questions are three short, multiple-choice questions that address the drafting process, audience, and genre. To see the questions, please visit the Writing section of www.edsteps.org.

Permission. Work submitted by a student under the age of 18 must have the permission of the student's legal guardian. Permission forms will be sent to guardians via e-mail or mail.

Participating offline. If your school is not equipped with sufficient electronic equipment to participate, please call 202-336-7032 or e-mail help@edsteps.org for information about how to mail student work to EdSteps at no charge to you.

Prizes. Participants who submit work are automatically entered into bimonthly drawings for **\$150 gift cards**. Every work sample you submit earns you one chance to win.