

Yorkmead School



Writing at Yorkmead

March 2016

Review Date March 2018

The Yorkmead approach to Writing

At Yorkmead, we believe that the ability to write with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Writing well is the ability to communicate ideas, information and opinions across a wide range of contexts. As a successful writer, a child will understand how to use different genres appropriately, matching them to audience and purpose whilst at the same time accurately using and applying the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation. Our writing provision at Yorkmead will equip children with the skills necessary to achieve this throughout the curriculum.

Aims:

All children should be able to:

- *Write with confidence, clarity and imagination;*
- *Understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling;*
- *Understand how to write in a range of genres (fiction, non-fiction & poetry) using the appropriate style, structure and features;*
- *Plan, draft, edit and redraft their work and learn how to self and peer-assess against success criteria;*
- *Develop a technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing;*
- *Develop their imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through their writing.*

Implementation:

We follow the National Curriculum (2014) which ensures that a range of genres are covered, including narrative (e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths & legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, non-chronological reports, information texts, recounts, reports and letters) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, acrostic and descriptive poetry.) Genres are taught and learnt by considering the key aspects of

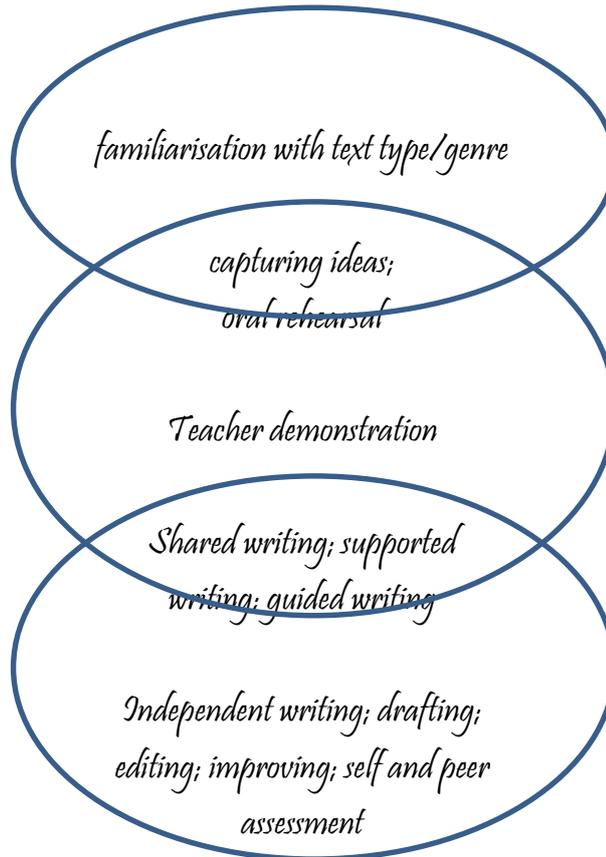
- *purpose*
- *form (organisation & language features)*
- *audience*

Throughout each unit, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the transition between reading as writers (focussing on the structure, characterisation and language features) to writing as readers (word play, describing, composition, planning, editing, redrafting.)

In a nutshell, planning for the learning journey in writing should follow these principles:



The sequence of teaching of writing should generally include the following progression:



At Yorkmead, we will use two clear teaching sequences in order to secure the children's understanding of how to write in different genres.

- 1. Talk for Writing – This will be used more frequently in KS1 and at least once per half term in KS2.*
- 2. Cold to Hot Cycle – this will be used when teaching specific genres, both fiction and non-fiction.*

When either is used the emphasis is always on securing an understanding of the audience, purpose and form (organisation and language features) of each genre being taught.

The Working Party will be developing a plan to secure the progression of skills for each fiction, non-fiction and poetry genre. In the interim, the appropriate key stage's planning proforma for different genres, which are available within our Assertive Mentoring materials, should be used as a first port of call.

Talk for Writing – the key principles

Week 1 – Imitate

- *Reading/sharing text with the children.*
- *Identify features of the text – discuss genre, audience, purpose, language features.*
- *Make a toolkit for your working wall.*
- *Story map text.*
- *Either – read story to the children and they draw pictures as you read, or provide the children with a story map you have already made (choose what is best for your year group/children).*
- *Talking/learning the story*
- *Use the story map with actions to learn the text.*
- *During this phase, teach sentence structures and encourage children to add these to their story map so that they can use them in their writing.*
- *Children then to write the story themselves.*
- *They do this using the story map and the teacher should model each part of the text first.*

Week 2 – Innovate

- *Make changes to the story.*
- *Keep the underlying pattern the same. Forget the detail and think about making changes to basic events, characters, settings and endings. Things you could change Animals, names, types of buildings, rooms, weapons, settings, time connectives, sentence openers. You can also add bits in Adjectives, adverbs, descriptions.*
- *Story map*
- *This can be done over your story map (by adding post it notes), children can draw a new story map or it could be planned out on a boxing up grid.*
- *Talk through the story*
- *Children to write their own story*
- *A class plan and story should be modelled again by the teacher.*

Week 3 – Create

- Children to make up their own story following the features of the genre covered (using toolkits made during the unit).
- Use either a story map, planning frame or bowing up grid to plan (whatever you feel is more relevant to your children)

Cold-to-Hot Writing Cycle

This cycle begins with the children writing 'cold' in a particular genre, moves on to the teaching and rehearsal of specific skills and features necessary for the children to secure that genre, to them finally being able to independently apply the newly acquired skills in a 'hot' write.

The advantage of using this approach is that:

- a) the progress from a cold to hot write is clearly evident;*
- b) teachers can address key learning gaps which are evident in cold writes;*
- c) there is a clear progression planned into the skills and techniques taught for genres across year groups.*

1. **COLD WRITE:** *In the week before a new genre is being taught, the children write in that style with minimal input about features etc. Some initial stimulus is given but the emphasis is on assessing the children's skills at writing 'cold' in a particular genre. This needn't be a long piece of writing – perhaps 20-30 minutes depending on age, with some brief planning time beforehand in KS2.*

2. **WAGOLL** (*What A Good One Looks Like*) *is shared with children and used to identify features of the genre. The findings of this are used to generate posters for the working wall which clearly specify:*

- *Purpose*
- *Form*
 - *Organisation (how it is set out etc)*
 - *Language (tense, formal/informal, style of openers, types of conjunctions etc)*
- *Audience*

Throughout the unit, the toolkit for each aspect needs to be added to the working wall and regularly referred to.

3. **STIMULUS, GATHERING** *of ideas & PLANNING* *for writing. This may be as part of the class text, a visual stimulus (e.g. Literacy Shed), a real-life context from a trip or event etc. Key vocabulary and development of word banks is essential at this stage.*

4. **WARM WRITING; TEACHER MODELLING & REHEARSAL.** A variety of techniques are used to model good practice in writing (see list below) and to develop their understanding of how to write in a particular style. For example, greater emphasis may need to be put on modelling how to write an effective introduction to a report, or a story opening/ending etc. The focus will vary depending on prior teaching focus and what key issues arose out of their cold writes.
5. **HOT WRITE:** Children begin to write independently with a first draft, based on either shared or independent planning. They can draw on new skills and aspects of writing they rehearsed earlier in the WARM WRITE stage. This can then either be edited in part or edited and totally redrafted.

Eventually, the more this cycle is used, the more independent the children will become in confidently writing across a wide range of genres. We anticipate that after some time, the HOT WRITE section of the cycle should be applied away from the point of teaching. For example, after a shared planning stage, teacher modelling leading into independent rehearsal (WARM WRITE) the children should then be able to plan, draft and redraft in the same genre up to two weeks after the initial teaching input.

In Upper KS2, children should eventually be taught to then return to their Cold Writes and redraft them by applying their newly acquired skills which they have developed throughout the cycle.

Upper KS2 should also revisit genres throughout the year so that they are applying their knowledge of genres without the need for the full cycle to be taught again.

Teaching Strategies for Writing

Modelled Writing

The teacher talks aloud through the thought processes as a writer. They have complete control over the writing and make explicit the structure, language features, spelling and punctuation of the text type as appropriate. Slow writing could be used as a very structured approach to modelled writing – see below.)

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach where pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to select the most appropriate. The teacher needs to give reasons for the choices made. Added into this, you can use Paired or Group Writing to add into the final piece of shared writing where pairs or groups can be given specific criteria for GPS or specific content from a plan to include. Group work is useful for example after a shared introduction: groups can each be given pointers to write for a different paragraph so that when the work is combined it makes a complete piece of writing.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by ability according to their target needs and the teacher works with each group in rotation during the week so that every child partakes in guided writing over a week or half term. The task is carefully selected to provide an appropriate level of challenge and will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process as opposed to writing a complete piece. Tasks may include the processes of planning, drafting and editing pieces of writing. Teachers choose a target for each group based on an assessment of their individual needs and previous writing. TAs can also be used to lead guided groups.

Slow Writing

This is a really useful technique to use in modelled writing but can then be used as a follow-up activity for children to complete in groups, pairs or individually. The purpose is to slow children down in order to get them to carefully consider each sentence they write, making each sentence different in style and structure.

How?

Use a topic/image/song as a stimulus and ask the children to write a set number of sentences which meet the criteria given. They should also double-space their writing so that, once written, they can go back and edit and redraft. Example criteria could be:

- 1. Your first sentence must start with a present participle (that's a verb ending in 'ing')*
- 2. Your second sentence must contain only three words.*
- 3. Your third sentence must contain a semi-colon*

4. Your fourth sentence must be a rhetorical question
5. Your fifth sentence will start with an adverb
6. Your sixth sentence will contain a simile

The criteria you choose should obviously fit in with what you've taught and can be varied and differentiated. Ultimately, by Years 5 and 6 the children should be able to select their own slow-writing prompts and be independent in choosing a range of sentence styles to make their writing varied and interesting.

The purpose of having to slow right down is to encourage the children to think about their technique. Generally speaking, pupils find it straightforward to write what they want but it's much harder for them to think about how they're going to write it. This process forces them to concentrate on the how instead of the what.

Once they've finished they get to improve - this is where the double spacing is useful. The children should interrogate every single word and consider whether there might be a better word. They look at every sentence and ask could it begin differently? Should it be longer or shorter? Are they absolutely sure it makes sense?? Is there variety?

Take a look at <http://www.learningspy.co.uk/featured/new-twist-slow-writing/> for further explanation.

Independent Writing

All children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. This is vitally important if children are to develop their skills as writers within different genres. Independent writing is a vital assessment tool as it provides teachers with essential information about gaps to teach towards. It is perfectly acceptable for the children to have access to items on a working wall, word banks, dictionaries and thesauruses during independent writing as this is part of normal everyday classroom practice.

Editing and Redrafting

These skills need to be gradually built up over the year so that by the end of a year, children are able to independently edit and improve their own work. Along with sentence specific issues, the children should also consider looking at the paragraphs and think about how they link; do they flow logically? Does each paragraph pick up where the preceding one leaves off?

Suggestions for a progression in teaching these skills might include:

EDITING

- a) Shared and or guided editing of teacher-prepared work which contains errors of specific type, e.g. spelling, tense, punctuation etc.

- b) Guided editing of the children's work, again focussing on one aspect to edit, e.g. spelling, punctuation, vocabulary choice etc.*
- c) Peer editing of each other's work as above.*
- d) Self-editing of own work – building up from small sections to whole pieces, with suggested guidance prompts but which are not too specific*

REDRAFTING

- a) Shared and or guided redrafting of prepared sentences and or paragraphs, according to suggested guidance prompts, e.g. you need to think about correctly punctuating/correcting spelling/using more adventurous vocabulary etc.*
- b) Guided redrafting of children's sentences/paragraphs focussing on variety of aspects and expecting it to be rewritten in part.*
- c) Peer redrafting of each other's work as above.*
- d) Self-redrafting of own work – building up from sentences to small sections/paragraphs to whole pieces.*

Non-negotiable Expectations for Teaching of Writing - 2016

- *Plan for 2 pieces of independent writing per week. These should cover a range of subjects, not just within Literacy lessons, and so, for example, may include shorter pieces in RE, Science, Topic. This is to ensure we develop the children's ability to write in cross-curricular ways and maintain standards of high quality work throughout the curriculum.*
N.B. Where greater emphasis on specific writing skills is needed within a week of Literacy lessons, staff should use their professional judgement about when to include an independent write but across a half term the amount of writing completed independently across the curriculum should be equivalent to 2 pieces per week
- *Clearly indicate Independent pieces of writing used to inform teacher assessments each half term by adding 'Independent Writing' on LO label. This is to distinguish between these assessed pieces of writing and other independent writing opportunities which were part of a lesson but may have followed some scaffolded or guided support.*
- *Identify and specifically teach the key features of fiction and non-fiction genres so that children have a clear understanding of the purpose, audience and form (language and organisational features) of different text types. The use of WAGOLLs ('What A Good One Looks Like') is essential and should be analysed to help children then apply the learnt features to their own writing.*
- *Clearly display on Working Walls the 'Writing Toolkits' of the identified features to support each genre being studied. These should also be referred to throughout teaching.*
- *Use planning templates to aid the planning process of writing –this will help to structure the children's writing. For now, use the Assertive Mentoring templates as a basis; the development of clear planning templates (which also plan for a progression of skills between year groups) will be developed by the Working Party.*
- *Use Writing Journals regularly for first drafts so that children have regular opportunities to re-draft their work. This should include cross-curricular writing. All work in journals should be marked as all other work. Ensure there is evidence of some form of editing or redrafting taking place once a week. As the academic year progresses in all years, and*

throughout the year in Upper KS2, greater evidence would be expected. Plan for one piece of totally redrafted work once per half term.

- Initial editing within first-drafts and redrafting of sections/whole pieces are to be done in handwriting pen in KS2 that they are easily identifiable in books.
- Teach GPS as a focus once per week (e.g. on a Monday) so that the Grammar focus for the week is relevant to the content and style of genre being taught and relevant to the independent writing they will be doing that week. Use the Medium Term Plans for Grammar to aid progression of skills, but teachers should also address on-going issues in GPS which they pick up on in daily marking.
- Spelling should be taught as part of Grammar lessons in KS2 and as part of Phonics in KS1. Children should be taught to know and understand the spelling rules and patterns for their phase (see NC spelling lists for full list but use the Assertive Mentoring year group lists for weekly spellings) as well as a range of strategies to help them learn their spellings. Poorer spellers should be given spellings from the previous year group. If a spelling pattern/rule is introduced on a Monday, then additional practice using taught strategies should be given as early morning work in 'Busy Books' in order to embed the learning. To assess spelling well, children should be tested weekly in spelling test books, but then given a dictation style test (using Assertive Mentoring Reviews (previously called dictations) every 3 weeks to test 3 previous week's spellings. These reviews should be done in the back of Literacy books and they will therefore provide valuable evidence for assessment against books targets.
- Handwriting should be taught once a week in the back of Literacy Books using the Nelson Handwriting scheme. In addition, to continuously reinforce the value and importance of letter formation and joining, develop daily handwriting practice by introducing a letter/join of the day at the start of Literacy lessons. The children should write this along one line at top of piece of work beneath date and LO. Support staff can support weaker hand writers as part of small group intervention work during assembly
- Writing moderation should be a regular part of our assessment process. Staff should spend first part of PPA each week reviewing the previous week's writing outcomes in order to

moderate as a year group and then address any common misconceptions or gaps in learning. SMT will also ensure that there is termly Phase, Key Stage or Whole School writing moderation planned into the academic year.

Writing Working Party Team 2016