



Guidance

Curriculum and standards

Primary

National Strategy

Improving writing with a focus on guided writing

Leading improvement using the Primary Framework

Literacy consultants, literacy subject leaders, Key Stage 1 and 2 teachers

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department for
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Introduction

Improving standards of writing at the end of Key Stage 2 is a national priority. In 2007 whilst 80% of children achieved an overall Level 4 in English (Key Stage 2 tests), only 67% achieved this result in writing. The performance of boys in writing is a particular concern with only 60% of boys achieving Level 4, there is clearly a need to address this issue. The Primary Framework launched in 2007 has:

- provided clear expectations for each year group in writing;
- delivered systematic practical support to teachers and headteachers to support assessment, planning and teaching.

This booklet, *Improving writing with a focus on guided writing*, will support headteachers, teachers and practitioners to improve the teaching of writing across all primary year groups. It is part of the overall Primary Framework Continued Professional Development (CPD) package on Improving writing and is designed to accompany the DVD 'Improving writing.' that provides exemplification of shared and guided writing in Years 1, 3 and 5.

It aims to:

- define clear messages about the assessment, planning and teaching of writing;
- strengthen a focus on teaching methods specifically for guided writing;
- illustrate effective classroom practice in the teaching of writing.

What is guided writing?

Guided writing is an essential component of a balanced writing curriculum, providing an additional supported step towards independent writing. It contributes to the teaching sequence as exemplified in the Primary Framework. Through guided writing, children are supported during the different stages of the writing process.

As an activity, it should be carefully targeted towards groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs. Within the teaching sequence, guided writing would normally follow on from shared writing, though not necessarily during the same session.

Teachers should consider carefully the purpose of the guided session and select the children accordingly. The aim is to provide support that is going to help children to improve their writing and to work with increasing independence.

What are the benefits of guided writing?

Guided writing:

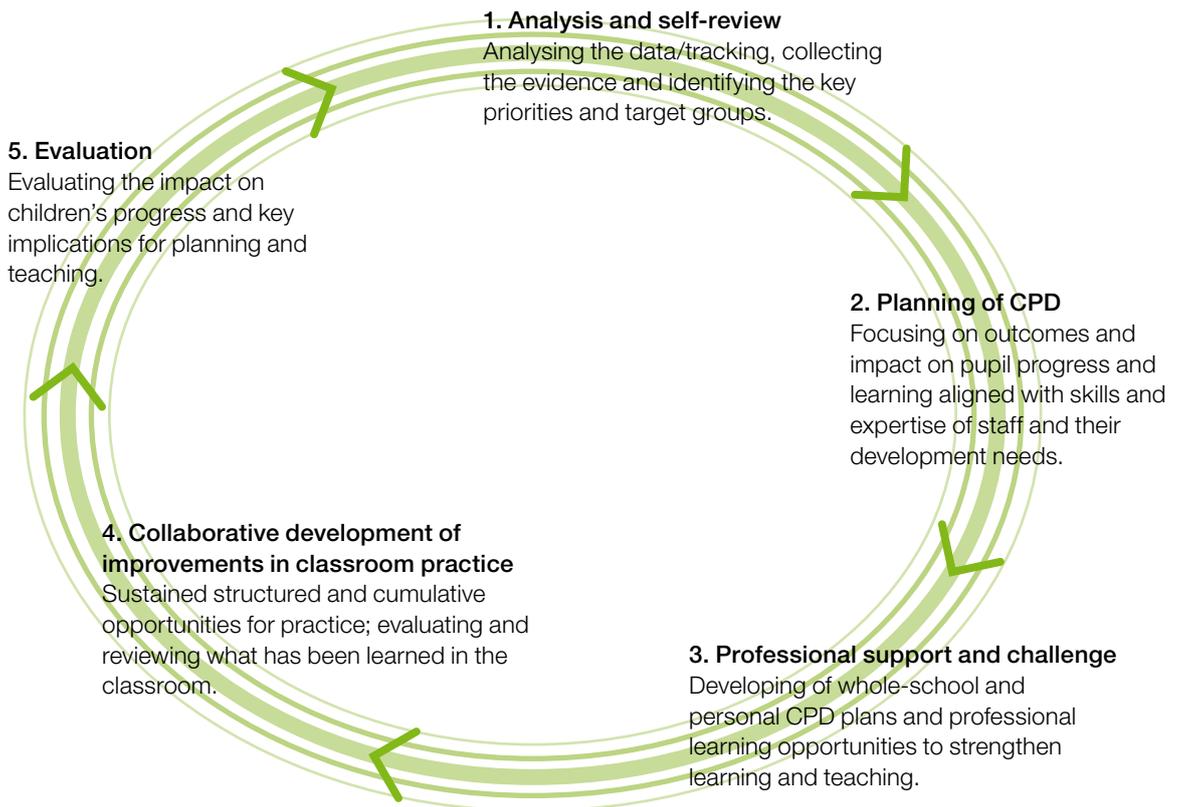
- enables the teacher to tailor the teaching to the needs of the group;
- facilitates the teaching and learning of individual children. Although guided writing is a group activity focused on the needs of the group, the teacher is able to observe and respond to the needs of individuals within the group;
- provides the teacher with the opportunity to extend and challenge more-able groups of children;
- encourages the children to be active participants in discussions about writing;
- builds confidence – the group are all grappling with the same issues;
- allows the teacher to give immediate feedback on success and the opportunity to discuss further areas for improvement.

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Leading improvement through using the Primary Framework

Headteachers will have received the booklet *Leading improvement using the Primary Framework* as part of the Primary National Strategy support to all schools (also available on the website: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications).

They will also be familiar with the cycle illustrated below, which provides the model for headteachers and senior leadership teams to lead an improvement priority using the Primary Framework. Improving writing will be a key priority for improvement for many schools identified through school self-evaluation and prioritised in the school development plan.



Headteachers and senior leaders may wish to use the DVD and this accompanying booklet in sessions planned for whole-school CPD to improve the teaching of writing.

This booklet provides:

- an explanation of the teaching sequence for writing, linked to the Primary Framework;
- an overview of the teaching strategies to improve writing;
- detailed guidance on guided writing and Assessment for learning (AfL);
- case studies providing exemplification of guided writing sessions within the context of extended units of work, drawn from the Primary Framework;
- suggested CPD activities for teachers.

The teaching sequence for writing

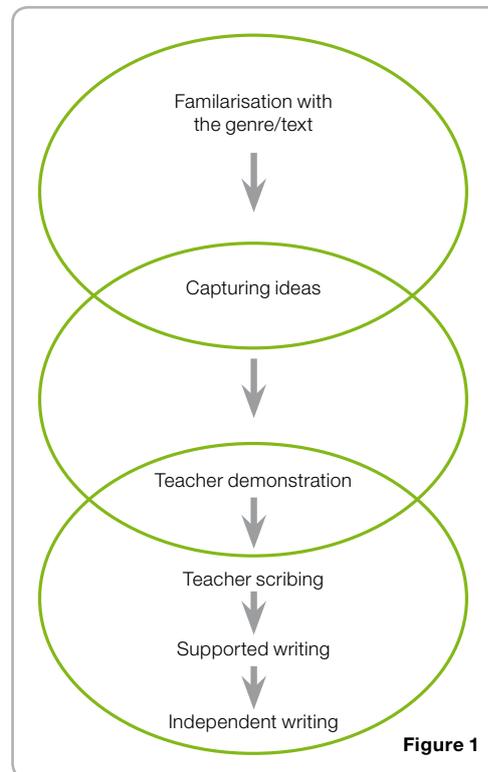
One of the key ways in which the Primary Framework supports the teaching of writing is through the recommended approach to planning. The exemplified units provide a model of planning for learning across longer, extended units of work where reading, planning and writing occur in the context of a rich and varied curriculum. The basis for the approach was set out in the joint UKLA/PNS publication *Raising boys' achievements in writing* (2004). Based on the work of Bearne (2002) the research recommended a structured sequence to planning where the children and teachers began by familiarising themselves with a text type, capturing ideas for their own writing followed by scaffolded writing experiences resulting in independent written outcomes (see figure 1). The planning model can be used to support learning across a short, five-day unit or longer units of four to five weeks. Time spent on a unit depends on the text type and the needs of the children.

Improving writing through quality first teaching

Engaging the children as readers in a quality text type/genre at the outset of the unit provides a critical reference point throughout the subsequent learning experience. By developing personal responses to texts and understanding how they as readers have been manipulated, the children extend their understanding of the patterns and cadences of the text type/genre.

Typical approaches used by teachers at the familiarisation phase in the planning process include:

- reading for pleasure and enjoyment of the text;
- learning the reading skills required by the format and medium of publishing, such as reading on-screen;
- higher order comprehension reading skills, for example, to identify the author's intent;
- reading as a writer to identify structures, vocabulary and techniques for use in their own writing.



The process of capturing ideas begins once the children are secure with a text type/genre. At this stage in the writing process the children explore the text type/genre through quality experiences that support the transfer of patterns, structures and cadences of the text into their spoken language. This process is sometimes referred to as 'talk for writing'.

The process of capturing ideas can include:

- role-play;
- drama;
- visualisation;
- small world play;
- planning approaches such as drawing, maps, diagrams, flow charts and photographs.

While familiarisation with a text type/genre and capturing ideas are valid learning processes in their own right, they also provide the models and content that can be drawn on throughout the writing process. As figure 1 shows, a combination of learning and teaching approaches can be combined to enable the children to write independently in the chosen text type/genre at different stages in the writing process. A writing session may begin with the teacher using shared writing to demonstrate how to engage a reader at a critical stage in the writing. In the same session the children use supported composition to practise and apply new skills (see the table Teaching strategies to improve writing on page 10 for a detailed outline of the various approaches).

As the children develop their own independent written work over a number of sessions they should be supported to:

- transfer ideas from plans into writing;
- apply strategies and skills gained as readers to meet the needs of an audience;
- draft their writing for meaning and content.

When appropriate for the text type and the audience, the learning and teaching approaches also support the children in proofreading and publishing their writing. At all phases of the planning process drama, role-play, ICT, media and speaking and listening approaches can be drawn on to support the children to achieve the learning objectives.

When approaching a unit plan the following points need to be addressed to ensure the unit meets the learning needs of the pupils. Successful planning to support writing includes:

- identification of children needs, based on effective AfL and linked to curricular targets;
- an understanding of the prior learning required to undertake a unit of work;
- making decisions about the number and structure of phases and the anticipated number of days required to secure the learning at each phase;
- at various points during the unit, adjusting the plan to provide opportunities to revisit and secure aspects of the children's learning;
- intervention through guided writing sessions that are identified to address specific learning needs with groups of children.

Further guidance on planning across all the literacy strands is available in the planning (resources) section of the Primary Framework.

Teaching strategies to improve writing

| Teaching strategy | Key principles | Advantages | Examples |
|---|--|---|---|
| Modelled writing Demonstration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, as the expert, demonstrates the writing process. The teacher articulates the process and emphasises specific teaching points related to the lesson objectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives children the opportunity to understand the choices a writer makes during the process of writing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm beginning my story with the setting, I want it to be gloomy so I'm going to start by writing, 'The sky seemed as though it was weeping...' When we write an explanation we have to start with an opening sentence that tells us what we are trying to explain so I'll start like this... |
| Shared writing Scribing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher involves the children in composition by asking for their ideas and structuring discussion. Teacher takes children's ideas and refines them before scribing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows children to concentrate on composition without worrying about transcription. Offers further opportunities to be active participants in the writing process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are writing a recount about our visit to the zoo. Talk to your partner and decide on a good opening sentence. I have written the first paragraph but I don't think it emphasises how strongly I feel about the new motorway. Can you give me ideas how I might improve it? |
| Shared writing Supported composition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used during or after shared writing. Children work in pairs to discuss choices. Objective is precisely structured. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows teacher to immediately assess understanding. Revises and consolidates shared work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to your partner for two minutes and compose a question to ask the author. We have been looking at how a verb can show how a character moves or speaks. On your whiteboards, change the verbs in this sentence to illustrate character. |
| Guided writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are grouped on the basis of ability and need. Teacher analyses writing, prioritises a focus and sets targets for each group. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is tailored to specific needs of the group. Builds confidence and encourages children to be active participants in writing conferences. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have looked at your writing and today I want to show you how you can make your writing more interesting to the reader, by changing the word order of some of your sentences. I'll begin with this sentence from Jack's work... |

Guidance on AfL and guided writing

Guided writing is underpinned by effective AfL. Guided writing sessions provide opportunities for ongoing assessment. Teachers identify the learning needs of children based on their assessments; they set precise writing targets that will address the needs of each group. The teacher explains the targets to the group and regularly reviews them with the children. Feedback is provided at every stage; this may take the form of self-assessment, peer-assessment or teacher-assessment.

| Key characteristics of AfL | Effective practice in guided writing |
|--|---|
| Creating the conditions for learning that will support AfL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The learning environment is supportive of AfL. ■ Secure rationale for ethos and attitudes to learning in place. ■ Routines and behaviours established – children clear about organisation for guided writing and how to learn as part of a group. |
| Using curricular targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The process of curricular target setting is well established in the school. ■ Group curricular targets are informed and identified by analysis of children’s writing and through discussion. ■ Children are fully aware of their targets and understand the process of reviewing them. |
| Designing opportunities for learning: planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is a clear focus on learning objectives, which feed into curricular target setting. ■ Success criteria are clear and understood by the children. ■ Teaching is adjusted to take account of ongoing assessment. |
| Day-to-day assessment strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Effective use of the following strategies is in place during guided writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – questioning; – observing; – discussing; – analysing – marking and assessing writing with the children; – checking children’s understanding. |
| Feedback on learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing effective oral and written feedback to children in the group. ■ Developing peer-assessment. ■ Developing self-assessment. ■ Ensuring children are clear about the next steps needed to improve their writing. |

Planning and organising for guided writing

- Effective teaching of writing begins with assessment and the identification of the learning needs of the class.
- Using this information and other relevant information, the teacher then groups the children with similar needs.
- The number of groups in any one class will vary but it must be manageable.
- The number of children in any group will also vary, usually six to eight children form a manageable group.
- The groups should be flexible to enable each child to achieve success. This may mean that a child attends two different guided writing sessions to consolidate a particular area of learning or to extend the child's learning.

How does guided writing relate to shared writing and independent writing?

Guided writing follows on from shared writing and addresses the specific identified writing development needs of each group.

- This may be general, for example understanding the concept of a sentence, variety of sentence structure, paragraphing. Alternatively it might be genre specific, for example use of emotive language when writing a persuasive argument, organising a non-chronological report or use of powerful verbs to indicate character in narrative.
- The session may simplify the shared session for less-confident writers or extend the shared session to challenge more-able writers.
- Guided writing may be focused at whole text level, sentence level or word level.

At what stage of the writing process do I teach guided writing?

Time to work with a guided group is scarce so it must be clearly focused. Guided writing can take place at any stage of the writing process.

Before writing – to support children’s planning and drafting of their work.

This should refer back to and build on the previous shared writing session. Activities might include:

- supporting children as they formulate their ideas – this may incorporate drama or role-play;
- reviewing objectives for writing and/or the children’s targets;
- the teacher modelling the process of planning and drafting (this may include rerunning part of the shared session for targeted groups of children);
- developing sentence construction and punctuation;
- retelling a known story in the correct sequence and as a writer: in complete sentences (look at speaking and listening objectives);
- planning a piece of explanatory writing drawn from a model discussed in the shared session:
- oral rehearsal:
 - in particular, those children who have poor literacy skills;
 - for children with poor language skills.

At the point of writing.

Support can be provided to groups as they begin to write or when they have already started to write independently (in order to support the revising process). Children can be supported to:

- write the first or next paragraph of an explanation text and be invited to read it aloud to the group;
- reread for clarity and purpose;
- use alternative vocabulary;
- use greater precision – choice of phrases, use of complex sentences;
- use greater cohesion – use of connectives, consistency of tense, time, person and so on;
- remember objectives for writing and be supported in checking their work against the success criteria.

Throughout, these sessions should be used to acknowledge and praise in order to facilitate constructive discussion with the intention of improving the writing. The teacher will invite comments and lead the discussion.

After writing – feedback sessions.

After children have worked independently on their writing there should be opportunities for them to assess their writing – the use of peer support here is useful.

After writing, you could:

- support children to check their work against success criteria, editing, proofreading and making improvements;
- review progress and targets;
- discuss next steps in writing and set new targets where appropriate.

Guided writing for English as Additional Language (EAL) learners

Guided writing sessions can provide highly effective support to EAL learners. These sessions should:

- be set in context, based on, linked to or in preparation for classroom work;
- provide explicit modelling/articulation of writing so that attention is drawn to grammatical features, if appropriate, and/or focus for guided writing such as persuasive language – use of modals (could, would, might and so on);
- provide opportunities for focused, planned talk:
 - paired/group talk at an exploratory level to gather ideas;
 - clarify thinking, reach shared understanding;
 - oral rehearsal of identified language required for writing;
 - further modelling/recasting of oral language where necessary;
- address the appropriate use and extension of vocabulary. This includes understanding of the nuances and intensity of words and phrases and their use within a genre and its register;
- review/assessment of writing against success criteria – language/vocabulary misconceptions addressed.

References: *Excellence and Enjoyment: Learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years* (00164-2007)

Assessment toolkit to support pupils with English as an additional language (0319/2002)

Could they do even better? Good practice case studies – the writing of advanced bilingual learners of English at Key Stage 2 (Ofsted HMI 2452)

Case studies

The following case studies provide exemplification of guided writing sessions in Years 1, 3 and 5. In each case the context of the session is provided, with the guided writing session following on from the whole-class shared session. The teachers have selected the groups of children and the focus for each session as a result of ongoing assessment of the children's writing and in discussion with them.

Points to look for in the clips are highlighted and follow-up CPD activities are suggested.

Appendix 1: Writing samples from the schools – these could be used for CPD activities linked to assessment and planning next steps

Appendix 2: A form for planning a guided writing session

Appendix 3: A form to support observation of the clips

Case study 1

School

This is an urban infant school with a separate junior school on the same site. Two initiatives have had a powerful impact on attainment in writing. The school was a pilot school for the Communication Language and Literacy Development programme and the more rapid acquisition of phonic knowledge has enabled the children to become more confident, independent writers. Another factor in improving writing has been the school's involvement in the Primary Arts Development Project based at a local secondary school, which has Arts status. All classes have integrated speaking and listening and drama into their literacy teaching and this has had an enormous impact on motivating the children to write.

Class – Year 1

The class comprises 19 children: 11 boys and eight girls, including one child with special educational needs (SEN). The teacher has a Teaching Assistant (TA) three mornings a week. The children are grouped for phonics and all take part in a daily, discrete phonics session. They are organised into three groups for guided writing. In addition to ongoing assessments, the teacher formally analyses the children's independent writing and sets new targets each half-term.

Writing targets

Group 1

To write a story with a clear series of events, interesting words and descriptions about settings and characters.

Group 2

To write a story with a clear series of events and begin to use interesting words.

Group 3

To write a story with a clear beginning, middle and end.

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Developing the teaching sequence – Year 1

The teacher has used the Primary Framework to develop the teaching sequence to encompass speaking, listening, reading and writing into a rich and meaningful experience for the children.

Writing outcome: a recount about the event of the stranded whale.

- The children have explored the theme 'The seaside' through information texts, drama, music and art.
- The teacher has read several Lighthouse Keeper (by David Armitage and Ronda Armitage) stories to the children.
- The role-play area is Mr Grinling's cottage and lighthouse.
- The children retell and improvise events from the stories.



- The teacher has read *The Lighthouse Keeper's Rescue* to the children.
- They have discussed events in the story, the setting and the characters.
- The children have rehearsed oral recounts, for example with the children in role as the whale, imagining what the whale might say before, during and after the rescue.
- The teacher has set an imaginative context for their writing; the children are to be reporters and to write about the event of the stranded whale.
- The teacher demonstrates writing a recount of the event.



- Children discuss the event with talking partners.
- Children begin their writing.
- The guided group work with the teacher focusing on sentence openings, the two other groups work on differentiated writing tasks.
- Completed reports are illustrated, evaluated and shared with the other Year 1 class.

Context of the lesson

- The theme for the term is 'The seaside' and the class has explored the theme through information reading and writing, history, drama, art and music.
- This half-term the teacher is focusing on narrative. The unit of work is recount (fiction). The children have had experience of oral retelling and writing factual recounts earlier in the term.
- The children have read a series of narrative texts set at the seaside.
- The children have explored the text, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Rescue* through reading, improvisation and role-play, speaking and listening and art.
- The children have worked at sentence level on simple sentence structure, use of capital letters and accurate demarcation.
- Phonics is taught in daily, discrete sessions.

The literacy session

Whole-class work

- The teacher introduces the learning objectives.
- The teacher recaps the sequence of events from the story.
- The teacher, in role, constructs an imaginary situation in which she is the 'chief reporter' needing help from them to report the event of the stranded whale.
- The teacher shows the children an email report, which gives scant detail, and together they discuss how to improve it by including more information.
- The teacher models two or three sentences explaining how she is making it more interesting to the reader.
- The children are asked to write their own reports of the incident, which will eventually form a newspaper, for the other Year 1 class to read.

Group organisation

Group 1

The children have to write a report about the event of the stranded whale. They have the checklist, what, when, where, who, why and how exemplified in the shared session, to support them.

Group 2

Guided writing group.

Group 3

Children to create a fact file of information about the whale and events. The children have a series of pictures and some key vocabulary. They have to choose a picture and write a sentence to match it in their whale book.

SEN child

Individual work matched to need.

The guided writing session

The children in this group are able to write in simple sentences but tend to write as they speak, beginning each sentence with 'then' or 'and'. The focus of this guided writing session is to build a greater awareness of the reader and to understand how to make their writing more interesting by using different sentence openings.

- The teacher explains the purpose of the session.
- The teacher shows an example of writing that uses repetitive sentence openings.
- The teacher has provided a selection of possible sentence openings and together they discuss how the words could be used.
- Children work in pairs on whiteboards and choose two pictures to each write a sentence about.
- Children apply the new knowledge to their own work.
- The teacher guides, supports and advises individuals.
- The teacher draws on examples from the group and summarises the learning.

Whole-class plenary

The teacher discusses the learning with the whole class, two children, girl A (high attainer) and boy A (low attainer), who were working independently, share their writing, and the teacher reviews the focus of the session.

Points to note from the DVD

- The rich learning environment.
- Clear objectives and expected outcomes.
- The teacher works in role to provide the context for writing.
- The teacher models the writing process.
- The children are given opportunities to compose writing themselves.
- The children can discuss ideas confidently with a talk partner.
- The teacher's emphasis on writing for a reader.
- The clear focus and structure of the guided session.
- The children's phonic knowledge that supports their writing.
- Opportunities for assessment at every stage of the lesson.
- The children are involved throughout.

Suggested CPD activities

- Examples of writing completed by the children during the session are available in Appendix 1.
- Analyse the writing, prioritise a focus and consider how you would plan the next guided writing session for each group. You may find the prompt sheet (Appendix 2) helpful.

Case Study 2

School

The school is in a suburban area and draws from a mixed catchment area. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and the arts. The school is part of a primary network that is researching the impact of the arts on writing.

Class – Year 3

The class comprises 30 children: 17 girls and 13 boys. Of these, two children are awaiting statements for SEN and three children have been identified as being very able. The children are organised into four guided writing groups but there is some flexibility in the composition of the groups throughout the term. AfL is a strength in the school with a focus on ongoing assessment. In addition, the teacher assesses the children's independent writing every half-term and sets targets for each group based on these assessments. The children also have individual targets where necessary.

Writing targets

Group 1

To use full stops, question marks and commas in lists accurately as well as using some other punctuation.

To use tenses accurately and appropriately.

To use interesting and adventurous vocabulary to explain my ideas.

Group 2

To try out a wide range of punctuation.

To begin my sentences in a range of interesting ways.

To use adjectives and adverbs to make sentences more detailed and descriptive.

Group 3

To use capital letters and full stops consistently.

To use adjectives and descriptions to add detail.

To write in a lively and interesting way to engage the reader.

Developing the teaching sequence – Year 3

The teacher has used the teaching sequence from the Primary Framework to plan this unit of work.

Writing outcome: an adventure story.

- Read, discuss and compare a range of adventure stories.
- Explore characters' thoughts and feelings through hot seating, improvisation, role on the wall and other strategies.
- Identify themes, typical characters and plots.
- Class discussion 'What makes an exciting adventure story?'



- Discuss the purpose and audience for a story set in Aztec times.
- Teacher provides opening that begins in their own classroom in the present day and John, the main character, travels back in time.
- Children explore ideas through drama.
- Teacher models planning.
- Children plan and discuss story with a response partner, some guided work.
- Teacher demonstrates how to continue the story.



- Children begin to write story over several days, teacher uses demonstration and scribing to illustrate aspects of narrative writing such as the conventions for dialogue.
- Drama lesson: dramatising strong verbs and adverbs in relation to character.
- Sentence level work whole-class: using strong verbs, adverbs and opening sentences with adverbial phrases.
- Guided work to support sentence level targets.



- The children edit and redraft their work with a response partner and with the teacher in guided time.
- Share and evaluate stories with the parallel class.
- Discuss possibility of changing events from the stories into a play script.

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Context of the lesson

- The theme for the term is 'The Aztecs' and each unit of work from the Primary Framework is related to this theme, both fiction and non-fiction.
- Children have already been involved in note taking, report writing and writing letters to the authors of the information texts they have used.
- During this half-term the teacher has focused on Unit 3 – narrative, with the children writing adventure stories, using the Aztecs information to create the setting and characters.
- The final unit will involve the children changing their stories into play scripts. The role-play area this term is a theatre and the children will be involved in performances.
- The children have already looked at the features of adventure stories, discussed their ideas, improvised and planned their own stories.
- They have worked with a parallel class dramatising movements and using strong verbs and adverbs to describe the actions.
- The children are now in the process of writing their story from their plans.

The literacy session

Whole-class work

- The teacher shares the objectives with the class.
- To use more powerful verbs and adverbs to entertain the reader.
- To improve how we start our sentences to entertain the reader.
- Children from the parallel class have been videoed reading various sentences from their Aztec stories.
- The teacher recaps previous work on verbs, adverbs and adverbial phrases.
- Using this information, the children try to improve the sentences working in pairs on whiteboards.
- The teacher instructs children who are working independently and prepares to work with the guided writing group.

Group organisation

Group 1

The children in this group have completed their story. They are working with response partners using the school drafting code and a checklist to redraft their own writing.

Checklist

1. Check that you have used powerful verbs and adverbs. Think back to yesterday and the words we generated in drama.
2. Check that you have begun sentences in a range of interesting ways, including at least one example of adverbials for when, where and how.
3. Check whether you have met any of your targets and underline examples that illustrate this.

Group 3

The children in this group are in the middle of their story. The focus of the previous day's drama lesson was to dramatise verbs and adverbs and to understand their role in describing character. Today this group are to go back over their work, looking at their use of verbs and adding an adverb to support character description.

Checklist

1. Look at the verbs underlined in blue in your literacy books.
2. Using the words we generated in our drama lesson and a thesaurus, change these words to more powerful verbs.
3. Now try to add some adverbs to describe how the verb was done, for example 'he walked **slowly**'.
4. Check whether you have met any of your targets and underline examples that illustrate this.

Group 2

The guided writing session

This is the middle ability group in the class. Two children, who are normally in this group, have joined another group today because they do not need today's input. The children in this group are secure, independent writers but the sentences in the opening of their story are repetitive, beginning either with 'The' or 'John', the main character's name. They have previously worked with powerful verbs but they are not yet applying this knowledge in their independent writing.

- The teacher explains the purpose of the session; the children need to improve the structure of some of the sentences in the opening paragraph – particularly looking at sentence openings.
- The teacher uses a sentence from the children's work that needs to be improved.
- Children work in pairs to discuss the improvements.
- The teacher has identified sentences in the children's work, which they can change; children choose one and on whiteboards try to improve it.
- When they are satisfied that the changes are an improvement, they apply these to their draft and then look at the other two sentences.
- The teacher sums up the group's work and shares examples. Children will apply this learning to their stories in independent time during the next literacy session.

Whole-class plenary

- The teacher reviews the progress of the groups working independently.
- Discusses the work of three children, girl B, girl C and boy B.
- The teacher revisits the objectives of the lesson.

Points to note from the DVD

- The learning environment.
- Clear sentence level focus to the session applied to the children's own work throughout the session.
- The teacher's emphasis on writing for a reader.
- The teacher's use of technical language.
- The structure and clear focus of the guided session.
- In the guided session the children are applying the learning to their own work.
- The effective work with boys in this group; they are clearly highly motivated and fully engaged.
- The use of a drafting book. This is used throughout the school; the left-hand page is left blank for redrafting.
- The teacher sets writing targets half-termly for the guided writing groups but there is flexibility across the groups reflecting need.

Suggested CPD activities

- When watching the DVD sequence consider how the teacher uses a range of day-to-day assessment strategies in all parts of the session.
- Which strategy do you consider is most effective in the context of this lesson?
- Consider which of the assessment strategies are embedded in your own teaching and identify areas for individual development.
- How does the teacher link from the shared writing into the needs of the specific group for writing?
- What does she know about the writing of these children which will enable her to tailor the teaching session of guided writing to their needs?

You may wish to use the form in Appendix 3 to support your observations.

Case Study 3

School

The school is in a village on the outskirts of a large town, with the catchment area extending beyond the village. There are 180 children in the school in traditional, single age group classes.

Class – Year 5

There are 31 children in this class including five children with SEN and one child with a statement for Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. There are five groups for guided writing. In addition to the teacher's ongoing assessments, she formally assesses the children's independent writing every half-term. This term all groups have had differentiated targets that relate to sentence level work.

Writing targets

Group 1

To write complex sentences of time (when), reason (why, because) and manner (how).
To select words for interest and precision.

Group 2

To link sentences, rearranging the words and phrases for different effects and purposes.
To use powerful verbs for interest and effect.

Group 3

To write sentences that can be joined in different ways, for example by adding 'then' and 'while'.
To begin to use speech marks. To use capital letters for a range of purposes.

Developing the teaching sequence – Year 5

The teacher has used the Primary Framework to support her planning of this unit for persuasive writing.

- Read, compare and discuss a range of formal letters to persuade and complain.
- Analyse structure and the use of language.
- Define success criteria.
- Make a class checklist of persuasive devices.
- Whole-class and individual note taking and planning.

- Teacher explains the issue: the council wants to build on local parkland.
- Children examine plans and discuss how it will affect different people in the village.
- In role, children make notes on how the proposal will affect them.
- Meeting in the 'Council Chamber' and villagers debate the issue.

- Self- and peer-assessment.
- Children edit and redraft letters and prepare for presentation.
- Another meeting of the Town Council is organised and the letters are received and evaluated.

- Teacher demonstrates writing an opening of a letter to the town council.
- Children write their own opening paragraph, in role.
- Teacher recaps learning and children continue writing their letters.
- Guided work for high attainers focuses on precision of word choices and use of persuasive devices and on other days, sentence structure for low attainers, variety of sentence structures and range of connectives for middle attainers.

Context of the lesson

- The class have been working on non-fiction Unit 3 from the Primary Framework – persuasive writing.
- The teacher explained that the council was planning to build on an area of local open land and produced plans for them to discuss.
- The children worked in groups in-role as a villager, a child, a shopkeeper or a town councillor.
- They discussed the implications of the plans and made notes to support their argument.
- This phase of the work culminated in a debate in the 'Council Chamber'. The children dressed in role and a very dramatic debate followed.
- During the next phase of the unit, the children read and evaluated a range of material intended to protest and persuade.
- They collected a range of persuasive devices and formed a checklist of the criteria for constructing a good persuasive argument.
- The teacher modelled a letter to persuade the council not to build on the land.
- The children have made and discussed a plan for their writing.
- The children have written the opening paragraph of their formal letter to the council.

The literacy session

Whole-class work

- The teacher recapped the features of a good persuasive letter using her demonstration writing (from the previous day) as an aide-mémoire.
- The teacher emphasised the focus of the lesson; the use of persuasive language in their writing.

Group organisation

All groups are working on the second paragraph of their letter; group 3 has a writing frame and some key vocabulary to support composition.

The guided writing session

Group 1

This is the most able group and they have written the first paragraph of their letter. In this session, the teacher is encouraging the children to use more precise word choices. She wants this group to reflect upon their language choices and to be able to explain why certain choices were preferable to others.

- The teacher outlines the focus of the session and revises a range of persuasive devices.
- The children then write the first sentence of their second paragraph on their whiteboards.
- The teacher uses one child's sentence to demonstrate that using the verb 'destroy' has a greater impact than 'stop'.
- The teacher discusses with the children their language choices and asks them to justify the choices.
- The children work with response partners to evaluate the effectiveness of each other's sentences and to make suggestions for improvement.
- The teacher concludes the session, using girl D's work, to review the focus of the session: the use of persuasive language.

Whole-class plenary

The teacher reviews the focus of the session by encouraging the children to evaluate their own writing and to demonstrate their understanding and use of persuasive language.

Points to note from the DVD

- Clear focus of the session.
- Speaking, listening and role-play gave the children opportunity to rehearse the language and to explore the issues before reading and writing.
- The teacher's use of technical language.
- The teacher's emphasis on the transference of writing skills across the curriculum.
- The teacher's assessment of writing in other areas of the curriculum.

Suggested CPD activities

When watching the DVD consider the range of strategies used for effective feedback on learning. Identify examples of:

- whole-class feedback;
- individual feedback;
- peer-assessment;
- self-assessment.

Consider the range of strategies for feedback in your own teaching and identify an approach to trial in the future.

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Case study 4

School

This school is a one-form entry voluntary aided, mixed primary school situated in a suburban area drawing mainly on the local parish and some neighbouring parishes. During the past two years the school has actively reviewed its teaching and learning using the Primary Framework, developing units of work that incorporate the effective use of speaking and listening, drama, ICT, success criteria and peer review. These have been embedded into the teaching sequence that is used consistently throughout the school.

Class – Year 5

This class of 35 children: 23 boys and 12 girls, is divided into six groups for guided writing.

The teacher is supported by a TA during literacy lessons. The teacher and the class regularly work on three-and four-week literacy units based on high-quality novels. The teacher captures and maintains the children's interest by embedding speaking and listening, drama, ICT (including the use of Digi Blue cameras) throughout the teaching sequence.

In addition to her ongoing assessment the teacher formally assesses the children's writing every half-term. This assessment is used to select the appropriate class and group targets to ensure sustained improvement as well as to inform planning.

Writing targets

Group 1

To use paragraphs to structure writing, making use of dialogue and description to show action and mood.

To use a wider range of adjectives, adverbs, and powerful verbs to engage the reader.

Group 2

To use commas effectively, considering how their position in a sentence will influence how it is read.
To use adjectives and powerful verbs to make the sentences interesting for the reader.

Group 3

To use a wide range of punctuation and ambitious vocabulary effectively, to create complex sentences.

Developing the teaching sequence – Year 5

The teacher has used a three-week fiction unit of work based on a Primary Framework teaching sequence. This unit encompasses the aspects highlighted below.

Writing outcome: to compose an email from the point of view of the main character.

- The children explore a wide range of issues including character, plot, friendship and bullying. They also consider the links between self-esteem, behaviour and learning.
- The class make use of paired discussion and drama linked to ICT to gain a greater understanding of the characters' motivations and how they change over the course of the narrative.
- The class has compiled a glossary of everyday American terms to aid their discussions about the language used in the novel and to support their writing.



- The teacher introduces the book and the expectations for the unit.
- She provides the children with various covers of the book – initial thoughts and impressions of the book are recorded on sticky notes and displayed on the working wall.
- During the unit the children were encouraged to make notes in their reading journal about the themes of the novel.
- The children explore the characters through role-play, paired discussion and an in-depth exploration of the text.



- The teacher introduces the lesson objectives recapping the previous lessons.
- Using an email the teacher draws out the features she wishes the children to use when planning or writing their own email.
- The teacher and the TA model how they might plan and write an email.
- The guided group work with the teacher and TA has a focus on organisation for group 1, embedding the use of commas and more adventurous vocabulary for group 2 and using sophisticated punctuation and ambitious vocabulary to create complex sentences for group 3.
- The completed emails are emailed to another school.

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Context of the lesson

- This is a three-week fiction unit based on a Centre for Literacy in Primary Education teaching sequence.
- Guided writing groups are organised according to the children's needs.
- The TA works with the more able children on a regular basis.
- The teacher and the TAs work closely, talking through planning.
- The teacher makes effective use of talk partners and peer support.
- Early morning work is often linked to units of work.
- Ongoing assessment informs daily planning.
- Drama and ICT are embedded in the literacy lessons.

The literacy session

Whole-class work

- The teacher introduces the lesson objectives.
- The teacher recaps the previous lessons drawing on children's understanding of the plot, feelings of the characters and the type of language used by the main characters.
- Using an email sent to the class, the teacher draws out the features she wishes the children to use when planning or writing their own email.
- The teacher and the TA model how they might plan and write an email.
- The children make suggestions about what might go in the email.
- Using a laptop linked to an interactive whiteboard the teacher models the opening part of an email.

The DVD clip shows a range of guided writing sessions. The teacher would normally focus on one group only in a literacy session.

Group organisation

Group 1

Assessment of earlier work identifies that this group needs to work on the organisation of their writing.

- The group uses their plans to support them in composing their email straight onto the computer.
- The teacher supports individuals, focusing on their organisation of text in addition to sentence level, composition and effect.
- The teacher makes reference to the whole-class shared work as an aid to discussion about improvements.

Group 2

Using ongoing assessment the teacher has identified that this group needs to embed their use of commas and more adventurous vocabulary in order to improve their sentences.

- The teacher has used a whiteboard to recap how sentences can be improved by inserting a wider variety of vocabulary into simple sentences. She also revisits the use of commas for effect.
- The group (some of its members were part of the Further Literacy Support group) then works individually to compose a sentence, at times rehearsing it with a partner before writing.
- The teacher returns to the objective of the guided writing session by asking one child to read out his sentence and questions him about where and why he has placed his commas.
- The rest of the class are working in pairs or independently on planning their email.

Group 3

This group is working with the TA to develop their sentences, using sophisticated punctuation and ambitious vocabulary to create complex sentences.

- The children work for ten minutes developing given sentences before writing their own.
- The TA is explicit about how the children could improve the sentences.
- The children expand sentences about the main character in the book, sometimes rehearsing them with a partner before recording them.
- The children discuss how one sentence has been expanded.
- The TA supports the children by giving instant feedback about the improvements.

Whole-class plenary

- During the plenary the teacher reviews the lesson objective.
- The teacher and the children highlight what can be used to check their work.
- In pairs, the children feed back on each other's work then they feed back to the teacher.
- The children are then asked to improve one thing in their own writing.
- The children on other occasions offer suggestion for how others can improve their work.

Points to note from the DVD

- The learning environment.
- The use of speaking and listening and peer support throughout the lesson.
- The teacher's use of real, everyday text.
- The teacher's emphasis on writing for a reader.
- The clear modelling of expectations.
- The use of modelling of planning and writing.
- The interaction between the teacher and the TA.
- The structure and clear focus of the guided session.
- Clear sentence level focus to the session applied to the children's own work.
- The use of drama and ICT.
- Opportunities for assessment at every stage of the session.
- Children's confidence and participation at every stage of the lesson.

Suggested CPD activities

- When watching the DVD consider how ongoing assessment has been used to select the guided writing groups. You may wish to use the form in Appendix 3 to support this activity.
- The teacher and TA spend time modelling/recapping at the beginning of the guided session. If you have additional support during your lesson, think back to when you last used this technique. How effective was it? How can you embed this in your teaching?
- Talk for writing is used in the shared and guided part of the lesson. How effective is it? How often do you use this technique? How can you embed it in your teaching?

Appendix 1: Writing samples

Year 1 samples

1. On Saturday Afternoon a whale that was stranded on the beach at lighthouse Bay was spotted by Mrs and Mr Grinling. Strate away they ran to the beach to see what had happned. Mr Grinling decided to Cycle down to the village on his bike to get help while Mrs Grinling throwes water over the whale so he dosent die. Mr Grinling came back with millions of people. Mr Grinling said the people should push the whale in the water. Atlast the whale was free floating around in the water.
2. first Mrs Grinling saw the wale Beachted through her tellyscope they went down to the lighthouse bay. Mrs grinling read her how to save a whale so mrs grinling splashted water onthe wale walst mr grinling rided his bike to get the vilgers to push the wale in to thesea.
3. In booklet form

Page 1 The whail was Stranded on light house bay Mr Gringling And mrs Gringling was the First to sea it

Page 2 they rusht bown The steps with Hamish to The beach To help The whail

Page 3 MR GrinGlinG pedeld awa on his bik when he came back he ha all of the vilijers.

Page 4 mRs GrinGlinG trowed water over The whail To keep him kool

Page 5 mRs GrinGlinG looket in her book she new just what to do

Page 6 The vilijers pusht And pusht intil iT went bakc The whail did one big flik then back to his perents.



Year 3 samples

The teacher gave the class the opening sentence:

It was summer term at school and all Year 3 children had been involved in a study of the Aztecs. John was carefully creating an Aztec sunstone and had almost finished, just one more piece to go! He carefully picked up the last piece but it was much larger than the others and didn't fit. He ran his fingers over the beautiful carvings and put a finger into the final remaining gap in the sunstone. Suddenly the room started spinning; John felt dizzy and closed his eyes. When he opened them again he could not believe what he could see!

Group 1

He was surrounded by strange looking people. When they had gone into the distance, he saw a lake gleaming like sapphires. Suddenly a bird shot out of a tree. John quickly turned his attention to the tree amazed. Then a charming smell drafted into the air and he followed it with his nose and found a lady cooking on a stone platter over a hot fire making super spicy torteas. He was really amazed because he started to think he was in the times of the gruesome Aztecs!

John felt scared so, he bolted to the market place where he bumped into a small Aztec boy trembling on the floor.

Group 2

He was as shoked as shoked could be looking around with his mouth dropping open and wide. He could hear the sizzle of cooking tortillas and lots of different dressed people chatting about him. They were dressed in dirty rags. Just then Jon thought that he was going to faint seeing all the water around him telling him that he was in Aztec times. Then John saw a woman who was dressed in old and dirty rags. He asked her in fright 'what's your name' 'Tray' she replied as she slowly tiptoed towards him. 'What are you doing here' she added quickly. I don't know, all I can remember is making a sunstone and then I found myself here in Aztec times.

Group 3

John saw a wume cukiing tortillas and they smelt beautiful and he went closer and closer he saw a stone tabul. Then he went inside the mud howes. John heard people showting. John looked up and dawn the person didn't have much stuff atall and she only had one little bed. John wondered what the posen name was. John said 'What is your name?' 'My name is Tay' she replied 'What is your name?' she said my name is John' John replied. John said 'By the way I am looking for a suntone' I have hard of it befur but I don't know were it is. I think I no were it is and I will take you there' they got there at last.

Year 5 samples

Group 1

22nd June

Dear sir

I am writing to inform you of my concerns about the new development. Looking at your plan, my attention is drawn to the new roundabout. How are we expected to agree with this idea to place new houses there? Surely, the other residents will agree with me when I say that you have no respect for our children. I would not let my children out of the house for fear of the terrible traffic.

I can't put up with the fact that if your plans are accepted, the town will be put on the map for the wrong reasons. For example, the new houses and roads are destroying all the nature. The poor animals will all have to find new homes. I don't know about you, but that breaks my heart. How would you like it if I came and demolished your home? I don't understand why you are purposely ruining our little village. This plan is disgraceful!

I am willing to do all in MY power to protect our future generations, I go recycling once a week, use power saving light bulbs and WALK EVERYWHERE!

What do you do to prevent global warming? Not only will more people mean more cars but more cars mean more pollution.

Now you have heard all of my objections. I ask you how could you even think about going through with this plan?

Yours sincerely

Kate

Persuasive writing checklist (self-evaluation)

| |
|--|
| Complex sentences ✓ |
| Rhetorical questions ✓ |
| Non-finite verbs ✓ |
| Persuasive words (surely, consequently, as a result of) ✓ |
| Punctuation ✓ |
| Grammar ✓ |
| Adjectives ✓ |

Teacher feedback

You have used many of the conventions for a persuasive argument and have elaborated your points well. I think the Chair of planning will have a lot to think about!

Group 4 child

The teacher provided this child with a scaffold to support his writing (in blue).

22nd June

Dear Sir,

I am concerned about your plans because kids can't get to school in time
Because of the new houses. The new road cuts across the park. Lots of the
houses will make a disaster to the development and it will be dangerous for
kids who need to get to school.

Many people think The houses will destroy wildlife in the park And will split the
park in half. You are destroying our park because of your new road.

Most children at school think we can't play on a full park because of your new
road cutting across the park.

We want you to quit the development.

Yours sincerely

Scott

Teacher feedback

You have remembered most of your capital letters and full stops and you have used some interesting vocabulary.

Appendix 2: Guided writing planner

| | |
|--|--|
| Focus of the guided writing session | |
| At what point of the writing process? Before writing During writing After writing | |
| Children to be included in the group | |
| Single session/series of sessions | |
| Teaching strategies | |
| Assessment opportunities Peer-assessment Teacher-assessment | |
| Review and next steps | |

Appendix 3: Guided writing DVD: suggested prompts for observation

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is the guided writing group well matched by need or ability? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are the objectives appropriate and clear? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do the children understand the purpose of the session? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is there a clear structure to the session? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the teacher support the children, for example through key questions, constructive comments, teaching at the point of writing? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are the children given opportunities to try composing themselves? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are they focusing on aspects of the writing process? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do they have opportunities to review their writing? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the session achieve the established purpose? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are the children involved throughout? | |

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