

# Improving writing: a handbook for Key Stage 3



# Improving writing: a handbook for Key Stage 3

First published in 2009

Ref: 00671-2009PDF-EN-01

## **Disclaimer**

The Department for Children, Schools and Families wishes to make it clear that the Department and its agents accept no responsibility for the actual content of any materials suggested as information sources in this publication, whether these are in the form of printed publications or on a website.

In these materials, icons, logos, software products and websites are used for contextual and practical reasons. Their use should not be interpreted as an endorsement of particular companies or their products.

The websites referred to in these materials existed at the time of going to print.

Please check all website references carefully to see if they have changed and substitute other references where appropriate.

# Contents

<b>Section 1</b>	What are the issues?	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 2</b>	The route to improvement in writing	<b>7</b>
<b>Section 3</b>	Gathering information – asking the right questions	<b>11</b>
<b>Section 4</b>	Analysing the information	<b>16</b>
<b>Section 5</b>	Writing the improvement plan	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 6</b>	Effective planning for writing at short-, medium- and long-term level	<b>46</b>
<b>Section 7</b>	Approaches to teaching writing in lessons	<b>65</b>
<b>Section 8</b>	Using the key leaflets	<b>72</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	Resources	<b>74</b>

# Section 1: What are the issues?

**Focus: Exploring the issues that affect our approaches to writing**

'Learning to write is at once one of the most commonplace and one of the most complex activities we ask children to undertake in school.'

Dr Debra Myhill, *Better Writers*, Courseware Publications, 2001

## What does it mean to be a 'writer'?

The range of skills that need to be deployed to 'write' is remarkably complex and include:

- **motor/keyboard skills** – the physical act, for example, of holding and guiding the pen, pencil, cursor, or keypad
- **visual and spatial skills** – knowing where to begin and where to go; to write from right to left, or left to right, in vertical lists, in diagrams, and so on; to recognise when words are spelt correctly and when they are not; to have a sense of the shape of words as they appear in front of the reader in blocks of text alongside images, in rows of handwriting
- **intellectual skills** – making decisions about the 'what' and 'why' of writing – what is being conveyed, to whom and in what form, and why it's being written – the purpose.

This complexity is, however, as much to do with other factors in the learning process. As teachers, we need to give pupils the desire to *want to write*. The act of writing cannot be predicated solely upon adult need, for example 'you'll need to write correct sentences to get a job', but has to come from inside and pupils need to have an engagement in the act of writing – to have something to say, ideas to communicate, a rich language to draw upon. So writing will be tied up intimately with what fires their imaginations, which may in fact be a purposeful task related to job applications, but may also be role-play leading into writing fantasy novellas, or carefully argued pleas for better treatment of refugees.

It is a truism to say that in schools there are many teachers of writing, and just as many spheres in which writing takes place, from the science experiment written up for homework, to the history essay analysing key sources, to the recording of times or measurements in a GCSE PE class, or the evaluation of a technology product. In recent years, the National Strategies and other sources of guidance have helped teachers learn how they can plan teaching and intervene to enable pupils to become more confident, competent writers who are able to bring together the range of skills required. There has been a move from simply addressing why pupils are writing, what they are writing and how they have written, to a more focused attention on the nuts and bolts of the process, the craft and techniques needed to make improvements.

For example, writing improved at a faster rate than reading between 2004 and 2008 in Key Stage 3 with regard to those achieving level 5 and above. This reflects the focused training on improving writing that took place in 2003 and 2004, and which schools have reported improved their understanding and use of the teaching sequence for writing. In addition, in a general sense, '...many team leaders reported an improvement in writing skills this year [2008]...' (awarding body, GCSE examiner's report).

## Core challenges and concerns

However, some core challenges identified both in earlier research at Key Stage 3 and in examiners' reports from 2008 still remain. We know that a key focus for improvement is still related to the **composition, punctuation and linking of sentences within paragraphs**. As just one examiner's report for GCSE stated for one particular unit:

Although textual cohesion in an overall sense was adequate in most cases, there was often a lack of paragraphing, and punctuation at sentence breaks was frequently missing. This resulted in uncontrolled answers from candidates who actually had interesting and relevant ideas.

Extract from *Report on the Units, June 2008, GCSE English* © Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations. Used with kind permission.

You may wish to look at:

- *Key leaflet: Punctuation*, which can be downloaded from the *Improving Writing* area of the website, for some ideas on how to address this
- the section on the punctuation substrand from the Framework for secondary English on pages 42–56 in *Teaching for progression: Writing*, which is also available for download from the site.

Go to [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) and search using the references: 'Key leaflet Punctuation' and 'Teaching for progression: Writing'.

Another challenge emerges when one looks at the **conventions of genres** and **how these are applied**. Although on starting secondary school, pupils may know the conventions for different types of writing, there is still some evidence that they do not apply them, especially when taught by different teachers across the curriculum.

Furthermore, how these are crafted and flexed in creative ways is a cause for concern.

GCSE examiners from a range of boards have commented on the need for more confident or able writers, in particular, to be freed from the constraints of, or over dependence on, writing frames, while recognising the help these provide for certain learners.

Similarly, exam boards have also shown concern about the rather mechanical use by candidates of technical terms (what one might call 'feature spotting') as opposed to a more engaged commentary on how and why language is used. They point to how the technique of 'point, evidence, explanation' can become a dull formula that doesn't connect with the text in any coherent way.

The following could be useful in tackling these issues:

- *Key leaflet: Adapting conventions* can be downloaded from [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) by searching using the reference 'Key leaflet: Adapting conventions'
- *Point, evidence, explanation and more* can be downloaded from the Improving the Teaching of Shakespeare website at [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies)

The issue of engagement, linked to the points above, is also raised as a concern by exam boards. They have seen some of the poorest written responses coming from candidates whose analysis of text appears separate from the overall narrative or account being created. In this sense, they have not 'connected' with the work in any meaningful way.

The resources and guidance within this document reiterate those crafts and techniques that have been shown to help improve writing, and have led to the broader improvements mentioned, but also now draw on ideas derived from functional skills approaches, the implications of the Framework for secondary English published in 2007, and additional guidance such as *Teaching for progression: Writing* and the aforementioned key leaflets on writing, which can be downloaded from the *Improving Writing* section of the Standards website.

The programmes of study for English also give us a useful reminder of what we, as teachers, need to provide, especially via the key concepts of:

- Competence
- Creativity
- Cultural understanding
- Critical understanding.

In particular, the notes associated with the key concept of Creativity should provide us with a springboard for devising episodes or schemes of work which develop writing in the sorts of engaging, meaningful ways that the examiners' reports imply:

**Creativity:** Pupils show creativity when they make **unexpected connections**, use **striking and original phrases or images**, approach tasks from a **variety of starting points**, or **change forms to surprise and engage** the reader. Creativity can be encouraged by providing **purposeful opportunities** for pupils to **experiment**, build on **ideas** or **follow their own interests**.

#### What are the core things we should do to aid improvement in writing?

##### Learners need:

- to be **engaged, challenged** and **motivated** by the tasks and contexts they are given
- to have a **clear sense of where they are going**, and what **skills they need to build, develop and apply** to become **independent**
- to have the **right resources (notebooks? laptops?)**, **opportunities (time?)**, and **space for writing**
- to be **taught conventions and patterns in language** and a variety of texts but learn how to **use and manipulate them inventively and originally**
- to be able to **identify areas for improvement** and **act upon them**
- to become independent in making decisions about and in **controlling** their writing.

##### Teachers need:

- to design a clear route to improvement for their own learners in writing
- to provide the **resources, time** and **space** needed for learners
- to continue to provide **carefully planned approaches** based on quality first teaching of **key, targeted objectives, core features** and **writing conventions**
- to consider, in addition, some new approaches where appropriate, for example by:
  - **co-constructing** the objectives and goals
  - creating schemes or episodes of work in which outcomes **are not entirely predictable**
  - allowing **experimentation, playing around with conventions** and taking **inventive approaches** that mirror more closely **'real' texts**.

**The department needs:**

- to work with its **own set of priorities**, making good use of national and commercial materials and local support
- to identify a **specific focus for development**, with clear targets, and with criteria for monitoring and evaluation
- to provide **time** and **support** for teachers to try out and **evaluate** the impact of changes and developments
- to work **collaboratively**, through peer observation and coaching
- to provide **senior management support** for all of the above.

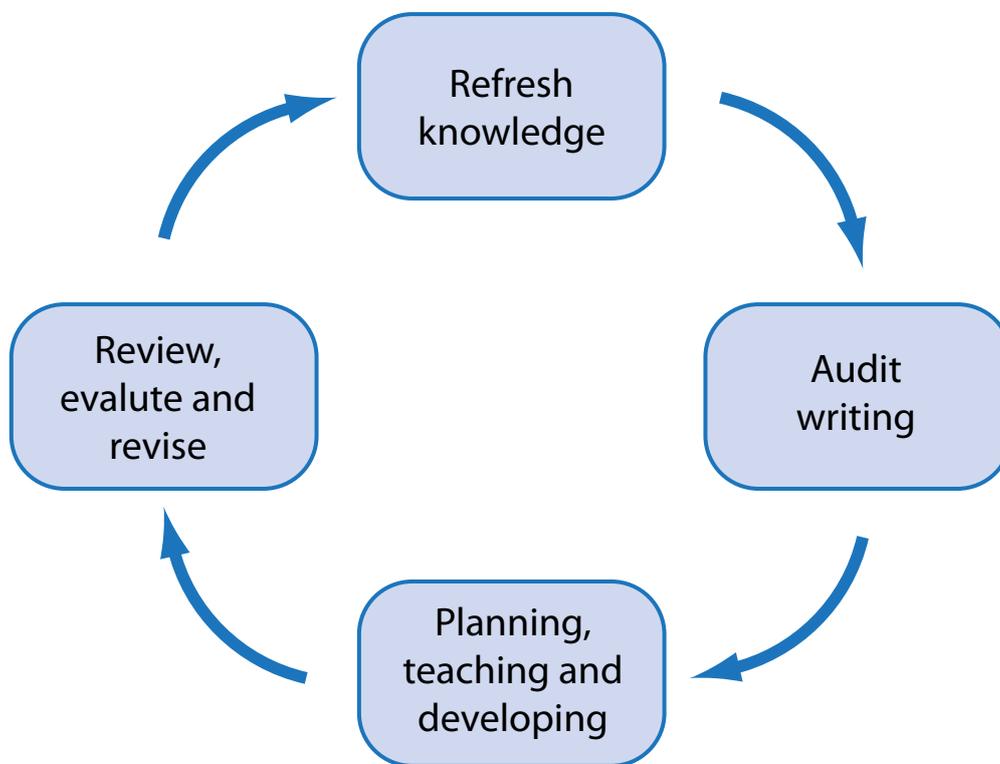
## Conclusion

With the support of the school, and focusing on key priorities by following the route to improvement and the guidance in this, and other documents, it is likely that significant progress can be made.

## Section 2: The route to improvement in writing

**Focus: The various stages in the route to improvement**

Broadly, the process is as follows:

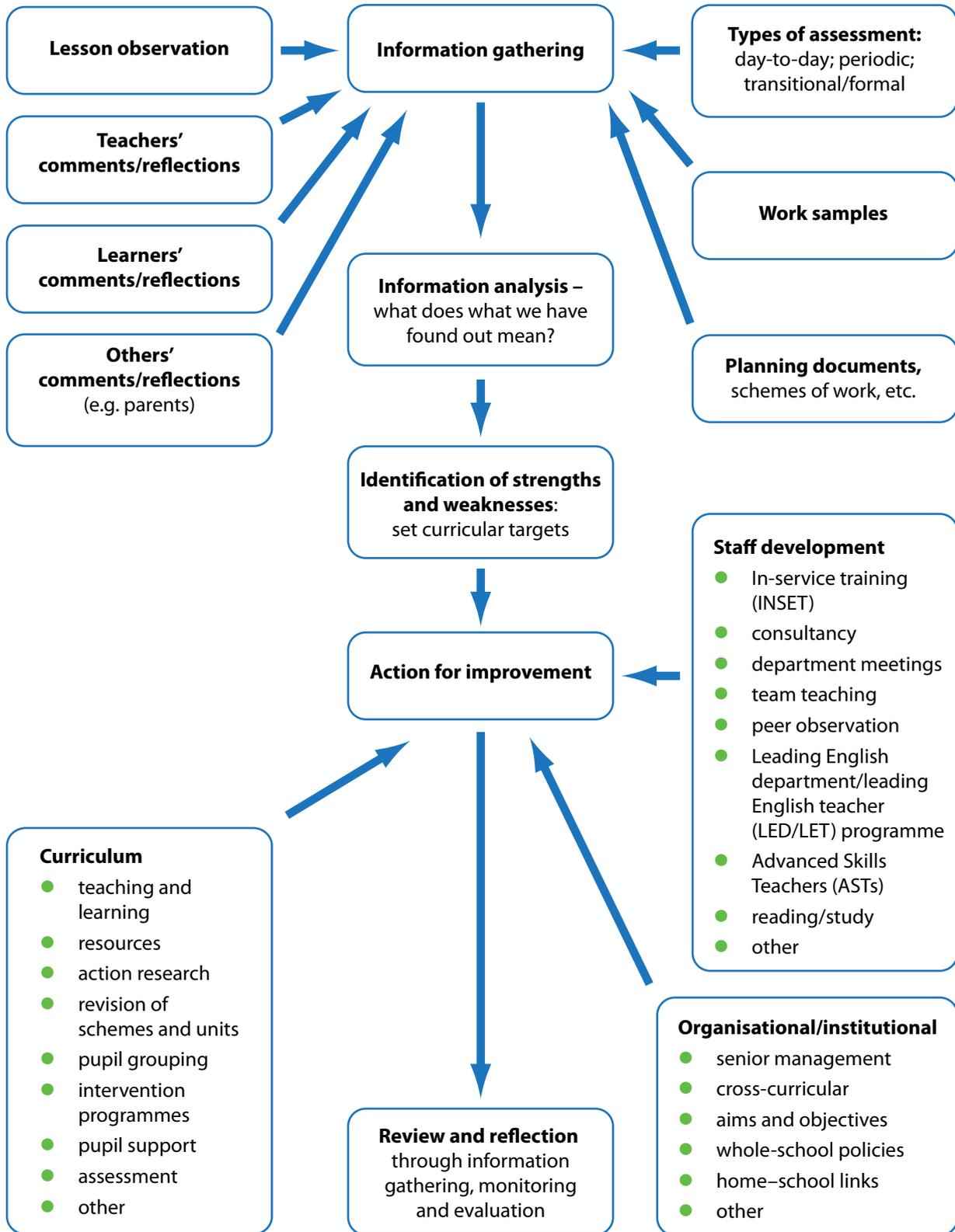


In other words, teachers/departments refresh their own knowledge about writing – for example, what the particular demands of the curriculum are, what the Framework says, where their own expertise lies; they audit the current situation (for example what the current issues for the pupils are); plan to address these issues; and then, review the progress made.

The particular process we are interested in begins here with the gathering of information, as ‘The route to improvement’ diagram on page 8 demonstrates.

## The route to improvement

The implication of the cycle of improvement is that there must be a clear process to follow. A more focused way of representing this process is as follows:



## The route to improvement process

The route to improvement process suggests a way in which you, the department, or the organisation you work in can:

1. Gather information on writing, and analyse and scrutinise it.
2. Identify what needs to be addressed.
3. Plan for and act on the improvements needed.

In order to get to the point at which you can put in place key actions, you will need to make sure you:

4. **Ask the right questions**, for example: What are we looking for? How much material should we analyse? What do we hope to achieve? The document *Asking the right questions*, which can be found in the Auditing writing section of the Improving writing website, will help with this.
5. Carry out an effective **work scrutiny** and **gathering of data**. The document *A work scrutiny* and the audit forms, also in the Auditing writing section will help you here.

### Gathering information

The information can come from a variety of sources.

- Schools should use Key Stage 2 test data to identify writing, spelling and handwriting scores.
- There may also be other information on transfer forms, particularly for some pupils (special educational needs (SEN), English as an additional language (EAL), Individual Education Plans (IEPs), etc.).
- Teacher assessment and Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) grids can be used.
- Written work transferred from primary school as part of the transition programme will help to identify individual, group and cohort strengths and weaknesses.
- Work samples can provide information on classes and groups: these need to be organised carefully to target certain pupils or to target types of writing.
- Work samples can also provide teacher responses, which can reveal common strengths and weaknesses across different abilities.
- Pupils' own responses to their writing can reveal useful and perceptive information.
- Lesson observation provides information on how writing is taught and learned.
- There may be opportunities to conduct observation targeted at writing, during which teacher and pupil response to writing may be seen.
- Schemes of work and other planning documents can show where writing is taught, and ought to show some of the 'how' as well.

### Analysis of information

The **analysis of this information** is crucial, not just in terms of conclusions but in terms of the process adopted and shared across the department or school to arrive at the right conclusions.

The most important aspect to analyse is the pupils' writing itself. But it is also important to analyse areas of the department that affect writing, including long-, medium- and short-term planning, provision and resources, teaching strategies, teachers' responses, marking and assessment, pupil self-assessment and attitudes.

The information can be **analysed** to **identify strengths and weaknesses** in two main aspects.

#### Which pupils?

Which pupils are succeeding most or struggling to make sufficient progress (especially in connection with key objectives and in relation to overall targets for raising standards)?

#### Which curricular targets?

In which aspects of English are they making good progress or struggling?

### Planning and taking action

Analysis may lead to targeting:

- specific year groups/classes/groups of pupils who need more effective provision, intervention, support or monitoring
- specific curricular targets which need more emphasis, more time, more effective teaching and learning; more effective 'layering' in the progression through Year 7 to Year 9 schemes
- aspects of planning, resourcing and teaching that will most affect change and improvement in writing.

### Review and reflection

As the process progresses, actions and outcomes need to be monitored, bringing the process back to data gathering and analysis. Emphasise how important it may be to use resources available to a department: for example, the senior management team, in lesson observation and work sampling; consultants, as part of additional support if available; the whole department, in sharing in the process, as appropriate to each member's role.

You may wish to use these review questions:

- What did we hope to change/improve?
- What evidence is there of improvement?
- What led to this?
- What could we have done differently/better?
- What changes can we now make to schemes, teaching, organisation, etc?
- What timescale do we use?

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

# Section 3: Gathering information – asking the right questions

**Focus: Auditing writing in the class and department, and knowing what questions to ask**

The starting point is an audit and analysis of writing. But what are you looking for? The answer is to know 'where we are now'. These questions might help, as will the suggestions of where to find the answers.

The key questions	Where to get the information
<p><b>Attitudes and engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are my/our pupils' attitudes to writing currently?</li> <li>● What sorts of writing are they undertaking in class/school/home, etc. and what do they feel about it?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Attitudes and engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lesson observation, surveys, pupil questionnaires, pupil reflection/evaluation during and after modules of work, discussion with colleagues, etc. can all produce useful information on the attitudes students have.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning and strategy</b></p> <p>What plans already exist for developing or improving writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● in the short/medium term (as part of lesson plans, short-term units)</li> <li>● in the longer term (as part of longer-term schemes or plans in the department, across the school, etc.)</li> <li>● within the English department</li> <li>● in other departments</li> <li>● in any other forums or areas of school life (for example SEN plans)?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning and strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Look at the departmental handbook (if there is one) to see what is said about the place of writing.</li> <li>● Gather together examples of teachers' individual plans, schemes of work, etc. and look at what is said about writing and how it links with other skills.</li> <li>● Consider whole-school documentation, for example marking policy, to see what attitudes, expectations and demands are implied.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Pedagogy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How effective are the strategies I am currently using?</li> <li>● How is writing taught in class/in the department/across the school?</li> <li>● What are the particular demands of assessment processes (APP, Functional Skills, GCSE, other subject areas, Diplomas) in relation to writing, and how is this affecting what we do?</li> <li>● Does the department or school have policies that impact on how writing is taught or approached (for example handwriting or marking policies)?</li> <li>● What seems to work well – what does not?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pedagogy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Samples of written work from pupils can provide evidence of approaches taken by a teacher, the department as a whole and so on. For example, a range of types of text, evidence of extended, independent writing, the sense of the pupil's 'own voice' in work, might suggest teaching approaches which value a personalised approach to developing writing skills.</li> <li>● Lesson observation, by colleagues or a head of department, can contribute to evidence of the sorts of approach being taken, but should be seen in the context of a period of time, not as complete, definitive evidence in itself. Observation which targets the specific teaching of writing may be useful.</li> <li>● Schemes of work provide useful information on teaching approaches.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standards and progression</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How are pupils performing in terms of writing against school/local/national expectations?</li> <li>● What particular strengths and weaknesses can be identified?</li> <li>● What progress has been made over a period of time (last month, term, year)?</li> <li>● What records or information is kept in relation to learners' progression in writing?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Standards and progression</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools can use Key Stage 2 test data to identify writing, spelling and handwriting scores. There may also be other information on transfer forms, particularly for some pupils (SEN, EAL, IEPs, etc.).</li> <li>● Written work transferred from primary school as part of the transition programme will help to identify individual, group and cohort strengths and weaknesses.</li> <li>● Teacher assessment and APP grids can be used.</li> <li>● Diagnostic data can be gathered from Year 7/8 optional tests, or transitional assessment where it exists.</li> <li>● Work samples can provide information on classes and groups, and can reveal common strengths and weaknesses across different abilities.</li> <li>● Pupils' own responses to their writing can reveal useful and perceptive information about what has been learned and secured.</li> <li>● Lesson observation can provide information on how writing is taught and learned.</li> </ul>

Much of the above may seem like a huge amount of extra work, but even if you are unable to do all the things mentioned, selecting one or two, for example talking to pupils about their attitudes to writing, or doing some basic analysis of data from assessments that already exist, can tell you a great deal.

## A work scrutiny

One way of auditing all of these areas – to a greater or lesser extent – is via a ‘work scrutiny’.

### The practicalities

What do you need to do to set up such a scrutiny? Answer the questions:

- Who will be involved (department members, others)?
- When will it take place (during school time, after school)?
- Who needs to be informed?
- What are we looking for (the purpose of the scrutiny)?
- What is a manageable sample, and how will it be collected?



### The outcome

An effective work scrutiny will provide you with:

- curricular target(s)
- some smaller stepping stones – layered targets
- specific classes, groups and individuals who may need attention
- identified areas for improvement in:
  - resources
  - expectations
  - teaching
  - marking
  - assessment
  - attitudes, engagement and motivation
  - performance across teaching groups
- specific classes, groups and individual pupils in need of particular attention.

The example that follows on page 14 provides a sample of the sort of gathering of information you might like to do.

### Work scrutiny planning grid (sample)

Key questions	Answers	Practicalities and notes
What are we looking for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the particular stumbling blocks that inhibit progress for underachieving pupils, especially in extended writing</li> <li>how to identify who those pupils are</li> </ul>	
What are the desirable outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strategies that already work for these pupils and can be shared and used by them, or by their teachers</li> <li>assistance in identifying progression in attainment and how/when it occurs</li> <li>assistance in future planning for these pupils through good monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>improvement for the targeted pupils</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies may already be being used by staff</p> <p>Might, however, mean we have to adopt new approaches</p>
Who will be involved in the scrutiny?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>head of department</li> <li>two teachers who teach Years 7 and/or 8</li> </ul>	
When will it take place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 May, 17 May</li> </ul>	Sort out cover for the afternoon, if needed
Who needs to know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>department – to supply samples in time</li> <li>deputy head – for cover</li> <li>pupils – to make sure work is in school when needed</li> </ul>	Memos to be sent out via email
What samples of writing will we use? What will we look at? (This needs to be manageable.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extended narrative and non-narrative writing</li> <li>particular aspects – perhaps punctuation, sentence construction, breadth of vocabulary</li> </ul>	<p>May need to photocopy so all those involved in scrutiny have copies for discussion</p> <p>Will need list of key things to look for</p>
What range of pupils will be covered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>range of pupils across Year 8 classes – one ‘top’, one ‘middle’, two ‘low’ from five classes, so 20 sets in total – as decided by respective class teacher</li> </ul>	May need to advise on selection – e.g. don’t base purely on controlled test, or homework marks
How will the process be followed up?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>brief summative written report by head of department</li> <li>key action points decided</li> <li>report back at departmental meeting; also to headteacher when convenient</li> <li>adaptation of schemes, plans, etc. as necessary</li> <li>evaluation of success at projected time in future (tbc)</li> </ul>	

## Conclusion

Using a range of data, prior knowledge, 'live' observation, scrutiny of written work and so on can provide a focused approach to what needs to be addressed. This will then enable you – or the department – to put in place targeted action to address the identified need.

## Section 4: Analysing the information

**Focus: What does the information we have gathered tell us?**

Once information and data has been gathered, an analysis needs to be made of what it means. Looking at the information that was gathered in a case study school shows how certain conclusions can be drawn.

### Sample departmental analysis of current Year 9 pupils

In the case study school, analysis shows:

- the reading versus writing gap is still wide, many pupils are achieving more in reading than in writing, as they had done at Key Stage 2
- pupils who entered Key Stage 3 on level 5 or above, both boys and girls, are achieving in line with expectations
- pupils with level 5 potential, especially boys, are not progressing in line with expectations
- most pupils need a teaching emphasis on sentence structure and punctuation: too many compound sentences mean that writing loses clarity of expression and thought
- many pupils find it difficult to maintain appropriate formality of expression
- when writing under pressure of time, many pupils working below level 5 have difficulties with the use and layout of paragraphs, with sentence punctuation and use of capitals
- many pupils with level 5 potential are insecure over paragraph organisation and textual cohesion, particularly in non-narrative writing
- girls with level 5 potential are over-reliant on dialogue in narrative
- most pupils show a limited vocabulary and lack precision when referring to evidence to back up their points
- there is marked variation in the progress made by different classes: two classes are significantly stronger in relation to sentence variety and paragraphing, although they are in similar ability groups
- few pupils know how to incorporate quotations effectively into their writing.

## Results of work scrutiny in case study school

Assessment focus	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
<p><b>Composition and effect:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts (AF1)</li> <li>produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose (AF2)</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils are performing comparatively well in relation to this assessment focus.</p>	<p>Pupils are performing comparatively well in relation to this assessment focus.</p>	<p>Pupils are performing comparatively well in relation to this assessment focus.</p>
<p><b>Text structure and organisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events (AF3)</li> <li>construct paragraphs and use some cohesion within and between linked paragraphs (AF4)</li> </ul>	<p>Most pupils are better at paragraphing in narrative as opposed to non-narrative.</p> <p>Many pupils use paragraphs, but only to signal time breaks or obvious chronological shift.</p> <p>Pupils often introduce texts appropriately, but rarely write conclusions.</p>	<p>Most pupils are better at paragraphing in narrative as opposed to non-narrative.</p> <p>Most pupils use paragraphs to signal chronology and to group ideas, but links between paragraphs are often arbitrary. Many still do not organise ideas effectively within paragraphs.</p> <p>Pupils often introduce texts appropriately, but conclusions rarely conclude.</p>	<p>Most pupils are better at paragraphing in narrative as opposed to non-narrative.</p> <p>Most pupils use paragraphs to signal chronology or to group ideas, but do not organise ideas effectively within paragraphs.</p> <p>Pupils often introduce texts appropriately, but do not write effective conclusions.</p>
<p><b>Sentence structure and punctuation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect (AF5)</li> <li>write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences (AF6)</li> </ul>	<p>Many pupils rely on compound sentences which become over-long.</p> <p>There is over-dependence on coordination and little evidence of subordination.</p> <p>Control of accuracy disintegrates when writing under time pressure.</p>	<p>Some variation in sentence structure but limited use of subordination to structure ideas.</p> <p>Some use of commas but not always accurate.</p> <p>Some use of inverted commas.</p>	<p>Some variation in sentence structure but limited use of subordination to structure ideas.</p> <p>Some use of commas and inverted commas but not always used accurately.</p> <p>Little use of a wider range of punctuation.</p>
<p><b>Vocabulary and spelling:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>select appropriate and effective vocabulary (AF7)</li> <li>spell most simple and common polysyllabic words accurately (AF8)</li> </ul>	<p>Progress in relation to spelling and vocabulary is at least in line with expectation.</p>	<p>Progress in relation to spelling and vocabulary is at least in line with expectation.</p>	<p>Progress in relation to spelling and vocabulary is at least in line with expectation.</p>

## Conclusion

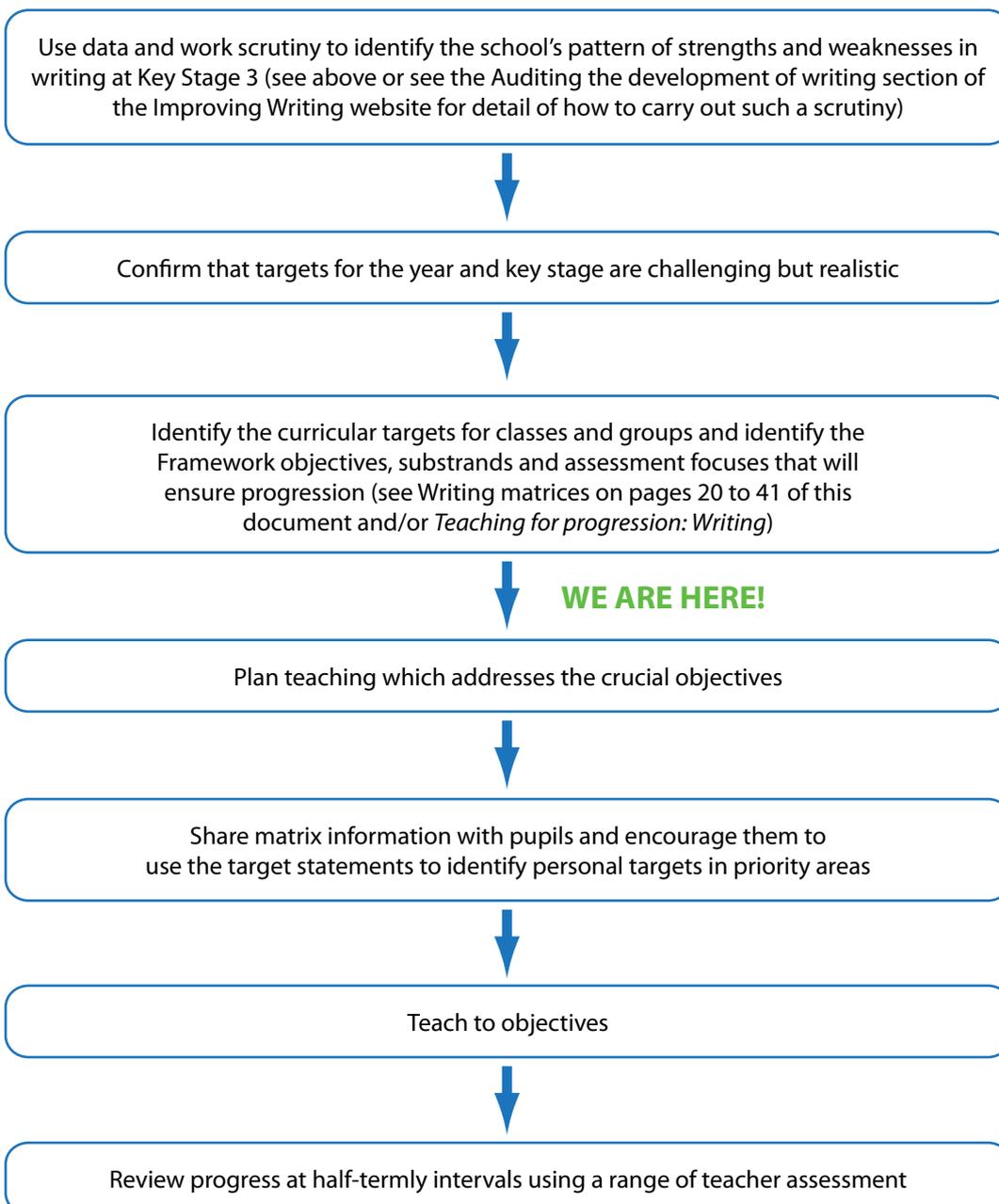
General observations from the case study school might be as follows:

- Pupils in Year 8 are doing work which is similar in demand to that which they have done in Year 7. Consequently many pupils are unprepared for the jump in demand in Year 9.
- The teaching of writing is focused predominantly on narrative and personal informal writing.
- Most writing is extended, and there is much evidence of drafting and redrafting of whole pieces, but little of focused teacher intervention.
- Only in a limited sense are pupils taking responsibility for improving their own writing through personal targets and moving towards a more independent approach.
- While generally encouraging, except in two classes, marking tends to be congratulatory rather than developmental. There's a sense in which the pupil, rather than the work, is being marked.

# Section 5: Writing the improvement plan

**Focus: How do we move from information to action?**

So, what next for the case study school? Reference to the writing matrices on pages 20 to 41 should then enable them to draw out those areas that need development and build them into their own improvement plan. The following diagram begins at the point at which information has been gathered, analysis has been done, and then considers the next step.



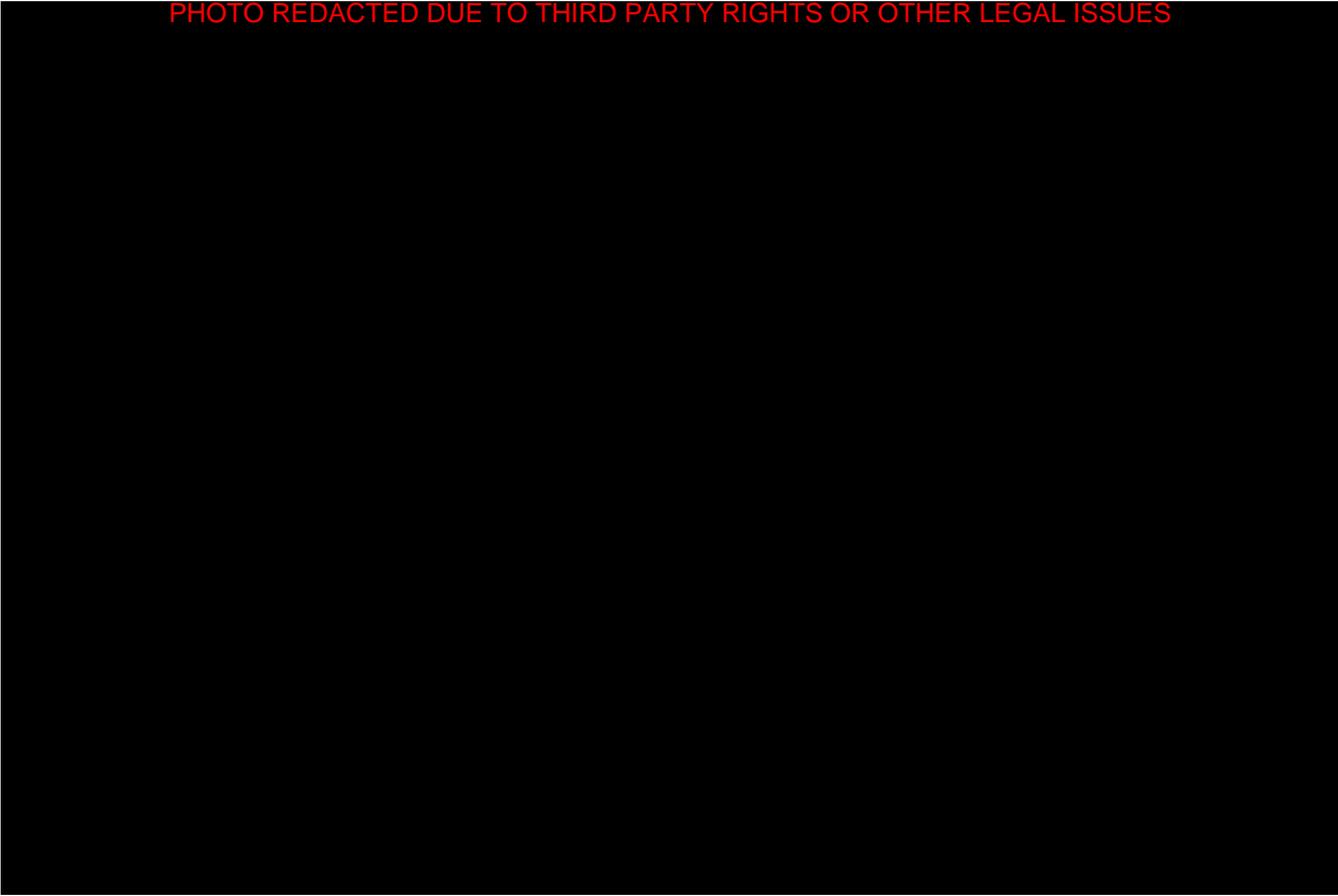
## Writing matrices

The writing matrices for Years 7 to 9 allow teachers to help plan short- and medium-term units of work by presenting:

- the key strands and substrands from the Framework
- related assessment focuses
- possible graduated teaching targets.

By looking across the three years you will see a synergy in particular areas so that both reiteration and progression in skills is evident. The matrices are best used in combination with the Framework when planning schemes of work.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



## Writing matrix: Year 7

**Focus: generating ideas, planning content and drawing on specific features and conventions used by writers to engage the reader**

**Related QCA assessment focus: composition and effect**

AF1 Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts

AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
7.1 Generating ideas, planning and drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share a range of visual planning formats and model how to plan, using spider diagrams/thought webs, for/against boxes, card sorts, interactive diagrams on-screen</li> <li>● Keep the teaching focus on the objective/s both when planning and drafting work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a range of planning formats; select and use one appropriate to task and purpose</li> <li>● Choose and use effectively an appropriate form of presentation</li> <li>● Plan an opening, know where your writing is going and how it will end (try out, or plan for, different types of opening and ending)</li> <li>● Recognise when it is appropriate to edit or redraft part or whole of a text</li> <li>● Proofread carefully to minimise technical errors</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: The above examples are not incremental</b></p>
7.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of texts on paper and on-screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, review and model some of the recurring features of various forms and texts through shared writing. At appropriate moment remove the 'crutch' of the frame, i.e. use a frame for planning but then remove it so that writing is independent (uses an internal/mental frame instead)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Choose content relevant to your task</li> <li>● Select ideas to interest and engage your reader (for example, based on ones writers have used)</li> </ul> <p><b>Use some of the conventions/features writers use in their own texts</b></p>
8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use role-on-the-wall to explore characters or specific viewpoint in a non-fiction text: an outline which can be filled in with appropriate words and quotations</li> <li>● 'Pairs talk' using a range of verb structures – 'I believe', 'I feel', 'I strongly believe', etc. – to express a personal view</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make your own standpoint clear when expressing a personal view</li> <li>● Make your main character's voice clear and consistent in fiction writing</li> <li>● Develop a range of ideas, points or arguments that will interest or influence your reader</li> </ul>

<p>8.4 Developing varied linguistic and literary techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Draw on the knowledge of reading that pupils have gained, through discussion of visual and sound effects, such as imagery, alliteration, rhythm, rhyme, etc.</li><li>● Use card sorts with the elements of a story (arresting opening, development, complication, crisis, resolution, etc.), give each group a different starting point to show that stories can be structured in different ways</li><li>● In shared reading of texts by pupils and published authors, demonstrate reading with a writer's eye</li><li>● In shared writing, demonstrate 'writing as a reader'</li><li>● Practise rereading in pairs and in guided work with the reader's reaction in mind</li></ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Add description, detail or explanation to your writing</li><li>● Shape stories using different narrative patterns</li><li>● Choose the appropriate form of writing and use some typical features of that form</li><li>● Choose the tone that best suits your task</li></ul> <p><b>Reader related</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Show you know who you are writing for</li><li>● Match your style to your reader</li><li>● Try to anticipate your reader's reaction</li><li>● Use the right level of formality to suit your context and your reader</li></ul>
---	---	---

**Focus: shaping the structure and organisation of a text with the reader and purpose in mind**

**Related QCA assessment focus: composition and effect**

AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

**Related QCA assessment focus: text structure and organisation**

AF3 Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events

AF4 Construct paragraphs and use some cohesion within and between linked paragraphs

<b>Linked Framework substrands</b>	<b>Helpful teaching approaches</b>	<b>Possible graduated pupil targets</b>  Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
<p>8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts on paper and on-screen</p>	<p><b>Text structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise texts in ways appropriate to their content – for example by chronology, priority, comparison – and signpost this clearly to the reader</li> <li>● Demonstrate via card sorts how the same material can be organised in different ways</li> <li>● Focus on topic sentences in shared work</li> <li>● Give pupils content in order to focus on structure</li> <li>● Use sequencing activities to analyse text structures</li> <li>● Model the organisation of ideas in fiction and non-fiction</li> <li>● Focus on conclusions in fiction and non-fiction: look at examples in shared reading and model in shared writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Paragraphing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feature paragraphing in shared and guided writing</li> <li>● Use starters to demonstrate the power of connectives to carry thoughts</li> <li>● Use sequencing activities to develop understanding of paragraph structures</li> <li>● Use writing partners armed with checklists of paragraph features</li> <li>● In shared reading, draw attention to effective paragraphing</li> <li>● Focus on the use of topic sentences during shared reading/writing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Text structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Know and use the range of text types</li> <li>● Arrange ideas in a logical order</li> <li>● Select a clear and effective way of opening and ending</li> <li>● Link the opening and the ending</li> </ul> <p><b>Organising paragraphs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise your main ideas into sections appropriate to the type of text</li> <li>● Use paragraphs to organise your writing in a logical way</li> <li>● Link paragraphs clearly using connectives</li> <li>● Introduce paragraphs with a topic sentence and group connected ideas together</li> <li>● Avoid ambiguity through positioning pronouns correctly and using them consistently</li> <li>● Expand your main points or ideas in the paragraph with details, points, or examples</li> <li>● Vary the length of paragraphs and connect ideas inside them in a logical way</li> <li>● Use paragraphs to organise your writing in a logical way</li> <li>● Link paragraphs clearly, using connectives that signal your line of argument</li> <li>● Begin and organise paragraphs in varied ways</li> </ul>

<p>8.6 Developing and using editing and proofreading skills on paper and on-screen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Model text marking and editing for particular readers</li><li>● Develop checklists for use by writing partners</li><li>● Build and develop the drafting, editing and proofreading habit by relating it to real-life and other curriculum contexts</li></ul>	<p>Identify, for each piece of work, a specific area to address and then ensure you check specifically at various points in the writing process that you have addressed it</p> <p>Use editing/proofreading techniques you have developed in English in other appropriate areas of the curriculum.</p>
--	---	---

**Focus: sentences, punctuation for expression, impact and clarity**

**Related QCA assessment focus: sentence structure and punctuation**

AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect

AF6 Write with technical accuracy of syntax in phrases, clauses and sentences

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets
<p>8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect</p> <p>9.1 Using the conventions of standard English</p> <p>9.2 Using grammar accurately and appropriately</p>	<p><b>Sentences and cohesion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review understanding of simple, compound and complex sentences in shared work</li> <li>● Demonstrate the impact of sentence variety in shared reading and writing and display examples, for example by starting with a non-finite verb, or ‘dropping in’ subordinate clauses</li> <li>● Be explicit about the demands of formal as opposed to informal writing and feature both in shared writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cover each type of punctuation via starters or in shared work and focus on particular features in subsequent marking and guided work</li> <li>● Demonstrate how to manipulate tenses for effect, and revisit through starters</li> <li>● Focus on the function of punctuation in carrying meaning</li> <li>● Have poster-size definitions of punctuation marks with examples found by pupils</li> <li>● Use writing partners to check on each others’ use of punctuation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sentences and cohesion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use conjunctions in addition to <i>and</i> and <i>but</i></li> <li>● Use simple noun phrases</li> <li>● Use subordinate clauses and punctuate some correctly</li> <li>● Use compound and complex sentence structures</li> <li>● Use conditional structures and expanded noun phrases</li> <li>● Use sentences of different lengths</li> <li>● Use subordinate clauses in different positions for effect</li> <li>● Use noun phrases in different positions for effect</li> <li>● Use the passive voice in formal writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use some commas correctly within sentences</li> <li>● Use commas to eliminate ambiguity</li> <li>● Use inverted commas to mark speech</li> <li>● Demarcate sentences accurately and use a range of punctuation to end sentences</li> <li>● Use a range of punctuation accurately, including commas around clauses</li> </ul> <p><b>Syntax</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use past, present and future tenses consistently</li> <li>● Use varied tenses correctly, for example past, conditional</li> <li>● Use modal verbs to reflect and question</li> <li>● Use passive verb forms to make writing impersonal</li> </ul>

**Focus: developing vocabulary, improving spelling**

**Related QCA assessment focus: vocabulary and spelling**

AF7 Select appropriate and effective vocabulary

AF8 Spell most simple and common polysyllabic words accurately

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
<p>8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact (link to strand 10: Exploring and analysing language)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have 'words of the week' to explore for meaning and structure</li> <li>● Teach about roots and origins</li> <li>● Make vocabulary a focus for starters</li> <li>● Draw attention to vocabulary in shared and guided work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Select some vocabulary which is descriptive or which is suitable or specific to the task</li> <li>● Use vocabulary which is appropriate to the task, genre, situation and reader</li> <li>● Use fewer finite verbs</li> <li>● Use a wider range of vocabulary to interest, surprise and influence the reader</li> <li>● Use formal vocabulary to contribute to the objectivity of writing</li> <li>● Use a wide range of vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>9.3 Reviewing spelling and increasing knowledge of word derivations, patterns and families (link to strand 10: Exploring and analysing language)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use <i>Teaching for progression: Teaching spelling</i>; go to <a href="http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies">www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies</a> and search using the reference 'Teaching for progression: Teaching spelling'</li> <li>● Teach strategies for learning spellings; and have spelling partners, for example, identify words which pose a particular challenge then learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory reinforcement and memorising critical features</li> <li>● Use conventions to make best guesses</li> <li>● Work with targeted groups to analyse and address their patterns of error</li> <li>● Encourage use of personal spelling journals to record target words, investigations, learning strategies and mnemonics</li> <li>● Make spelling work part of a wider exploration of word knowledge, for example in exploring the influence of other languages, Norse, French, Latin, etc., and their impact on spelling (for example <i>hug/embrace; motherly/maternal</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spell regular complex words accurately, for example learn and apply rules for doubling consonants when adding suffixes</li> <li>● Spell irregular words accurately, for example learn and apply rules and patterns for adding suffixes <i>-ible/-able</i></li> <li>● Spell with consistent accuracy, for example check work and locate possible misspellings of unfamiliar words, using your knowledge of spelling to make a best guess</li> </ul>

## Writing matrix: Year 8

**Focus: generating ideas, planning content and drawing on specific features and conventions used by writers to engage the reader**

**Related QCA assessment focus: composition and effect**

AF1 Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts

AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
7.1 Generating ideas, planning and drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a range of visual planning formats and model how to plan, using spider diagrams/thought webs, for/against boxes, card sorts, interactive diagrams on-screen</li> <li>● Set specific problems or contexts that require pupils to select the most appropriate planning approach</li> <li>● Demonstrate the direct connection between the objective/s and the plan or process being proposed. Keep the teaching focus on the objective</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a specifically selected planning format and identify how it will help in solving problems, making links between ideas, etc.</li> <li>● Choose and use effectively an appropriate form or medium of presentation</li> <li>● Plan an opening, know where your writing is going and how it will end (try out different types of opening and ending and review which works best for the reader)</li> <li>● Recognise when it is appropriate to edit or redraft part or all of a text</li> <li>● Proofread carefully to minimise technical errors</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: The above examples are not incremental</b></p>
7.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of texts on paper and on-screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, review and model the recurring features of various forms and texts through shared writing</li> <li>● Relate reading, through discussion, to writing</li> <li>● Show how some writers adapt or mix typical conventions or features in their writing for particular effects; experiment with alternatives to conventional structures; remove the support of writing frames or scaffolds to encourage independent application of skills and content</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Choose content relevant to your task</li> <li>● Select ideas to interest and engage your reader (for example, based on ones writers have used)</li> <li>● Use, and where appropriate adapt, some of the conventions/features writers use in their own texts</li> <li>● Try to work without the support of scaffolds or frames in extended, independent writing</li> </ul>

<p>8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use role-on-the-wall to explore characters or specific viewpoint in a non-fiction text – use an outline which can be filled in with appropriate words and quotations</li> <li>● ‘Pairs talk’ using a range of verb structures – ‘I believe’, ‘I feel’, ‘I strongly believe’, etc. – to express a personal view</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make your own standpoint clear when expressing a personal view; make your main character’s voice clear and consistent in fiction writing</li> <li>● Develop a range of ideas, points or arguments that will interest or influence your reader</li> </ul>
<p>8.4 Developing varied linguistic and literary techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draw on the knowledge of reading that pupils have gained, through discussion of visual and sound effects, such as imagery, alliteration, rhythm, rhyme, etc.</li> <li>● Use card sorts with the elements of a story (arresting opening, development, complication, crisis, resolution, etc.), give each group a different starting point to show that stories can be structured in different ways</li> <li>● In shared reading of texts by pupils and published authors, demonstrate reading with a writer’s eye</li> <li>● In shared writing, demonstrate ‘writing as a reader’</li> <li>● Practise rereading in pairs and in guided work with the reader’s reaction in mind</li> <li>● After modelling, allocate different poetic forms, and/or poetic features, to different groups and review via a plenary</li> <li>● Gradually remove the support of frames or scaffolds so that pupils apply the techniques independently, rather than mechanically</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add description, detail or explanation to your writing</li> <li>● Shape stories using different narrative patterns</li> <li>● Choose the appropriate form of writing and use some typical features of that form</li> <li>● Choose the tone that best suits your task</li> </ul> <p><b>Reader related</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show you know who you are writing for</li> <li>● Match your style to your reader</li> <li>● Try to anticipate your reader’s reaction</li> <li>● Use the right level of formality to suit your context and your reader (consider when formal and informal styles can be mixed)</li> </ul>

**Focus: shaping the structure and organisation of a text with the reader and purpose in mind**

**Related QCA assessment focus: composition and effect**

AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

**Related QCA assessment focus: text structure and organisation**

AF3 Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events

AF4 Construct paragraphs and use some cohesion within and between linked paragraphs

<b>Linked Framework substrands</b>	<b>Helpful teaching approaches</b>	<b>Possible graduated pupil targets</b>  Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts on paper and on-screen	<p><b>Text structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise texts in ways appropriate to their content – for example by chronology, priority, comparison – and signpost this clearly to the reader</li> <li>● Demonstrate via card sorts how the same material can be organised in different ways</li> <li>● Focus on topic sentences in shared work</li> <li>● Give pupils content in order to focus on structure</li> <li>● Use sequencing activities to analyse text structures</li> <li>● Use discussion to promote coherent thinking and appropriate structures</li> <li>● Model the organisation of ideas in fiction and non-fiction</li> <li>● Engage in shared and guided work on making links between openings and endings</li> <li>● Use texts written by pupils to focus on topic sentences and connectives.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Text structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use different ways of structuring texts for best effect</li> <li>● Use text conventions in unusual ways</li> <li>● Select an effective way of opening and ending</li> <li>● Link the opening and the ending effectively</li> <li>● Open and close the writing skilfully, selecting devices for impact on the reader and linking to ideas earlier in the text</li> <li>● Lead up to the ending, making it more than a concluding sentence</li> <li>● Include relevant evidence, quotations and references to support your argument</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Paragraphing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feature paragraphing in shared and guided writing, drawing attention to cohesion and coherence</li> <li>● Use starters to demonstrate the power of connectives to carry thoughts</li> <li>● Use sequencing activities to develop understanding of paragraph structures</li> <li>● Use writing partners armed with checklists of paragraph features</li> <li>● In shared reading, draw attention to effective paragraphing</li> <li>● In shared reading, show how paragraph structures differ between text-types</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organising paragraphs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use paragraphs to organise your writing in a logical way</li> <li>● Link paragraphs clearly, using connectives that signal your line of argument</li> <li>● Link sections of the text and paragraphs in varied ways</li> <li>● Introduce paragraphs with a topic sentence and group connected ideas together effectively</li> <li>● Expand your main points or ideas in the paragraph with details, points or examples</li> <li>● Avoid ambiguity through positioning pronouns correctly and using them consistently</li> <li>● Vary the length of paragraphs and connect ideas inside them in a logical way</li> <li>● Link paragraphs clearly, using connectives that signal your line of argument</li> <li>● Begin and organise paragraphs in varied ways</li> <li>● Structure paragraphs to create specific effects</li> <li>● Link sections of the text and paragraphs in varied ways</li> </ul>
<p>8.6 Developing and using editing and proofreading skills on paper and on-screen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Practise rereading in pairs and in guided work with the reader's reaction in mind</li> <li>● Model text marking and editing for particular readers</li> <li>● Develop checklists for use by writing partners</li> <li>● Work with some unfamiliar contexts in which generic editing and proofreading skills might be needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on pre-selected specific areas or skills and check your work to see if you have improved</li> <li>● Identify sources for going back over skills you haven't secured</li> <li>● Apply proofreading and editing skills across a range of different texts and contexts</li> </ul>

**Focus: sentences, punctuation for expression, impact and clarity**

**Related QCA assessment focus: sentence structure and punctuation**

AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect

AF6 Write with technical accuracy of syntax in phrases, clauses and sentences

<b>Linked Framework substrands</b>	<b>Helpful teaching approaches</b>	<b>Possible graduated pupil targets</b>  Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
<p>8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect</p> <p>9.1 Using the conventions of standard English</p> <p>9.2 Using grammar accurately and appropriately</p>	<p><b>Sentences, cohesion and syntax</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review understanding of simple, compound and complex sentences in shared work</li> <li>● Demonstrate the impact of sentence variety in shared reading and writing and display examples</li> <li>● Be explicit about the demands of formal as opposed to informal writing and feature both in shared writing</li> <li>● Have pupils compare the sentence structures in different types of writing by different authors</li> <li>● Draw comparison and contrasts between the role of sentences, key conventions, variety, etc. in writing and in spoken texts – how important is it for speakers to ‘speak in sentences’?</li> <li>● In shared reading work, draw attention to the use and impact of the passive</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sentences and cohesion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extend the use of subordinate clauses and punctuate most of them correctly</li> <li>● Use a variety of compound and complex sentence structures accurately</li> <li>● Use simple sentences for effect in both narrative and non-narrative writing</li> <li>● Use conditional structures and expanded noun phrases</li> <li>● Use subordinate clauses in different positions for effect</li> <li>● Use noun phrases in different positions for effect</li> <li>● Use sentences of different lengths and structures, including adverbial clauses in different positions</li> <li>● Use sentences of different lengths and structures, including passive constructions</li> <li>● Expand and condense noun phrases for effect</li> <li>● Use a full range of sentence structures to create specific effects</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Cover each type of punctuation in starters or in shared work, and focus on particular features in subsequent marking and guided work</li><li>● Demonstrate how to use pronouns appropriately, and revisit through starters</li><li>● Focus on the function of punctuation in carrying meaning and in clarifying ideas</li><li>● Have poster-size definitions of punctuation marks, with examples found by pupils</li></ul>	<p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Use some commas correctly within sentences and inverted commas to mark speech</li><li>● Conclude all sentences accurately and use a range of punctuation</li><li>● Use a range of punctuation accurately, including commas around clauses</li><li>● Use semi-colons to balance ideas within a sentence</li><li>● Use a full range of punctuation to create specific effects and clarify meaning</li></ul> <p><b>Syntax</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Use past, present and future tenses consistently</li><li>● Use varied tenses correctly, for example past, conditional</li><li>● Use modal verbs to reflect and question</li><li>● Use passive verb forms to make writing impersonal</li></ul>
--	--	--

**Focus: developing vocabulary, improving spelling**

**Related QCA assessment focus: vocabulary and spelling**

AF7 Select appropriate and effective vocabulary

AF8 Spell most simple and common polysyllabic words accurately

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
<p>8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact (link to strand 10 – Exploring and analysing language)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review and if necessary re-teach thesaurus use</li> <li>● Exploit the possibilities of word deletion to focus on vocabulary; have groups remove selected words to create passages for others to read</li> <li>● Investigate word origins; explore how words have changed in meaning over time; experiment in writing ‘older’ texts in which vocabulary has subtly different meaning</li> <li>● Explore connotations of words in context</li> <li>● Make vocabulary a focus for starters</li> <li>● Draw attention to vocabulary in shared and guided work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use vocabulary which is appropriate to the task, genre, situation and reader</li> <li>● Use fewer finite verbs</li> <li>● Use a wider range of vocabulary to interest, surprise and influence the reader</li> <li>● Use formal vocabulary to contribute to the objectivity of writing</li> <li>● Use a wide range of vocabulary to create specific effects</li> <li>● Extend the range of abstract nouns used as an alternative to adjectives and adverbs</li> </ul>
<p>9.3 Reviewing spelling and increasing knowledge of word derivations, patterns and families (link to strand 10 – Exploring and analysing language)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review spelling strategies based on looking, listening and learning</li> <li>● Maintain pupils’ positive images of themselves as spellers</li> <li>● Use look, cover, write, check with spelling partners</li> <li>● Mark diagnostically for spelling</li> <li>● Focus on subject-specific terminology, especially that needed for critical writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spell regular complex words accurately, for example learn and apply rules for doubling consonants when adding suffixes</li> <li>● Spell irregular words accurately, for example learn and apply rules and patterns for adding suffixes <i>-ible/-able</i></li> <li>● Spell with consistent accuracy, for example check work and locate possible misspellings of unfamiliar words; use your knowledge of spelling to make a best guess</li> </ul>

## Writing matrix: Year 9

**Focus: generating ideas, planning content and drawing on specific features and conventions used by writers to engage the reader**

**Related QCA assessment focus: composition and effect**

AF1 Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts

AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
7.1 Generating ideas, planning and drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a range of visual planning formats and model how to plan, using spider diagrams/thought webs, for/against boxes, card sorts, interactive diagrams on-screen</li> <li>● Set specific problems or contexts that require pupils to select the most appropriate planning approach</li> <li>● Demonstrate the direct connection between the objective/s and the plan or process being proposed</li> <li>● Keep the teaching focus on the objective</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a specifically selected planning format and identify how it will help in solving problems, making links between ideas, etc..</li> <li>● Choose and use effectively an appropriate form or medium of presentation</li> <li>● Plan an opening, know where your writing is going and how it will end – try out different types of opening and ending and review which works best for the reader</li> <li>● Recognise when it is appropriate to edit or redraft part or whole of a text</li> <li>● Proofread carefully to minimise technical errors</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: The above examples are not incremental</b></p>

<p>7.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of texts on paper and on-screen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, review and model the recurring features of various forms and texts through shared writing</li> <li>● Relate reading to writing, through discussion of writers' uses of rhetorical devices</li> <li>● Model the different ways some writers adapt or mix typical conventions or features in their writing for particular effects and for particular audiences; experiment with alternatives to conventional structures</li> <li>● Draw links between the way conventions and forms are used in English and across a range of other subjects and unfamiliar contexts</li> <li>● Gradually remove the support of frames or scaffolds. By now most pupils should be internalising structures, techniques and strategies and 'carry in their head' the typical sentence starters, organisational features, conventions, etc. which they then deploy independently</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Choose content relevant to your task</li> <li>● Select ideas to interest and engage your reader (for example, based on ones that writers have used)</li> <li>● Use, and where appropriate adapt, some of the conventions/features writers use in their own texts</li> <li>● Develop your own ideas and writer's voice using conventions and features inventively and originally</li> </ul>
<p>8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use role-on-the-wall to explore characters or specific viewpoint in a non-fiction text:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– use an outline which can be filled in with appropriate words and quotations</li> </ul> </li> <li>● 'Pairs talk' using a range of verb structures – 'I believe', 'I feel', 'I strongly believe', etc. – to express a personal view</li> <li>● Explore in texts how writers sustain viewpoint or character over a longer time, and develop in shared writing</li> <li>● Signal and demonstrate in shared work the power of introductions and conclusions</li> <li>● Model how to present a balanced analysis of a situation, text, issue or set of ideas, taking into account a range of evidence and opinions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make your own standpoint clear when expressing a personal view; make your main character's voice clear and consistent in fiction writing</li> <li>● Develop a range of ideas, points or arguments that will interest or influence your reader</li> <li>● Sustain viewpoint and character over longer texts</li> <li>● Use introductions and conclusions to set out ideas, engage readers, draw together key points</li> </ul>

<p>8.4 Developing varied linguistic and literary techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draw on the knowledge of reading that pupils have gained, through discussion of visual and sound effects, such as imagery, alliteration, rhythm, rhyme, etc.</li> <li>● Use card sorts with the elements of a story (for example arresting opening, development, complication, crisis, resolution, etc.); give each group a different starting point to show that stories can be structured in different ways</li> <li>● In shared reading of texts by pupils and published authors, demonstrate reading with a writer's eye</li> <li>● In shared writing, demonstrate 'writing as a reader'</li> <li>● Practise rereading in pairs and in guided work with the reader's reaction in mind</li> <li>● After modelling, allocate different poetic forms, and/or poetic features, to different groups and review via a plenary</li> <li>● Model how an impersonal style can suggest impartiality and authority</li> <li>● Remove frames or scaffolds at an appropriate point to allow for writers to develop their own structures, features, conventions and original approaches in independent ways so that the work is theirs alone</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add description, detail or explanation to your writing</li> <li>● Shape stories using different narrative patterns</li> <li>● Choose the appropriate form of writing and use some typical features of that form</li> <li>● Choose the tone that best suits your task</li> <li>● Develop a range of ideas, points or arguments that will interest or influence your reader</li> <li>● Make your own standpoint clear when expressing a personal view</li> <li>● Include varied views or perspectives in your writing that are tailored to your reader</li> <li>● Use a variety of linguistic devices skilfully to match your purpose and context</li> <li>● Use inventive, original approaches that emerge from what you want to say</li> </ul> <p><b>Reader related</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show you know who you are writing for</li> <li>● Match your style to your reader</li> <li>● Try to anticipate your reader's reaction</li> <li>● Use the right level of formality to suit your context and your reader</li> <li>● Vary the level of formality in different parts of the text for effect</li> <li>● Choose style and content carefully to appeal to different sub-groups of readers</li> <li>● Manipulate or 'position' your reader using a range of carefully selected techniques or strategies</li> </ul>
---	--	---

**Focus: shaping the structure and organisation of a text with the reader and purpose in mind**

**Related QCA assessment focus: composition and effect**

AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

**Related QCA assessment focus: text structure and organisation**

AF3 Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events

AF4 Construct paragraphs and use some cohesion within and between linked paragraphs

<b>Linked Framework substrands</b>	<b>Helpful teaching approaches</b>	<b>Possible graduated pupil targets</b>  Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
<p>8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts on paper and on-screen</p>	<p><b>Text structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise texts in ways appropriate to their content – for example by chronology, priority, comparison – and signpost this clearly to the reader</li> <li>● Demonstrate via card sorts how the same material can be organised in different ways</li> <li>● Focus on topic sentences in shared work</li> <li>● Give pupils content in order to focus on structure</li> <li>● Use sequencing activities to analyse text structures</li> <li>● Use discussion to promote coherent thinking and appropriate structures</li> <li>● Model the organisation of ideas in fiction and non-fiction</li> <li>● Engage in shared and guided work on making links between openings and endings</li> <li>● Use texts written by pupils to focus on topic sentences and connectives</li> <li>● Teach the different ways in which quotation and reference can be incorporated into writing; explore how pupils can move beyond ‘Point, evidence, explanation’ in order to play around with the structure and make it engaging. See the document, <i>Point, evidence, explanation and more</i> (<a href="http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies">www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies</a> – search using the ref 00039-2009PDF-EN-02)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Text structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use different ways of structuring texts for best effect</li> <li>● Use text conventions in unusual ways</li> <li>● Select an effective way of opening and ending</li> <li>● Link the opening and the ending effectively</li> <li>● Open and close the writing skilfully, selecting devices for impact on the reader and linking to ideas earlier in the text</li> <li>● Lead up to the ending, making it more than a concluding sentence</li> <li>● Include relevant evidence, quotations and references to support your argument</li> <li>● Use different ways of engaging a reader in your argument in the way you organise the points you are making, the evidence you use, and the explanation that develops it</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Paragraphing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feature paragraphing in shared and guided writing paying special attention to cohesion</li> <li>● Use starters to demonstrate the power of connectives to carry thoughts</li> <li>● Use sequencing activities to develop understanding of paragraph structures</li> <li>● Use writing partners armed with checklists of paragraph features</li> <li>● In shared reading, draw attention to effective paragraphing</li> <li>● In shared reading, show how paragraph structures differ between text-types</li> <li>● Model revision techniques which include paying deliberate attention to concluding paragraphs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organising paragraphs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use paragraphs to organise your writing in a logical way</li> <li>● Link paragraphs clearly, using connectives to signal your line of argument</li> <li>● Link sections of the text and paragraphs in varied ways</li> <li>● Vary the shape and length of paragraphs for impact</li> <li>● Use paragraph order and divisions to create specific effects with the reader in mind</li> <li>● Use topic sentences in various positions for maximum effect</li> <li>● Avoid ambiguity through positioning pronouns correctly, using them consistently</li> <li>● Expand your main points or ideas in the paragraph with details, points, or examples</li> <li>● Vary the length of paragraphs and connect ideas inside them in a logical way</li> <li>● Link paragraphs clearly, using connectives that signal your line of argument</li> <li>● Begin and organise paragraphs in varied ways</li> <li>● Structure paragraphs to create specific effects</li> <li>● Link sections of the text and paragraphs in varied ways</li> </ul>
<p>8.6 Developing and using editing and proofreading skills on paper and on-screen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Practise rereading in pairs and in guided work with the reader's reaction in mind</li> <li>● Model text marking and editing for particular readers</li> <li>● Develop checklists for use by writing partners</li> <li>● Practise writing within time constraints</li> <li>● Explore with pupils how to evaluate changed effects on the reader by different choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on a range of pre-selected objectives in writing and review them both as you go along, and at various key points in the writing (after a page, at the end of the process, in discussion, etc.)</li> <li>● Make selections about when to use particular editing or proofreading skills in different subjects, contexts or situations</li> <li>● Evaluate changed effects on the reader arising from different choices</li> </ul>

**Focus: sentences, punctuation for expression, impact and clarity**

**Related QCA assessment focus: sentence structure and punctuation**

AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect

AF6 Write with technical accuracy of syntax in phrases, clauses and sentences

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets <small>Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing</small>
<p>8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect</p> <p>9.1 Using the conventions of standard English</p> <p>9.2 Using grammar accurately and appropriately</p>	<p><b>Sentences, cohesion and syntax</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review understanding of simple, compound and complex sentences in shared work</li> <li>● Demonstrate the impact of sentence variety in shared reading and writing, and display examples</li> <li>● Be explicit about the demands of formal as opposed to informal writing, and feature both in shared writing</li> <li>● Collect and display examples of formal and informal writing</li> <li>● Compare the sentence structures in different types of writing and in writing by different authors</li> <li>● In shared and guided work, rehearse sentences aloud to familiarise pupils with formal phrasing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sentences and cohesion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vary the position of noun phrases and clauses</li> <li>● Expand and condense noun phrases for effect</li> <li>● Extend the use of subordinate clauses and punctuate correctly</li> <li>● Use a variety of compound and complex sentence structures accurately</li> <li>● Use simple sentences for effect in both narrative and non-narrative writing</li> <li>● Use conditional structures and expanded noun phrases</li> <li>● Use subordinate clauses in different positions for effect</li> <li>● Use noun phrases in different positions for effect</li> <li>● Use sentences of different lengths and structures, including adverbial clauses in different positions</li> <li>● Use sentences of different lengths and structures, including passive constructions</li> <li>● Expand and condense noun phrases for effect</li> <li>● Use a full range of sentence structures to create specific effects</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Cover each type of punctuation in starters or in shared work, and focus on particular features in subsequent marking and guided work</li><li>● Demonstrate how to use pronouns appropriately, and revisit through starters</li><li>● Focus on the function of punctuation in carrying meaning</li><li>● Have poster-size definitions of punctuation marks, with examples found by pupils</li><li>● Encourage the practice of proofreading, both pupils' own writing and that of others</li></ul>	<p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Use some commas correctly within sentences and inverted commas to mark speech</li><li>● Conclude all sentences accurately and use a range of punctuation</li><li>● Use a range of punctuation accurately, including commas around clauses</li><li>● Use semi-colons to balance ideas within a sentence</li><li>● Use a full range of punctuation to create specific effects</li><li>● Use punctuation appropriately in a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts (for example don't over-use exclamation marks in formal letters)</li></ul> <p><b>Syntax</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Use past, present and future tenses consistently</li><li>● Use varied tenses correctly, for example past, conditional</li><li>● Use modal verbs to reflect and question</li><li>● Use passive verb forms to make writing impersonal</li><li>● Use a wide variety of tenses and verb forms carefully chosen for interest, subtle shades of meaning and effect</li></ul>
--	--	---

**Focus: developing vocabulary, improving spelling**

**Related QCA assessment focus: vocabulary and spelling**

AF7 Select appropriate and effective vocabulary

AF8 Spell most simple and common polysyllabic words accurately

Linked Framework substrands	Helpful teaching approaches	Possible graduated pupil targets Note: targets to be set as appropriate for individuals or groups and to be adapted to suit different forms of writing
<p>8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact</p> <p>(link to strand 10: Exploring and analysing language)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review and if necessary re-teach thesaurus use</li> <li>● Exploit the possibilities of word deletion by having groups create, for other groups, texts with categories of words missing</li> <li>● Focus on vocabulary</li> <li>● Investigate word origins, development and changes through time, culture, etc..</li> <li>● Explore connotations of words in context</li> <li>● Make vocabulary a focus for starters</li> <li>● Draw attention to vocabulary in shared and guided work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Select some vocabulary which is descriptive or which is suitable or specific to the task</li> <li>● Use vocabulary which is appropriate to the task, genre, situation and reader</li> <li>● Use a wider range of vocabulary to interest, surprise and influence the reader</li> <li>● Use formal vocabulary to contribute to the objectivity of writing</li> <li>● Extend the range of abstract nouns used as an alternative to adjectives and adverbs</li> <li>● Use a wide range of vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>9.3 Reviewing spelling and increasing knowledge of word derivations, patterns and families</p> <p>(link to strand 10: Exploring and analysing language)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review spelling strategies based on looking, listening and learning</li> <li>● Maintain pupils' positive images of themselves as spellers</li> <li>● Use look, cover, write, check with spelling partners</li> <li>● Mark diagnostically for spelling</li> <li>● Focus on subject-specific terminology, especially that needed for critical writing</li> <li>● Work with targeted groups to analyse and address their patterns of error</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spell regular complex words accurately, for example learn and apply rules for doubling consonants when adding suffixes</li> <li>● Spell irregular words accurately, for example learn and apply rules and patterns for adding suffixes <i>-ible/-able</i></li> <li>● Spell with consistent accuracy, for example check work and locate possible misspellings of unfamiliar words, use your knowledge of spelling to make a best guess</li> </ul>

## The improvement plan

In order to plan teaching which will address the issues that have been raised by the analysis and audit, you will need to include:

- numerical targets (the percentage of pupils to improve from one level to another)
- curricular targets (the English focus – sentences, vocabulary, etc.)
- relevant objectives (from the Framework for secondary English)
- assessment focus
- other relevant links: (functional skills, PLTS, etc.)
- planned teaching
- marking and assessment
- provision and resources
- department or self-development needs.

Here is a **sample plan** to improve writing based on the case study school from earlier.

Focus	Notes/rationale
<p><b>Numerical target</b></p> <p>100% of pupils on level 4 in Year 7 to reach level 5+/6 in Year 9</p>	<p><i>The school's numerical target, outlined in the school improvement plan and agreed with the local education authority (and based on the progress expected for individual pupils from Key Stage 2), is that 100% of pupils on level 4 in Year 7 reach level 5+/6 in Year 9</i></p>
<p><b>Curricular target</b></p> <p>To improve the variety, accuracy and impact of sentence structures of all pupils on level 4</p>	<p><i>Careful analysis – through a work scrutiny and APP grids – has shown some key areas where a significant number of pupils are currently struggling – in this case, with their use of and control over sentences. This priority links to three of the QCA assessment focuses</i></p>
<p><b>Relevant objectives</b></p> <p><b>Framework substrands (look at progression objectives over Years 7 to 9)</b></p> <p>8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect</p> <p>8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact</p> <p>8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts in a variety of forms on paper and on-screen (<i>with particular focus on what the objectives say about paragraphing</i>)</p> <p>9.1 Using the conventions of standard English (<i>with particular reference to what the objectives say about formality/informality</i>)</p>	<p><i>The crucial part of the process. To secure the improvement needed, the department will need to review its teaching of writing by looking at the scheme of work to ensure that the priority objectives and substrands are going to be taught, and that areas of development are identified</i></p> <p><i>This will require further specific attention to progression in sentence composition (see the Writing improvement matrices on pages 20 to 41 and Teaching for progression: Writing).</i></p>

<p><b>Assessment focus</b></p> <p>(AF4) Construct paragraphs and use some cohesion within and between linked paragraphs</p> <p>(AF5) Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect</p> <p>(AF6) Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences</p>	<p><i>See comment on curricular target above</i></p>
<p><b>Actions to secure improvement</b></p> <p><b>Planned teaching</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review closely three units across the key stage which include focus on the identified teaching objectives to ensure that:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. key lessons in existing units address the identified teaching objectives</li> <li>1.2. teachers draw attention to sentence structures and their effect in shared reading</li> <li>1.3. teachers model how to expand sentences for impact during shared writing</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Incorporate into the units of work:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. a series of starter activities drawing on <i>Teaching for progression: Writing</i></li> <li>2.2. the use of more short, focused pieces of work during independent and guided work which will develop competence in using sentences well</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Ensure that:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. targeted use is made of teaching assistants during group sessions</li> <li>3.2. teachers identify pupils who could benefit from guided work on sentences</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Secure improvement over time by ensuring that the key features of writing are:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1. identified by the teacher when demonstrating writing</li> <li>4.2. used by the pupils in discussion of a jointly constructed text (shared writing)</li> <li>4.3. applied during guided and independent writing</li> <li>4.4. used by pupils as the basis for evaluation of their own and others' work</li> <li>4.5. referred to by teachers in feedback.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><i>You'll notice how attention is directed to specific units of work, to specific teaching approaches, and also to marshalling support for particular groups of pupils</i></p>

<p><b>Marking and assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share curricular targets with pupils (and with colleagues in other subject departments for reinforcement across the curriculum; link to Functional Skills development)</li> <li>● Target assessment and feedback for pupils on sentence level work, to identify strengths as well as development needs</li> <li>● Identify group and/or individual targets</li> <li>● Establish personal targets for some pupils</li> <li>● Use the relevant assessment focuses on common end-of-unit assignments</li> <li>● Use QCA optional tests diagnostically to monitor progress and identify pupils for guided writing support, coaching and booster lessons</li> <li>● Develop an exemplar portfolio to ensure commonality of judgements</li> <li>● Track progress for target pupils so as to monitor, evaluate and celebrate improvement</li> </ul>	<p><i>Notice also how the department decides to weave the priorities directly into its assessment practices</i></p> <p><i>Achieving this will take time and resources, and these are signalled in the plan</i></p>
<p><b>Provision and resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide time for diagnosis of data</li> <li>● Give access to training for less confident or less-experienced colleagues</li> <li>● Make targeted use of extra teaching assistants</li> <li>● Equip all classrooms with OHPs or IWBs where possible</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Departmental development needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Go to <a href="http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies">www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies</a> and search using the reference: 'Grammar for reading and writing'</li> <li>● Purchase David Crystal's <i>Encyclopaedia of the English Language</i></li> <li>● Get a consultant to work with key teacher on developing writing in Year 8, with a focus on sentence variety</li> <li>● Ask other members of the department to observe Ms X or Mr Y teaching sentence level work</li> <li>● Arrange a visit to leading department which majors in shared and guided writing</li> </ul>	<p><i>And finally, thought is given to the support needed to ensure that these plans can be implemented. Notice how there is a range of development activities identified</i></p>

## Conclusion

By working through a systematic process which identifies those areas needing development, based on solid analysis, a plan can be put in place which will enable pupils to make the two levels of improvement across the key stage as required.

However, this only tells part of the story – the overview for the case study school. In the end, it will be the specific in-class teaching and the sequence of learning which will make the difference. What follows is more specific advice on planning sequences of work in which writing is targeted.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



# Section 6: Effective planning for writing at short-, medium- and long-term level

**Focus: A review of key features in effective planning, especially for writing**

## Effective planning

The key leaflet *Planning to improve writing*, available from the Improving Writing section of the website [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) is a useful reference point, which expands on much of what follows.

Planning needs to secure progression and development for each pupils over the key stage, and this is best done by purposes and types of writing occurring recursively over a period of time. For example, pupils might be taught some basic forms of letter writing in Year 7 with some fairly straightforward attention to formality, register and layout. Letters might be revisited at later stages when their form and purpose might be adapted, the audience made more challenging (through unfamiliarity) and the task set more demanding.

## Features of effective planning

- Schemes of work mesh well with **prior expectations** and earlier work (from primary schools). They clearly build on progress based on attainment from previous key stages and year groups. Schemes identify the learning objectives and assessed outcomes; these are shared with pupils at the beginning of the sequence for learning.
- Plans are in place for pupils to work towards making **two levels of progress** in writing. Some pupils will need intervention and will benefit from temporary additional support, for example *Progress Units* (also available for whole-class teaching), *Writing Challenge*, and *Literacy Plus*.
- Plans secure and consolidate existing knowledge, but also **challenge** and **teach new skills**, allow risk-taking and encourage invention and creative thinking, for example, using the Progression Maps for teaching suggestions and to set curricula targets.
- Planning for **sustained** and **extended writing** is important if pupils are to develop a confident voice and increasingly more complex critical thinking. The best teaching 'stages' opportunities for longer pieces of writing with carefully planned teaching episodes.
- Plans set out these **different aspects** of the **process** (revision, consolidation, refining of the familiar, developing new aspects and new challenges) and are flexible in response to changing circumstances and needs.

- **Planning for progression** is clear. Plans of lessons, units and schemes of work take account of where pupils are in their development as writers. It is clear, through consistent Assessment for Learning practice, how assessed writing assignments build on what has gone before and anticipate future work.
- Short- and medium-term plans or episodes of work **cluster objectives, strands or substrands creatively**, linking the three modes of Speaking and listening, Reading and Writing in appropriate and inventive ways, for example, exploring the concept of viewpoint in both spoken and written work.
- Pupils need as much time planned in as possible in order to **reflect** on their writing and **review** their development as confident and independent writers.

## Developing a curriculum map for writing

A curriculum 'road map' for writing can be a useful way of setting out some milestones and broad signposts to direct the range, coverage and approaches to writing across a year, key stage, and so on.

The map might include:

- forms and purposes of writing and when they might be taught/experienced
- wider contexts/topics and the place of writing within them
- departmental events, meetings and tasks
- assessment opportunities related to writing
- school events or curriculum opportunities that might link in with writing work, for example, drama performances, extended learning days, curricular contexts in other subjects
- events and opportunities outside school that might be linked with writing work.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## Curriculum map: example A: writing – Year 7 (work in progress)

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
<b>Focus/context for learning</b>	<b>Transition unit</b> (weeks 1–2) leading into... <b>Storytelling module:</b> (weeks 3–7) mainly prose fiction, oral tradition, cultures and conventions	<b>World traveller module</b> (weeks 8–13) non-fiction reportage; some media/digital texts; TV reporting	<b>Texts, pictures and design module</b> (weeks 14–17) media, digital and printed illustrated graphic novels and games	<b>Poetry module</b> (weeks 18–21) reading and exploring poetry, writing an anthology, performing poems	<b>Soaps and scripts module</b> (weeks 22–29) dramatic conventions, TV, radio and theatre	<b>'Parallel worlds'</b> (week 30–36) mix of prose fiction and poetry reading; class/group novel reading; writing own extended short story/novella for a published collection; also non-fiction opportunities: promos, publishing, printing, etc.  Link back to 'Storytelling' module and 'Texts, pictures and design' module
<b>Outcome/s (writing)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written collection of short revised tales and myths</li> </ul> <p>Forms</p> <p>Short fictional narratives</p> <p>Written dramatic monologues</p> <p>Ridiculous rhymes – myth ballads</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Front page report</li> <li>Web log</li> </ul> <p>Forms</p> <p>Report – personal, factual, drawing in descriptive colour</p> <p>Personal web writing; autobiography</p> <p>Formal biography – not website based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short presentation on a graphic novel or game using narratives and images</li> </ul> <p>Forms</p> <p>Revisit narratives, adding images</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Live poetry performance</li> <li>Short poetry personal response</li> </ul> <p>Forms</p> <p>Revisit rhyme; develop free verse forms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Polished 'soap' improvisation</li> <li>Scripted scene</li> <li>Review of soap episode</li> </ul> <p>Forms</p> <p>Scripts for television or web-TV</p> <p>Reviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written analysis and exploration of stories and other texts, focusing on viewpoint and evidence</li> <li>Pitch to publisher of proposed story (oral activity)</li> <li>Short dramatised improvisation</li> </ul> <p>Forms</p> <p>Narrative: extended short story or novella</p> <p>Promo material: sample covers and blurbs – persuasive, graphic, mixed media</p>

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
<b>Progression for learning (Framework substrands related to writing)</b>	<b>Writing</b> 7.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of texts on paper and on-screen 8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas	8.1 (cont.) 8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect	7.2 (cont.)	Work in progress	7.2 (cont.)	
	8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact	8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts in a variety of forms on paper and on-screen 9.2 Using grammar accurately and appropriately	8.5 (cont.)	9.3 (cont.)		8.4 Developing varied linguistic and literary techniques
	9.3 Reviewing spelling and increasing knowledge of word derivations, patterns and families		9.3 (cont.)			9.2 (cont.)

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2					
	<b>Language</b> 10.1 Exploring language variation and development according to time, place, culture, society and technology	<b>Language</b> 10.1 Exploring language variation and development according to time, place, culture, society and technology			<b>Language</b> 10.2 Commenting on language use						
<b>Assessing Pupils' Progress opportunities</b>	<b>Writing</b> AF1, AF2 and AF7 Functional Skills: level 1	<b>Writing</b> AF1, 2,3, 4, 5, 6 Functional Skills: level 1	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>	<b>Writing</b> AF1, AF2, AF6 Functional Skills: level 1						
<b>Curriculum opportunities/ links</b>		<b>Humanities department:</b> <i>shared module planning, teaching and homework</i>		<i>Link to Drama lessons: use scripts for developing performance work</i>	<b>Business Studies:</b> <i>marketing and promoting my book (team-teaching one lesson per week)</i> Functional Skills link between subjects Look at ICT possibilities in particular						
Calendar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
<i>External events</i>				7-9: <i>Visit to radio station</i>			<i>Theatre visit (dates tbc)</i>	<i>Theatre visit (alternative date tbc)</i>			
<i>School-based</i>	23-30: <i>Primary visits; Year 7 oral stories</i>			19-21: <i>Christmas Panto (foyer display of Year 7 fairytales/ myths)</i>		17: <i>Year 7 poetry competition evening performance</i>				15-19: <i>School Arts Week</i>	13-15 (evening): <i>School production</i>

**Curriculum map: Example B – writing forms across a key stage**

Year	Autumn term A	Autumn term B	Spring term A	Spring term B	Summer term A	Summer term B
Year 7	<p><b>Prose</b> Short fictional narratives</p> <p><b>Script</b> Dramatic monologue</p> <p><b>Poetry</b> Ridiculous rhymes Ballads</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Report – personal, factual, drawing in descriptive colour</p> <p>Formal biography – not website based</p> <p><b>Media forms</b> Personal web writing; autobiography</p> <p>APP</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Revisit short narratives, adding images (picture books? graphic novels?)</p>	<p><b>Poetry</b> Rhymes – used in rap, formal verse; introduce writing of free verse forms, including shape poetry</p>	<p><b>Script</b> Single scene from TV drama. Writing dialogue</p> <p><b>Prose</b> Review of TV programme on website</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Analytical and comparative essay on a range of texts focusing on viewpoint and evidence</p> <p>Extended short story or novella</p> <p>APP</p> <p><b>Media forms</b> Promo material: sample covers and blurbs</p>

Year	Autumn term A	Autumn term B	Spring term A	Spring term B	Summer term A	Summer term B
Year 8	<p><b>Prose</b> Formal and informal letter and accompanying commentary Writing dialogue in short gothic story</p> <p><b>Poetry</b> Dialogue poems</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Reviews of product (car, gadget, etc.); linked to images, data, diagrams</p> <p><b>Script</b> Scene setting and directions; writing a longer play for teenagers.</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Persuasive article for magazine on charity Personal letter following up article to argue/respond to it</p> <p><b>Media forms</b> Web landing page and panels for charity or lobbying site.</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Reportage – travel writing from war zone, linked to researched resources.</p> <p>APP</p> <p>Focus on note making.</p>	<p><b>Poetry</b> Various forms and shapes – pupils write three of following (all do sonnet): haiku tenka rondeau sonnet triolet</p> <p><b>Prose</b> Comparative essay on various forms of poetry, developing viewpoint</p>	<p><b>Media forms</b> Multimedia presentation on design proposals for futuristic town, deploying images, moving text/screens Writing to engage and inform; persuade and argue</p> <p>APP</p> <p><b>Prose</b> Evaluative report on other group's presentations in formal style/tone</p>
Year 9	<p><b>Prose</b> Biography and autobiography Pastiche of Pepys</p> <p><b>Media form</b> Treatment for a film script on Pepys' life or episode/s from it</p>	<p><b>Script</b> Film script conventions; opening sequence (2–3 scenes) historical drama</p> <p><b>Prose</b> Writing advice guidelines for scripts (Ten top tips for top scripts) based on the above</p>	<p><b>Script</b> Writing a prequel or short parallel scene to a Shakespeare play</p> <p><b>Prose</b> Short accompanying commentary explaining ideas, language, etc..</p>	<p><b>Poetry</b> Writing two short lyrics</p> <p><b>Prose</b> Linked to the above – 'still life', focused descriptive study of object, scene, etc..</p> <p>APP</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Personal response to set of poems, some lyric, some longer</p> <p>Personal article/column from Sunday magazine/paper with mock-epic, humorous qualities</p>	<p><b>Prose</b> Character sketches for Shakespeare play</p> <p>Longer analytical essay on themes, ideas, motivations, etc. in play by Shakespeare or similar (for example Faustus)</p> <p>APP</p>

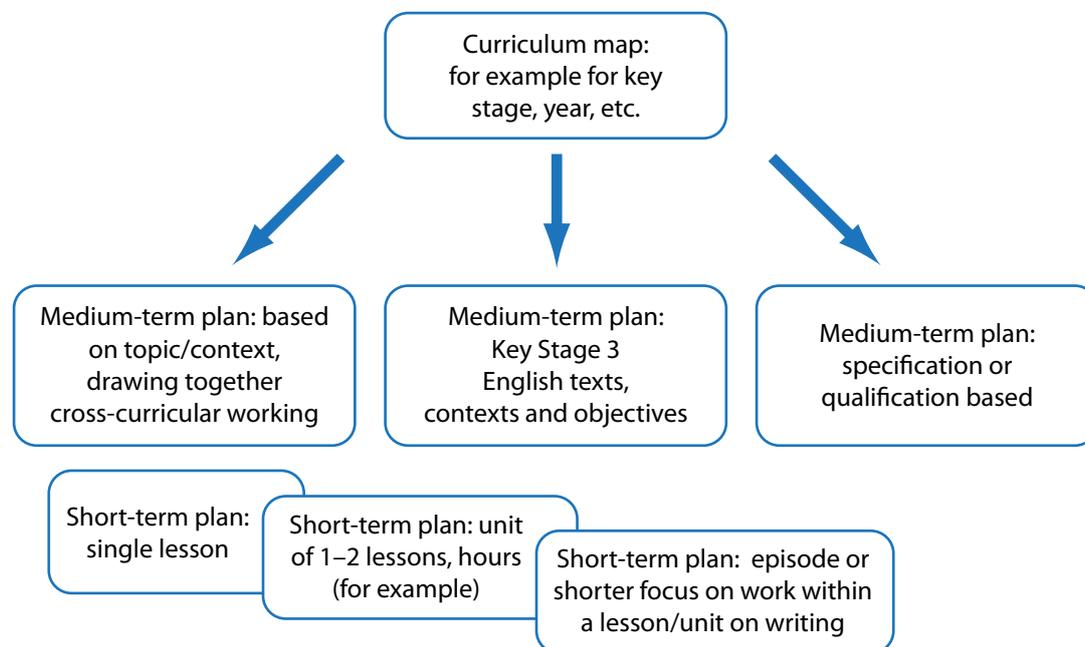
## Developing medium-term plans

Whether planning to address a specific focus in writing (as mentioned earlier), or developing plans which encompass a range of different skills, sources and so on, the principles of a good plan remain the same.

The medium-term plan will:

- clearly focus on **specific aspects of progression in writing**, around suitable objectives and assessment outcomes
- **link to a long-term plan** which envisages and frames the opportunity for two levels of progress for all pupils in writing across a key stage
- **identify strategies** and **activities** that will support pupils in working towards these objectives and outcomes
- present a coherent and **engaging sequence** for learning and teaching writing
- put learning in meaningful contexts for pupils
- make close reference to **appropriate texts** and **resources**
- be **adaptable** and **evolve** to suit the needs of particular groups and individual pupils
- provide **planned opportunities** to develop pupils' experience and understanding of **key concepts**
- be **evaluated** through feedback (e.g. from assessment, lesson observations, pupil interviews) to indicate that the unit is both effective and engaging.

## Curriculum map



A range of resources already exists to help you with planning. In particular, *Teaching for progression: Writing* shows how a number of strands, substrands and objectives from the Framework may be linked together coherently.

## What does this mean in practice?

While it does not mean short, sharp interventions in particular skill areas are unwelcome (for example in focusing on better use of the comma in writing), it does suggest that – not surprisingly – the best writing emerges out of compelling learning contexts that do not sit in complete isolation from other areas of the curriculum or life, for example, those that:

- form a bridge between reading of a thought-provoking novel, non-fiction article and writing
- contain a real-life context which matters to pupils, for example, one that is related to relationships, work possibilities, solving problems, drawing on own experiences
- bring together different types of subject matter – technology, history, business, etc. alongside writing skills
- refer to professional writing – writing that reflects more closely how ‘real writers’ work (for example, journalists, scriptwriters, editors, project managers in business, etc.).

The same document also stresses the importance of embedding the development of skills via the medium-term or short-term plan, namely via **four stages**:

- **linking** reading to writing – engagement, models, content and context
- **modelling** – building skills
- **joint construction** – building, developing and applying skills
- **independent construction** – applying, securing and extending skills.

These are as important across the medium-term as the short-term plan, as it is clear on some occasions that there may not be time, for example, for ‘independent construction’ within the constraint of a single lesson.

### Writing the medium-term plan:

Question	Notes
What has the periodic assessment told us about particular pupils' or a group's writing needs? (See below for follow-up.)	
What specific aspect, focus or skill in English do you intend to develop or explore via the medium-term plan? Is it intended for a particular group or class of pupils?	
What particular strands or substrands from the Framework are you targeting? Which of these are related to writing?	
Do you have a particular context or learning focus in mind (for example, a 'real-life' context, a short story or other text)?	
What particular outcomes do you expect to see (written or otherwise)?	
What notional time do you expect to spend on this sequence of learning (hours, lessons, over how many weeks, homeworks)?	
What assessment opportunities do you envisage? (Which, if any, are related to writing assessment focuses?)	
What resources will be required (by you, or by the pupils)?	
What particular learning needs do the pupils have?	
What particular challenges do you predict? (Are there particular pupils who will need support? Will any stages require particular attention for any reason?)	
What support do you need?	
How will you recognise success over the course of the sequence or scheme?	
Are there any other factors specific to your own situation that you need to consider?	

Answering these questions will go a long way to helping develop your plan. There will, of course, be other elements or information you wish to add in depending on your local circumstances. A set of medium-term plans from a number of case-study schools are available on the website and can be found in the Planning area of the Secondary English section of the Standards site ([www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies)): go to English – Planning – Planning for progression – Planning using the Framework for Secondary English.

Some of these have a particular writing focus but most cover a wide range of skills and content areas.

Here is a more recent example of a medium-term plan based broadly on one from the website. It's called 'Location, location, location'. Check and see which of the elements in the grid on page 55 have been addressed in the plan.

- What is yet to be added?
- Is there sufficient detail for a medium-term plan?

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



## Medium-term plan: writing focus

Medium-term plan – sheet 1			
Title of unit: Location, location, location	Year 8	Term 1	Duration: 3 weeks
<p><b>Overview</b></p> <p><b>Stage 1: (week 1)</b> Pupils explore a range of texts and sources in which a defined location largely determines the action, viewpoint or tone of the text as a whole. Core texts will be: extracts from depiction of moors from Bronte poetry/prose; autobiographical account of an estate from Lynsey Hanley's <i>Estates</i>; estate agent's account of a large, ramshackle property in need of renovation.</p> <p><b>Stage 2: (week 2)</b> Pupils develop a piece of comparative writing about the texts studied, focusing on particular sentence and text level skills, such as paragraphing and cohesion. Pupils prepare a proposal for a publisher on a set of stories or poems related to one location or territory. Pupils will learn a clear sense of audience, purpose and task along with some key conventions/features for the proposal and its style/formality.</p> <p><b>Stage 3: (week 3)</b> They take their idea/s and create a description of the location and its people/characters, which will form the landing page and introduction for a website to support the series/drama/books/game. The focus will be on how to engage visitors to the website who might wish to buy/access the stories. There will be opportunities to draw on Functional Skills at level 1 in English and ICT.</p>			
<p><b>Link to key concepts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pupils will make 'fresh connections between ideas, experiences and texts' (<b>Creativity</b>) when exploring the different locations and how they are described. Is there a link between the Brontes' and modern 'gothic-style' texts/descriptions, for example? They will use 'inventive approaches...taking risks' when 'playing with language' in their own writing and planning.</li> <li>● They will need to demonstrate 'being adaptable' when they present their ideas in two different forms – in the written form for the viewers/customers for the website in an 'unfamiliar context' and as an oral presentation to the class; as well as a 'secure understanding' of language and grammar conventions (<b>Competence</b>).</li> <li>● They demonstrate '<b>Cultural understanding</b>' in their exploration of important texts in the literary heritage, but also gain a sense of how 'ideas and values are portrayed differently' in new writing, namely the emerging 'fantasy' tradition/convention (see <i>Discworld</i> website) that built on the Victorian gothic, sensationalism and fairytale/myth.</li> <li>● Throughout, '<b>Critical understanding</b>' will be important in getting a real sense of how writers marshal and shape ideas to create meaning, they will then draw on this to develop their own and others' ideas.</li> </ul>			

<p><b>Key learning focus (substrands)</b></p> <p><b>Speaking and listening</b></p> <p>3.1 Developing and adapting discussion skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>5.2 Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts</p> <p>6.2 Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning</p> <p><b>Writing</b></p> <p>8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas</p> <p>8.4 Developing varied linguistic and literary techniques</p> <p>8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts, etc.</p> <p><b>Language</b></p> <p>10.2 Commenting on language use</p>	<p><b>Planned assessment opportunities</b></p> <p><b>Speaking and listening</b> (AF1, AF2)</p> <p>Contribution to group and class discussion</p> <p>Presentation to class on proposed ideas</p> <p><b>Reading</b> (AF2, AF3, AF5, AF6)</p> <p>Contribution to group and class discussion</p> <p>Analysis of how two writers presents their worlds</p> <p><b>Writing</b> (AF1, AF2, AF4, AF6)</p> <p>Comparative essay on different texts</p> <p>Own written report/proposal to publisher/producer</p> <p>Landing page for website detailing the location/territory and other key details for viewers</p>
<p><b>Resources</b></p> <p>Lynsey Hanley <i>Estates</i>; Brontes: <i>Selected Poems</i> (Everyman Library); estate agents' details; web page from Discworld site; handouts on selected fictional locations</p>	

Medium-term plan – sheet 2

**Week 1**

**Lesson 1:**

Read 'Home' by Anne Bronte, focusing on contrasts between soft pastoral and harsh moorland. Shared writing on short four-line verses, and expanded noun phrases, alliteration, e.g. 'scattered, stunted trees'; explore poet's viewpoint about where she lives; where she'd rather be.

**Lesson 2:**

Read extract from Lynsey Hanley's *Estates* about returning to where she grew up. Small group discussion focusing on her attitude to it; guided reading on selecting key expressions – similes, metaphors about the estate.

**Lesson 3:**

Look at estate agent's details of property. Group work comparing the three texts in terms of narration – who is speaking; key features; viewpoints, etc.

**Week 2**

**Lesson 1:**

Model comparative writing on two of the three extracts based on previous lesson's discussion. Focus on cohesion between sentences and paragraphs of comparison.

**Lesson 2:**

Independent writing of comparative piece, working with review partners to help with redrafting. Complete for homework.

**Lesson 3:**

Initial research and investigation of locations used in particular PC games, published stories in a series, like *Discworld*; draw out key factors needed in designing a location seen as appealing.

Group or pair work assessing three proposed ideas for a sequence of stories based on a particular location. One is 'fantasy'; one 'real/modern'; one 'historical'. Pupils to decide which, commercially, would be most appealing to teenage readers.

**Week 3**

**Lesson 1:**

Look at website text for published series; model writing text that introduces location, characters, etc. Focus on persuasive features; also, move from general to specific.

Focus on idea of an 'unfamiliar audience' (see Functional Skills progression) and how text should be adapted.

**Lesson 2:**

Pupils draft own text based on selected location; do rough design of web page layout to support core text.

If time, upload onto mock website. Homework to complete draft of text.

**Lesson 3:**

Share drafts with others working on same location; redraft as necessary. Present ideas to other groups or class; make links between how ideas are presented orally and in writing.

Homework or follow-up to complete redraft of web text.

**Teaching strategies**

Range of explorations via pair and group discussions.

Shared and guided reading – focused analysis, predicting, empathising, anticipating and retrospecting.

Eliciting links between texts and ideas via range of closed and open questions.

Detailed focus on short elements of text composition using modelling, redrafting and peer evaluation to improve.

'Press' the learning via more challenging questions, opportunity to make independent choices, changing the context suddenly (for example, change the parameters of what the website text might say), justifying choices and solutions.

**Personalising this unit for your pupils**

Gifted and talented students to look at further Bronte poems; explore/research into Bronte's invented worlds of Angria and Gondol.

For group and guided reading/writing sessions, group students based on APP reading levels and targets. Sessions differentiated by tasks and questioning/prompts.

Teaching assistant (TA) to give additional support to level 3 writers with planning and writing of web text for location – working with 'Group 1' below.

Notion of choice also provided via three-group model which follows initial set-up of work:

Group 1 – Directed learning, supporting group with guided work; working closely with teacher/TA prompts, structures, eliciting learning before moving to greater independence.

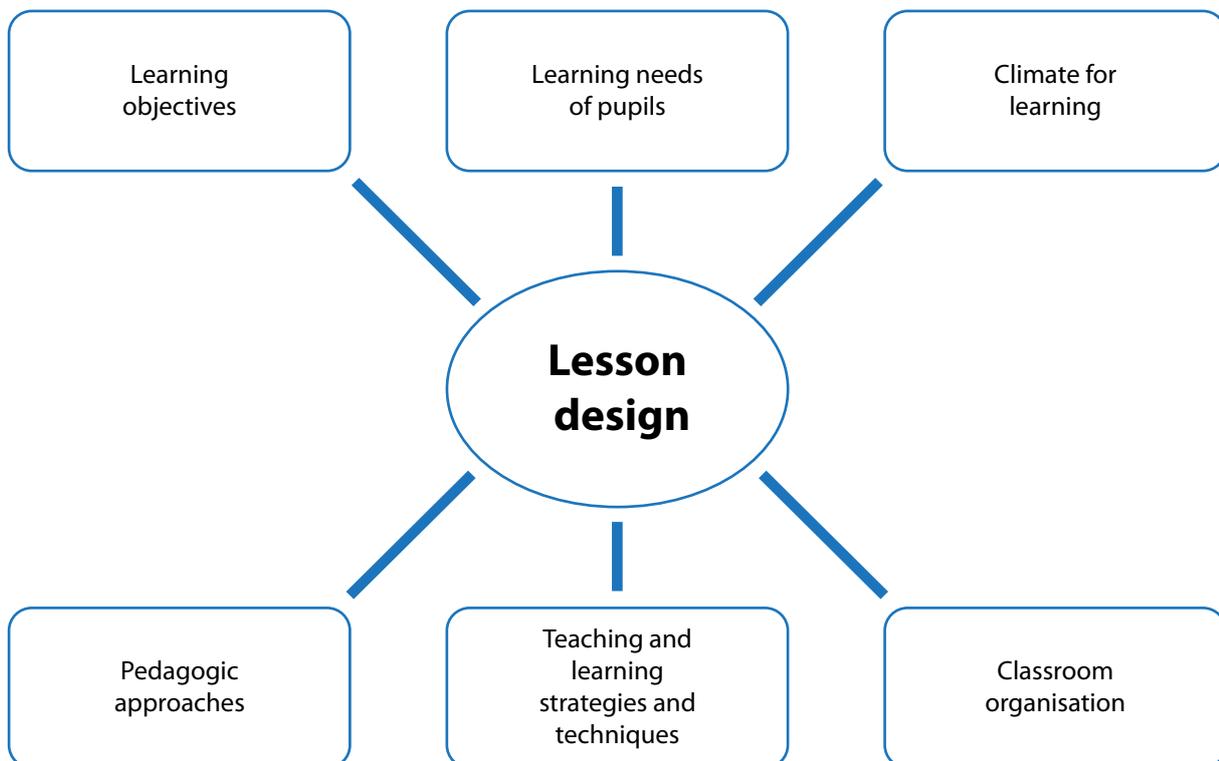
Group 2 – Periodic intervention through teacher/TA support, but extended independent work with strategic plenaries.

Group 3 – Independent work with intervention as required by group themselves, deciding focuses, direction for exploration and development of ideas.

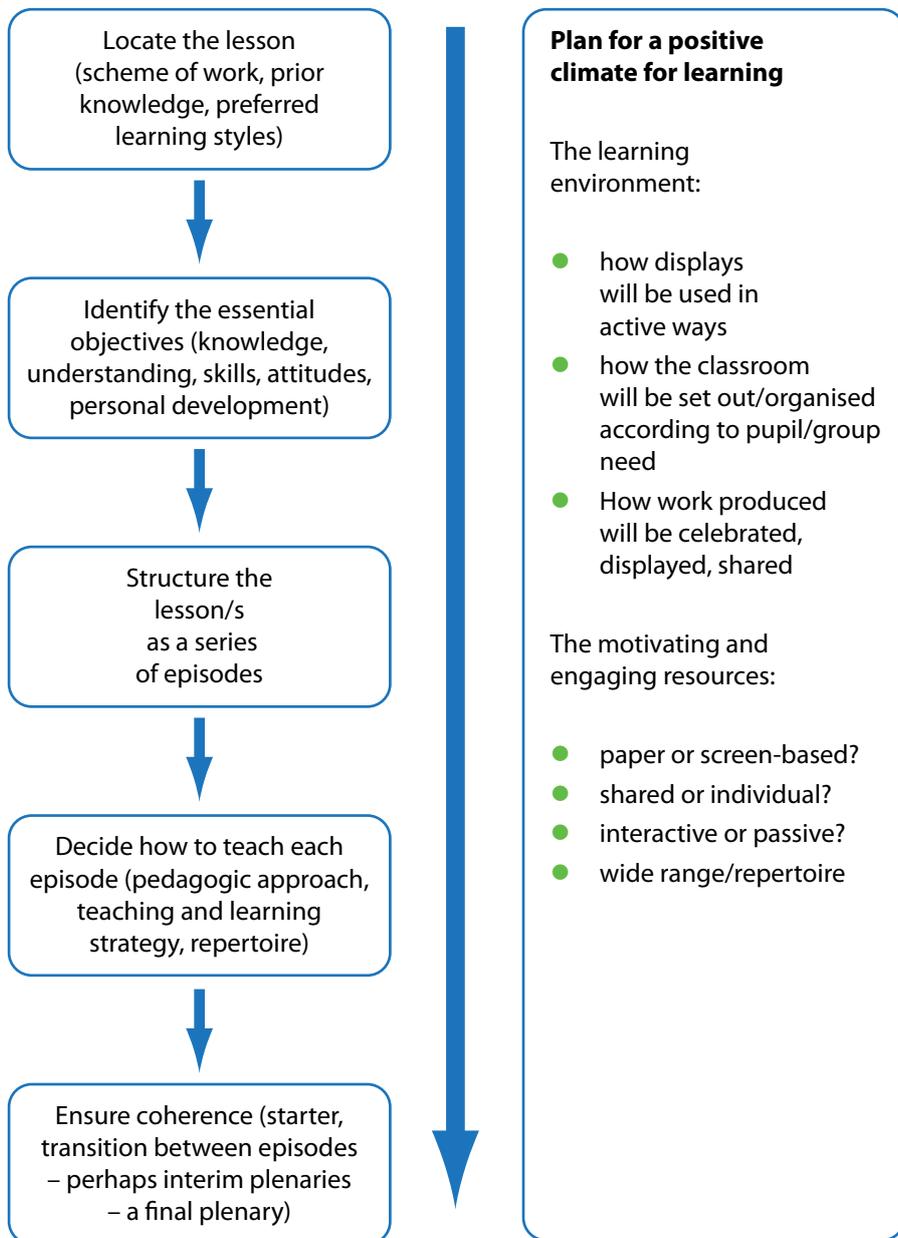
## Short-term plans and episodes

It is worth reminding ourselves before we deal with short-term plans, what key elements that make for good teaching and learning can be *built into* these plans, or are implied by them: the climate for learning is key. This is determined by pupils' learning styles and prior attainment and knowledge, the pedagogic approaches taken (direct, inductive, exploratory), and the teaching and learning strategies and techniques deployed (developing a repertoire). In addition, important factors such as classroom organisation (pupil grouping, arrangement of furniture, display, use and choice of equipment, and other adults) need to be planned for.

## Factors affecting lesson design



## The process of lesson design



## The short-term plan

A successful medium-term plan will offer a range of formats and ideas for the short-term plans and resources.

For example, while the short-term plan may still in many cases provide a clear, structured lesson plan with starter, introduction, development and plenary session, this will be one of a range of pedagogies and learning designs chosen because of the stage pupils have reached in their learning. Other plans may more appropriately begin, for example with investigation and group discussion, leading to presentation and peer review. Alternatively they may start with experiences outside the classroom and lead to independent research followed up by direct teacher-led instruction on how to interpret or process findings or responses for specific purposes and audiences.

Whatever the format, style or content of the resource that will guide short-term work, it will need to have **personalisation** at its heart and, alongside it, an understanding of how the short-term plan will aid **progression**. Above all, the detail of the plan will ensure a **rich and engaging learning experience** that will build upon what has happened previously in a teaching sequence, and link into what is to happen thereafter – guided by the medium- and long-term planning.

The following set of principles may assist you in the **short-term planning** process. There are three areas against which to reflect on your plans and processes:

- building, practising and applying skills
- the learning process
- progression through levels and leading to independence.

## Building skills

Skills need to be:

- taught and **built**
- **applied, practised** and **developed**
- **secured** and **applied independently**.

Building skills is a recursive process and should be revisited at each of the stages above, as and when required, in a range of contexts and situations.

## The learning process

This needs to be a compelling (and recursive) process that will:

- **engage** pupils by establishing aims and success criteria, drawing on prior learning, selecting stimulating resources and contexts, and sharing knowledge and ideas
- **explore** purposes, skills, aims, processes, ideas and key questions
- **transform** skills and knowledge into deep learning, through collaborative and increasingly independent work, consolidating and extending what has been learned
- provide opportunities to **review, evaluate** and **present** what has been learned, experienced and enjoyed
- **reflect** in an extended way on the whole process and the next steps that are required. This broadly fits with the familiar structured lesson model, but should now be seen in terms of a **learning process** that works in a **range of flexible contexts** such as with extracurricular opportunities, or over a sequence of short sessions.

## Progression

This will be determined by:

- the increasing **complexity** of situations, contexts, resources and activities
- the **technical demand** associated with these activities
- the learner's **familiarity** with the task, activity or context
- the level of **independence** with which a learner demonstrates and applies skills, knowledge and understanding.

Note: these are, broadly speaking, the principles of progression within the Functional Skills standards and approaches, but are closely mirrored by the strands within the Framework for secondary English.

## Conclusion

These clear principles about *what* should go into curriculum plans, medium-term plans and shorter teaching episodes, units or lessons, will enable you to develop good planning structures, but what about the actual teaching?

# Section 7: Approaches to teaching writing in lessons

## Focus: What works for pupils in lessons?

A number of key ideas have been established over recent years that are known to work in teaching writing. For example:

Teachers need to **build a bridge between reading and writing** by flexible use of a teaching sequence. (You may wish to use the *Key leaflet: Building a bridge from reading to writing* to assist in your work.)

In essence this is as follows:

- establish clear aims
- provide examples
- explore the features of the text
- define the conventions (bearing in mind the fact that many – most – texts are hybrids)
- demonstrate how it is written
- compose together
- scaffold the first attempts
- encourage independent writing (and facilitate inventive and creative ways of applying conventions and playing with language)
- draw out key learning
- review.

For example, lesson 1, week 2 of the medium-term plan 'Location, location, location' on page 59 states:

### Week 2

#### Lesson 1:

Model comparative writing on two of the three extracts based on previous lesson's discussion. Focus on cohesion between sentences and paragraphs of comparison.

So the teaching sequence for this might be as follows:

<b>Establish clear aims</b>	To use coherent and cohesive links between sentences and/or paragraphs when writing about two texts. Consider how that learning might apply to other subject areas or contexts.
<b>Provide examples</b>	Look at two to three paragraphs that compare elements of the two texts in question.
<b>Explore the features of the text</b>	In this case, linking connectives; also topic sentences to introduce key points in paragraphs.

<b>Define the conventions</b>	Draw out other features of extended comparisons: introduction, conclusion, use of quotation/evidence/paraphrase – as appropriate to level of group/class.
<b>Demonstrate how it is written</b>	<p>Write a sentence or two which demonstrates the skill/s in practice – for example, topic sentences to introduce a particular feature.</p> <p><i>Lynsey Hanley uses a range of striking images to describe the estate she grew up on, for example when she writes about the terraces being ‘as flat-fronted as pancakes on a washing line.’<sup>1</sup></i></p> <p>Do the same for other features and conventions – for example how the idea above might be linked or contrasted with the estate agent’s text.</p> <p><i>In contrast, the estate-agent’s text does not feature similes but does contain powerful visual descriptions such as ‘sweeping oak staircase’.</i></p>
<b>Compose together*</b>	Take other examples from Hanley’s text and the estate agent’s text and ask pupils to contribute ideas on the wordings as you write on the board.
<b>Scaffold the first attempts</b>	<p>Provide a set of prompts for pupils to use when writing their own paragraphs based on the texts. For example:</p> <p>‘In Hanley’s text she...’</p> <p>‘However, the estate agent’s text shows...’</p> <p>‘One similarity is...’, etc.</p>
<b>Encourage independent writing**</b>	<p>Give students the opportunity to write without the ‘crutch’ of the scaffold on these, or similar texts – perhaps on the other text from the medium-term plan.</p> <p>If the convention is one that can be adapted and developed – not particularly likely with this comparative essay – then suggest to pupils how this might be achieved, for example how an account of a return visit to a place where you once lived could be humorous and fantastical (exaggerating all the things you remembered), serious and reflective – or even a mixture of the two.</p>
<b>Draw out key learning</b>	Return pupils’ attention to what they set out to do. Elicit the learning – what have they discovered about how to link paragraphs? How do they introduce key points? This can be related to progress within the different assessment focus areas, with an analysis of where they lie within the different levels, targeting what needs to be done for future improvement.
<b>Review</b>	<p>Celebrate or highlight success in the task, through display or sharing of written work; oral presentation; recording of ‘targets met’, etc.</p> <p>Set targets for improvement; link what has been done to the next phase of work – for example, writing a longer comparative piece that comments on all three texts studied.</p>

1. Excerpt by Lynsey Hanley from *Estates: An Intimate History* (© Lynsey Hanley 2004) is reproduced by permission of PFD ([www.pfd.co.uk](http://www.pfd.co.uk)) on behalf of Lynsey Hanley.

\* In **shared or guided writing sessions**, teachers will need to:

- Keep the focus on the objective.
- Rehearse sentences aloud before writing.
- Constantly reread.
- Model writing one step at a time.
- Prompt, sift, analyse and evaluate contributions.

### **Keep the focus on the objective**

- This means moving swiftly through some parts of the composition, but spending the bulk of the time on key objectives.
- Avoid being sidetracked – do not muddle pupils by throwing everything in; keep the focus clear.
- Refer continually to objectives that have been taught previously, to keep them 'alive'.

### **Rehearse sentences aloud before writing**

- Model continually how to think up a sentence, and orally revise it before writing.
- Demonstrate how you listen to the impact of the sentence. This helps to avoid too many errors and allows for revising before, rather than after, writing.
- Avoid modelling an approach to writing that encourages pupils to write any old thing down – and then try to rescue it afterwards.
- Emphasise the need to apply spelling strategies and to punctuate as automatic habits that do not interfere with composition.
- Model how to refer back to the initial plan, brainstorm or concept map.
- When you are demonstrating something difficult, you will probably need a 'crib' to ensure you cover all of your intended teaching points.

### **Constantly reread**

- Encourage constant rereading as it helps you to check that sentences build on each other, and to spot errors and identify areas in need of improvement.
- Counter the belief that writing is about a hundred-yard dash, regardless of where you began.

### **Model writing one step at a time**

- Focus attention purposefully upon modelling those aspects of writing that most pupils find difficult, or that have not yet become an automatic habit.
- Model the features of writing that pupils have not yet accomplished, to help them move from one level to another.

### **Prompt, sift, analyse and evaluate contributions**

- Every pupil should be challenged to apply and try; provide brief pauses for pupils to discuss in pairs, or jot ideas down; this helps all pupils to participate.
- Challenge and do not necessarily accept first ideas. Avoid voting on which is best; ask for explanations.
- Demonstrate how the first idea might well be reasonable but show how it could be improved. The first thought is not necessarily the best thought.

- Establish the habit of ‘writing as a reader’; write suggestions down and then think about which idea is the most effective, and what the impact would be on the reader. Just saying ‘I like that idea best’ is not helpful.
- Avoid over-relying on the same few eager pupils with their hands up. Use them for good examples, but also ask pupils who might not understand, so that misconceptions can be addressed.

### \*\* Independent writing

As far as pupils’ response to this is concerned, it has been established that effective independent writers:

- know where they are going and where they are going to end up
- have an idea of how their writing should sound, and listen in their heads to test it out
- use their reading to inform their writing
- have a style repertoire to choose from (but don’t deploy this mechanically or unthinkingly)
- attend to the needs of the reader
- rehearse and reread
- select and reject
- concentrate
- evaluate their work as they write
- improvise their own support strategies
- attend to their known weaknesses.

None of this, of course, works without the pupils’ **engagement** in the process. So, how is this achieved?

### How to engender positive attitudes to writing

Teachers:	Pupils:
provide a motivating climate for learning in terms of both resources, displays/environment, and attitudes	enjoy being in the classroom or environment, contribute and are motivated; value and respect their peers
value all serious attempts at writing and, in particular, ensure that succinctness is valued as highly as elaboration and detail	want to have a go, are proud of their writing and keen to share it with others
ensure that pupils’ errors are seen as opportunities for learning	want to persevere and see feedback as helpful, not as deflating
give immediate feedback on successes as well as areas for improvement	know both what they already do well and what they need to do to improve
share examples of effective and engaging writing	know what constitutes effective and engaging writing
model and share our own writing	see us as writers who make decisions, crafting and revising as we write

intervene with groups and individuals where necessary	are confident that someone will help them when they need it
use interactive teaching approaches and oral work to rehearse and clarify ideas	value discussion before writing, and the evaluation and feedback of their peers
plan to specific objectives, but allow diversion when appropriate to the needs of the pupils	are clear about what they will learn, but have a commitment to the goals themselves
provide pupils with a toolkit of shortcuts and strategies to be deployed in creative ways	confidently take ideas from other writers and texts to rehearse, emulate and reuse
support the writing of extended pieces	build the confidence to produce longer pieces by working on smaller chunks
support planning	know where their writing is going but feel confident to change direction if necessary
provide dedicated writing time	make good use of time-limited independent writing opportunities in lessons

## So, what might a short-term plan look like that implies and embeds these key principles?

The following does not set out the classroom organisation, climate for learning, etc. (for example groupings, how the room is set out) or indeed the teaching repertoire to be drawn from (inductive, directive, etc.) although these will need to be considered in advance of the teaching. Some of this is implied – there is by necessity direct address/teaching as part of the teaching sequence for writing – but is not restated in this plan, which is designed to be workable and manageable.

## Short-term plan: one example

Term 1	Week 2	Lesson 1
<p><b>Week 2: Lesson 1</b> <i>Focus: developing skills in linking and contrasting ideas and features in different texts – in particular topic sentences and contrasting connectives.</i></p>		
<p><b>Framework strands:</b> (main focus) Reading 6.2 Writing 8.5</p>	<p><b>Assessment focuses</b> Reading AF2, AF5 Writing AF4</p>	<p><b>Resources:</b> Lynsey Hanley's <i>Estates</i>; estate agent's details</p>
<p><b>Starter activity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Card sort activity of key connective phrases into groups – contrast words/phrases, emphasis words/phrases; addition words/phrases, etc.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Introduction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recap on the two texts to be focused on.</li> <li>● Distribution of extracts; brief rereading on own.</li> <li>● Small-group work, recapping a number of features and conventions in both texts which had been previously explored, but giving particular attention to differences/contrasts between texts in terms of <i>visual descriptions</i>, eliciting imagery and figurative language in one, but not the other. Record anew, or highlight from list of features if recorded in previous lessons.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Interim plenary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report back from groups; class list of features compiled for future reference.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow the teaching sequence for writing, to model how to write topic sentences and, if time, contrasting connectives, based on the two extracts.</li> <li>● Pupils to compose together as whole class, and then move into pairs to write one or two sentences together.</li> <li>● Then pupils, independently, write a further one or two sentences using the conventions and cohesive devices learned. (May need to provide scaffolds for some students to build ideas around, but encourage independent application of skills without scaffold either at end of process or in follow-up work.)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Plenary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share examples of individual work – display or read aloud and ask pupils to identify the particular successes in the work discussed or shown, drawing attention to the targeted objectives.</li> <li>● Pupils can make their own evaluation in relation to the APP levels as to what they have achieved, and identify particular targets for improvement.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Further work:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Either to complete or write a more extended response to the texts, or draw in a third text, which is less familiar.</li> <li>● Discuss in small groups or pairs how the particular connective words and topic-sentence skills discussed might be applied to other subjects; be precise and explicit about how they might be used, and suggest that pupils bring in a piece of writing from another subject area in which these features might have improved their response.</li> </ul>		

## Conclusion

Good teaching and learning is, as has been established, contingent on successful planning. While a good plan does not, in itself, guarantee an engaging, motivating and purposeful lesson or set of lessons, it goes a long way towards assisting both teacher and learner. The range of guidance available for writing successful plans is wide and varied, yet core principles about the sort of things to include, and the need for plans for different purposes (long-term, short-term) to be interconnected and interdependent is well established. Giving time to discuss and write plans will not be a wasted exercise.

Finally, a key message about plans is that they should not become straitjackets. The best teachers know when to divert from prearranged pathways if pupils pick up ideas and 'run with them'; equally, they know when to bring pupils back on task when they have diverted too far from a given path. However, this sort of steerage is much easier to do when a vision or set of objectives has been determined in advance – indeed, one could argue that the possibility of diverting from the route can itself be, if not planned for, at least prepared for in terms of the climate established with learners, the willingness of the teacher to allow pupils to take risks, and planned opportunities for pupils to develop creativity, act independently, and think and write inventively.

## Section 8: Using the key leaflets

**Focus:** How the key leaflets can be used for professional development by heads of department and subject teachers

There is a range of key leaflets, which are available on the Improving Writing website. These are:

- *Adapting conventions*
- *Improving boys' writing*
- *Building a bridge from reading to writing*
- *Improving writing through marking and response*
- *Planning to improve writing*
- *Punctuation*
- *Improving writing through talk*
- *Improving writing through ICT*
- *Writing for real, purposeful and relevant contexts*
- *Writing and special educational needs*

These are designed for individual teacher reading and use, but can also be used as part of professional training and development. Below are two ways the leaflets can be used: firstly, by the individual teacher; secondly, by the head of department or other teacher responsible for the improvement of writing.

### Using the key leaflets – as an individual teacher

**Stage 1:** read the opening section of the leaflet and identify, using the grid supplied, which of the key issues and challenges listed are priorities for you. Keep this grid to hand when going through the leaflet to see the extent to which these issues are answered by the guidance that is given.

**Stage 2:** read through the remainder of the leaflet, highlighting the information or guidance that is particularly relevant to your concerns. Jot down your own further questions or issues as they occur to you. If you wish, share your notes and findings with a colleague, and explore ways forward.

**Stage 3:** using the Next steps section, select one or more of the actions listed and plan a date by which the action will be completed.

**Stage 4:** return to the leaflet and the 'action' section as the steps you have planned are completed. Treat the leaflet as a working document adding your own advice, guidance, issues and so on to it.

### Using the key leaflets – as a head of department

**Stage 1:** select from the list of key leaflets those which you consider to be particular priorities for your department, and plan for a particular 'window' within which you can address them. For example:

- autumn term weeks 7–11: *Writing and special educational needs*
- spring term weeks 2–5: *Improving boys' writing*
- summer term weeks 5–10: *Planning to improve writing*

**Stage 2:** read through the key leaflet from a head of department's perspective, and highlight the issues which you consider most pressing for the department.

**Stage 3:** at a departmental meeting or training session, introduce the topic and why you consider it particularly important for the department, school, or particular group of pupils, based on your self-evaluation of writing.

Ask colleagues to work through the Issue or challenge grid, completing it as individuals.

Then, in pairs or as a whole team, share individual concerns, drawing on specifics from current practice rather than broad abstracts, to explore the issues.

Next, identify the concern or concerns that best reflect your – and your department's – priorities, and together look at what the leaflet has to say about that particular challenge.

Finally, using the actions in the Next steps grid identify:

- for **each member** of the department at least **one or two individual action/s** related to their own classroom practice that they will commit to carrying out by a set date (for example adapting a specific scheme of work)
- for the **department as a whole** one broader action related to policy or approach which will require **you** as head of department, **or a nominated teacher**, to carry out the task by an agreed time (for example scrutinising a range of work across years, teachers, etc.).

Set an agreed review date to evaluate progress in the individual and departmental developments.

**Stage 4:** carry out review and set further priorities and actions.

## Conclusion

The inclusion of the key leaflets is designed to allow you, should you so wish, to focus on specific areas of concern. However, none of them should be seen as entirely independent of the others – or indeed of other guidance.

# Appendix

## Resources

This section contains:

- A work scrutiny: blank template
- Analysis of writing with target pupils, class or group: blank form for completion
- Improvement plan – blank template
- Curriculum map: writing template
- Curriculum map: writing forms across a key stage
- Medium-term pre-planning template
- Medium-term plan – template
- Short-term plan – template

## A work scrutiny: blank template

Key questions	Answers	Practicalities and notes
<b>What are we looking for?</b>		
<b>What are the desirable outcomes?</b>		
<b>Who will be involved in the scrutiny?</b>		
<b>When will it take place?</b>		
<b>Who needs to know?</b>		
<b>What samples of writing will we use? What will we look at?</b> (This needs to be manageable.)		
<b>What range of pupils will be covered?</b>		
<b>How will the process be followed up?</b>		

### Analysis of writing with target pupils, class or group: blank form for completion

Assessment focus	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
<p><b>Composition and effect:</b> (Add relevant assessment focuses.)</p>	(add comments)	(add comments)	(add comments)
<p><b>Text structure and organisation:</b> (Add relevant AFs)</p>	(add comments)	(add comments)	(add comments)
<p><b>Sentence structure and punctuation:</b> (Add relevant AFs)</p>	(add comments)	(add comments)	(add comments)
<p><b>Vocabulary and spelling:</b> (Add relevant AFs)</p>	(add comments)	(add comments)	(add comments)

### Improvement plan – blank template

Focus	Notes/rationale
<b>Numerical target:</b>	
<b>Curricular target:</b>	
<b>Relevant objectives:</b> <b>Framework substrands (look at progression objectives over Years 7 to 9)</b>	
<b>Assessment focus</b>	
<b>Actions to secure improvement</b> <b>Planned teaching</b>	

<b>Marking and assessment</b>	
<b>Provision and resources</b>	
<b>Departmental development needs</b>	

**Curriculum map: writing template**

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
<b>Focus/context for learning</b>						
<b>Outcome/s (writing)</b>						
<b>Progression for learning (Framework substrands related to writing)</b>						

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
<b>Assessing Pupils' Progress opportunities</b>						
<b>Curriculum opportunities/links</b>						

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
<b>Calendar</b>											
<i>External events</i>											
<i>School-based</i>											

**Curriculum map: writing forms across a key stage**

Year	Autumn term A	Autumn Term B	Spring term A	Spring Term B	Summer term A	Summer term B
YEAR 7	Prose Poetry Script Media forms APP					
YEAR 8	Prose Poetry Script Media forms APP					
YEAR 9	Prose Poetry Script Media forms APP					

### Medium-term pre-planning template

Question	Notes
<p>What has the periodic assessment told us about particular pupils' or a group's writing needs? (See below for follow-up.)</p>	
<p>What specific aspect, focus or skill in English do you intend to develop or explore via the medium-term plan? Is it intended for a particular group or class of pupils?</p>	
<p>What particular strands or substrands from the Framework are you targeting? Which of these are related to writing?</p>	
<p>Do you have a particular context or learning focus in mind (for example, a 'real-life' context, a short story or other text)?</p>	
<p>What particular outcomes do you expect to see? (written or otherwise)</p>	
<p>What notional time do you expect to spend on this sequence of learning (hours, lessons, over how many weeks, homeworks)?</p>	

What assessment opportunities do you envisage? (Which, if any, are related to writing assessment focuses?)	
What resources will be required (by you; the pupils)?	
What particular learning needs do the pupils have?	
What particular challenges do you predict? (Are there particular pupils who will need support? Will any stages require particular attention for any reason?)	
What support do you need?	
How will you recognise success over the course of the sequence or scheme?	
Are there any other factors specific to your own situation that you need to consider?	

## Medium-term plan – template

Medium-term plan – sheet 1			
Title of unit:	Year	Term	Duration:
<b>Overview</b> <b>Stage 1:</b>  <b>Stage 2 (week 2)</b>  <b>Stage 3 (week 3)</b>			
<b>Link to key concepts</b>			
<b>Key learning focus (substrands)</b> <b>Speaking and listening:</b>  <b>Reading</b>  <b>Writing</b>  <b>Language</b>		<b>Planned assessment opportunities</b>  <b>Speaking and listening (AFs)</b>  <b>Reading (AFs)</b>  <b>Writing (AFs)</b>	
<b>Resources</b>			

<b>Medium-term plan – sheet 2</b>		
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Week 3</b>
<b>Lesson 1:</b>	<b>Lesson 1:</b>	<b>Lesson 1:</b>
<b>Lesson 2:</b>	<b>Lesson 2:</b>	<b>Lesson 2:</b>
<b>Lesson 3:</b>	<b>Lesson 3:</b>	<b>Lesson 3:</b>
<b>Teaching strategies</b>		
<b>Personalising this unit for your pupils</b>		

### Short-term plan – template

<b>Term:</b>	<b>Week:</b>	<b>Lesson:</b>
<b>Focus:</b>		
<b>Framework substrands:</b> (main focus)	<b>Assessment focuses:</b>	<b>Resources:</b>
<b>Starter activity:</b>		
<b>Introduction:</b>		
<b>Interim plenary:</b>		
<b>Development:</b>		
<b>Plenary:</b>		
<b>Further work:</b>		
<b>Notes</b>		

# Acknowledgements

Extract from *Report on the Units, June 2008, GCSE English* © Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations. Used with kind permission.

Excerpt by Lynsey Hanley from *Estates: An Intimate History* (© Lynsey Hanley 2004) is reproduced by permission of PFD ([www.pfd.co.uk](http://www.pfd.co.uk)) on behalf of Lynsey Hanley.

Audience: English teachers and subject leaders

Date of issue: 08-2009

Ref: **00671-2009PDF-EN-01**

Copies of this publication may be available from:

**[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)**

You can download this publication and obtain further information at: **[www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk)**

© Crown copyright 2009

Published by the Department for  
Children, Schools and Families

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial research, education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged as Crown copyright, the publication title is specified, it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context.

**The permission to reproduce Crown copyright protected material does not extend to any material in this publication which is identified as being the copyright of a third party.**

For any other use please contact  
[licensing@opsi.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@opsi.gov.uk)  
[www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm)



department for  
**children, schools and families**



When you have finished with  
this publication please recycle it