

Communication, Language and Literacy Development

Materials for consultants: third instalment

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Please note

Wherever possible the consultant visits should follow the appropriate Cluster meeting, i.e. Visit 3 should take place after the practitioners have attended Cluster Meeting 3.

Cluster meeting 3R: Reviewing phonics and early writing

This session is a joint cluster meeting for teachers and practitioners in the targeted schools. Like any effective CPD provision it requires dedicated time and will take approximately two to three hours or one half day. The subsequent consultant visit (Visit 3R) to schools is to monitor implementation of the agreed actions.

This cluster meeting is a generic structure to be adapted according to the needs of teachers and practitioners. However, consultants should ensure that in all cluster meetings the following aspects are addressed:

- The tracking of children's progress in the phases of phonic progression and PSED/CLL.
- The needs of vulnerable groups, for example new arrivals, children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language (EAL).
- The development of speaking and listening skills.

Cluster meeting 1R		Cluster meeting 2R	Cluster meeting 3R	Cluster meeting 4R	
		2PVI	3PVI	4PVI	
		Programme of support: modelling, co-planning and teaching, observing, reviewing progress			
Initial visit 1a	Initial visit 1b	Planned visits to schools and linked settings Visit 2 PVI, Visit 2R; Visit 3PVI, Visit 3R; Visit 4PVI, Visit 4R			Review meeting

Note: The content within this generic structure will need to be adapted for each session in response to the needs of the practitioners.

Aims and agenda	<p>To review ongoing progress and practice in the teaching of phonics</p> <p>To promote professional dialogue and the sharing of effective practice</p> <p>To explore the effective teaching of writing within the Foundation Stage, with a particular focus on speaking and listening and the application of word recognition skills</p> <p>To develop opportunities for children's freely chosen and self-initiated writing activities</p> <p>To support practitioner knowledge on assessment of writing</p> <p>To identify next steps for development and action</p>
Before the session	<p>Ask practitioners to bring samples of independent writing in different contexts and Foundation Stage Profile information for two or three children.</p> <p>Collect an overview of progress and identify practitioners to share individual case studies.</p>

Introduction/ review	<p>Review and feedback on teaching of phonics, for both the direct teaching sessions and the application into reading and writing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing progress; • sharing successes/what went well and why; • issues and challenges; • joint problem solving; • sharing practice (short individual case study).
Focused input	<p>Focus: Early writing</p> <p>Introduction and key messages</p> <p>The Early Learning Goals for Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL) outline what most children will be able to achieve in writing by the end of the Foundation Stage.</p> <p>– <i>The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)</i> contains guidance for teachers and practitioners to support children in learning to write.</p> <p>However, all the areas of learning and development as defined in the EYFS contribute to children’s developing ability to write. Developing positive dispositions and attitudes to writing is critical and whereas some aspects contribute more to the content and composition of the writing, (e.g. knowledge and understanding of the world) and some more to the physical aspect of handwriting (e.g. physical development) there are aspects in all areas which influence the process of learning to write.</p> <p>Likewise, within the area of Communication, Language and Literacy, all the elements have a direct bearing on writing and the specific pages on which each is covered in <i>Practice Guidance for The Early Years Foundation Stage</i> are indicated below. Young children learn how to write through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – developing oral language (pp. 41–49); – reading with an adult individually and/or in a group (pp. 53–56); – playing games that help them to hear sounds in words and form the letters that represent them (early spelling and handwriting) (pp. 50–52 and 59–60); – playing and experimenting with writing (pp. 57-58) and watching others write (shared writing). <p><i>The Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics – Core learning in literacy for Foundation Stage</i> outlines what children in the Foundation Stage are expected to learn across the 12 strands.</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Refer colleagues to the renewed framework for literacy – <i>Core learning in literacy for Foundation Stage</i> (pp. 22 and 23 in the hardcopy booklet issued to schools in September). Look at the 12 strands. The emboldened objectives refer to the Early Learning Goals.</p>

Identify as a group how writing is dependent on the objectives for speaking and listening and word recognition.

- Discuss the importance of the speaking and listening strands to the writing process.
- Highlight the reversibility link between decoding and encoding in strand 5 and the expectations that most children will learn to 'read and write one grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes'.

Practitioners should exploit any purposeful opportunity for children to write. In the same way that talk develops because we need to communicate and reading develops because we like to read, writing develops when we see the point of it: a purpose and an audience are crucial.

Children need to experience writing in different contexts – stories to entertain, messages to inform, lists to help organise, greetings cards, directions, signs, letters to invite parents and carers and friends to a party, messages sent to a character in a story, information written to help another class, labels put up to inform people about a display, etc. Captions, for instance, provide an early form of sentence-making that has a clear purpose for young writers.

Children, like all of us, write best about what they know. For this reason, writing recounts about significant events is important. As they become familiar with non-fiction, poems and stories, these too can become a basis for children's own writing – retelling, substituting, extending.

Shared Writing (see Developing Early Writing pp. 16–17)

Teacher demonstration

Note: consider the role and value of ICT in shared writing

A key feature of quality first teaching makes clear to beginner writers that blending for reading and segmenting for spelling are reversible processes.

The teacher models the writing process for the children, thinking aloud, making the link to speech and showing them how a writer makes decisions 'on the run'. It is important to ensure the purpose and **audience** is clear to the children from the outset.

Adult scribing

The adult scribes as the children compose a text. The use of audio recordings, including simple digital camcorders, helps to encourage extended composition. This can be enlightening, as children's ability to compose may well outstrip their transcriptional skills by a long way. Some of the children's own compositions can be usefully turned into short booklets for their own reading material, display or the book area.

Supported composition

Children compose a short piece of writing to follow on from a teacher-modelled piece of writing. This can be individual or collaborative. Feedback is immediate and strengths are identified.

	<p>It is important to value children's earliest attempts at writing and recognise them as steps along the route to writing fluently. At the same time, note significant developmental stages, such as writing from left to right, top to bottom, beginning to leave a space between words, investing their own words with meaning.</p> <p>The Rose Review makes clear that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a key feature of effective practice is the demonstration of the 'reversibility' of reading (decoding) and spelling (encoding). <p>Consider use of video, e.g. Foundation Stage Toolkit <i>Observing Children Building the Profile</i> (QCA/05/1569): <i>The shipwreck</i>.</p> <p>Revisit the Literacy learning environment checklist from the CLLD audit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your learning environment developed? • What might you want to develop further to support early writing?
<p>Planning, teaching and assessment</p> <p>Activity: sharing action research</p>	<p>Explore current practice through discussion around all/some of the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the sample writing children, what is their current Foundation Stage Profile for CLL and where would you expect them to be by the end of the Foundation Stage? • How do you currently plan for the teaching, practice and application of writing skills? • What writing opportunities do you offer across the areas of provision? (DEW p. 27 could be used as a prompt.) • How do you assess and track children's progress in writing? • How does ICT support the development of children's writing? <p>Practitioners work in twos or threes on tables to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share and discuss samples of children's independent writing; • select one child to use within a group; • use the samples of independent writing to identify current stage of learning with regard to ELGs for writing. Note whether children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words; – attempt writing for different purposes, using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions; – write their own names and other things such as captions and labels and begin to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation. • use writing assessment to identify next steps; • identify learning opportunities to support next steps in learning; • share headline feedback across the table.

Next steps	Each meeting would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• expectations for phonics teaching and agreed actions on teaching, practice and application;• identification of actions linked to input focus for the individual school/setting;• review and feedback focus for the next meeting;• visit dates and support focuses agreed with the consultant.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice Guidance for The Early Years Foundation Stage• Samples of children's writing (from practitioners)• Foundation Stage Toolkit• <i>Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics – Core learning in literacy for Foundation Stage</i>

Visit 3R: Review of phonics teaching and application in shared and guided writing

Note: This is a generic structure to be adapted according to content.

Cluster meeting 1R		Cluster meeting 2R	Cluster meeting 3R	Cluster meeting 4R	
		2PVI	3PVI	4PVI	
		Programme of support: modelling, co-planning and teaching, observing, reviewing progress			
Initial visit 1a	Initial visit 1b	Planned visits to schools and linked settings Visit 2 PVI, Visit 2R; Visit 3PVI, Visit 3R ; Visit 4PVI, Visit 4R			Review meeting
Aims and overview	<p>The visit could include the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model delivery of phonics activity by consultant • Complete ongoing phonics assessment and review of children's progress • Complete joint planning for discrete phonics session • Model/co-teach/observe shared or guided writing session • Explore opportunities for children's freely chosen and self-initiated writing activities • Joint review, planning and next steps 				
Before the session	<p>For identified focus of shared/guided writing, you may wish to select from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe teaching/current practice in shared or guided writing; • model/co-teach agreed activity; • review practice and progress; • complete joint planning with practitioner – select from the objectives from the <i>Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics – Core learning in literacy for Foundation Stage</i>. <p>With the practitioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss how shared/guided writing is currently taught; • plan a sequence of shared writing across the week; • agree the modelling/co-teaching/observation roles. 				
Observation, modelling and review – phonics	<p>Phonics</p> <p>Feedback and review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review progress since last session regarding teaching, practice and application at the relevant phase(s). • Review phonics assessments and children's progress. • Identify children for additional small-group support. • Review planning, provision and resources. <p>Plan modelling/co-teaching/observation to support next steps.</p>				

<p>Assessment, planning, modelling, co-teaching and review – application of phonics in shared writing</p>	<p>Early writing</p> <p>Practitioners need to be familiar with the <i>Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics – core learning in literacy for Foundation Stage</i>.</p> <p>Practice Guidance for <i>The Early Years Foundation Stage</i> indicates that young children learn to write through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing oral language (pp. 41–49); • reading with an adult individually and/or in a group (pp. 53–56); • playing games that help them to hear sounds in words and form the letters that represent them (early spelling and handwriting) (pp. 50–52, 59–60); • playing and experimenting with writing (pp. 57–58) and watching others write (shared writing). <p>Children need to have purposeful opportunities to write and experience writing in different contexts – stories, messages, lists, cards, directions, signs, letters, etc.</p> <p>Shared and guided writing form an essential part of the teaching of early writing and provide the opportunity for children to engage in the process of constructing a written text as well as making explicit the writing process. Talk is an essential part of the process of learning to write. For more detail see <i>Developing Early Writing</i> pp. 25–31 and LA case study: Shared writing in Reception.</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>Complete a joint writing assessment before or after the session with the selected group/individuals to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current skills and knowledge; • application of phonics skills/knowledge; • next steps in learning. <p>Planning</p> <p>In order for writing to be meaningful, children need time to link it both to meaningful contexts and to shared and independent writing experiences. Focuses for shared or guided writing need to be linked to the children’s stage of development and comprehension.</p> <p>Independent activities that follow on from the shared or guided writing session need to include lots of opportunities for adult-led and child-chosen and child-initiated activities, role-play, retelling stories and aspects of creative development.</p>
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	<p>Decide on planning format to be used.</p> <p>Modelling/co-teaching and review</p> <p>Key points in shared writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and teach a shared writing session. • Identify objectives to be taught. • Choose appropriate words to build a writing vocabulary. • Include high-frequency words in all your writing demonstrations. • Show children how alphabet and word cards can help them. • Provide repeated opportunities for children to use their segmenting skills to write words so they become fast and fluent (write in the air, on mini-whiteboards, with partners). <p>Application of focused phonics work in shared writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners need to make links to the focused phonics teaching and encourage children to apply their phonic knowledge. • In shared writing, practitioners can ask specific questions linked to individual children's phonic knowledge and whichever phase the majority of the class are working at. Shared writing provides an invaluable opportunity to demonstrate how this knowledge can be applied in their writing. • ICT can play a vital role both in shared writing and in supporting the application of skills. • Children need lots of meaningful opportunities to use writing in their play across all areas of learning. Consider how the learning environment is planned and the availability of resources to support children's independent writing.
<p>Planning and next steps</p>	<p>Phonics</p> <p>Agree the expectations for progress for the identified group/children.</p> <p>Plan next steps for phonics teaching, practice and application.</p> <p>Application of phonics in writing</p> <p>Discuss conditions for learning, and opportunities for shared and independent writing activities across the areas of learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modelling/co-teaching of agreed activity; • review of practice and progress. <p>Agree development areas for provision across the areas of learning.</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core learning in literacy from <i>Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics</i> • LA case study: Shared writing in Reception • A successful writing classroom

LA case study: Shared writing in Reception

Notes to support shared writing in Reception

Preparation for writing: talk for writing is key

This is where children collect their ideas for writing. Start with opportunities for speaking and listening so children hear and practise using the vocabulary and language structures they will need for their writing. It is good to follow on from a shared reading text or use texts which children show particular interest in so children are already familiar with the language and content.

Speaking and listening opportunities

- Retelling stories in pairs, groups, as a class, with teaching assistant (TA), buddy.
- Acting out stories, events in role-play, outside.
- Using puppets to tell stories and recount events.
- Using tape recorders, computer programs, cameras to recount, explain.

Writing opportunities

Remember that drawing pictures, mark making and drawing symbols may precede writing and are all important stages.

- Retelling parts of a story.
- Creating menus, labels, greeting cards, instructions.
- Writing speech bubbles for story characters or photos.

Consider context, purpose and audience

Share these with the children.

Demonstrate how we write

Talk through what you are doing each step of the way as you write. Demonstrate the way in which we say each word slowly and write the sounds we hear but not 'sounding words out' thus breaking them into meaningless units!

For example: *My sentence is going to say 'The gingerbread man ran out of the door'. Let's say that together. Now ... 'The': I can see that on our high frequency word chart here ... record 'The'. Then write gingerbread (maybe commenting that it is a long word with lots of letters – this links in concepts about print). Now say again 'The gingerbread man' – let's say that slowly: m-a-n – what can we hear – yes! m; we write that phoneme like this, continue with the phonemes a – n .*

It is important to have a conversation aloud, posing and answering a question with a few seconds' gap so children can contribute or think about this themselves quietly but without having to be put to the test. So highlight whatever is appropriate for most children's stage of phonics learning, possibly target comments or questions to high or low achievers and just write in the other words.

Don't stop and talk about everything! Pause to highlight things related to your objective but then move on quickly so pace, meaning and children's attention are maintained.

Remember to reread the whole piece of writing and teacher or children can highlight specific words, letters, punctuation, etc. as appropriate.

Make sure there are visual clues during the talk for writing (pictures, puppets, etc.) to support children who may have language comprehension difficulties. Keep it all short and snappy with a minimum of talk and sitting on the carpet!

Keep the session interactive with partner talk and use of mini-whiteboards. Make sure that all children have clear sightlines to the shared writing.

Have alphabet and high-frequency word cards or charts beside you during all shared writing sessions. Refer to them so children can see how links are made and understand that these cards can help them when they write. Again, the demonstration is the powerful thing here. Have these available on tables for guided and independent writing.

Make sure that the class focus for phonics is highlighted in demonstrations of shared writing. Include opportunities for children to apply segmenting skills at the appropriate phase so children see clearly the application of phonics during writing.

Linking shared writing to independent writing

Make sure that writing tasks are scaffolded for children so they have opportunities to write and are not just copying and reassembling text.

TAs need to be trained and have opportunities to watch lessons so they say and do the same things as the teacher. A consistent approach is vital. TAs should not always work with the low achievers and they should certainly not be encouraging dependence by doing everything for the children. They need to know how to provide the tools and support so they work in partnership, allowing children to practise skills for themselves.

Children need to receive specific feedback related to the lesson focus, not their behaviour or neatness!

Range of writing

Remind teachers to demonstrate writing for all genres. Just as we include demonstration of reading strategies and comprehension for all shared reading texts we must demonstrate different types of writing. It is important to make the connections between (shared) reading and writing.

In order to write, children need something to say, words to use, an understanding of language structure, an ability to think and compose in their heads before writing, a bank of high-frequency words, phonic decoding and encoding skills, an ability to use punctuation and capital letters, and an ability to write legibly. All these things allow us to gain meaning from print and are interrelated so need to be considered when teaching writing. We need to reinforce the idea that composition and creativity are important and not just the surface features or technical things.

LA case study: Shared writing in Reception

The following pages contain:

Appendix A

This is an illustration of the different aspects of shared writing in the Reception class which children need to experience over a period of time, for example a day or a week. There is no requirement for children to engage with all the aspects in one session. However, the aspects need to be delivered in the order exemplified.

The key focus in all shared writing work in Reception classes will be to provide extensive opportunities for children to engage **orally** in sessions so that they continually practise their speaking and listening skills, using new vocabulary and language structures regularly in their responses and their oral composition.

Appendix B

An exemplar plan for writing in Reception.

Appendix A

Year/class:	Date:
Text type/range	Traditional tale, captions, explanation text, etc.
Class writing target	The target you expect most children to have achieved by the end of half-term.
Objectives (from Core learning in literacy from Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics)	Look at objectives from Strands 1–4, 5–6, 9–11. The objectives should be linked to the class writing target.
Links to reading (text) and/or cross-curricular links	Is the writing related to another curriculum area or to a book you have read?
End of block writing outcome	What writing will the children have completed by the end of the block?

Aspects	
<p>Preparation for writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to reading • Purpose, audience, form • Speaking and listening • Visuals 	<p>This is where the children collect their ideas for writing. They should have lots of oral language opportunities to hear and use the vocabulary and language structures they will use in their writing.</p> <p>Share the purpose, form and audience with the children.</p> <p>This may be the main part of the first session.</p>
<p>Shared writing (planning, writing, editing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration • Scribing • Paired writing 	<p>This is where the children will see how to write.</p> <p>Demonstration</p> <p>Teacher demonstrates how to write, shows how a writer thinks, verbalises the process, focuses on the objectives.</p> <p>Children listen and watch but do not actively participate.</p> <p>Scribing</p> <p>Teacher writes for the children as they compose, uses children's contributions to move lesson on or to make a teaching point related to objective.</p> <p>Children work in pairs or on their own to contribute sentences for the text, orally or on whiteboards.</p> <p>Supported composition</p> <p>Children write quickly individually or in pairs, usually on whiteboards; they write a limited amount of text to secure the understanding of the task.</p> <p>Teacher makes an immediate assessment of the children's readiness to write independently, and identifies and corrects misconceptions.</p>

Independent writing task	<p>Children should now have the opportunity to write independently, in pairs or groups or individually.</p> <p>Teacher may choose to work with one group of children at a time during the day rather than have everyone writing at the same time (see below).</p>
Guided writing group and focus	<p>Teacher works with one or more groups of children to support them in achieving the learning intention or an individual writing objective.</p>
Plenary – celebrating writing	<p>Edit one child's piece of writing. Highlight use of focus areas. Check meaning. Extend story or model recording of all dominant letter sounds in words. Give children the opportunity to edit their own work. This could be a group plenary if this is more appropriate. Children should have the opportunity to read their work to another child (not necessarily to the whole class) and to review their learning as well as celebrate their successes.</p>
Focus of improvements session (to be filled in after marking the writing)	

Appendix B

Reception – extended writing plan

Year/class:	Date:
Text type/range	Narrative Eric Carle: The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Puffin Books
Class writing target	Begin to write simple sentences.
Objectives	Strands 1 & 3: Speaking – use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events. Strand 5 : Word recognition: decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) – use phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. Strand 11: Sentence structure and punctuation – begin to form simple sentences sometimes using punctuation.
Links to reading (text) and/or cross-curricular links	Use knowledge of familiar texts to re-enact or retell to others, recounting the main points in correct sequence.
End of block writing outcome	In writing a simple sentence, segment the phonemes and make an attempt at writing the graphemes in one or two cvc words. Include a high frequency word in the sentence.

Aspects	
Preparation for writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to reading • Purpose, audience, form • Speaking and listening • Visuals 	Read/retell the story. Sequence the picture puppets.
Shared writing (planning, writing, editing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration • Scribing • Paired writing 	Write the beginning of the story following oral rehearsal (may include paired retelling). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on the sentence to be written during the session. • Select the words to work on. • Focus on segmenting one or two CVC words when writing the sentence. • Include high-frequency words (link to class focus if appropriate). • Reread to check meaning. In pairs talk about what happened next. Rehearse this orally with partner.

Guided writing group and focus	Booklet to write own story. Focus: segmenting CVC word(s) and regular high-frequency words with the aid of alphabet cards
Independent writing task	Picture puppets available for children to retell the story. Picture and vocabulary supports available in writing area for children to use.
Plenary – celebrating writing	Edit one child's piece of writing. Highlight use of focus areas. Check meaning. Extend story or model recording of all dominant letter sounds in words. Give children the opportunity to edit their own work. This could be a group plenary if this is more appropriate.
Focus of improvements session (to be filled in after marking the writing)	

A successful writing classroom

A successful writing classroom should include:

- clear expectations, targets and regular observation and assessment of progress towards the targets;
- a stimulating environment with:
 - displayed and celebrated examples of children’s own writing;
 - purposes and opportunities for writing linked to activities across the curriculum;
 - frequent uses of writing to communicate, e.g. through notes, reminders, lists, etc.;
 - frequent access to and encouragement to use writing materials at every opportunity;
 - opportunities to use writing in play activities;
- adults (not only teachers) as role models who use writing explicitly in the classroom or setting for a variety of purposes and demonstrate to children what they are doing, e.g. writing notes, completing registers, making lists, completing forms, writing labels, directions, captions, responding to children’s work;
- a wide experience of reading as the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds;
- the systematic, regular and direct teaching of phonics;
- rich oral experience of telling, retelling and refining texts as a preparation for writing;
- regular shared writing to teach the skills of text composition directly;
- opportunities for supported, independent writing linked to, and developed from, shared writing;
- displays of word lists, notes and other formats for planning which represent ‘work in progress’ and serve both to remind children of previous learning and to provide scaffolds, checklists and support for independent writing.

From *Developing Early Writing*, DfEE 0055/2001

Cluster meeting 3PVI

This session is a joint cluster meeting for teachers and practitioners in the targeted settings. The main focus is on developing speaking and listening skills throughout Phase 1. Like any effective CPD provision it requires dedicated time and will take approximately two to three hours or one half day. The subsequent consultant visit (Visit 3PVI) to settings is to monitor implementation of the agreed actions.

This cluster meeting is a generic structure to be adapted according to the needs of teachers and practitioners. However, consultants should ensure that in all cluster meetings the following aspects are addressed.

- The tracking of children's progress in the phases of phonic progression and PSED/CLL.
- The needs of vulnerable groups, for example new arrivals, children with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language (EAL).
- The development of speaking and listening skills.

Cluster meeting 1R		Cluster meeting 2R	Cluster meeting 3R	Cluster meeting 4R	
		2PVI	3PVI	4PVI	
		Programme of support: modelling, co-planning and teaching, observing, reviewing progress			
Initial visit 1a	Initial visit 1b	Planned visits to schools and linked settings Visit 2 PVI, Visit 2R; Visit 3PVI, Visit 3R; Visit 4PVI, Visit 4R			Review meeting

Audience:	Teachers and practitioners working with younger children in the Foundation Stage, primarily in the non-maintained sector but could also include those working in maintained nurseries.
Aims and Agenda	<p>To clarify the content and expectations of Phase 1</p> <p>To support an audit of existing provision for telling stories, and opportunities for children to develop their communication and language skills</p> <p>To explore using stories to promote speaking and listening skills</p> <p>To explore the use of rhymes, songs and musical activities in developing speaking and listening skills</p> <p>To identify next steps for development and agree action required by teachers and practitioners</p>

<p>Before the Session</p>	<p>Contact practitioners and ask them to bring with them the Story Audit together with any video recordings made of their practice following Cluster meeting 2.</p> <p>If you do not have a copy of Communicating Matters, contact LA Foundation Stage lead officer/adviser to get a copy of Modules 1 and 2 (the CD will be needed for video clip and slides).</p> <p>Collect any props that can be used to aid story building.</p> <p>Read Annex 1 which is taken from the Early Communication, Language and Literacy Development Audit and prepare some examples of activities that practitioners could do to help meet the criteria.</p> <p>Ensure that you have a copy of <i>'Guidance for practitioners and teachers on progression and pace in the teaching of phonics'</i> and are familiar with Phase 1 expectations.</p>
<p>Introduction/ review and feedback</p>	<p>Quickly recap from the last session:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the vital importance of Phase 1 to later development and explain how it 'paves the way' for a phonic programme to begin – remind practitioners that Phase 1 continues well beyond the introduction of Phase 2; 2. the necessity to share with parents this vital stage in children's literacy development and to encourage parents to promote speaking and listening skills at this stage; 3. the importance of reading stories and the practitioners' role; 4. how the review of current practice around reading stories has been useful and how it has helped practitioners to reflect on their practice to ensure they are providing a good communicative environment. <p>Introduce this session in three parts:</p> <p>Part 1</p> <p>Review of the Story Audit</p> <p>Part 2</p> <p>The importance of Storytelling for both practitioners and children, encouraging the development of narrative, reflective discussion and sustained shared thinking</p> <p>Part 3</p> <p>Rhymes, songs and musical activities and how they can be used to support the development of speaking and listening skills</p> <p>(N.B. These three parts need not be covered in their entirety in the cluster meeting. It is suggested that you select appropriate sections to meet the needs of the practitioners in your local context.)</p>

Focussed input	<p>PART 1</p> <p>Review Story Audit</p>
Story Audit	<p>Ask practitioners to share in small groups some of their findings from the Story Audit. (For example, what changes to practice or provision have they made? How have they been working with the rest of the team to ensure the whole team implement the changes? What have they noticed about particular children's interests and abilities?)</p> <p>Work in small groups to share findings and then take some feedback, drawing and expanding on good examples.</p>
Telling stories	<p>PART 2</p> <p>Move on to telling stories, which also forms part of the Story Audit.</p> <p>Use <i>Communicating Matters</i> Module 1 PowerPoint Focus 6 Day 2 The Child as a Storyteller.</p> <p>Introduce by saying that the aim is to look at the importance of storytelling as an activity for both adults and children, why storytelling is important for children's language development and how we can provide opportunities for storytelling in settings.</p> <p>Introduce slide 4 (video) A couple of parents talking about their children ... telling stories.</p> <p>Show slide 4.</p> <p>Ask for the group's reactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were these stories important to the parents? • Did they enjoy telling the stories? • Did the group enjoy hearing them? • Are they like stories that they themselves hear or tell every day? <p>Point out that whenever people gather they tell stories; we are surrounded by stories.</p> <p>Show slide 5 and go through.</p> <p>Ask 'But why are stories so important to us?'</p> <p>Show slide 6.</p> <p>Explain that stories are not accidental things. When we tell a story we take an episode from our lives and reconstruct it in a shorter, more succinct form.</p> <p>Introduce slide 7 (video) Mother telling a story about her four-year-old. How is she composing the text of the story, i.e. how does she condense a day into a short story that we can follow? How is she composing a personal history for the child?</p> <p>Show slide 7.</p> <p>Show slide 8. Ask for comments.</p> <p>Feed back that she has selected snippets of the experience that lasted several hours and shaped them into a form that she thinks others will find interesting. It is her version of the event ... someone else may have told it in a different way, adding snippets that she missed out. As she retells the story to others, she will adapt it to the different audiences.</p>

<p>Show slide 9.</p> <p>Soon the four-year-old may have forgotten the event, but the story may still be retold within the family. He may then recount his own version of this bit of his history to his friends or his own family – it becomes part of his history.</p> <p>Ask the group to share one or two of their own family stories.</p> <p>Point out that stories are important to adults. How are they important to children?</p> <p>Show slide 10.</p> <p>Show slide 11 and elaborate on each point.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stories are reshaped every time they are told; they can be said to be ‘authored’. ‘Author’ is related to the word ‘authority’ – the child becomes the authority on their stories. The ability to tell and write stories will play an important part in children’s later literacy development. 2. There is no right or wrong in a story – it is the child’s own story. Children can build up their confidence and abilities in authoring by gaining experience in telling their stories. <p>Show slide 12 and elaborate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Telling a story allows children to restructure and reshape their experiences into something that makes sense to them and their listeners. 4. Different stories will use different types of language; through storytelling children can experience using their language in different ways. <p>Show slide 13 and elaborate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Many stories that young children hear or tell involve moral issues, mild misdemeanours or awkward consequences. Children love telling stories about robbers or things that went wrong; it is partly through telling stories that they explore ethical and moral issues. 6. As children learn to write they will often be expected to write for an audience, first the teacher but later a much wider audience. Telling stories to an audience allows children to experience the reactions of the audience and to learn from that experience. They will also of course be learning from having stories told to them by different people in different ways. <p>Show slide 14. Storytelling is important to children but as a practitioner we can ... (read slide).</p> <p>Introduce slide 15 (video) Children are telling their own stories; these include a blind girl and a child learning EAL. Handout 6.1 in Module 2 is a transcript of the video. (This may be useful as some of the video is hard to hear.) Are they ‘typical’ of the stories practitioners hear every day?</p> <p>Show slide 15 (video).</p> <p>Skip to slides 19 and 20 and use to summarise.</p> <p>Move on to now looking at how we can support children’s storytelling and tell stories ourselves. How can we motivate children to tell stories, support their storytelling and monitor their progress?</p>
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Skip to slide 24. Read and elaborate.

How is being a storyteller different from reading stories?

Show slide 25 and elaborate.

Remind the group that the most powerful way to motivate children to tell stories is to tell stories themselves.

Mention at this point children learning EAL. Practitioners need to consider how they ensure that all children can access this activity. Ask for or give examples of how needs can be met, including the use of a child's home language, if appropriate.

The inclusion of children with SEN should also be mentioned here. What are the needs of individual children and do practitioners ensure that they meet those needs when planning activities? Ask for or give examples of how this can be done.

Involving parents can be included here too.

Using props to aid story-building

Move on to supporting children as storytellers. Slide 26 gives some examples of how this can be done.

Show slide 26 and elaborate. Share props to aid story-building with the group and give examples of how they can be used.

Providing space and time

Introduce slide 27 (video) as an example of a technique that could be used – a storytelling chair. A practitioner was with the group but did not intervene. Remember that this is something that would take a while to develop in a setting. Children will need to feel comfortable and confident with the activity.

Show slide 27.

Ask the group for observations. They should note:

- the children organised themselves very successfully;
- the boy who sat for a long time was asked 'Have you finished?' His answer was 'I'm thinking!'
- the children listened attentively to each other's stories;
- at one point children started to ask questions of the storyteller.

What helps this to work?

Show slide 28 and read.

Could also do this type of activity in different ways, e.g storyteller's hat or coat. Also think about the children who may not feel comfortable in this situation – could set up private storytelling situations, e.g an area open at a certain time, a practitioner listens to stories individually and could even record stories and share again either in writing or using a tape. Children can also be given puppets to help them to tell their stories 'through' the puppet.

Remind the group again about children learning EAL or those with SEN and ensuring that they can participate fully.

Consider also how parents can be involved in the activities.

Ask the group to share their ideas about using these activities in their settings and take feedback.

Monitoring

Stories told by children give you a lot of evidence about children's communication and language skills. Recording the stories gives you the opportunity to reflect on their level of development and their ability to construct a story and use their language to indicate pace, tension, humour. It also allows you to assess the children's vocabulary development and any difficulties they may be having with articulation or expressive language.

Parents could be encouraged to share with practitioners the stories that their children hear or tell at home.

Audit

Practitioners can be asked to revisit the Story Audit and review and implement opportunities for telling stories in their setting.

Additional activity

Developing reflective discussion, language for thinking

Use Module 2 of *Communicating Matters* Focus 3.

This focus of this Module is 'Using Language to Think'. With some groups of practitioners it may be useful to go through the whole module, but with many you may wish just to look at and discuss the strategies that Ros Bailey uses with children when telling a story to a group of four- and five-year-olds. She then asks them to think about possible solutions to a dilemma. (Slides 13, 14 and 15 and handout 3.1.) She skilfully engages the children's interest by the use of puppets and then encourages the children to use their language for thinking.

PART 3

Using rhymes, songs and musical activities

Ask the group about what else often happens in a story session ... rhymes and songs are shared with the children. Ask the group to consider why this happens; what do children learn from rhymes, songs and musical activities? Why is it so important to later literacy development?

Take feedback and include the following.

- Rhymes and songs are particularly important and enjoyable for babies and young children. At first, all learning arises from physical action and the gathering of experience through the senses. Children learn best when activities engage many senses.
- Initially their attempts to communicate will be non-verbal. As language develops and young children learn about conversation, thought becomes less dependent on action, although non-verbal messages remain an important form of communication throughout life.

<p>Rhymes, songs and musical activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies are soon able to distinguish fine differences in sounds. They learn to cry, laugh, gurgle, etc., and they pay attention to sounds and distinguish between patterns, tones and rhythms of the voices all around them. They begin to imitate and repeat what they hear. Adults help to cue children into the rhythm and stress patterns of speech. When we (adults) speak to babies and very young children, our speech is delivered in a higher pitch and uses more marked stress. (Listen to young children copying that when speaking to a baby themselves!) • If we provide children with many opportunities to develop an awareness of sound discrimination and an awareness of rhythm and rhyme, they will begin to become familiar with words starting with the same sound. They can then be encouraged to play with words and sounds, to distinguish between sounds and to talk about sounds. This will help them to develop their articulation of sounds (for example, many children talk about 'm' for Matthew and notice other instances where 'm' is used). (Give an explanation of 'phonemes' and introduce here the concept of phonemic development.) • Children listen to, enjoy and physically move to music from an early age. They enjoy experimenting and making sounds using instruments, first of all perhaps banging a spoon on their highchair table and later experimenting with and using musical instruments. Children often have favourite tunes or songs that they sing or move their bodies to. • We are all helping children to work towards the Early Learning Goal 'Listen with enjoyment, and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems.' (Language For Communication) <p>Move on to consider how this can be achieved; what activities should we be providing?</p> <p>Working in small groups and using the criteria from the Early Communication, Language and Literacy Development Audit as a guide, ask the practitioners to give examples of the sorts of activities already in place in their settings and identify the areas that need to be developed. A chart is provided (Annex 1) to record ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage young children to explore and imitate sounds. • Encourage repetition, rhythm and rhyme by reciting poems and rhymes and singing. • Use rhymes from a variety of cultures and ask parents to share their favourites. • Provide opportunities for children to move rhythmically to music, such as skipping, rocking and dancing. • Make up alliterative jingles and play with words in everyday activities. • Make up alternative endings and encourage the children to supply the last word of a nursery rhyme.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw attention to the similarities in sounds at the beginning of words, emphasising initial sounds. • Play games with children to encourage them to listen for the sound at the beginning of a word. • Set up a listening area where children can enjoy music, rhymes and stories. <p>Take some feedback from the group and go through suggestions for suitable activities.</p> <p>Also ask practitioners to consider these points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What support/training is given to trainees, newly qualified practitioners or volunteers? Do they know rhymes and songs that can be used? Do they have opportunities to observe a more experienced member of staff and build up their confidence in this area? Some practitioners have not had much experience of singing or acting out rhymes in public and will need encouragement, support and help to build up a repertoire. • Are all the staff team confident in musical activities? If not, what training can be provided? • Do you have appropriate resources for this area of work? • What advice, support, or information is given to parents about doing rhymes, songs and musical activities with their children? Is there anything in the setting's prospectus? Do you share the words of familiar rhymes and songs with parents, so that they can join in with their children? Do you sing different words to familiar tunes? Do you ask parents to share with you the rhymes and songs that their children enjoy? How do you value the songs and rhymes children bring from home? • How do you ensure that children with SEN are able to access activities? • How do you ensure that children learning EAL benefit fully from the activities? <p>Inform practitioners that the focus of the next visit will be rhymes, songs and musical activities.</p>
<p>Planning, teaching and assessment</p>	<p>Practitioners to review their practice. Remind them to think about how they can disseminate this information to others in the setting and plan for improvements as a whole team.</p> <p>Practitioners to complete relevant sections of the audit, or if easier work as a staff team on Annex 1, preferably before the visit.</p>
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>Implement ideas in setting, share with colleagues, do audit/checklist together as a team and plan for improvements in this area in cooperation with consultant.</p>

Resources	<p>Video player (if any practitioners videotaped their story session)</p> <p><i>Communicating Matters</i> Modules 1 and 2 CD. Copies of Module 1 Handout 6.1 and, if used, Module 2 Handout 3.1</p> <p>A laptop, preferably with speakers, screen (if it is a small group a laptop may be sufficient)</p> <p>Copies of Annex 1</p> <p>Copies of Story Audit</p>
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Visit 3PVI: Review of storytelling, rhymes, songs and musical activities and continuation of audit

Cluster meeting 1R		Cluster meeting 2R	Cluster meeting 3R	Cluster meeting 4R	
		2PVI	3PVI	4PVI	
		Programme of support: modelling, co-planning and teaching, observing, reviewing progress			
Initial visit 1a	Initial visit 1b	Planned visits to schools and linked settings Visit 2 PVI, Visit 2R; Visit 3PVI , Visit 3R; Visit 4PVI, Visit 4R			Review meeting

Points to consider

- Visit 3PVI provides an opportunity for a focused coaching and support activity with the practitioner and follows on from Cluster meeting 3PVI. The session is likely to take approximately one half day.
- It is important to remember the diversity of the settings involved and the make-up of the staff team. Dissemination of the information may prove to be a challenge in some settings and it is vital that the leader or manager of the setting is able to support this.
- Every PVI setting will have some support from a qualified teacher; the level of support varies between LAs. It is important that the CLLD consultant makes contact with the teacher support team as they may already be working with the setting on improving the quality and a consistency of approach to support is vital. They may prove very useful in improving practice and should know very well the structure within the setting and any barriers that may hinder progress.

(Note: This is a generic structure to be adapted according to content.)

Aims and overview	<p>To support the setting to complete the Story Audit and to review progress in telling stories</p> <p>To support the setting in reviewing their practice in rhymes, singing and musical activities</p> <p>To support the setting's review of this area of work</p> <p>This could include an observation of practice, a review of the environment and a meeting with the staff or discussion around the audit and planning the next steps</p>
Before the session	<p>Agree the focus of the visit, recap expectations that the audit will have been completed and that new techniques will have been implemented.</p> <p>Agree the time for the visit. (Consideration: it is not unusual that in preschool playgroups practitioners leave immediately after the session to go to another job or that in a day nursery a break may not be taken until after the children have had their lunch. The support teacher for the setting may be able to suggest times that s/he has found are convenient for the staff.)</p>

Observation and review	<p>Observe either a storytelling session or rhyme time.</p> <p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress in implementing revised storytelling; • progress with Story Audit, reminding practitioners that Story Audit evidence should also be used in the Early Communication Language and Literacy Development Audit; • progress in auditing provision for rhymes, songs and musical activities.
Planning and next steps	<p>Review with the practitioners the progress so far, identify priorities for action and support to compile an action plan.</p> <p>Share action plan with support teacher.</p>
Resources	<p>Story Audit, Annex 1 and Early Communication Language and Literacy Development Audit</p>

Annex 1

PVI Cluster meeting 3

Criteria: Do we ...	What we do now	What we need to do to make it even better
Encourage young children to explore and imitate sounds?		
Encourage repetition, rhythm and rhyme by reciting poems and rhymes and singing?		

<p>Use rhymes from a variety of cultures and ask parents to share their favourites?</p>		
<p>Provide opportunities for children to move rhythmically to music, such as skipping, rocking and dancing?</p>		

<p>Make up alliterative jingles and play with words in everyday activities?</p>		
<p>Make up alternative endings and encourage the children to supply the last word of a nursery rhyme?</p>		

<p>Draw attention to the similarities in sounds at the beginning of words, emphasising initial sounds?</p>		
<p>Play games with children to encourage them to listen for the sound at the beginning of a word?</p>		

<p>Set up a listening area where children can enjoy music, rhymes and stories?</p>		
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