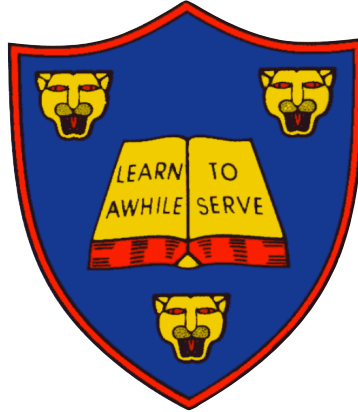


Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School



English curriculum Writing Policy

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Our school context

Stratford-Upon-Avon Primary School is situated in a culturally rich area, and we are lucky to have internationally-renowned local history on our doorstep. As such, the town has a thriving tourist industry, meaning we benefit from interacting with visitors from far and wide. We are proud to be situated at the heart of Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon and, quite rightly, English is at the heart of everything we do!

All children flourish at our school. We are proud of our long track record of achieving above national average outcomes across all subjects and for all groups. Our children make good - or better - progress from their starting points with us in Reception. Our children leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School ready to succeed at secondary school, and in later life.

We are proud of our rich diversity. Though we are 65% White British, the percentage of children in our school with EAL is above the national average. Many of our children have dual heritage and speak two languages. In fact, we currently speak 16 languages across the school! We also have above national average numbers of pupils with SEND.

We work hard to ensure that our curriculum is equitable, inclusive, inspiring and purposeful. Our English curriculum enables all pupils to be at their best.

Intent and implementation overview

At Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, we know that all our children can, and must, become fluent readers and writers. Ensuring children quickly adopt the alphabetic code and the necessary skills to read, and then write, with confidence is our priority. We have intentionally chosen a rigorous phonics programme that encourages the immediate application of phonic knowledge and skills to writing. We intentionally create an inspiring environment which includes rich, immersive texts and provide ample opportunities to write with enthusiasm. We have then ensured our implementation is based upon effective, research-informed pedagogies and that our teaching sequences ensure appropriate, sequential knowledge and skills progression throughout school. Our approaches are inclusive and sufficiently challenging; they are followed consistently by all to manage cognitive load and enable pupils to attend to new learning; they provide ample opportunity for retrieval and consolidation so learning is embedded in the long term memory; and they allow for our pupils to demonstrate personality and flair.

Impact

Our approaches are rigorous and equip our children with the knowledge and skills to be at their best as writers. As such, our children consistently achieve above national average outcomes. Our progressive writing curriculum ensures children can write fluently and accurately, and that children enjoy doing so. They are excited to read, publish and perform their writing for their intended audience. They are reflective and able to evaluate their own impact and success. Our children see themselves as writers, poets and playwrights, and would love to discuss their authorial choices with you.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the English Policy: Reading and Phonics.

Overview - Our writing week



Handwriting

In KS1, every morning we begin with taught handwriting lessons.
In KS2, handwriting lessons respond to diagnostic assessment and skills gaps.



The writing process

Lessons that form part of the writing sequence happen daily.



Little Wandle phonics

From Reception to Key Stage 1, whole class phonics lessons happen daily.
In Key Stage 2, we offer phonics interventions for pupils who would benefit from them.



'Do Now'

Daily writing lessons begin with a grammar blast which facilitate retrieval and consolidation of knowledge and skills taught previously.



Spellings investigations

We introduce new patterns and morphologies weekly.

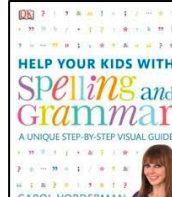
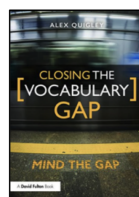
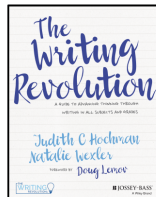
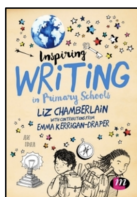


Writing across the wider curriculum

We embed writing opportunities across the wider curriculum where we encourage children to apply their learning.

Our research-informed approach

Our approach is based upon research and pedagogies which have had a demonstrable impact upon learning within contexts such as ours. We are committed to supporting our teachers to stay up to date and informed about current developments within English and cognitive science around learning and memory. Our teachers and teaching assistants regularly attend CPD in order to continue their own learning.



We also support our teachers to work 'smarter not harder' by adapting existing resources created by English experts where possible.

Our approach to handwriting

For additional information about our approach, please see our **Handwriting Policy**.

Every morning, children from EYFS upwards practise their handwriting following our progressive curriculum that ensures skills build incrementally and are retrieved to consolidate. Handwriting is an integral component of the English programmes of study for Key Stages 1 and 2.

The programmes describe two dimensions of writing:

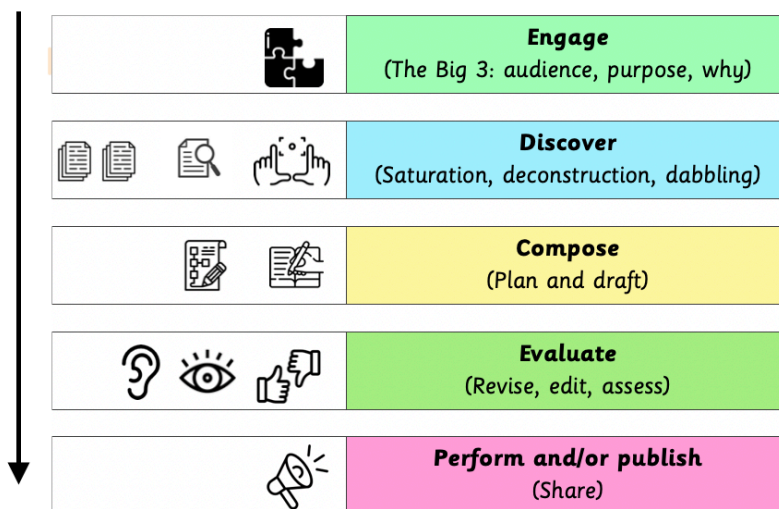
- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

The curriculum demands that teaching should develop competence in both dimensions, as writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription. This relationship defines the role of handwriting as a functional tool in the writing process. The National Curriculum for English places high importance on handwriting, but does not provide guidance on how it should be taught. It also does not specify a particular font style, for example. At Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, we adopt a casual cursive style. We build fluency progressively throughout school so that children are able to quickly record their thinking in a legible, well-presented style.

Implementation

In EYFS and LKS1, children focus upon their acquisition of phonic knowledge and its application in writing. They learn letter formation and proportionality, and rehearse writing simple sentences with accuracy using correct punctuation and finger spaces. Writing is always linked to their reading of rich texts and/or by firsthand experiences, such as trips. Sentences are dictated so that children's cognitive load is well-managed meaning they can attend to transcription rather than composition until they are fluent at this skill. When pupils are secure and ready to compose their own sentence, they are always orally rehearsed, held in the memory, and then written.

Implementation: the writing sequence from UKS1



The writing process from UKS1

This process replicates the stages a professional author might follow when constructing a text.

Each stage is expertly modelled by the teacher as children become familiar with this process and are guided to improve their writing through structured tasks.

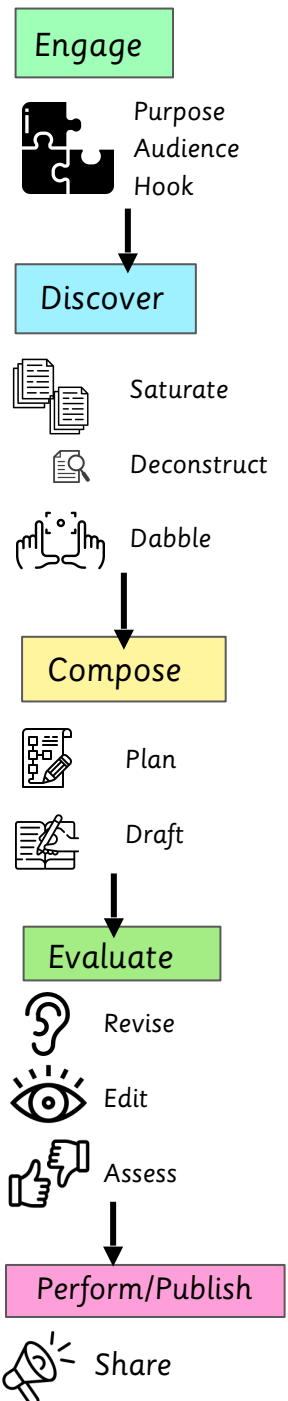
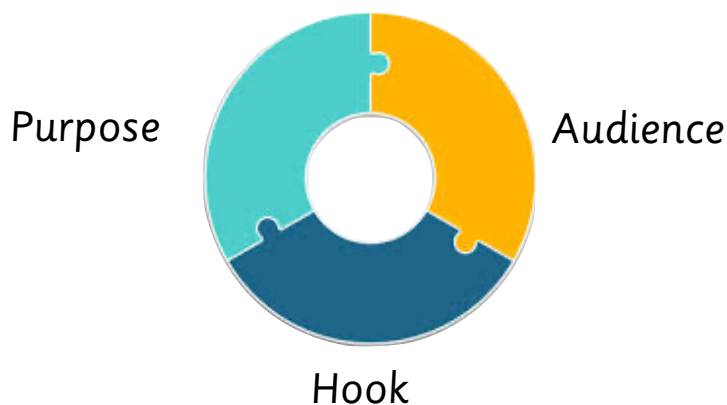
All writing units are sequenced in this way. The writing process generally takes around three weeks - but this is an approximate guide and should not be slavishly followed. The text type, children's age, the children's prior experience, their level of engagement, and their rate of learning will dictate how long should be spent on each component.

Working walls show this process in our classrooms as we create visual schemas. In UKS2, pupils should be aware of this sequence and able to articulate it.

Launching with purpose: The Big 3

We have a clear understanding of our **purpose** for writing (what impact we want to achieve by writing) and our **audience** (who we are writing for). Each writing unit begins with an engaging **hook** that inspires the children so that they are motivated to write.

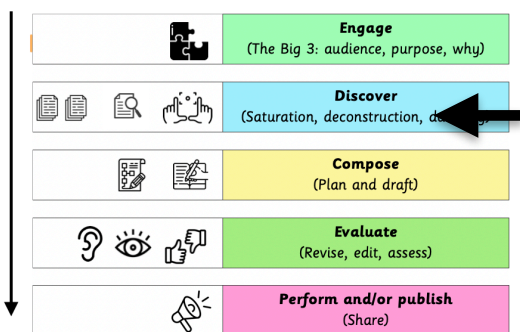
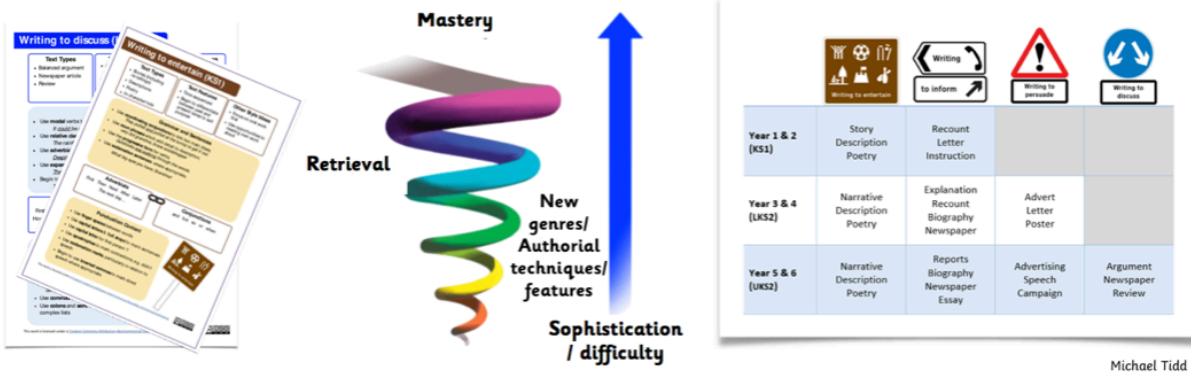
We share the 'Big 3' with the children so that they are able to think about how word choices, tone, information they include, and their writing style should be adapted to their audience.



Choosing our outcome

Once we have established our 'Big 3' (hook, purpose and audience), we then involve our children in a conversation about **what** we should write. We ensure that we cover a balance of genres and foreground retrieval opportunities, but we do not teach text types for the sake of coverage (e.g. prescribing that every year group must teach instruction texts in Spring). We build upon our children's knowledge of genre and authorial technique throughout the year, and throughout their school journey, ensuring that they are always able to explain **why** they have chosen to write what they have in the way that they have. Our children experience a balanced and varied diet of written genres inspired by rich texts.

During the writing process, we link our decision-making to our 'Big 3', asking questions such as 'Which text type would be most powerful / effective and help us to achieve our purpose? Which features do we need to include and why?' Our children therefore understand that some texts are more appropriate in different contexts, for different audiences and to achieve different end goals. We guide our children's purposeful selection.



Discover

Our children read for inspiration and imitation. They are saturated with a range of high quality texts that focus on the same purpose of writing. They are encouraged to **read like a writer** and **write like a reader**. They look at these texts to help them improve their understanding of genre conventions and commonalities.

They then hone in on quality, foci text examples and deconstruct them in detail. Teachers find or self-author texts which foreground authorial techniques that they wish to develop during 'dabbles' (explicit skills teaching). Teachers construct these texts by referring to our writing success criteria and genre conventions documents to ensure they are of an appropriate, age-related standard.

SATURATION ACTIVITIES

Oral rehearsal (fluency)	Dramatic interpretation	Comprehension tasks (CFU)	Quizzes
Diamond Nine	Summarise in your own words	True or false..?	Scavenger hunts Find me...



DECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

Highlight the features & discuss their usefulness	Cut out the features & categorise	Make a scrapbook of similar techniques	Scavenger hunt: Collect examples in a pair / group
Make a poster of features	Teach someone else what features must be included	Box up key facts	Text mark



Our teachers have excellent subject knowledge and share their understanding of the text at a sentence and word level. They guide the class's exploration of these texts and help to unpick them, developing a collective understanding of why the author has made the choices they have, and 'banking them' so that they are be imitated later. We ask: What is the impact? What effect is achieved?

When encouraging children to interact with texts, the children are guided to either **analyse the text** (finding and categorising information) **or deconstruct the text** (exploring the structure).

Analysing texts:

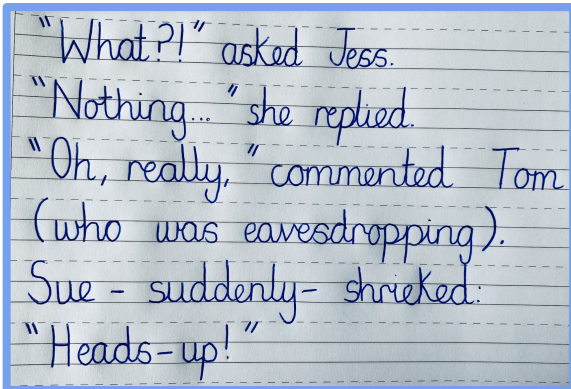
- Text marking (Find and underline parts of the text that have a particular meaning or contain particular information.)
- Text segmenting and labelling (Break the text into meaningful chunks and label each chunk.)
- Table construction (Draw a table. Use the information in the text to decide on row and column headings and to fill in the cells.)
- Diagram construction (Construct a diagram that explains the meaning of the text.)
- Questioning (Answer the teacher's questions or develop questions about the text.)
- Summarising

Deconstructing texts:

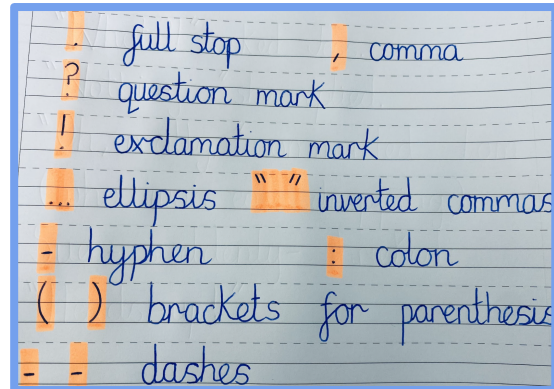
- Text completion (Fill in missing words, phrases or sentences.)
- Sequencing (Arrange jumbled segments of text in a logical or time sequence.)
- Grouping (Group segments of text according to categories.)
- Table completion (Fill in the cells of a table that has row and column headings, or provide row and column headings where cells have already been filled in.)
- Diagram completion (Complete an unfinished diagram or label a finished diagram.)
- Prediction activities (Write the next step or stage of a text, or end the text.)

Consistent approaches: punctuation

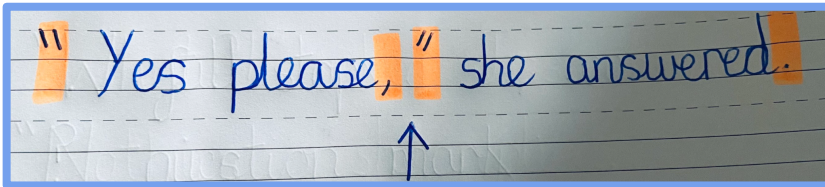
We have a consistent approach to how we **punctuate** throughout school.



An example of a written conversation.



How we name and form punctuation.



How we punctuate direct speech.

We teach 'grammar dabbles' throughout the writing sequence. We provide retrieval opportunities to assess what the children remember and help it to become 'sticky' in their long-term memories, so that these skills can be progressively built upon.

Grammar retrieval practice - 'Do now'

We teach grammar in the context of what we are writing. Every English lesson begins with some 'Do now' tasks which are primarily about retrieving skills and knowledge, applying these to solve problems, and thus embedding learning within the long term memory. These are often gamified to encourage maximum participation and pacy completion, and involve punctuation and syntax errors that require fixing (e.g. 'Sentence Scramble'). These happen for a minimum of 10 minutes daily and encourage children to retrieve and apply previously-taught skills and knowledge. Essential knowledge and skills are mapped progressively throughout school. (Please see Appendix 1 for progression information). Teachers circulate to ensure precision and accuracy. This is corrected immediately. Pupils self-mark using purple pen.

Grammar dabbles - Lessons for direct grammar instruction

We use a research-informed approach to grammar instruction. We teach grammar within the context of what we are reading and writing.



Use real text examples



Focus upon the effect



Talk about the impact



Use creative imitation



Create a risk-free environment in which to experiment



Reading and investigation



Explicit teaching and direct modelling

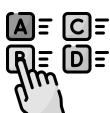


Discussion and experimentation



Making controlled written choices

Activities within these lessons make look like



quizzes



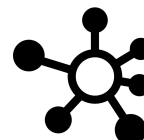
spot & correct
the mistake



varied question mats



targeted questioning



info dumping

Now that we have studied our rich text, are fluent when reading it, and have completed a variety of comprehension activities to ensure we fully understand its content, we are ready to hone in on some of the authorial techniques we may want to mimic.

Prior to constructing their model text, teachers have conducted an initial assessment and gap analysis. They have ensured that their text demonstrates some grammatical features and techniques that they wish to foreground during this unit of work.

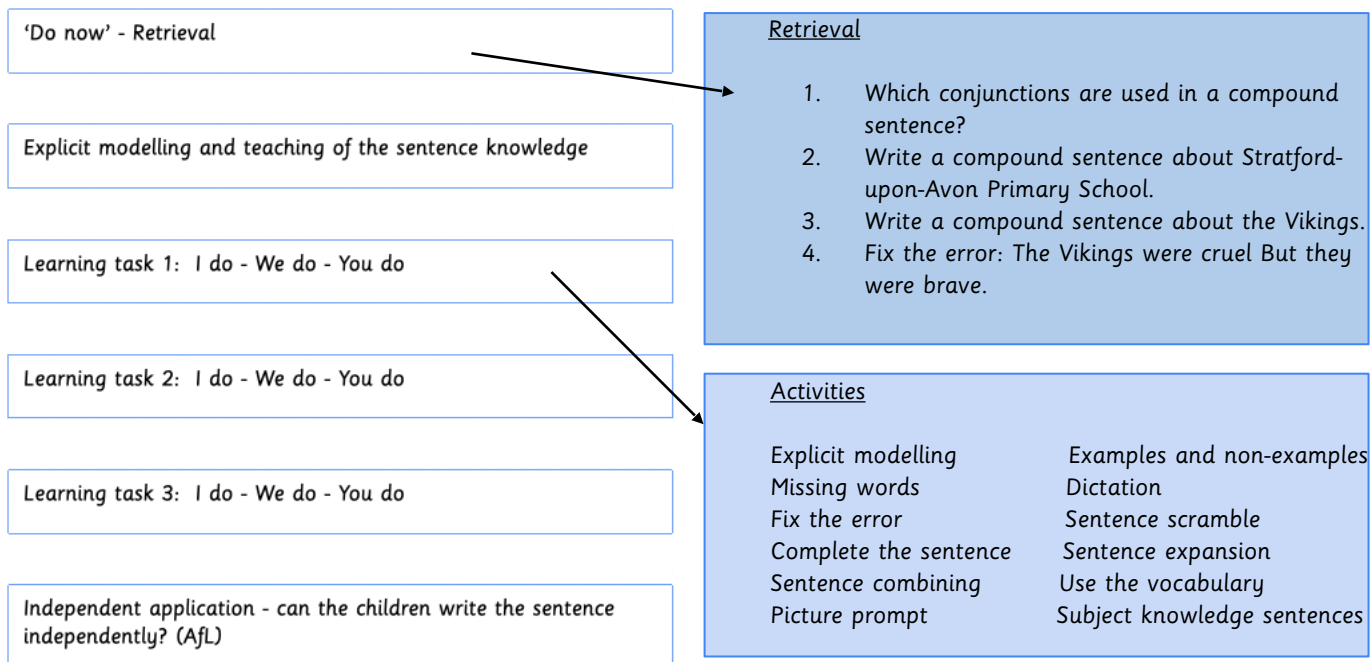
After having rich discussions about foregrounded authorial techniques and their effect on the reader, the children are ready to have a go themselves and, following direct teacher modelling, they imitate these techniques until they are comfortable using them. This might be verbally, in writing or a combination of the two. Our aim is to add new authorial tools to their repertoire which they can then plan to use purposefully and apply successfully in their own writing.

During the dabbling phase, feedback from adults is directional. Children are explicitly told how to improve to become more accurate when applying grammatical skills.

The emphasis is on **quality** of output over **quantity**, and working **accurately**.

(Please see Appendix 2 for details of our grammar progression by year group.)

The learning sequence of a grammar dabble may look like this:

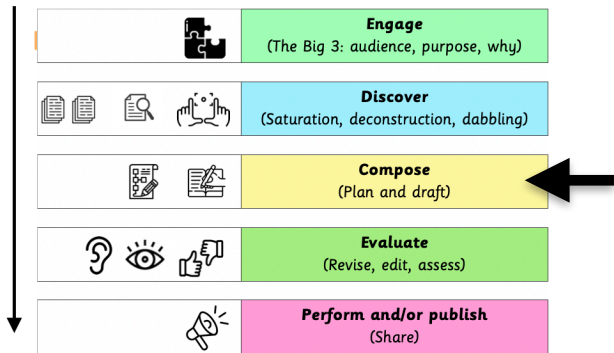


Compose

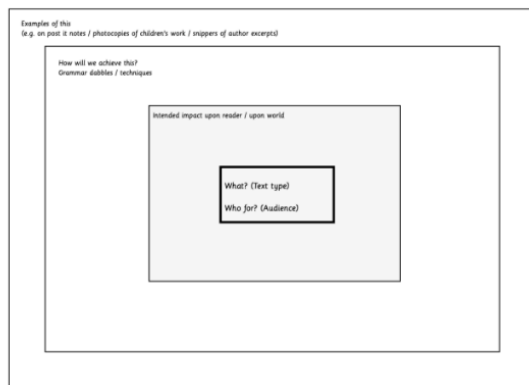
As our children **read like writers** and develop their repertoire of authorial techniques and grammatical skills during the ‘discover’ phase, they use this planning tool to help them to ‘bank’ their discoveries.

In UKS1, these jottings may be done by an adult or may be visual aide memoirs. As the children move through school, they become more familiar with this tool and can use it with increasing independence. These ‘banks’ also form a part of our working walls in the classrooms. Teachers are provided CPD to ensure consistency in using this tool.

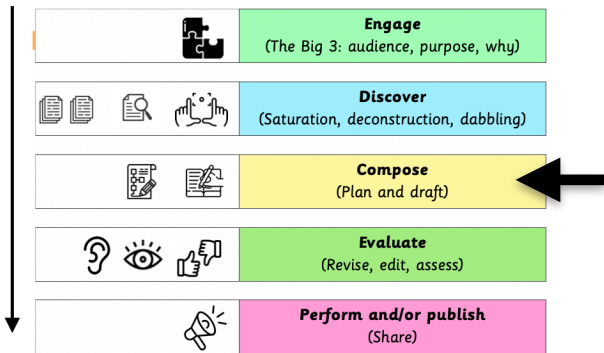
(See guidance document).



This tool is then used to support children when **planning** their own texts and choosing features to imitate to achieve a particular effect. “I have chosen to use ___ because ____.” At the **evaluating** stage, these help our writers to reflect independently: “Have I used the key features and skills I wanted to successfully?”

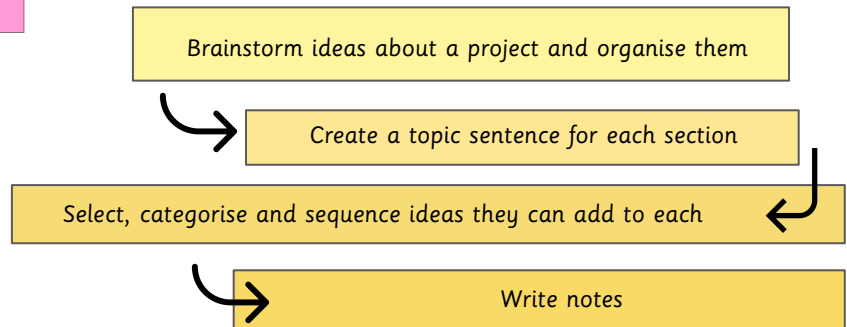


i. Empty example.



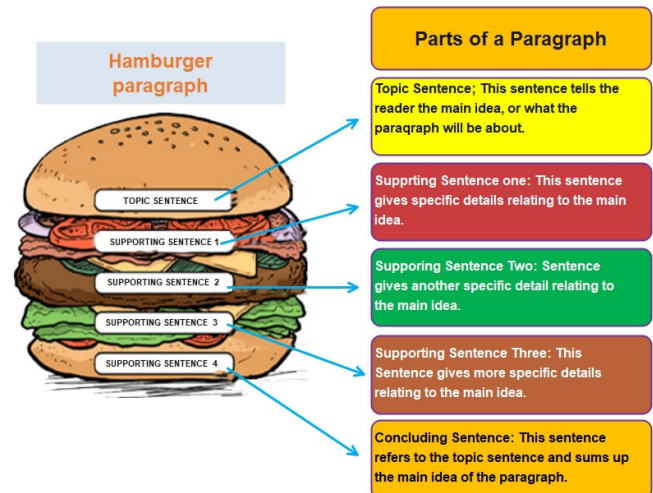
Compose: planning and draft

We explicitly teach our children how to use different planning scaffolds and redrafting techniques to help them to organise their thinking, reduce cognitive overload, structure their writing coherently and make improvements.



“Burger paragraphs” - a boxed up planning approach

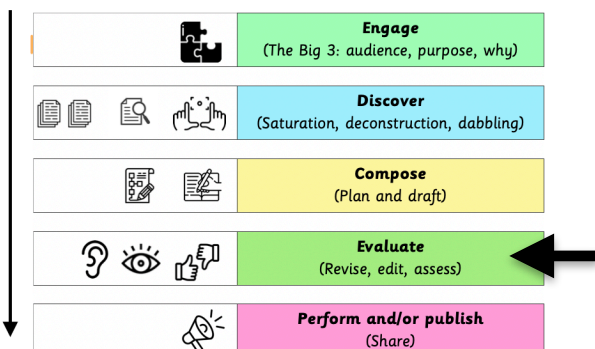
As as a whole school, we follow a boxed-up planning approach organised around an engaging visual: ‘the burger paragraph’. It is a progressive model that develops year on year so as to reduce cognitive load and allow children to attend to their ideas and content rather than the planning process itself. This approach is introduced in the final term of Year 2 at the earliest.



Evaluating: editing and revising

We establish an ethos of high standards, and we support children to develop a growth mindset whereby they are **motivated to improve** their work.




We explicitly teach editing in a progressive way throughout school, so that by the time the children are in UKS2, they are independent proof-readers who are motivated to improve their writing and require few, increasingly non-specific prompts from their teacher.



Editing or revising

Our children work in a variety of ways when **editing** and **revising**, which are separate but related skills. Before beginning an evaluation lesson, the foci are established and techniques precisely modelled. Questioning is used to encourage ownership and self-reflection so that children work with increasing independence. Scaffolding is reduced as pupils travel through school.

- **Revising** changes what the writing **sounds** like. We use the acronym ARMS.
- **Editing** changes that the writing **looks** like. We use the acronym COPS.

Revise - think ARMS	Edit - think COPS 
	
Add: Sentences and words	Capitalisation
Remove: Unnecessary words/sentences	Openers and organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vary sentence stems • Check paragraphs are correct
Move: Change a sentence or a word placement	Punctuation: Correct and improve usage
Substitute: Trade words or sentences for others	Spelling: Check all words and use a digital dictionary or word bank

Example activities	
Read writing aloud	Editing flaps
Editing partners	Highlighting features
Conferencing	Purple pen improvements
Digital marking and audio prompts	Writing on every other line so edits are possible in between
	Tracing paper overlays

Editing expectations

(For further information about feedback codes, for example, please see our **Feedback policy**.)

Children develop their editing skills at age appropriate stages. They use a purple pen when responding to feedback.

In KS1 adults circulate to ensure that children have written their simple sentences accurately.

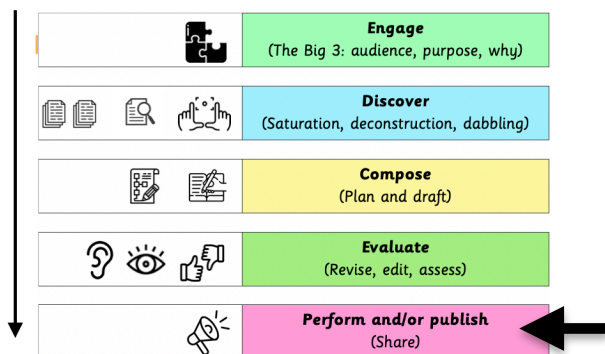
If mistakes have been made, children will receive prompt feedback and will use purple pen to correct their simple sentence errors (ensuring that they have used a capital letter, punctuation to end the sentence, and have applied expected spellings accurately.) Teachers will write a wiggly line under spellings that need correcting.

Children can either correct these errors by writing directly on top of lower case letters and to add punctuation. They can write spellings neatly above if there is room, or underneath.

In KS2 adults circulate to ensure that children are meeting our high standards and producing their best work. In KS2, pupils are taught to become constructive editing partners who offer useful peer feedback.

Editing progression

Year 3 and 4	Evaluate and edit by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the effectiveness of their own and other’s writing and suggesting improvements Proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors
Year 5 and 6	Evaluate and edit by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposing changes to vocabulary and grammar, to enhance effects and clarify meaning Ensuring the consistent and correct use of tense throughout the piece Ensuring correct subject and verb agreement when using singular and plural, distinguishing between language of speech and writing and choosing appropriate register Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors



Performing and publishing

Throughout the writing process, our learners are constantly reminded of their purpose / provocation. Adults role-model enthusiasm for their subject, a motivation to write, and a belief that their writing can change the world. Our learners are constantly reminded of ‘The Big 3’ and their journey towards performing and publishing what they have written so that our outcomes are of a high quality and are meaningful. Often, our end goals involve the wider community.

Publishing and performing ideas

Plugged (links to our digital curriculum)	Unplugged
Zooming a class in another country to share our writing.	Creating a newspaper stand from which to sell their newspaper
Publishing an online promotional video.	Having a sleepover to read scary stories to one another or a sibling who is also invited
Sharing a podcast.	Handing out leaflets to promote a cause
Creating a prospectus video - Welcome to Burford - including drone footage and a voiceover.	Publishing a prospectus to hand out to new Burford parents
Using green screen to bring dramatic speeches to life.	Actioning a campaign. Handing out information, pin badges, promotional materials. Having a stall at a protest rally.
Creating e-texts to share with others.	Attending a meeting with a local councillor to present a persuasive speech.
Zooming an Old Peoples’ Home and sharing stories or poems.	Publishing a text in the local library.
Zooming an author to share our writing which was inspired by their work.	Writing a letter to a politician or Big Business.

Assessment

(In addition to this policy, please see our **Assessment policy**, **Feedback policy** and **Inclusion policy** which cover our approach across all subjects in greater detail.)

Children receive 'live' verbal feedback in lessons and respond using purple pen so that misconceptions are addressed immediately and they are encouraged to reflect on the efficacy of their authorial choices as they read and write.

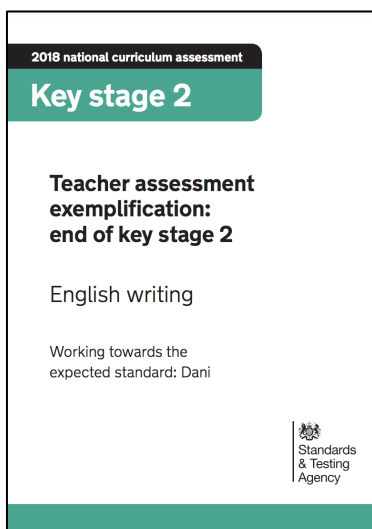
Their final piece of writing is used to assess their writing against our writing descriptors (TAFs). These then cumulatively form a portfolio of evidence to support our teacher judgements at WTS, EXS or GD.

Assessments are moderated by the English Leader and at Trust-wide moderation events; and by our SENDCo.

This gap analysis then informs teaching next steps and interventions which ensure all pupils achieve their potential.

The expected standard

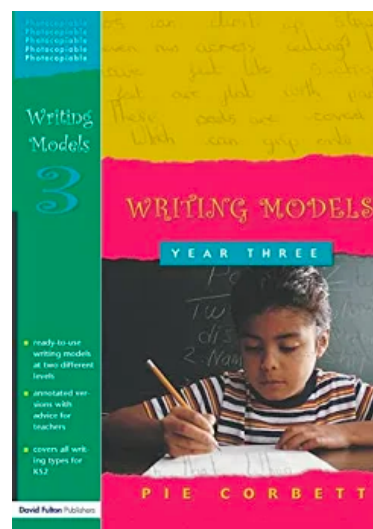
Our teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are experts at making writing judgements for their cohort. To ensure teacher knowledge and confidence we ensure practitioners access an excellent CPD offer complemented by the following materials:



Teacher assessment exemplification materials provided by the Standards & Testing Agency



Grammarsaurus' model texts which are annotated to draw attention to examples of grammatical features



Writing models at different points throughout the writing year.

We also retain examples of writing produced at EXS+ by children in previous years and refer to a building portfolio of evidence. Our teachers attend Trust-wide events and city-wide events where we moderate writing together with teachers in the same year groups as our own.