



Primary National Strategy

Improving Boys' Writing: Purpose and Audience



Links to PNS resources and others

Playing with Sounds (DfES 0280-2004)

Grammar for Writing (DfEE 2000, Ref. DfEE 0107/2000)

Developing Early Writing (DfEE 2001, Ref DfEE 0055/2001)

Resources on the Primary Strategy Website (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary):

- Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage
- Foundation Stage Profile
- Quality Texts to Support the Teaching of Writing
- NLS Exemplified Units of Work
- Year 5 and Year 6 Booster Units

Further Literacy Support (FLS) materials (DfES 0359/2002)

Teaching Writing: Support Material for Text Level Objectives (DfES 2001, Ref. DfES 0532/2001)

Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA/00/587)

QCA Schemes of Work for Key Stages 1 & 2

Effective Practice in writing at Key Stage 2, Graham Frater (Basic Skills Agency 2001
ISBN 1 85990 171 9)

Websites

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/teachingresources

www.bbc.co.uk/history/forkids

Ideas for CPD

- Plan for cross-curricular literacy making links with the *Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage* or NLS unit plans and QCA units of work, and school-based foundation subject planning
- Revisit literacy planning to ensure that cohesive units are being taught across the school and that the context for writing is meaningful and relevant
- Carry out paired work scrutiny to ensure that word and sentence level learning is applied in writing and that this is detailed explicitly in planning
- Create and use strategies for facilitating 'partner-peer-review' of writing. Video examples of practice to share
- Audit the activities boys engage with in a Foundation Stage setting and provide 'real' writing opportunities in role-play, small world and construction activities
- Arrange peer observation of a group of underachieving boys, including pupil interviews on attitudes to writing; use this information for future planning

"We wrote a non-chronological report about life in Roman Britain. We were learning about the Romans in History, so we already knew all the information. All we had to do was write it down properly. We added pictures and maps as well.
It was great!"
Jamil, Jr 5

"We wrote instructions for a magic trick. J3 did the trick then told us whether they were any good. That really helped us improve our writing."
Femi, Year 5

Give writing meaning

I find that the boys in my class are more enthusiastic in their writing if each task has a very clear purpose. This can be linked to the skills of writing, (e.g. the purpose of an effective plan) or can be achieved through real audiences, publication or display, or through encouraging writing that expresses personal opinions.

Jane, Year 5 teacher

Key principles

- From the Foundation Stage onwards ensure that 'real' writing activities are planned for
- Plan that each literacy session/activity is part of a cohesive unit of work and is not just a 'one-off'
- Make the boys aware of the purpose of each task within the unit, in particular, how a skill or concept can be applied to other learning, or in another curriculum area
- Demonstrate how skills learned in word and sentence level teaching are applied in 'real' writing activities
- Ensure that the audience for writing is made clear and that, wherever possible, this audience goes beyond the immediate classroom/setting environment
- Facilitate 'partner-peer-review' during writing sessions so that pupils are kept aware of the importance of revisiting their work to make changes and improvements
- Create real opportunities for audience involving parents/carers

Improving Boys' Writing: Purpose and Audience

Foundation Stage

- Write shopping lists to use in the supermarket role-play area.
- Write about a visit to the local shopping their home-setting profile book.
- Create captions to explain how construction-kit models work.
- Write captions to go with photographs on a large story map to be used as a support for oral retelling.
- Use sticky notes to label models, small world play.



Foundation Stage children had been reading *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. They dressed up and retold the story, both in the role play area and outside. The practitioner took a series of digital photographs that the children then used for sequencing the story. They then dictated sentences to go with the pictures and made a 'big book' to use. This book was the most popular story-time choice for weeks!

Ravi loves making train tracks around the nursery. The practitioner provided paper and pens for Ravi to draw a map of his tracks and encouraged him to label it to help his peers follow his route. Ravi spent 35 minutes engaged in this activity and then used it with friends and rebuilt the track.

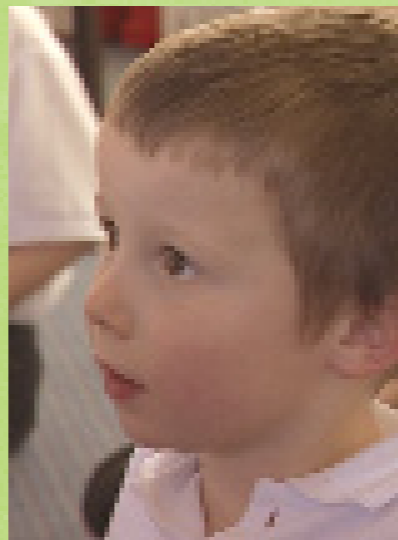
Year 1 and Year 2

Rory enjoys using the computer, but was reluctant to write. He was asked to write some instructions for other children on how to print images and change font sizes. He immediately began to write and the teacher used his writing for shared work the next day. Rory went on to write a computer book for the rest of his class.

Year 1 pupils had visited the seaside in the first half of the summer term. While there, they had visited a Sea-Life Centre. The teacher took lots of digital photos during the trip. On returning to school, the teacher told them that the headteacher wanted to include some information about the trip in the summer newsletter to parents.

The pupils used the photos to order their recounts, working in pairs to retell the recounts orally before writing. They then wrote their recounts on a specially prepared 'newsletter' writing frame. The recounts were attached to all of the newsletters sent out at the end of term. Every child's work was used.

- Write own versions of popular stories for YR's reading corner.
- Write instructions for everyday in-school activities and display them as hints/reminders.
- Write story-maps with captions to help with story-telling and writing.
- Write a new section for an information book (e.g. a section about 'scooters' for a book about 'Wheels').
- Write recounts of science investigations.
- Write instructions for making models, then make and display the models.



Year 3 and Year 4



- Prepare a class anthology of poems following a poetry-writing unit.
- Write articles for the school newspaper.
- Write instructions for outdoor PE activities, test, evaluate and re-draft.
- During story-writing sessions, give pupils peer-review time, when they work in pairs to read each other's writing, praising success and making suggestions for improvement.
- Use knowledge from RE to help create non-chronological reports, e.g. 'Sikhism', or recounts, e.g. 'The Life Of Guru Nanak'.

Year 4 pupils had been studying different faiths in R.E. They interviewed adults in the school community to ask them about their places of worship. They also read a selection of information texts from their project resource box before undertaking research on a chosen area of the subject.

They then created their own non-chronological report from their notes, using the format and structures identified earlier. Some pupils used ICT to do this. The finished writing was then 'published' in the school library, to be used for successive Year 4 classes. The class kept their own copies for further reference during their RE lessons.

When asked about writing Jamil stated that he loved 'proper' writing. When questioned further he explained that this was writing for other people, his Mum, the school newspaper, a book he had made for the head-teacher. 'I am being a real writer then'.

Year 5 and Year 6

Year 5 pupils were working on the QCA unit 'Biscuits'. Working in small groups, they had designed unusual biscuit shapes and written recipes. When it came to making the biscuits, the groups swapped recipes. As they worked to cook the biscuits, they noted any points at which the recipes were not clear, badly worded, etc. After the cooking session, the groups made suggestions for improving the recipes so that the authors could make appropriate changes. After that, the improved recipes were then given to Year 6, who evaluated them by making the biscuits themselves and commenting on the effectiveness of the written instructions.

Connor made a remote control robot in technology. The class were asked to write an adventure story for Year 3, where the model was a central character. Connor wrote a five-page story which was then re-drafted after feedback from Year 3. Copies were published as a 'limited edition short story': one for the class library; one for Year 3 and one for his parents.

- Write persuasive posters/informative leaflets about health/PHSE-related topics (e.g. drugs, smoking, etc.) to be displayed in school/local community.
- Following a science topic on 'sound', pupils work in pairs to create an explanatory text on PowerPoint to be displayed during parents' evening.
- Make links with a school in a contrasting locality and e-mail information (text and pictures) for a joint geography topic.
- Write book reviews for the school website.

