The Writing For Pleasure Centre's Big Book Of Writing Mini-Lessons

Lessons That Teach Powerful Craft Knowledge For 3-11 Year Olds

Ross Young, Felicity Ferguson, Tobias Hayden & Marcela Vasques

The Writing For Pleasure Centre
- Promoting research-informed writing teaching

The Writing For Pleasure Centre

The mission of The Writing For Pleasure Centre is to help all young people become passionate and successful writers. We look to accomplish this goal by investigating what world-class writing teaching might be. We do this through:

- Our school residencies and teacher training workshops.
- Curriculum development and creating resources.
- Conducting, disseminating and publishing research.
- Working with children, teachers, school leaders, teacher-educators and charities.

We have developed this research-rich website to share the most effective teaching practices. It's our hope that teachers regard The Writing For Pleasure Centre website as a place where they can access a specialist network and continued professional development that is free.

The Research Base

For the past fifty years, research has been consistent on what makes great writing teaching. Despite this, we as teachers can be inundated by a variety of approaches and training, all promising a lot but often lacking the necessary grounding to be successful in the long-term. This is why our website and pedagogy is based on the following:

- Extensive scientific research into the most effective writing instruction.
- Case studies of what the best performing teachers of writing do that makes the difference.
- Our own research into a *Writing For Pleasure* pedagogy.
- The wisdom of professional writers.

If you're new to the idea of a *Writing For Pleasure* pedagogy, you can read all about it at **writing4pleasure.com**

The Writing For Pleasure Centre functions both as a think tank and as an action research community. The result is that we are continually engaged in sharing effective practices, case studies and research findings.

The authors have dedicated a great deal of time and effort to writing the content of this booklet, and their written expression is protected by copyright law. We respectfully ask that you do not adapt, reuse, or copy anything on third-party (whether for-profit or not-for-profit) lesson-sharing websites. This resource is for the purchasing institution only. As always, we are happy to answer any questions you may have at **literacyforpleasure@gmail.com**

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Contents

Introduction 4
Navigating the book 6
Delivering a lesson 27
Further reading 31

Mini-Lessons

Being writers 32
Generating ideas 87
Organisation and structure 151
Fluency 188
Clarity and accuracy 200
Developing 238
Word choices 293
Spelling 299

Index 305
Appendix 332

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Introduction

There is no greater feeling than having children enter your classroom every day seeing themselves as a close-knit community of apprentice writers. They know that every day, when they enter the writing workshop that is your classroom, it's going to start with you giving them a valuable writing lesson

- Young & Ferguson (2020)

Every time we teach a lesson about the craft of writing, we move children towards becoming genuine, independent and successful writers. They learn what writers do, the processes they use, the literary techniques and strategies they apply, the discipline, habits and behaviours they exhibit, and finally the frustrations, exhilarations, satisfactions and, ultimately, the pleasures that come from being a writer.

Writing-study mini-lessons are the single most effective practice a teacher of writing can employ (Young & Ferguson 2021). Put simply, it's about sharing some powerful 'how to' knowledge, the 'hints, tips and secrets' of being a writer, if you like, before inviting children to apply what you've taught them during that day's writing time. It's all about focusing explicitly on the teaching of writing. It's about children learning more about the writer's craft. The important thing is that your pupils feel they are learning something valuable that other excellent and experienced writers do, and that they will be able to do it in their writing too.

We know that many teachers feel they don't know where to start when it comes to teaching about writing. This is partly because many of us weren't taught valuable craft knowledge when we were at school, nor did we receive an adequate apprenticeship in how to live the writer's life. As a result, many of us feel we lack knowledge and understanding about how writing is 'made'. We are scared and unsure, and we dislike writing as a result. To add insult to injury, many of us didn't learn how to teach writing effectively on our initial teacher education courses, and so we feel utterly underprepared to write and teach writing (Young & Ferguson 2021).

We delayed writing this book because we believe that it's ultimately *you,* the teacher, who should be creating mini-lessons in response to what your individual class needs. We still hold this view, but we have now come to appreciate that teachers want to see real examples of great writing teaching so that they can see how they can teach it for

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

themselves. As a result, we have teamed up with two other fantastic writer-teachers (Tobias Hayden & Marcela Vasques) to share some of our favourite writing lessons. We hope that you too will write to us and make contributions to this 'library of craft knowledge' we are trying to build together.

Please note that we have not included grammar mini-lessons in this title. These have been published as a separate mini-book entitled: *The Writing For Pleasure Centre's Grammar Mini-Lessons For 5-11 Year Olds*.

What Is Craft Knowledge?

In our book *Writing For Pleasure: theory, research and practice*, we consider what a knowledge-rich writing curriculum might include. This has helped us formulate the way we have organised the 300 mini-lessons that are included in this book.

- **Craft knowledge**
  - **Process knowledge**, knowledge about the processes, procedures, strategies and techniques writers use as they go through their writing process, generating ideas, planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and performing.
  - **Genre knowledge**, the typical textual, linguistic, literary and grammatical features genres employ to be at their most meaningful and successful.
  - **Goal knowledge**, how writers set themselves goals and manage their writing deadlines.
  - **Knowledge about their reader**, how writers will meditate on the purpose for their writing, gather information about and consider their future readership.
  - **Knowledge about a writerly environment**, how writers live and work with others, and the conditions which are conducive to writing productively and happily.
- **Transcriptional knowledge**, including spelling and punctuation conventions and keyboard and handwriting skills.
- **Knowledge of how writers use their reading**, including how they read to enhance their craft knowledge and search for content material.
- **Knowledge of technology and other modalities.**
- **Knowledge of writers' affective needs** as they craft and publish texts. This includes giving attention to their confidence, motivation, desire, competence, and their personal and collective responsibilities.

(Young & Ferguson 2021 p.188)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

If we boil down our approach to teaching the craft of writing, it is as simple as:

Teach, then Invite

Teach. Provide explicit and direct instruction to your class on an aspect of writing you feel they need a better understanding of.
Invite. Invite children to try it out during that day's writing time.

Teach includes:

- **Introduce.** Name and explain what it is you're about to teach and discuss its purpose.
- **Share examples.** Share examples from your own writing, from professional writers, and from the children's own texts.
- **Provide information.** Explain any of the conventions writers typically follow, and share your personal advice.

Invite includes:

- **Try.** Invite children to give it a try during that day's writing time. They can try it within the composition they are developing, or, depending on the mini-lesson, they can experiment on their 'trying things out page' (see page 291).
- **Discuss.** At the end of a writing session, let children discuss how they got on, and share any great examples.
- **Create artefacts.** Make a poster or fact sheet of the mini-lesson. By doing this, you will be helping children understand that they have added something to their writing repertoire and that they can use these artefacts for themselves again and again in the future.

Why are they *mini*-lessons?

There are three fundamental things young writers need every day. Firstly, they need to receive some high-quality teaching in the craft of writing. Secondly, they need an immediate and sustained opportunity to write meaningfully. Finally, they need time to read, share and then discuss how their writing is coming along (Young & Ferguson 2021). That's why we recommend you follow this kind of consistent routine:

Mini-lesson	Writing-time	Class sharing
10-15mins	30-50mins	10-15mins

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

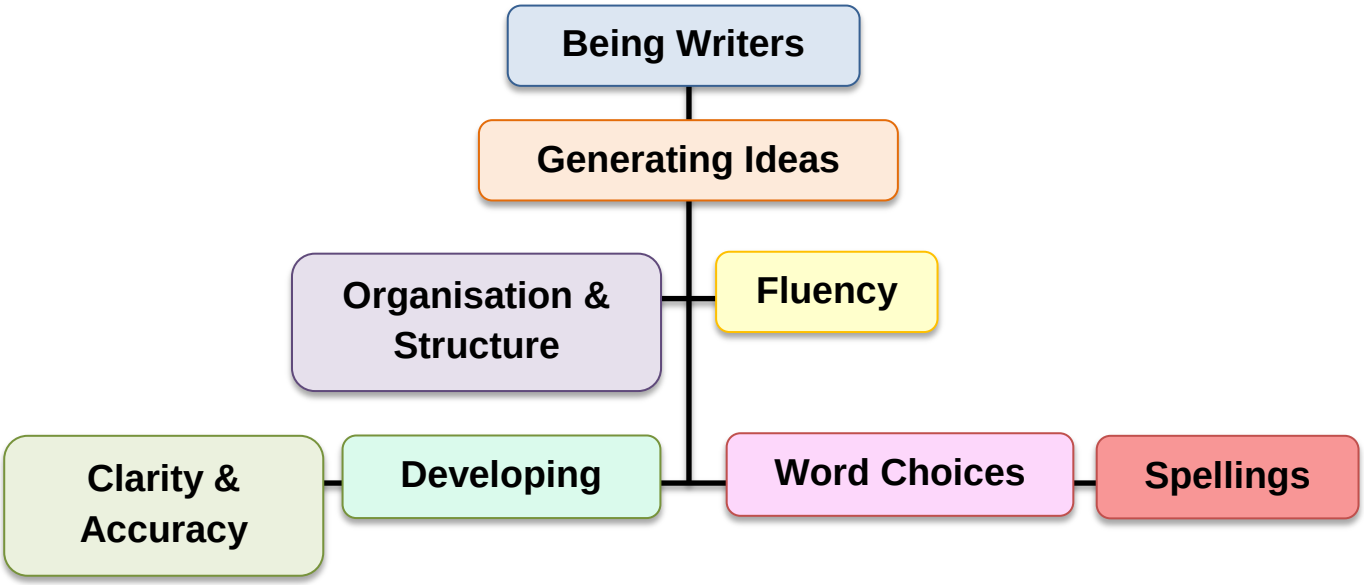
Navigating the book

Navigate the lessons by craft area

The English National Curriculum's programme of study for writing isn't very well organised, nor does it give much advice on developing children's craft knowledge. At times you get the impression that certain items have been plucked from the air and arbitrarily assigned to particular year groups without a rationale. This is a shame because, as we have described earlier, craft knowledge is useful, and children find it interesting when they see how it can enhance their ability to write meaningful and successful texts. With this in mind, we have organised our writing-study mini-lessons in such a way that they reflect what children are trying to achieve in their writing. This allows teachers to ask: *what is it my class actually needs instruction in?*

Our categories include the following craft areas: *Being Writers, Generating Ideas, Organisation & Structure, Fluency, Clarity & Accuracy, Developing, Word Choices* and finally *Spelling.* Developing children's craft knowledge is ultimately about teaching children the knowledge and skills to be responsible, independent and successful writers. This obviously involves learning about how a writer writes and how they are *moved* to write by generating and spotting promising writing ideas. When children are knowledgeable about writing, they are better able to organise and structure it in ways that suit their purpose and audience. They are able to translate their initial thoughts and ideas onto paper fluently. They are able to reflect on and refine their writing by keeping their focus and by writing with clarity. Writers think about the substance of their words and know where elaboration and detail is necessary. They also consider their word choices and use of vocabulary. Finally, writers try to adhere to the conventions that their readers come to expect, and so are able to write something that is accurate and successful.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Our first category of mini-lessons is ***Being Writers.*** These lessons give children essential instruction in the disciplines, behaviours, routines and dispositions of writers. They also focus on the social aspects of being a writer in a writing community, showing ways of talking, thinking, discussing and sharing compositions with others, and presenting writing to a variety of audiences both in and out of school. However, they are also about setting goals and getting things done. For example, how to manage your time, how to regulate yourself and work independently, and how to stay focused and motivated.

Next, we have ***Generating Ideas***. Mini-lessons in generating ideas are vital. Without them, children don't find the necessary motivation and desire to write. Idea generation techniques teach children where and how writers begin. Children learn how to mine their thoughts, feelings, experiences, reading, knowledge and imaginative ideas for the rich and fruitful writing topics they want to pursue.

Lessons in ***Organisation & Structure*** and ***Fluency*** often need to come next. These lessons help children take their ideas and the packages of images and thoughts from their head and get them onto paper (or screen) quickly and happily.

Next, we have mini-lessons which support children to ***Develop*** the substance and style of their initial pieces and to consider the ***Clarity & Accuracy*** of their written message; reflect on their ***Word Choices*** and attend to their ***Spellings***. These mini-lessons help children enhance their compositions and prepare them for accurate publication or performance.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

We believe orientating your writing teaching to what your class is wanting (or struggling) to achieve within these craft areas is far healthier and more effective than simply following a predefined writing scheme or unit plan. For example, we hope that teachers will turn to our pages on *Developing* if they notice that their class lacks the ability to write with necessary detail or elaboration. We want you to turn to our lessons on *Word Choices* if you feel children could benefit from giving more attention to their use of vocabulary. And we want you to teach mini-lessons about *Clarity & Accuracy* if the children's writing needs to stand up and be taken seriously by their future readers.

Being Writers	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
Setting up our own publishing house	32	Any process	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Doing what bookshops do	35	Any process	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Rights and responsibilities of a mini-lesson	37	Any process	All genres	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Rights and rules during book-making time	38	Any process	All genres	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1
Rights and rules during Author's Chair	39	Any process	All genres	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1
What can we learn about writing from this writing?	40	Any process	All genres	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What have you learnt about writing today?	42	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How to write in collaboration	42	Any process	All genres	Confidence, Motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Tell it if you can't read it	43	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Hey! We could do that in our books!	45	Any process	All genres	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1
What to do when you don't know what to do	46	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
How do you know you're finished?	46	Editing, publishing and performing	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
How to suggest a mini-lesson	48	Any process	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Let's make a to-do list	49	Drafting, revision	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Keeping a writing register	51	Drafting, revising	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Adopt a writer	53	Any process	All genres	Writer-identity	KS1, KS2
How to share your writing with a friend	54	Any process	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	KS1, KS2
How to respond to your friend's writing	56	Any process	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	KS1, KS2
Squirrelling away - how to organise a notebook	57	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Collecting language - speech	58	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Why do we set goals?	58	Any process	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Celebrating goals achieved	60	Any process	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
What went well yesterday?	60	Any process	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What do you need mini-lessons on?	61	Any process	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS2
Can I copy you?	62	Any process	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Give a mentor text a hug	63	Planning, drafting	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What's your writing habit?	64	Any process	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
How motivated are we?	65	Planning	All genres	Motivation	KS1, KS2
How should we celebrate?	65	Publishing and performing	All genres	Motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Why are we doing this project?	66	Publishing and performing	All genres	Motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Percentage complete	66	Any process	All genres	Motivation	KS2
Where's your finish line?	67	Any process	All genres	Motivation	KS1-2
Using a writing calendar	68	Any process	All genres	Motivation, agency	KS2
Our writers' rights and responsibilities	69	Any process	All genres	Writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Writing rivers	71	Any process	All genres	Writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Create a routine	72	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Knowing the writing processes	73	Any process	All genres	Independence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Perform	74	Publishing	Narrative, Poetry	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Muting Michael Rosen	75	Publishing	Poetry	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Choose something delicious from the publishing menu	76	Generating ideas, Publishing	All genres	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Book making	77	Publishing	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Revisit your book	78	Revising	All genres	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
How to use your Writing Station	79	Any process	All genres	Agency, independence	EYFS, KS1
I get by with a little help from my friends: giving advice	80	Any process	All genres	Independence, writer-identity	KS2
Design your own product goals!	80	Revising	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Why do writers write?	83	Generating ideas	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How do writers evaluate their writing?	84	Revising, publishing	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	KS1, KS2

Generating Ideas	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
Let's have an ideas party	87	Generating ideas	All genres	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Leapfrogging using another author's book.	88	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Leapfrogging yourself using a friend's idea	89	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Change something about a text you love	89	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Have your toy as a character	90	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Ideas heart	90	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
What do you know?	92	Generating Ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
How well do you know?	93	Generating Ideas	Non-Fiction	Self-regulation, Independence	KS1, KS2
Read – draw – write	94	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Something I learnt: Warning stories and proverbs	95	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
When I was younger…	95	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency,	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Favourite objects	97	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Favourite places	98	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Top fives and top tens	98	Generating ideas	Narrative, non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Spark line	100	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
What if...	101	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Imagine a day when...	102	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Imagine a moment when...	103	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Inspired by… poems	104	Generating ideas	Poetry	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Intertextuality: finding stories within stories (as a whole class)	105	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Idea webs	107	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Twenty words	108	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Write about topic lessons	109	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Think 'faction'	110	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Fan fiction	111	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Memoirs with strong feelings	112	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Something different happened this time	113	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
What do you do when you're not at school?	113	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I know how to...	114	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Let me tell you...	115	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Information is held in the objects we treasure	115	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I'm an expert in	116	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I want to learn more about...	117	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Conversations over photographs	118	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Take a seed of truth and grow a story	118	Generating ideas	Narrative	Agency, motivation	KS1, KS2
The history that hides in objects	119	Generating ideas	All genres	Agency, motivation	KS1, KS2
Collect one week - write the next	119	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Dreamcatcher to story catcher	120	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
What am I sorry about?	120	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Answering Michael Rosen's four questions	121	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Read a moment	122	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Comb your reading book	123	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Free-writing	123	Generating ideas, planning	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Free-writing on an idea	124	Generating ideas, planning	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Free-writing across the curriculum	124	Generating ideas, planning	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
My life would be different if...	125	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS2
If I were in charge of the world…?	126	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Dear world, how are you?	127	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What makes you cross?	127	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
That's not fair!	128	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Poetry with strong feelings	128	Generating ideas, planning	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Intertextuality: finding stories within stories	129	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Write about what you're most afraid of	130	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Playing on your audience's fears	130	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Conflict: stories about people	131	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Lost of gained? Positive or negative?	133	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Proverbs inspire narrative	134	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Idioms inspire narrative	135	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Themes for great stories	136	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Give a voice to those who can't be heard	137	Generating ideas	Poetry	Independence, agency	KS2
Have you ever wondered about...?	137	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Asking questions	138	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
What have I always wanted to find out about?	139	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Ask your audience...	139	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Use newspapers and magazines	140	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Independence, agency	KS2
What itch needs scratching?	141	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
What do you believe?	141	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Be outrageous	142	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Make a change!	143	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Personal issues to global issues	144	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
The ten most important things about me	144	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Create character mini-books	145	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Write a list	146	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	EYFS, KS1
People watching	146	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Independence, agency	KS2
Language popping like Pinter!	146	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Independence, agency	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Likes and dislikes	147	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, writer identity	KS1, KS2
I know and it's important to me!	147	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, writer identity	KS1, KS2
Colour-noun-poem	148	Generating ideas	Poetry	Independence, writer identity	KS2
Let's rank	149	Generating ideas	All genres	Motivation; writer-identity	KS1, KS2
I've got more ideas than I know what to do with!	150	Generating ideas	All genres	Agency, independence	KS1, KS2

Organisation & Structure	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
What do you notice about books?	151	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
When is a book finished?	152	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
New thing? New page!	153	Drafting	Non-fiction, narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Using labels to help the reader when you're not there	153	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Organise what you know	154	Planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Free writing: Why I love...	155	Generating ideas, planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Star plan to shine	155	Generating ideas Planning	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Talk about your topic… Tell your story...	156	Generating ideas, planning	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Discovery drafts: write it in five minutes!	157	Generating ideas, planning	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Keep it simple: use story arcs	157	Planning	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Life mapping	159	Generating ideas, planning	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Introducing your topic	160	Planning, drafting	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Webbing	161	Planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Classification diagrams: Make a topic tree then you'll see	162	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Five finger planner	163	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Plan it by post-it	163	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Draw then write	164	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Draw a map	165	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Planning rivers	166	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Journey planning	167	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Planning grids	168	Planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Timeline	169	Generating ideas, planning	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Thinking in paragraphs	170	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Pilcrows: Marking paragraphs	171	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Persona	172	Planning, drafting	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Symbolism	172	Planning, drafting	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Is your last line really necessary?	173	Drafting, revising	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Storyboarding	174	Planning, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Playing God? Choosing a narrator	176	Planning, revising	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Writing in role: Teaching in role	178	Planning, drafting	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Begin by setting the scene	178	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
The power of using 'you'	179	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Lead your reader to the instructions	180	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Would I robot be able to follow my instructions?	181	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Add a glossary	181	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Question web	182	Planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Make notes	182	Planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Read some text - shrink the text	183	Planning	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Not enough facts? Paint with words	185	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Leave space for your readers!	186	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Self-regulation, confidence	KS2

Fluency	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
Let's use 'kid writing'	188	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Write the first sound then use kid writing	189	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Go from sounds to letters	190	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Talk to yourself	191	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Write it *in* the line if you can't write it *on* the line.	191	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Pencil microphone: Say it then write it	192	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Whisper your sentence, hold it and keep it!	192	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Think, say and write	193	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Make a page - share page	194	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Write a little - share a little	195	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Using our drafting advice	196	Drafting	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
State the obvious	197	Drafting	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Well, what do you want to say next?	198	Drafting	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Pause at a special place	199	Drafting	All genres	Confidence, Independence	KS1, KS2

Clarity & Accuracy	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
Go back and wake your writing up!	200	Drafting	All genres	Independence	EYFS, KS1
Give your writing a tickle	201	Publishing and performing	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Look again: Going back to yesterday's writing	202	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Tell it to a friend	203	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1
Use your finger spaces	204	Drafting, revising	All genres	Indepence, confidence	EYFS, KS1
Finding your diamond moment	204	Planning, revising	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Finding your theme by looking inside yourself	205	Planning	Narrative	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Roar of the waterfall	206	Planning, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
General to specific	207	Planning	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Five alive!	207	Revising	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Change the word order	209	Revising	Narrative	Independence	KS1, KS2
Traffic-light sentences	210	Drafting, revising	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Fixing your 'sticky bits'	211	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Cutting the string: Avoiding *stringy* bits	211	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Repeated lines	212	Drafting, revising	Poetry	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Hyperbole	212	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Imagism	213	Drafting, revising	Poetry	Confidence, independence	KS2
The actions reveal!	214	Drafting	Narrative	Agency, confidence	KS1, KS2
Moving quickly and slowly in a story	215	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
Would an alien understand what I'm writing about?	216	Revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Time-travelling markers	217	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Teleporting location markers	218	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Ed… sentences	219	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Ing… sentences	220	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
If… then… sentences	221	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
What is the cause?	222	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
What is the condition?	222	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
What does it compare to?	223	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Giving examples and bringing in the experts	223	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
*By…*what means does it happen?	224	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Order-of-mention	224	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
The gang of three	225	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Beware of 'it'	225	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Pack a punch *and* share the detail	226	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Switching it up	226	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Sentences as daisy chains	228	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Borrow from what you've read: Referencing	230	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Save it for later	231	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
If in doubt, cut it out: Getting rid of 'yawny bits'	232	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
YES! I did it! EYFS checklists	233	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS
How to use a revision checklist	234	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Getting it 'reader ready': How to use an editing checklist	235	Editing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Ha! Gottcha!: How many edits have you got?	236	Editing	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Setting up publishing expectations	236	Publishing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

Developing	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
Generating words from pictures	238	Drafting	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Add to your pictures, add to your writing!	238	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Do my pictures match my writing?	239	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Touch your pictures to make them come alive!	240	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
What's in a story?	240	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
It's OK - just add it on at the end	241	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Let me in! Using carets	242	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
What you want to say then *How* best to say it	243	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Dabbling	243	Generating ideas, planning	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Authors ask questions	248	Planning, drafting	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Writing your title last	248	Revising	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
The best line	249	Revising	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Using the senses	250	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Prove it!	251	Drafting, revising	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
The power of three	252	Planning, drafting,	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Metaphor & simile	253	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Personification	255	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Great story openings	256	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Characters asking questions: Who…? What…? Where…? When…? Why…? How…?	257	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
How does your character talk?	258	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How is your character feeling?	259	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Strong endings (narrative)	261	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Rumbling reading tummy	261	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Partner up for great description and detail	262	Drafting, Revising	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Character personality	264	Planning	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
Character personality into show don't tell	266	Revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Characters based on real people	267	Generating ideas, planning,	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Setting descriptions	267	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Painting with words	269	Drafting, revising	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
My setting is a character too! Pathetic fallacy	270	Planning, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Show don't tell	271	Drafting, revising	Narrative, poetry	Confidence	KS2
Writing a conversation: Dialogue	272	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
What were they thinking?!: Monologue	273	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Using body language	274	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
See things like a poet: the poetry that hides in things	275	Revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Pathetic fallacy	276	Drafting, revising,	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Giving clues	277	Drafting, revising,	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
One word in the right place	277	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Postpose your adjectives!	278	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Teach me about it but also teach me about why you love it	279	Planning, drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Taking time out to tell a story	279	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Nonfiction: Intriguing introductions	280	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Nonfiction: colossal conclusions	282	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Support the facts	284	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Making information come alive	285	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Unlike	285	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
If..,.then… When…, then...	286	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Use an anecdote to make a point	286	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Showing characters' point of view	287	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Knowing your character inside out	288	Generating ideas, planning	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Zoom in, Zoom out!	289	Drafting, revising	All genres	Agency, independence	KS1, KS2
From rubbish to gold	290	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Use your 'trying things out page'	291	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2

Word Choices	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
'Cracking open' boring words	293	Revising	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Let's not have a snore festival	294	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Spells, incantations and the power of naming	294	Drafting, revising	Narrative	Independence	KS1, KS2
Alliteration	295	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Onomatopoeia	295	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Rhyme	296	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Metonymy	296	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence	KS2
Good, better, best!	297	Revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Character names	297	Planning, revising	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Save it for later	298	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Create rhythm	298	Drafting, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

Spellings	Page	Process	Genre	Affective Needs	Age
Use a temporary spelling	299	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS2, KS2
I'm not scared of words!	300	Any process	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Stretch, say it slowly and listen	300	Drafting, editing, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Say it and picture the word	301	Drafting, editing, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Stretch, count and look	301	Drafting, editing, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Onset and rime	302	Editing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
How to check for spelling mistakes and correct your unsure 'temporary' spellings	302	Editing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Spellings - come in come in - dot dot dash dash - the syllables	303	Editing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Tapping the syllables	303	Editing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Root words	303	Editing, revising	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

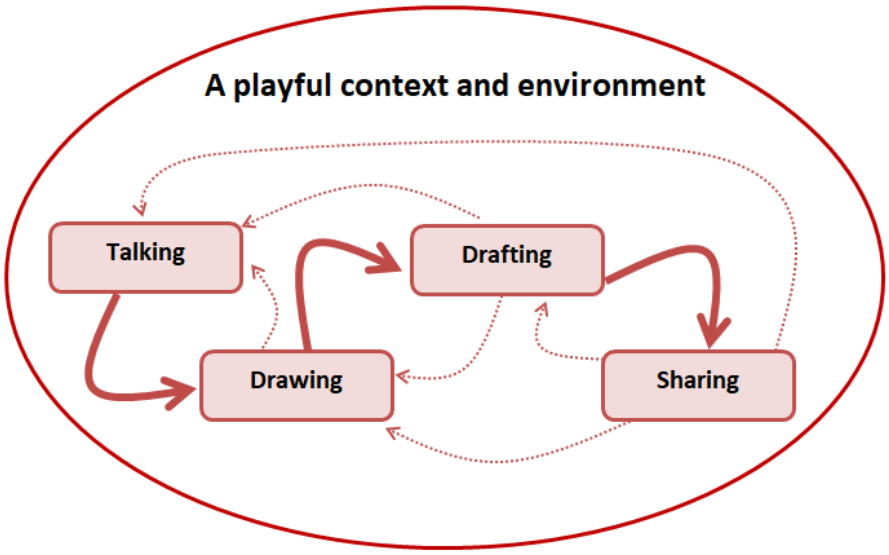
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Navigate the lessons by writing process

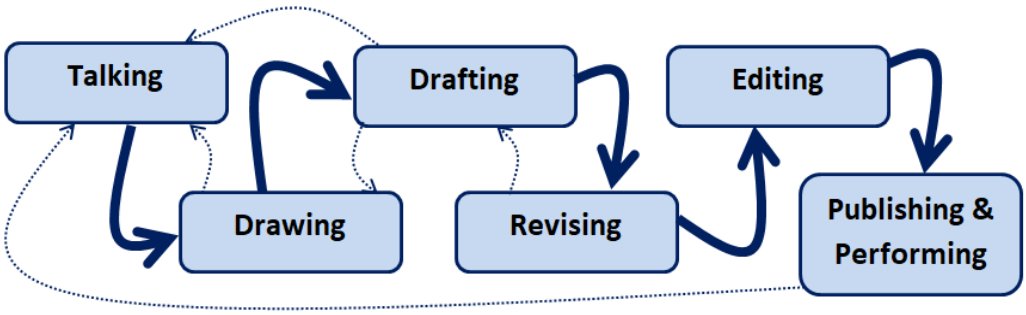
Schools achieving dramatic writing progress ensure children understand writing to be a multi-step process which involves taking a germ of an idea and seeing it through to publication or performance

- Young & Ferguson (2021)

There is no such thing as *the* writing process. A young writer's process, over time, and through meaningful practice (and good teaching), becomes unique to them. It's important though that we teach children a variety of writing strategies and show that, as they craft, they move their 'germ of an idea' towards final publication and performance. It's imperative that we teach young writers the techniques and procedures other writers use to manage and negotiate these different processes. Therefore, you'll see on page 305 how we have provided you with a way of navigating this book by writing process. Each mini-lesson is listed according to which process it will help children develop. Over time, writers will internalise these taught strategies and use them independently.

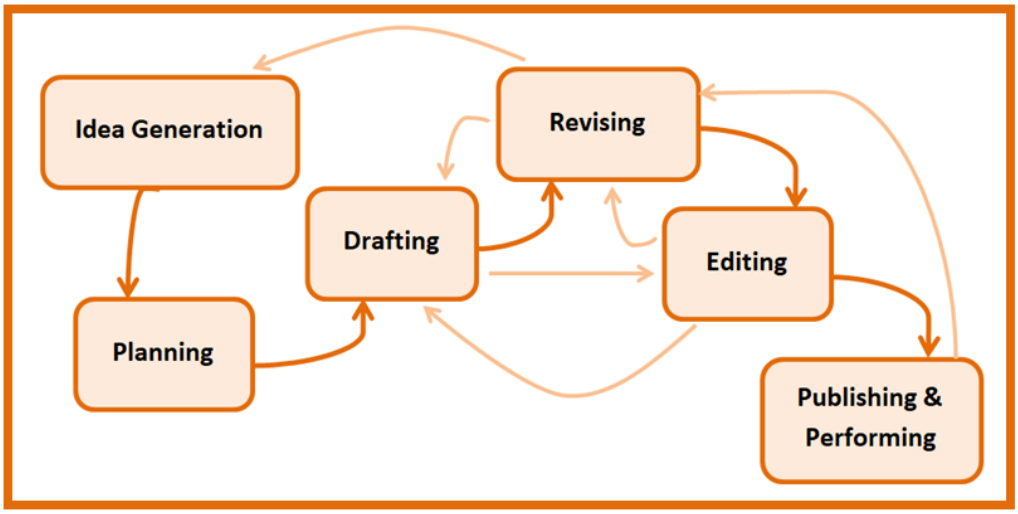


An example of the writing processes for EYFS



An example of the writing processes for KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



An example of the writing processes for KS2

Navigate the lessons by genre

Genre-based approaches to teaching writing have achieved spectacular improvements in student outcomes. Such approaches achieve twice to over four times the expected rates of learning whilst at the same time closing the gap between the most and least successful students

- Young & Ferguson (2021)

We have also indexed our mini-lessons by giving suggestions about what text-type they will best serve. You'll notice that some lessons are simply labelled 'any'. This is because features typical of one form of writing can often be useful across a range of genres. For example, an opinion piece can be enhanced through poetic metaphor, and an explanation text could be given a deeper meaning when it is partnered with a personal anecdote. This is how we can and should engage children in thinking and rethinking what can be done with writing.

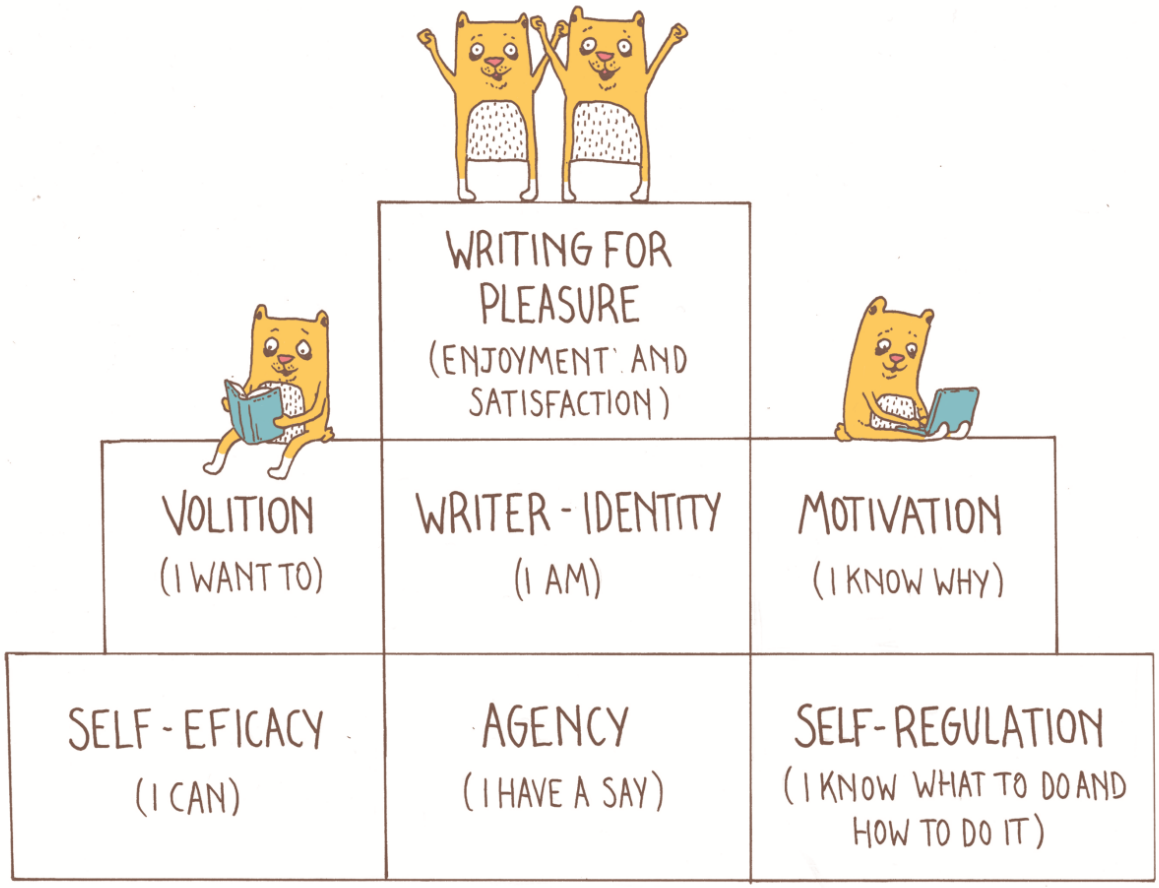
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Navigate the lessons by affective need

The affective needs of young writers account for more variance in their learning than anything else. Nurturing children's affective needs is in itself the most effective practice teachers can employ

- Young & Ferguson (2021)

Attending to your learners' affective needs can be one of the most effective practices you employ. That's why we have also indexed our mini-lessons on the basis of developing or supporting children's writerly behaviours, attitudes and dispositions. If your children are lacking confidence, consider searching for mini-lessons that will support this. If your class is lacking motivation, share mini-lessons with them that can increase it. The affective needs include: self-efficacy, self-regulation, agency, motivation, volition and writer-identity and are based on the work and research of *The Writing For Pleasure Centre*. To search for specific lessons, simply press Ctrl + F and type in some key words.



The affective needs of young writers (Young & Ferguson 2021)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Navigate the lessons by age

Finally, you will notice that we have provided suggested age-ranges for our mini-lessons. Sometimes this isn't possible as the lessons are useful whether you're three or 103! However, EYFS suggests mini-lessons for the earliest and most inexperienced of writers (3-5 year olds). Key Stage One suggests that the mini-lesson will be suitable for moderately fluent writers aged around 5-7. Key Stage Two mini-lessons are typically suitable for more experienced writers aged between 7-11. However, these are only meant as a rough guide and you're free to make your own judgements. Again, to find specific lessons simply press Ctrl + F and use the search function.

Delivering a lesson

These mini-lessons have been taught in very real and very varied writing classrooms. The first half of the mini-lesson is directed at you, the teacher. It's there to give you a bit of background as to why the mini-lesson exists and what it hopes to achieve. The second part of the mini-lesson is devoted to sharing the typical language you can use to deliver it. These are not scripts, however, and you should feel free to adapt, adjust or dismiss the advice given in any of these lessons to suit the needs of your own class.

Top tips for making your own mini-lessons

1. Plan your mini-lessons in response to what you're seeing during writing time.
2. When you notice some great craft you or other writers use, name it, teach it and invite your class to try it.
3. Ensure the lesson is short, explicit and direct.
4. Teach one thing and then invite children to try and apply it.
5. Have high expectations for application.
6. Give your mini-lesson a catchy title and turn it into a poster or resource children can use time and time again.
7. Repeat lessons when necessary.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Finding your own mini-lessons

We say that you're probably teaching a good mini-lesson if, at the end of your instruction, you can turn around and invite your class to use what you've taught them during that day's subsequent writing time. A good way of finding mini-lessons that will have a big impact on children's progress is to ask yourself these sorts of questions:

- What are the children interested in writing?
- What do the children say they want to learn more about?
- What can't the children do very well?
- What is stopping the class from producing their most meaningful and successful texts?
- What is sometimes frustrating about their pieces?
- What is sometimes frustrating about the ways in which they work during writing time?

We offer two proformas which teachers might find helpful for identifying and writing their own mini-lessons in the Appendix.

Teaching your own mini-lessons

There are five typical ways to approach teaching a mini-lesson:

1. **Let me show you this…** Using writing of your own, from your pupils, or from commercially published authors, show children something cool, interesting or important about writing, and invite them to do the same during writing time.
2. **What can you learn from my writing?** Share a picture book or text you've written. After sharing, ask: what could you do in your writing today?
3. **What can we learn from this book?** Share a single or several texts with the children, either on the carpet or at their desks, and ask them: what can we do in our writing today?
4. **What do you want to know?** This is an opportunity to find out what the children feel they need advice or instruction in most. They can also share with you organisational and procedural problems they might be having during writing time.
5. **I saw this yesterday...** These mini-lessons allow you to highlight something great someone did during yesterday's writing time and invite all the children to do the same today. Alternatively, you can attend to something you didn't like and nip it in the bud.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The language of mini-lessons

We think you're teaching a good mini-lesson if you start out by saying things like:

1. When I write…
2. Yesterday, I couldn't help but notice that…
3. When some writers… they'll….
4. Why do authors use…
5. I've noticed recently that…
6. I want to show you how…
7. I thought today we could try…
8. We need to show that we can....
9. Remember when we wrote our….? Well now I think we are ready to…
10. I know that last year you… well, this year…

(Young & Ferguson 2020 p.68)

Writing your own mini-lessons

It's good for teachers and schools to develop their own writing mini-lessons, and for them to be written in a consistent way. Here is how we developed our 'house style' which you are welcome to adopt too. Incidentally, we are always on the lookout for excellent additions to our library of mini-lessons. If you've written and taught a great one, consider sending it to us at www.writing4pleasure.com/contact

1. Where relevant, try to begin with a short quote from a writer which relates to the subject of the mini-lesson.
2. The first part of the lesson (usually one paragraph) is written almost conversationally from teacher to teacher. It's there to orientate the reader towards the content of the lesson on an adult level. You can use first person if you like, and feel free to include short anecdotes from your own experiences.
3. The second part of the lesson (in italics) is written so as to give teachers an idea of the way they might present the lesson to the children. This includes the language and kind of address they might use. It usually includes a reminder to teachers to share a relevant example from their own writer's notebook or from literature.
4. Always end your mini-lessons with an invitation to children to try out the strategy in writing time that day.
5. Add photographs, diagrams and quotes from the children if you have them.
6. Finally, insert the relevant index tags in a box underneath your mini-lesson. Choose one craft area, one or two processes, one genre, one or two affective needs, and one or two age ranges. For example:

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Craft Area: being writers, generating ideas, organisation and structure, fluency, clarity and accuracy, developing, word choices, spelling
Process: generating ideas, planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing & performing
Genre: poetry, narrative, non-fiction, all genres,
Affective Needs: confidence, independence, agency, motivation, writer-identity
Age: EYFS, KS1, KS2, KS1-2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Further reading

Good writing teaching isn't a secret anymore. There are a number of books out there that share the same kind of craft knowledge that you'll see throughout this book. Indeed, many of our mini-lessons have been inspired by the teaching and wisdom of other great writing teachers. Here is a list of some of our favourites:

- Atwell, N. (2002) *Lessons that change writers* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Calkins, L., Mermelstein ((2003) *Launching the writing workshop.* Portsmouth NH: Firsthand
- Dean, D., Anderson, J. (2014) *Revision decisions* Portland, Maine: Stenhouse
- Fletcher, R., Portalupi, J. (2001) *Nonfiction craft lessons: teaching information writing K-8* Portland: Stenhouse
- Fletcher, R., Portalupi, J. (2007) *Craft lessons: teaching writing K-8* Portland: Stenhouse
- Graves, D. (1989) *Investigate nonfiction* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Graves, D. (1989) *Experiment with fiction* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Graves, D. (1992) *Explore poetry* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Gould, JS., Burke, MF. (2008) *Writing workshop. Answers to frequently asked questions for primary writers. Carthage IL: Teaching and Learning Company*
- Heard, G. (1998) *Awakening the heart* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Jacobson, J. (2007) *Graphic organizers: reading and writing. New York: Scholastic Teaching Resources*
- Meehan, M., Sorum, K. (2021) *The responsive writing teacher* California: Corwin
- Ray, KW., Cleveland, L. (2004) *About the authors* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Ray, KW., Cleveland, L. (2018) *A teacher's guide to getting started with beginning writers. Grades K-2. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann*
- Ray, KW., Glover, M. (2008) *Already ready: Nurturing writers in preschool and kindergarten* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Rog, L. (2007) *Marvelous minilessons for teaching beginning writing K-3* Newark: International Reading Association
- Serravallo, J. (2017) *The writing strategies book* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann
- Young, R., Ferguson, F., (2019) *Power English: Writing* Oxford: UK
- Young, R., Ferguson, F., (2020) *Real-World Writers: A handbook for teaching writing with 7-11 year olds* London: Routledge
- Young, R., Ferguson, F. (2021) *Writing For Pleasure: Theory, research and practice* London: Routledge

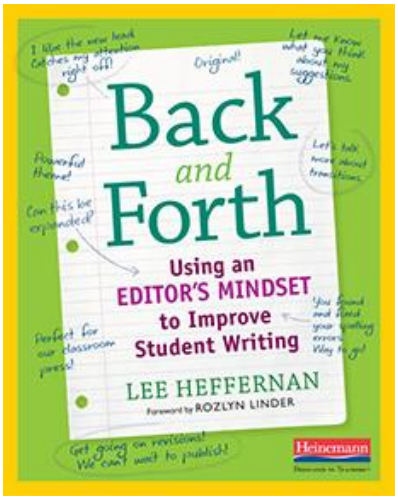
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Being Writers

Donald Graves (1983) has given teachers of writing the perfect motto: *teach the writer, and then the writing.* To be writers themselves, children need to know what writers do, how they behave and work, what strategies they use to regulate themselves, how they set deadlines, solve problems and get writing done. These mini-lessons teach children exactly those generalities of writing - strategies that they can use time and again when engaged in different pieces and genres of writing. These lessons also focus on the social aspects of being writers in a writing community, showing them ways of talking, discussing and sharing their ideas with others and presenting their writing to a variety of audiences in and out of school.

Setting up our publishing house

One dominant aim of any great writing teacher is to nurture children's identities as writers. We want children to feel like genuine writers who go through the genuine processes to be published authors. Additionally, we want to give children ownership over the themes for their publishing houses and, to a certain extent, over their class library. Here is a mini-lesson that may take a bit more time than the usual suggestion of 10-15minutes. Indeed, you might want to spend a few whole sessions on this, but it's worth it.



Having read '*Back & Forth: Using An Editor's Mindset To Improve Student Writing*' by Lee Heffernan, I was inspired to create a class publishing house in my own classroom. When I first taught this lesson, I was fortunate enough to have accepted a publishing deal and so took the opportunity to explain the process I was going through and the relationship I was building with the publishing house and my 'editor'. What I've come to realise is that a compositional editor is a very critical friend. They look to push your ideas and your writing to its maximum potential. They support and champion you but they also tell you when things need untangling.

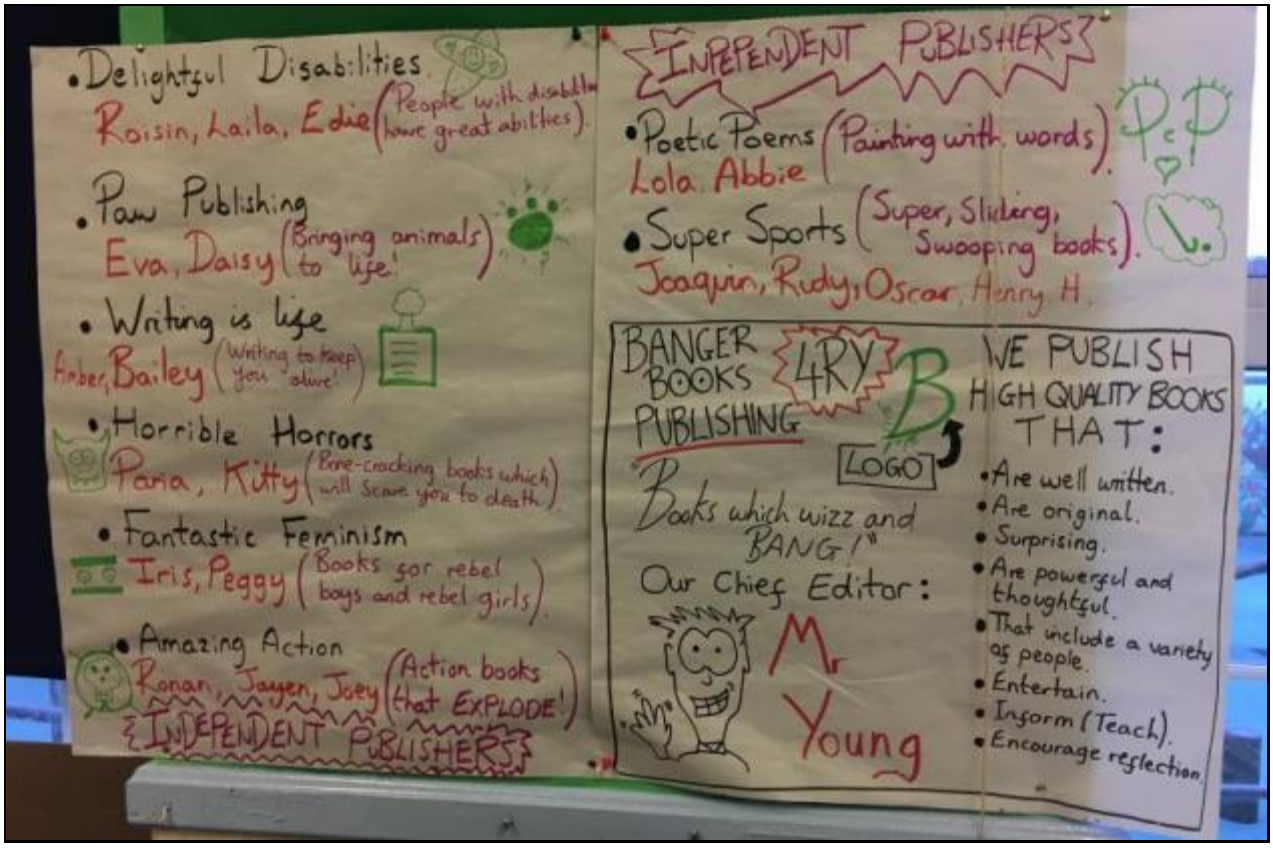
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

A publishing house, I've also discovered, has a certain identity, a certain statement of intent and a certain reputation for producing certain types of books. I decided to talk about it a little with my class. We discussed which publishing houses were publishing our favourite books in the class library and we decided that, in many ways, I was the children's chief editor and, as a writer-teacher, the children were often mine too! But we didn't have a publishing house. We publish into the class library but what does our library stand for? What sort of texts do we want to publish for each other? Importantly, what sort of texts do we need to publish for each other? What's our mission? We discussed this and created our own mission statement for our newly formed publishing house…now we needed a name and a logo.

The children got together and came up with a variety of ideas. We took a vote and agreed on '*Banger Books Publishing: Books Which Wizz And Bang!*' Alongside it was a logo which we felt everyone would be able to draw and add to their published pieces easily.

However, there was some disappointment in the class. Some of the children became attached to their particular vision for their publishing house and felt that maybe their idiosyncrasies weren't visible in our whole class mission statement. So with that, we decided that we could also have smaller, independent houses and that these would need mission statements, brand names and logos too. It was also agreed that these independents would have to be unique enough to not encroach on Banger Books Publishing. The result was the poster below, showcasing the independents and what sorts of books they were looking to publish on their label. Children met and conferred with the editors when they felt they had something to publish with them. They shared any revision or editorial ideas for the manuscript before it went to press. I was also around to offer advice and an independent voice too.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Delightful Disabilities *People with disabilities have great abilities.* We are looking to

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

publish: stories, poems, faction, memoirs and lots of other things about disabilities.
Paw Publishing *Bring animals to life.* We are looking to publish high-quality texts which have strong animal characters and have a strong environmental message.
Writing Is Life *Writing that keeps you alive.* We are looking for memoirs that entertain, are well written and include lots of people and loads of info.
Horrible Horrors *Bone-cracking books that will scare you to death.* We publish high-quality books that are well written, powerful, have a meaning, are scary, entertaining or surprising.
Fantastic Feminism *Books for rebel boys and rebel girls.* We want our books to include an amazing girl! Something that the girl does to save the day, to be thoughtful, to have a moral.
Amazing Action *Books that explode.* We publish high-quality texts that are scary with lots of action and are well written.
Poetic Poems *Painting with words.* We publish high quality books that are well written, very artistic, entertain readers, not boring, poems about the things you like.
Super Sports *Super sliding swooping books*. We publish high-quality books that are well written, about sport, are funny and are adventurous.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; motivation, writer-identity; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Doing what bookshops do

A town isn't a town without a bookshop

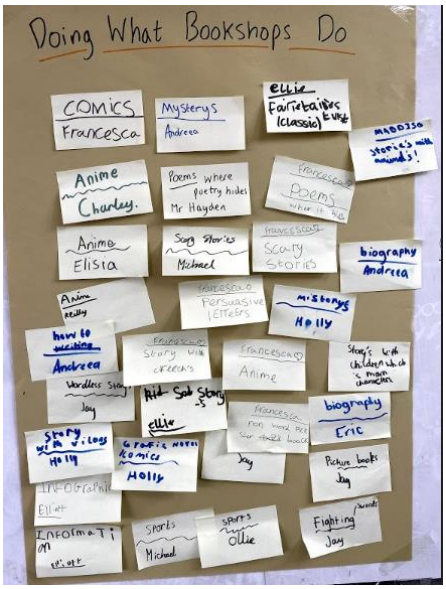
- Neil Gaiman

If you've ever been to a good independent children's bookshop like *Bags Of Books* in Lewes or *The Book Nook* in Hove, you'll notice that they place their books under certain categories. For example, here are the categories for the picture books at *Bags Of Books* when I visited last Summer:

Father's day, brand new picture books, books about transport, dinosaur stories, non-fiction picture books, summer stories, classic picture books, poetry picture books, first experiences, celebrating pride, diversity in picture books, all about feelings, be you - be kind, books - books -books, wordless picture books, funny picture books, animal stories, our planet, magical picture books, alternative fairy tales.

We can increase children's motivation and writer-identities when we explain to them that in their classroom, they will try to do the same thing bookshops do. They will make books throughout the year and place them under different categories. The children can be invited to think about what categories they would like their class library to have and you can build class writing projects around children making books for that category. For example, one class writing project might be to produce 'funny books' for the 'funny picture book section'. It might be the case that you even take children on a school trip to see how libraries or children's bookshops organise and categorize their collections.

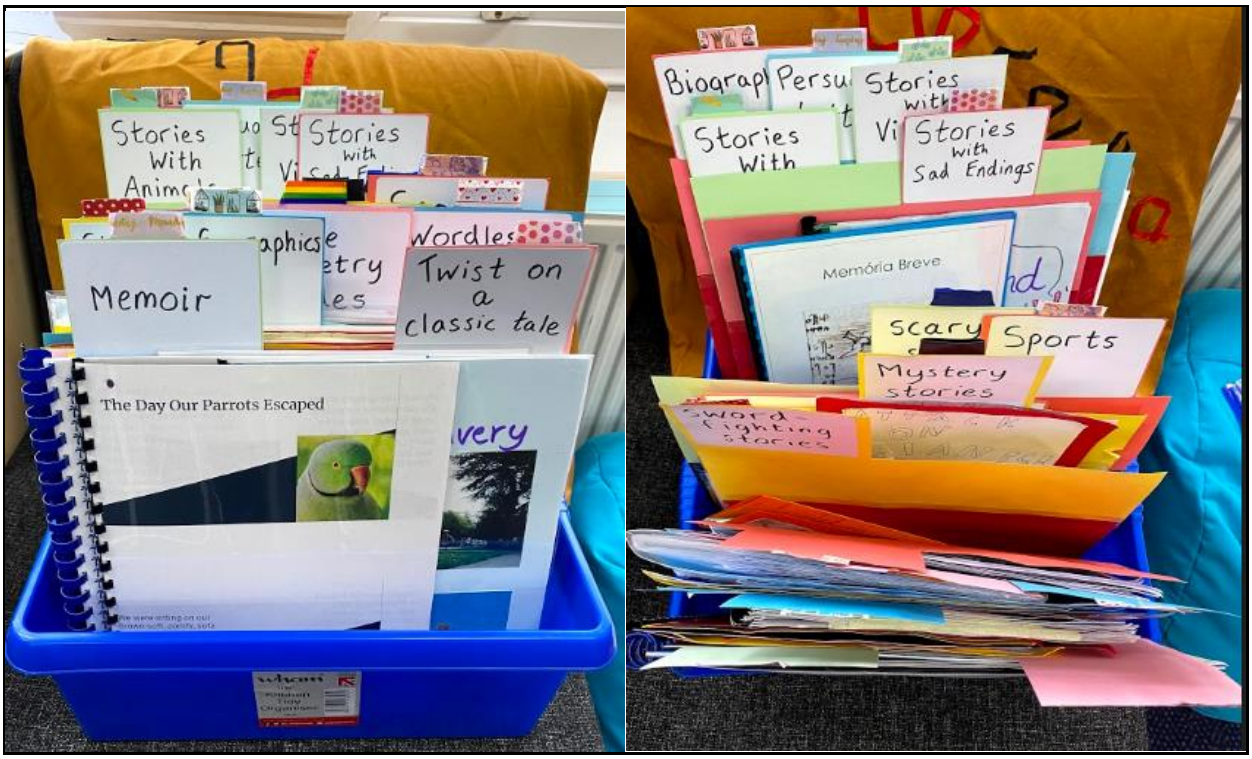
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Ideas included:

- Biographies
- Stories with sad endings
- Sword-fighting stories
- Stories with children as the main characters
- Information
- Sports
- Memoir
- Twist on a classic tale
- Comics
- Graphic novels
- Where poetry hides
- Wordless picture books

Here we can see a poster where the children have come up with categories both for the existing writing in the classroom and aspirations about what they would like to write/read.



Here we can see children being given the responsibility of organising the children's section of the class library. They are beginning to make decisions and are placing published pieces into their relevant categories.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; motivation, writer-identity; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Rights and responsibilities of a mini-lesson

I've learnt a lot about quality writing teaching by working with schools who specialize in teaching children with emotional and behavioural diagnoses. What I've come to realise is they need a balance between rights and rules. These need to be explained and justified. This helps create a reassuringly consistent learning environment - something we know is so important in world-class writing teaching (Young & Ferguson 2021). With this in mind, it's sometimes good to go over the expectations for mini-lessons. Here is what one class came up with.

- We have the right to learn something cool/interesting/useful about writing every day.
- We have the right to learn something that is going to make our writing better.
- We have the right to go back and use a mini-lesson again.
- We have the right to apply a mini-lesson to another piece of writing.
- We have a responsibility to listen carefully during any instruction.
- We have a responsibility to try out what we've been taught during that day's writing time.
- We have a responsibility to request what mini-lessons we think we need.
- We have a responsibility to say what we think about each mini-lesson and how useful it was (see also page 61).

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, writer-identity; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Rights and rules during book-making time

I've learnt a lot about quality writing teaching by working with schools who specialize in teaching children with emotional and behavioural diagnoses. What I've come to realise is they need a balance between rights and rules. These need to be explained and justified. This helps create a reassuringly consistent learning environment - something we know is so important in world-class writing teaching (Young & Ferguson 2021). With this in mind, it's sometimes good to go over the expectations for book-making time. Here is what one class came up with.

- We have the right to make books every day.
- We have the right to make the books we want to make.
- We have the right to make all different kinds of books.
- We have the right to make our books the way we like to make them.
- We have the right to make our books on our own if we want to.
- We have the right to love our friends' ideas and to make books like them.
- We have the right to make mistakes and change our mind.
- We have a responsibility to focus and work hard.
- We have a responsibility to help our fellow writers out when they ask us for help.
- We have a responsibility to solve our own problems if the teacher is working and writing with someone else.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, writer-identity; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Rights and rules during Author's Chair

I've learnt a lot about quality writing teaching by working with schools who specialize in teaching children with emotional and behavioural diagnoses. What I've come to realise is they need a balance between rights and rules. These need to be explained and justified. This helps create a reassuringly consistent learning environment - something we know is so important in world-class writing teaching. With this in mind, it's sometimes good to go over the expectations for Author's Chair (see Young & Ferguson 2020 for more information on Author's Chair). Here is what one class came up with.

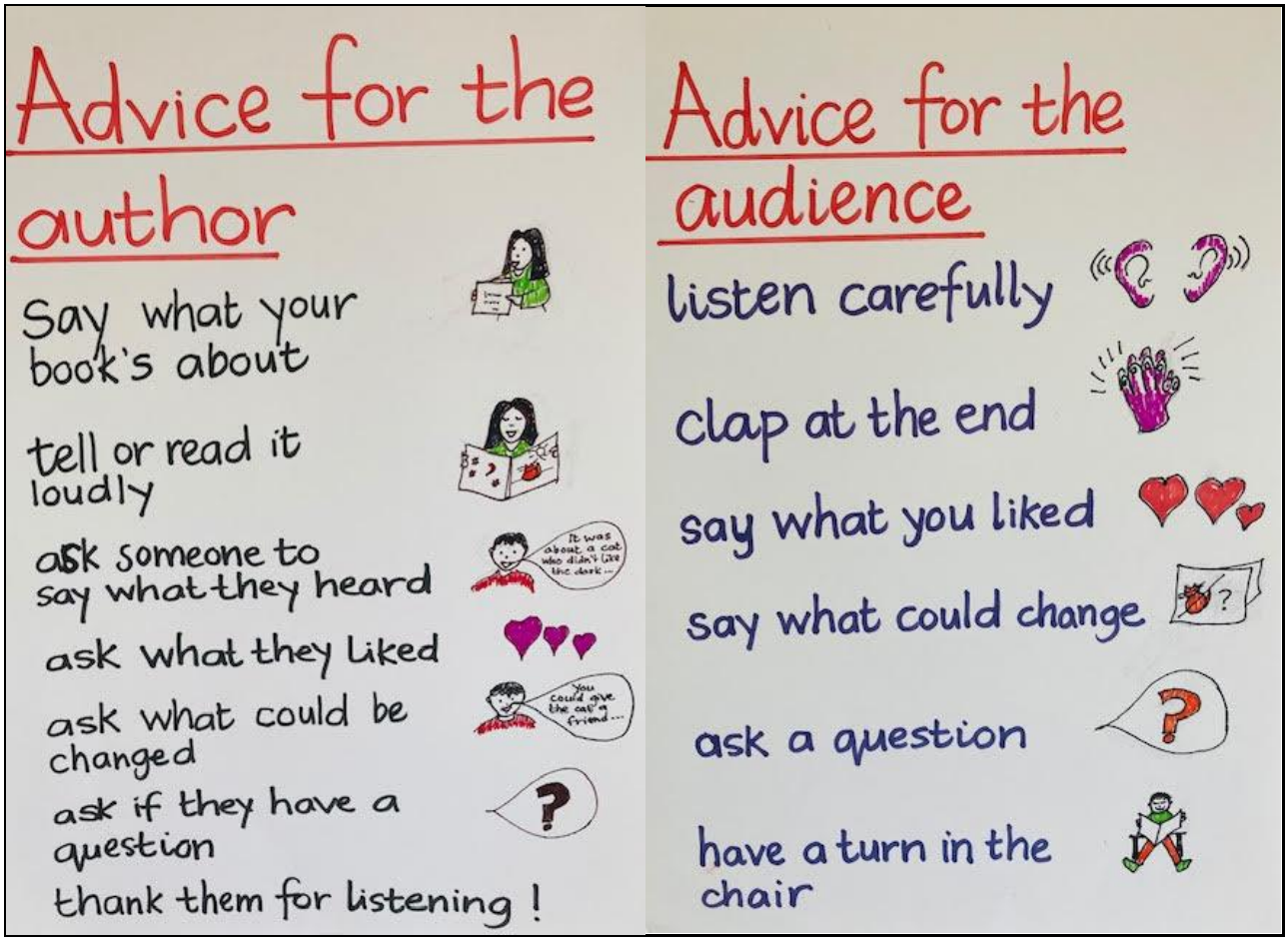
Advice for authors

1. Warm us up! Tell us what your book is about.
2. Read or tell us your book nice and loud.
3. Enjoy the applause
4. Pick someone to tell us what we just heard and what your book was about.
5. Ask us what we liked about it.
6. Ask us what we think you could add or change about it.
7. Ask us if we have any questions.
8. Say thank you and sit down.

Advice for the audience

1. Get warmed up! Listen to what the book is about.
2. Listen really carefully, don't interrupt, and laugh at the funny bits.
3. Clap at the end.
4. Be ready to say what the book was about.
5. Be ready to say what you liked about it.
6. Be ready to say what they could add or change to make it even better.
7. Be ready to ask a question.
8. Be ready to go in the Author's Chair next.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, writer-identity; EYFS, KS1

What can we learn about writing from this writing?

If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot

- Stephen King

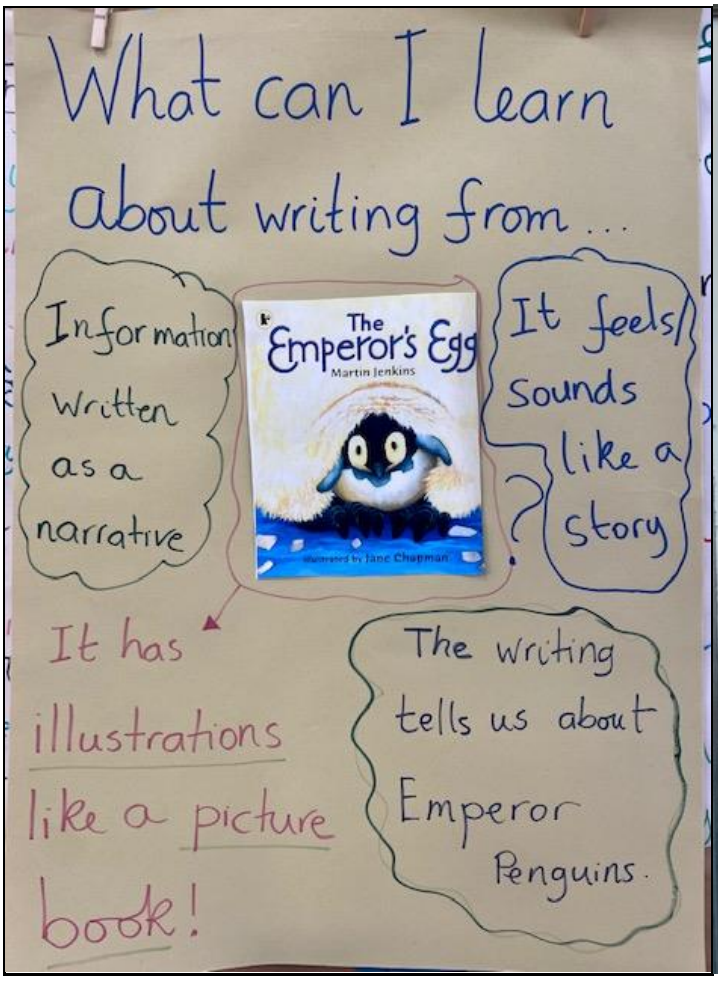
Sit down with children in the EYFS and show them a picture book you've recently read them. Put it on your lap. Open it up and show them the pages again. Then ask them: What can we learn about making books from this book? What have this writer and illustrator done in their book that we can do in our picture books? Show children in KS1
a piece of writing from a student last year. Put it in their hands. Let them read it and talk about it. Then ask them: What can we learn about writing from this piece?

What can we do that they've done? Take a short story and share it with children in any KS2 class. Let them read it and talk about it. Then ask them: What can we learn about writing from this writing? What can we do that they've done when we write our own short stories?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

If I asked you to write a film review or a new school policy - what would be one of the first things you'd do? That's right, you'd find and look at other examples. This is what writers do. They look at what's already been crafted to learn more about how they can craft their own. This is true for three-year-olds or writers who are 103. We can learn about how to craft great writing by looking at the writing of other writers. Writers leave us cues and clues that we can follow, replicate and make our own. This is one of the most important writing lessons we can ever teach children.

This mini-lesson operates slightly differently to most. It's the children leading their own learning about writing. Children are being tasked with identifying the key writing lessons taken from what another writer has done which they can use and apply during writing time. The key to success with this kind of mini-lesson is to ask the two key questions: What can we learn about writing from this writing? What can we do in our own writing? And write children's answers up on flipchart, large enough for all to see.



Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, motivation; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What have you learnt about writing today?

Writers learn about writing by writing

- Frank Smith

This is a mini-lesson that is actually taught at the end of writing time rather than at the beginning. As the title suggests, you ask children what they have learnt about themselves as writers, or about writing. They can share this writerly knowledge with the rest of the class - and so everyone benefits. Of course, as a fellow writer, you too can share what you've learnt about writing that day too.

When doing this mini-lesson for the first time, it's good to ask specific children to contribute something about the conference you had with them that day. That way, the whole class can benefit from what the child learnt. What children share can be focused on their specific piece or on how they managed themselves more generally as a writer that day - for example, how they used a resource in the classroom or how they applied a certain writerly technique or strategy.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

How to write in collaboration

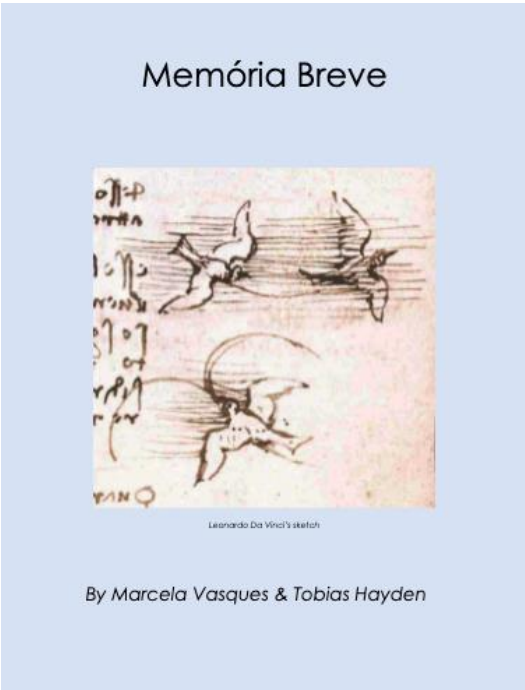
The experience of writers working together and the idea of creative collaboration is so delightful

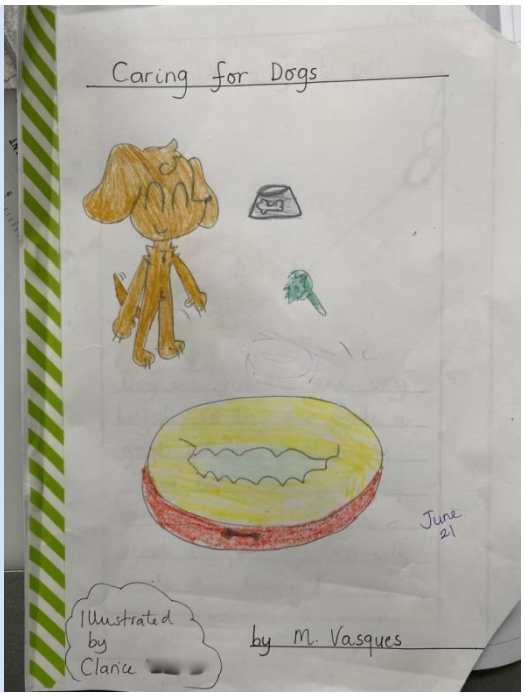
- Akiva Goldsman

Working in collaboration is a great way to be motivated about writing. You learn so much about other approaches to writing and ways of thinking from sharing ideas and collaborating with others. For this reason, we should demonstrate how children can collaborate. A great way to do this is to share how you've collaborated with others and then invite the children to do it too. For example, you could invite children to do the illustrations for a piece you've written or to collaborate with you on writing a piece together.

Working in collaboration is fun and it helps you with your ideas! Your friends might be good at things you struggle with and might be able to help you.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.





Writer-teachers Marcela Vasques & Tobias Hayden wrote this story in collaboration, using a mixture of English, Italian & Portuguese!

Could the children in your class collaborate using a variety of languages too?

Clarice illustrated and **M. Vasques** wrote the text!

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

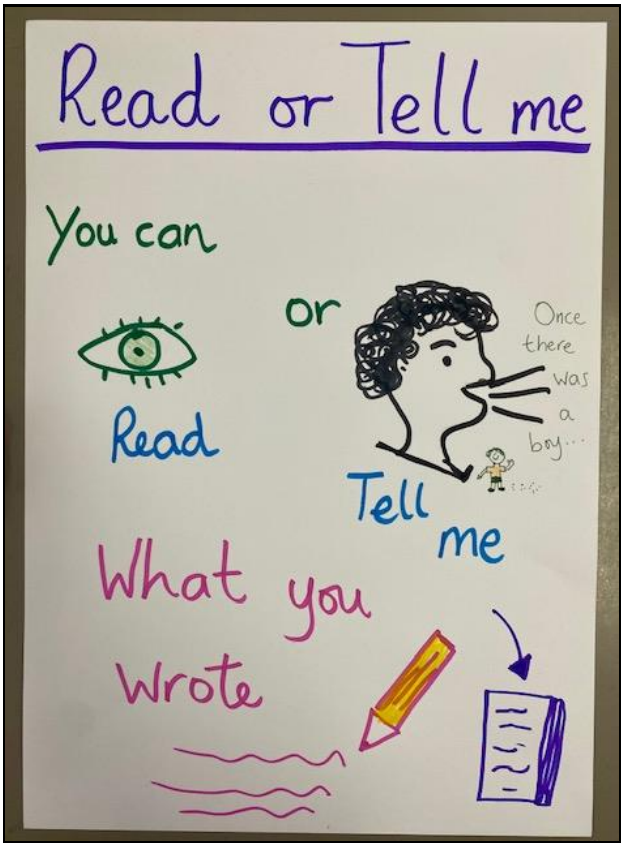
Tell it if you can't read it

'I can't read it - I don't know what it says'

Very early on in their writer's journey, children are still using marks and letter and spelling approximations, and their handwriting is yet to become fluent. This can sometimes make it hard for them to *read* their writing (particularly if they've picked up on the misconception that you must write in transcriptionally accurate and conventional ways before you're allowed to *read* your writing). Children's focus on print can sometimes make them feel less confident to *tell* their writing when they find themselves unable to read back their early attempts. Therefore, we must show children how they can participate in meaning-sharing even when they can't read their writing.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Sometimes I hear children say that they can't read their writing because they don't always know what it says. This used to happen to me when I was your age too. You don't need to worry though. When this happened to me, I used to just 'tell' my story instead. I would use what I remembered and my pictures to tell people what my book was about and what my writing said. Let me show you. At this point you could share an exemplar text you've crafted using kid writing (see page 188). You could show them how you are telling the story when you don't know what the text says.



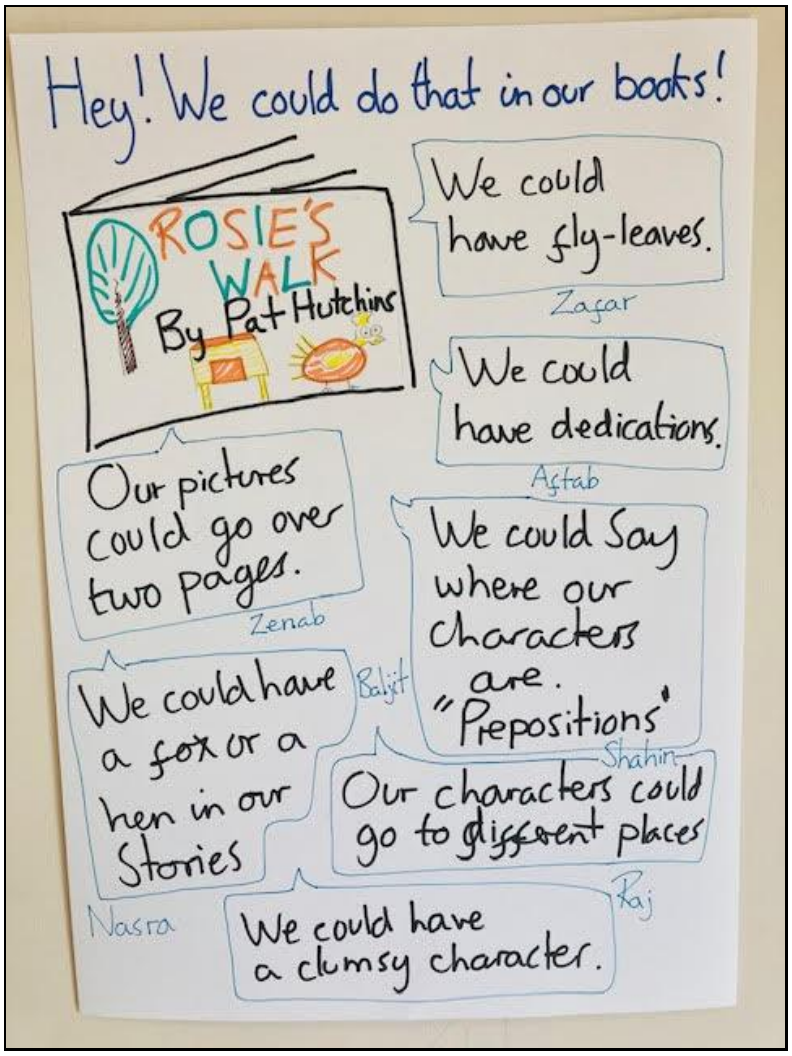
Tags: Being writers; publishing and performing; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Hey! We could do that in our books!

Hey...we could do that in our books!

This is something I hear children saying all the time in classrooms that use our approach to writing (Young & Ferguson 2020). Writers of all ages like to use things for themselves that they see other writers doing. Children as young as three and four do this.



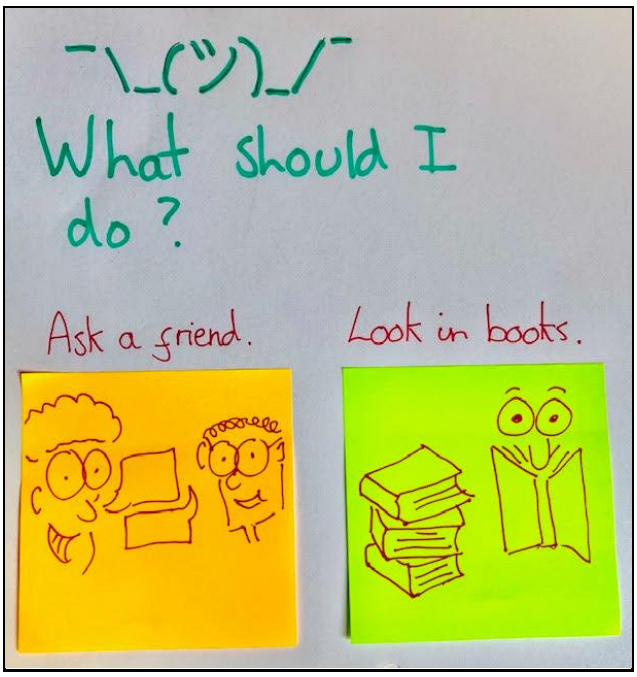
For this mini-lesson, all you need to do is sit the children on the carpet and flick through a picture book you've recently read together during read-aloud. This time, though, you're looking at the book as writers and makers of picture books. As you flick through the pages, you can simply ask the children to shout out what they could try during that day's book-making time and then invite them to give it a try.

Tags: Being writers; publishing and performing; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What to do when you don't know what to do

We want children to be as independent as possible when they are writing. The best performing young writers are self-regulating ones (Young & Ferguson 2021). Therefore, we must teach them what to do when they don't know what to do.



For this mini-lesson, explain that it's better for children to solve their own writing problems than to always get the answer from you. Explain that, when they learn their own writing lessons, they learn more powerfully. This means that, when they don't know what to do, they should first ask a friend for help and if that fails look at other people's books to get advice. This includes other books by children in the class, the books you've written for them as their writer-teacher or the commercial books in the class library. Other people's books are sometimes the best place to go to get answers to our writing questions. Invite children to use this advice during that day's writing time.

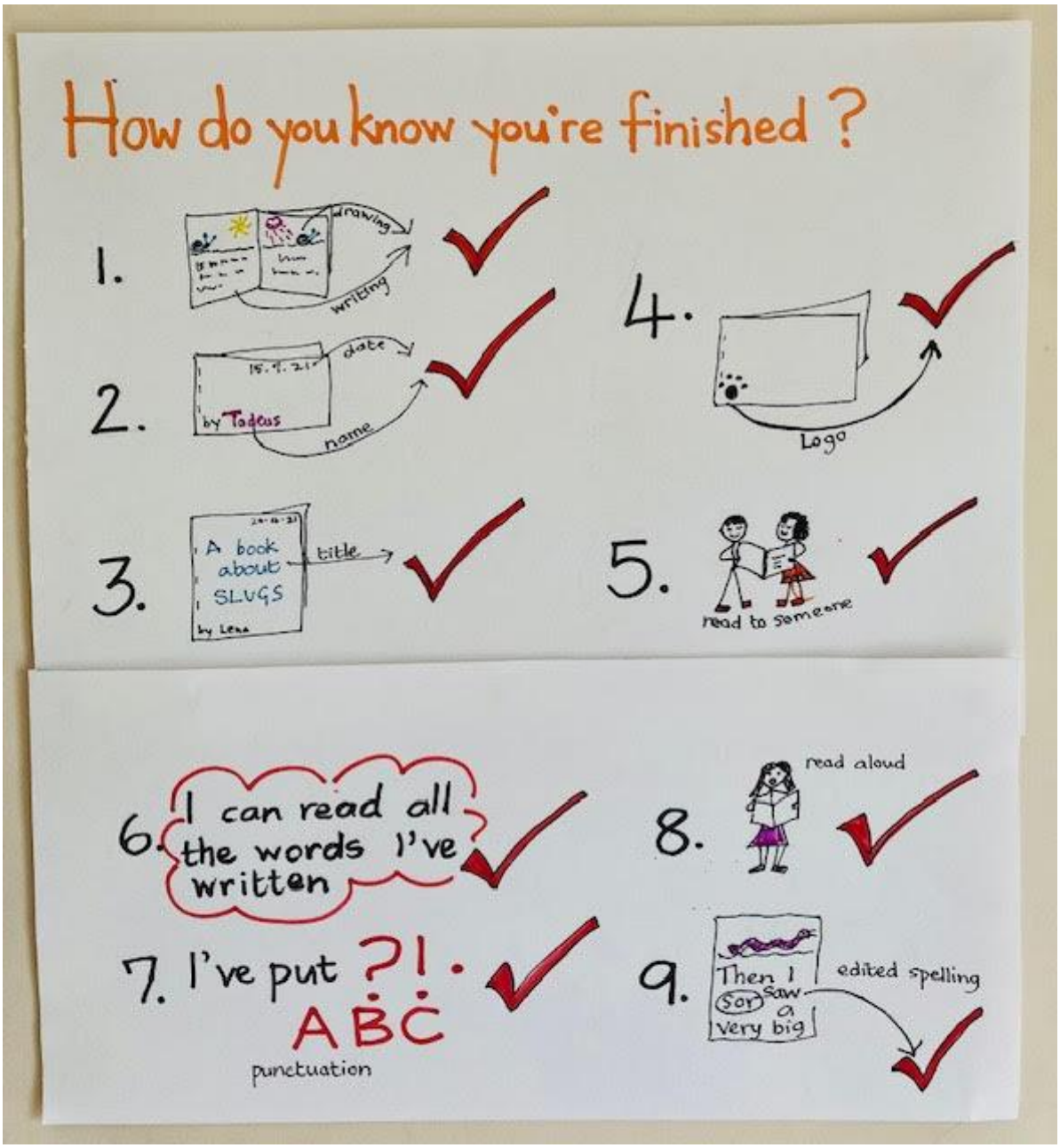
Tags: Being writers; publishing and performing; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

How do you know you're finished?

Part of running an excellent writing classroom is ensuring that it runs smoothly and that children are as independent as they can be. This includes children knowing when they are finished and what they should do once they are finished. Below is an example of a poster created as part of this mini-lesson. It's good to ask the children themselves how they know they are finished and to ask them what they think they should do when they have finished making a book or completed their piece of writing.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This poster is based on classrooms which use a contemporary writing workshop approach (Young & Ferguson 2020, 2021).



For this mini-lesson, tell the children you want to make a poster together to put on the working wall. The poster is going to help us check when we think our books are finished.

The class 'I've finished' checklist

1. All my pages are full with writing and pictures.
2. I have the date and my name on my book.
3. My book has a title.
4. I have put our class publishing logo on the front.
5. I have shared my writing with someone I thought would like it.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

As the year progresses, this checklist can be added to and include:

6. I can read all the words I've written.
7. I have used punctuation to help my reader. **. ? ! ABC**
8. I have read my piece out loud.
9. I have edited my high-frequency spellings.

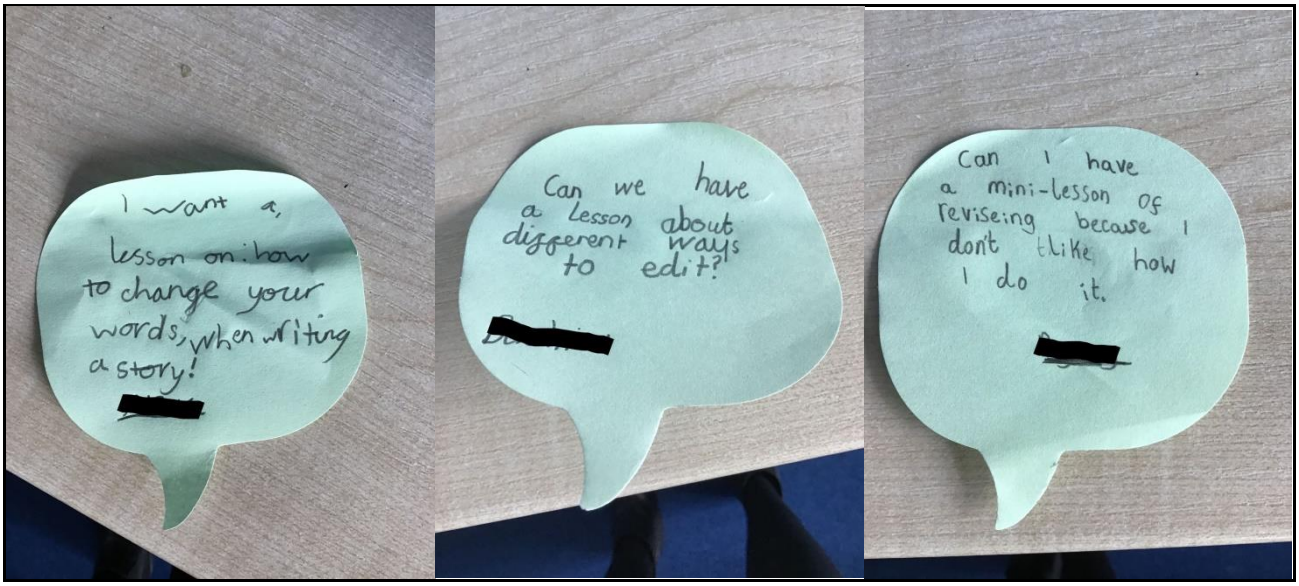
Tags: Being writers; editing, publishing and performing; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

How to suggest a mini-lesson

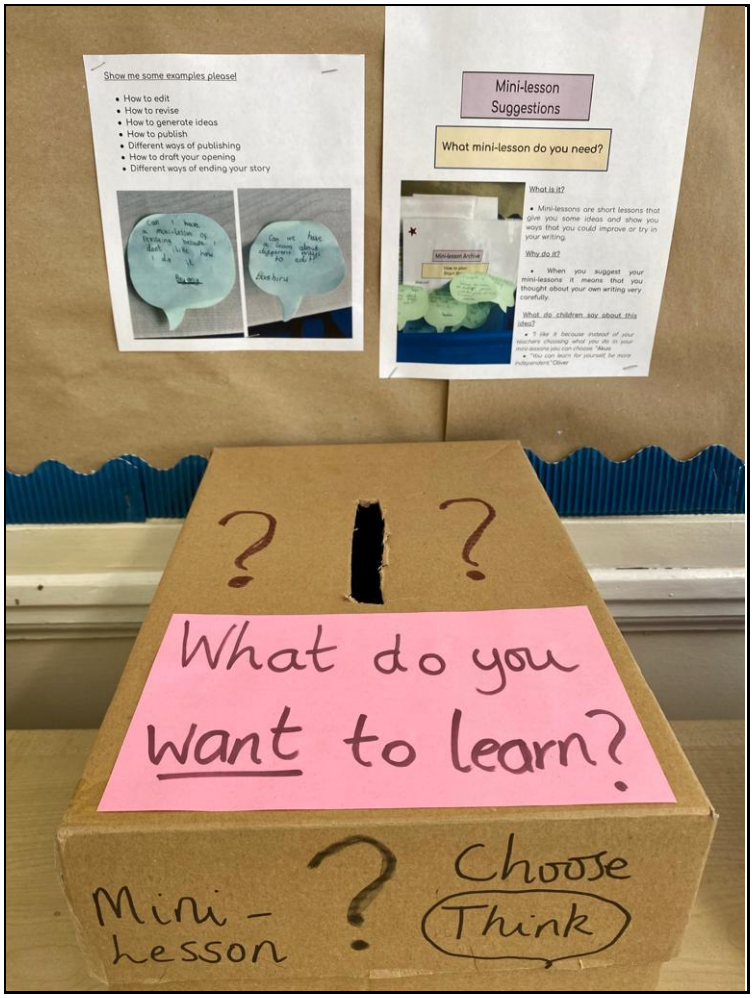
Sometimes what is stopping your children from developing their writing is a specific mini-lesson that only they will be able to tell you they need because they are the ones struggling or desiring to move their writing on. So why not allow them to suggest the mini-lesson they want you to teach?

You can do this by asking them to write their mini-lesson suggestions on post-it notes.

As you know, we start writing workshop with a mini-lesson. I usually choose what the mini-lesson is about but I was wondering: what do you think you need mini-lessons on most? Have a chat and write some ideas on these post it notes. I'll look at them tonight and plan some mini-lessons for next week.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Here, we can see how writer-teacher Marcela Vasques uses a mini-lesson suggestion box to collect children's suggestions as to what they feel they need instruction in most.

Tags: Being writers; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Let's make a to-do list

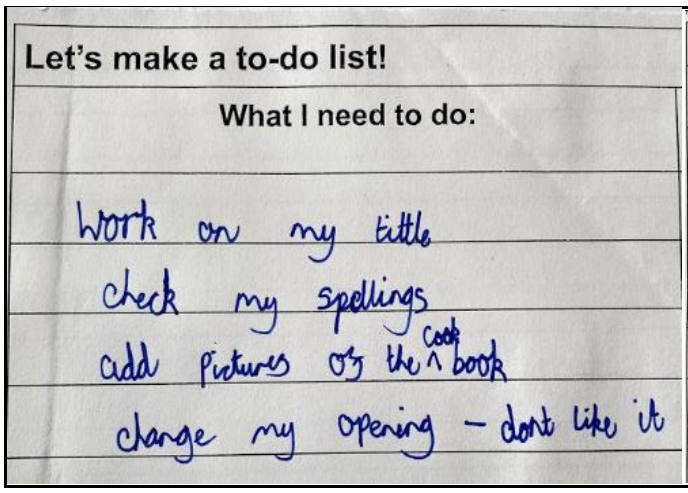
The best goals, writing or otherwise, are specific, measurable, and keep you coming back at regular intervals

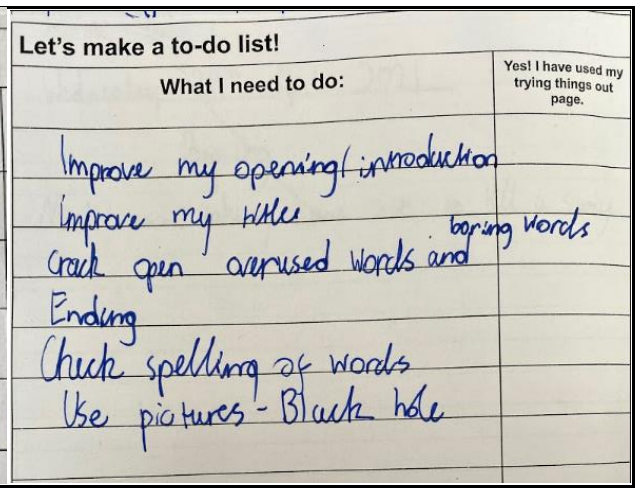
- P.S Hoffman

While I'm drafting a text, I'll often make a mental note of things I know I'm going to want to go back to and sort out. I often have to finish a draft before I have the mental capacity to change it. The same goes for children. As a community of writers, it can be useful to make a collaborative 'to-do list' together on flipchart paper - adding to it when things arise. Children can make suggestions of things to put on it, and you as the teacher can make recommendations. In this way children begin to identify for themselves what is expected as well as what is possible. Over time, children can be encouraged to make their own list like the examples below.

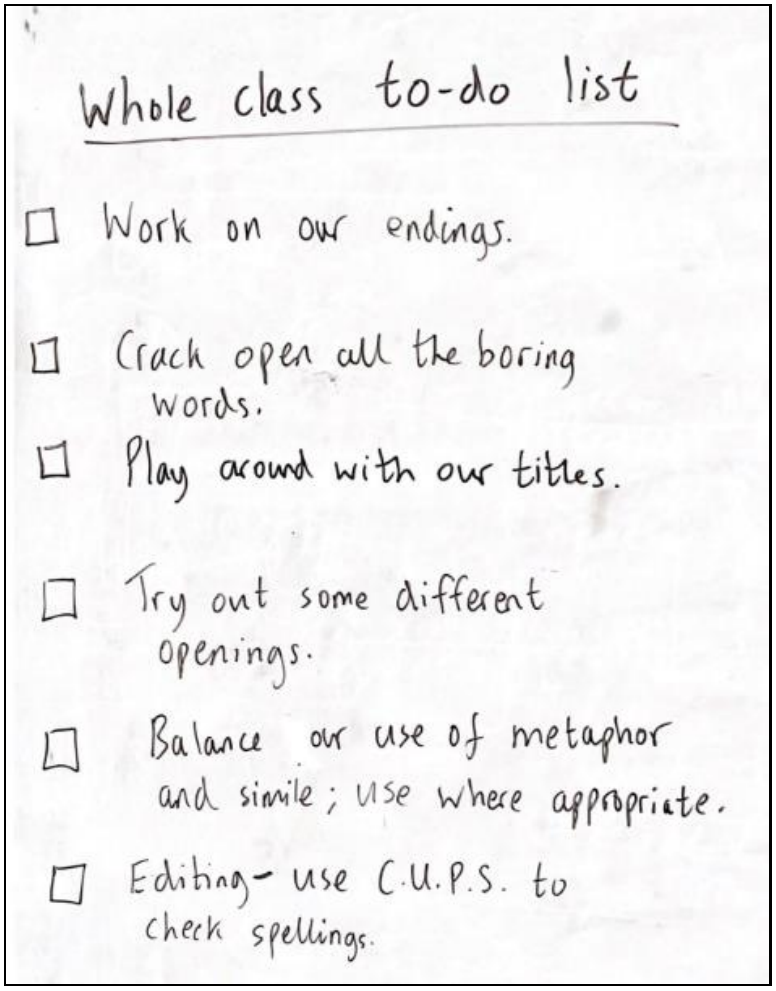
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This mini-lesson is usually best introduced just before class sharing. Class sharing is a reflective time. Children are listening, reading, discussing and commenting on each other's developing compositions. This is a fruitful time to make a to-do list of things we might need to attend to or think about again when we are revising. Invite children during class sharing and Author's Chair to give suggestions for the class 'to-do list'.





Here are a couple of examples of children's individual to-do lists along with a whole class example generated after most children had finished drafting a memoir.



Here is an example of Tobias' class putting together a whole-class to-do list.

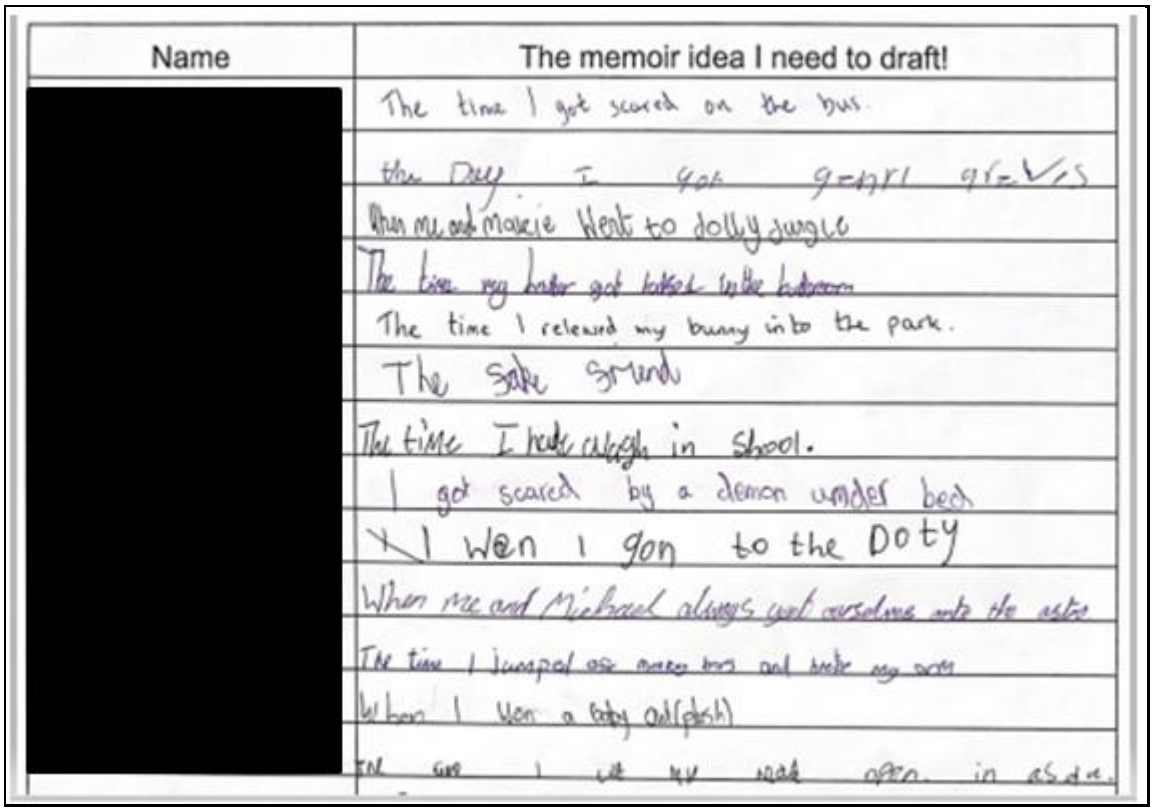
Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Keeping a writing register

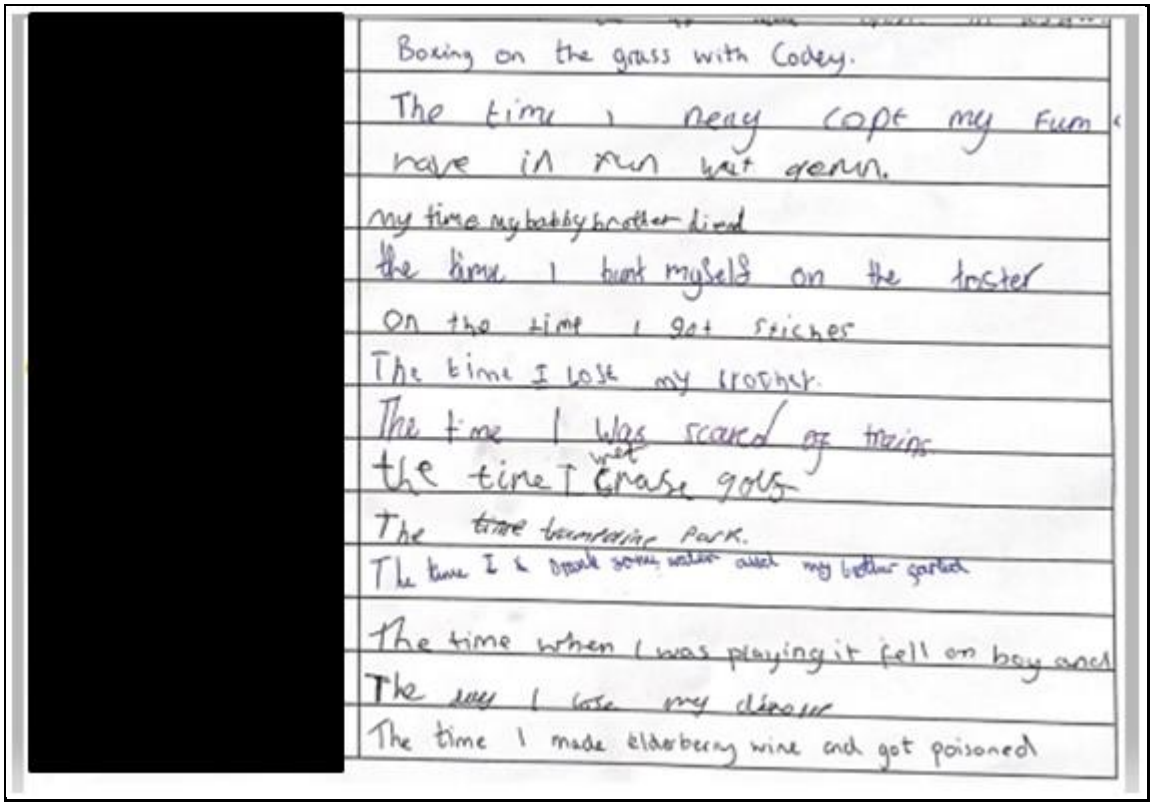
A good way of helping children to develop the habits and disciplines of a writer is to introduce them to the idea of a writing register. When I have tried this, I have included columns for: *audience, purpose, genre, diamond moment, process goal, and product goal*. This is probably best introduced by you as a way to keep tabs on the children's class or personal projects. But after a while, you will be able to hand over responsibility for updating this to the children. A register is something which transfers very well to online and can support children to be in a constant state of composition. I really like this idea as it helps children know what their classmates are working on and because it can act as an idea generation technique in itself. It also helps them to set goals, which is one of the most effective strategies any writer can employ.

In the mornings when children come in and settle down to their personal projects, or whenever you have your writing time, you could ask some of them to volunteer to give any updates about what they have been working on. You can fill out the register with the responses so everyone can get an understanding of how it works. Eventually, this is a responsibility the children can take on for themselves. You can share this digital document with them so they can even add to it from home. They may even wish to develop their own way of recording what they are working on and what writing goals to set themselves.

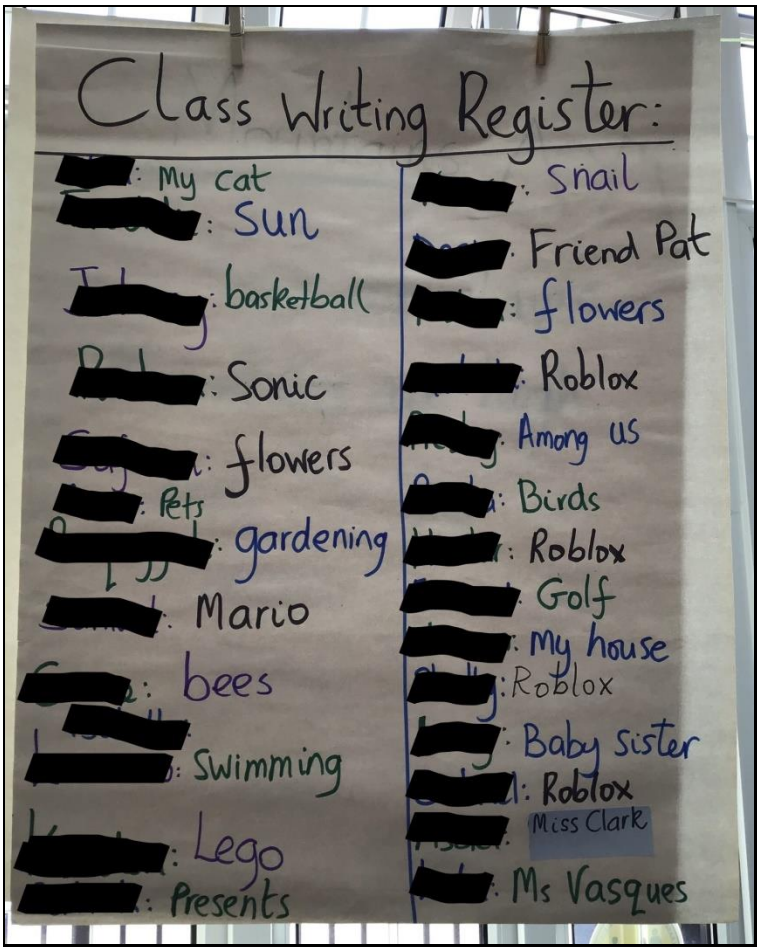


Name	The memoir idea I need to draft!
[redacted]	The time I got scared on the bus.
	the Day I got gonrl grabs
	When me and Maxie Went to dolly jungle
	The time my brother got locked in the bathroom
	The time I released my bunny into the park.
	The Sake Smell
	The time I broke a leg in School.
	I got scared by a demon under bed
	~~X~~ I Wen I gon to the Doty
	When me and Michael always get ourselves into the water
	The time I jumped off [illegible] and broke my arm
	When I Wen a baby ad(dish)
	The [illegible] I [illegible] my [illegible] open in [illegible]

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



An example of a writing register filled out by Tobias' Year Four class.



An example of a whole-class writing register poster made in Marcela Vasques' Year Two class.

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Adopt a writer

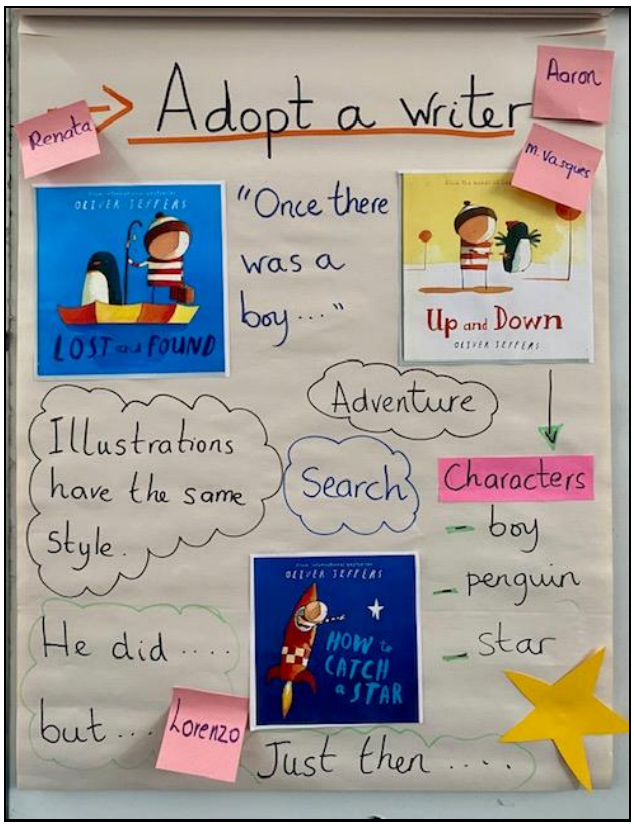
The best way to learn about writing is to study the work of other writers you admire
- Jeffrey Deaver

The children in your class will all have a favourite book. They may even have a favourite writer. We know from research that, when given the opportunity, children will naturally copy or 'adopt' the style of the books, poems and authors they read most often (Young & Ferguson 2021). It's good to point this out to children and to let them know it's fine to copy and use their favourite things from the writers they love.

For this mini-lesson, the best way to start is to discuss what you know about your favourite writer. For example:

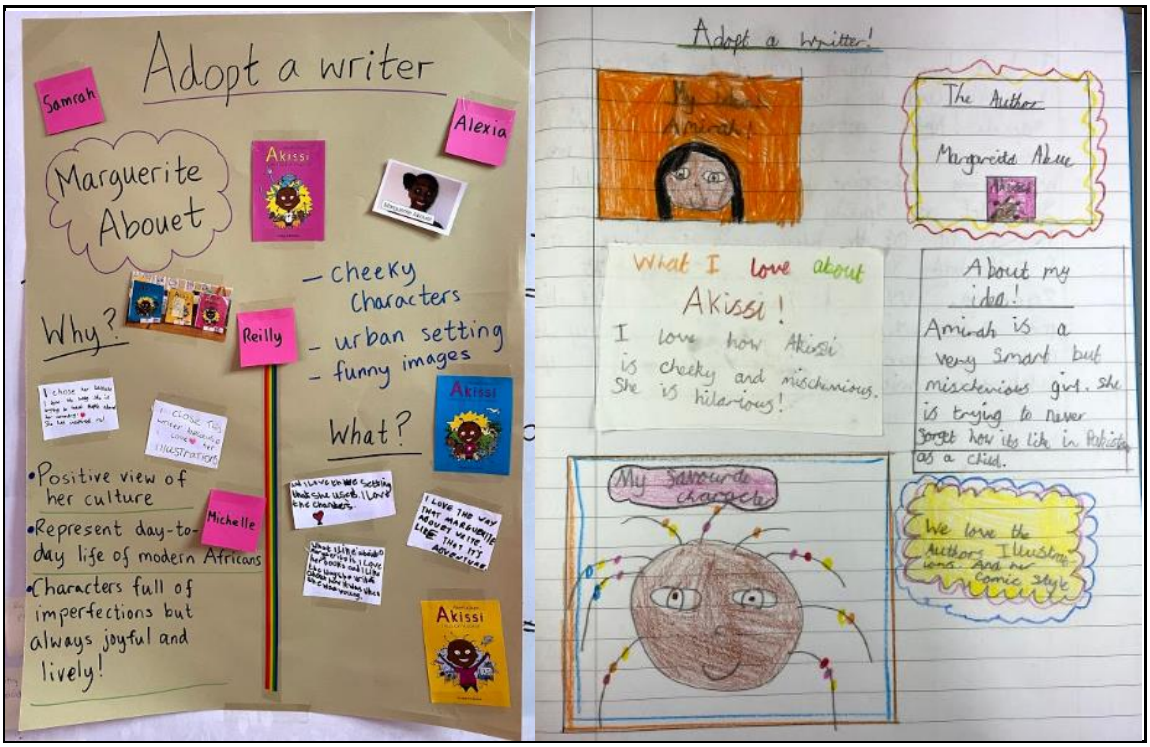
- *What moves them to write?*
- *What do they like to write about most?*
- *What moved them to write your favourite book?*

Then you can discuss how you tried to adopt a favourite author's style for a while. Share with your class a piece you've crafted in which you've copied the things they do and made them your own. You can then invite your class to find out what moves their favourite author to write, to think about what they like to write about most, why the author wrote their favourite book and finally, to copy something they really admire about their 'adopted' author to use in their own writing.



Here we can see an example from writer-teacher Marcela Vasques. The poster shows how children were going to try and adopt some of the writerly techniques of Oliver Jeffers in their own book-making.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Above is an example from writer-teacher Tobias Hayden's classroom where the children have explored what they like, and would like to try out, from one of their favourite writers, Marguerite Abouet, author of the Akissi series. Alongside is an example of a child trying this out for themselves and creating a new character called Amirah who is very smart but mischievous and gets up to all sorts of cheeky adventures in Lahore, Pakistan.

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

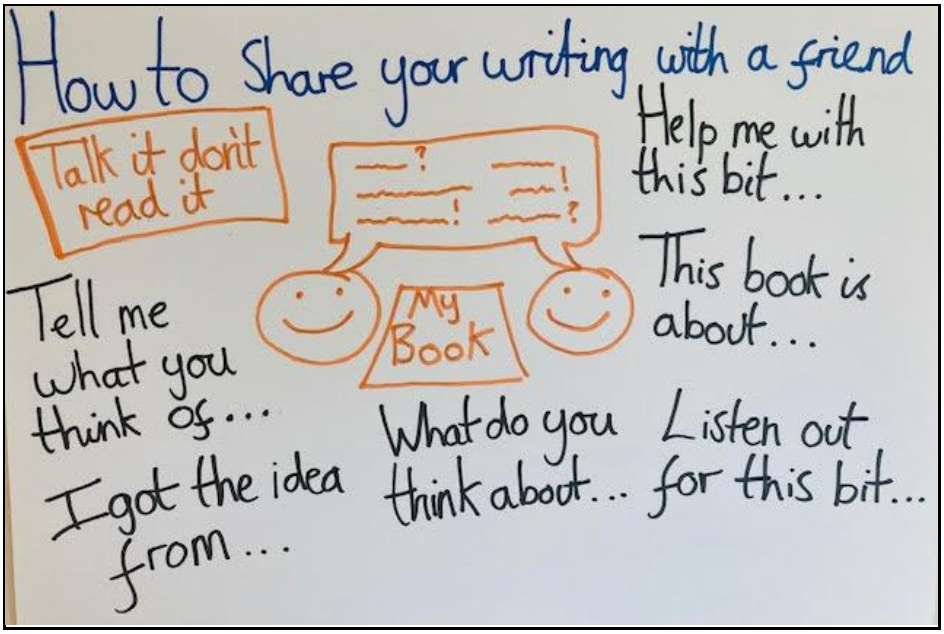
How to share your writing with a friend

Part of world-class writing teaching is ensuring that children know how to talk to each other about their writing (Young & Ferguson 2021). Therefore, learning how to share your writing with a friend is an important mini-lesson to teach and return to. Below we share how we've typically gone about setting up a healthy routine for sharing. This routine can be further modelled and reiterated during Author's Chair (Young & Ferguson 2020). Finally, we recommend that you make this routine visible to children in the form of a poster for the working wall.

Advice for sharing your writing with a friend

- *If you don't want to read your piece out, you can talk about it instead.*
- *Give some background to your piece (like where you got your idea from and what the piece is about) before you start reading.*
- *Explain what you'd like your friend to listen out for and what you want some advice on before you start reading.*

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; motivation, writer-identity; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

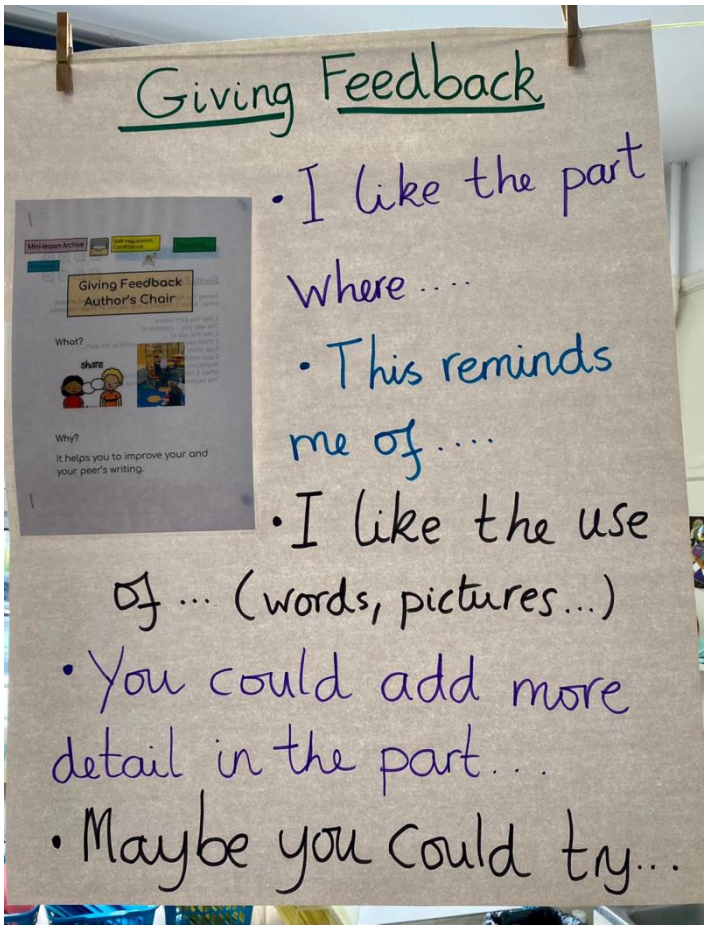
How to respond to your friend's writing

Writing can be a vulnerable thing to do. We all have pretty fragile writing egos and this is certainly the case for a great many children. With this in mind, we must respond to children's writing carefully and sensitively. So must other children. This lesson is just as much for teachers and assistant teachers as it is for the children in your class. We must first and foremost respond to *what* it is the writer is wanting to share with us and to show a personal connection with them. We must do this before we offer any advice or suggestions. This mini-lesson should be supported by excellent modelling from you as a writer-teacher during pupil conferencing (Ferguson & Young 2021). Children learn how to talk about writing and being a writer from you. Finally, we recommend that you make this routine visible to children in the form of a poster for the working wall.

Giving feedback to your friend

- *In your own words, repeat what their piece is about.*
- *Share what you like about the piece.*
- *Share what the piece reminded you of from your own life.*
- *Share what other things you've read or seen that the piece reminded you of.*
- *Share what it reminded you of from the wider-world.*
- *If they ask for some help, share your advice.*

Here is an example of a poster taken from Marcela Vasque's Year Two classroom.



Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; motivation, writer-identity; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

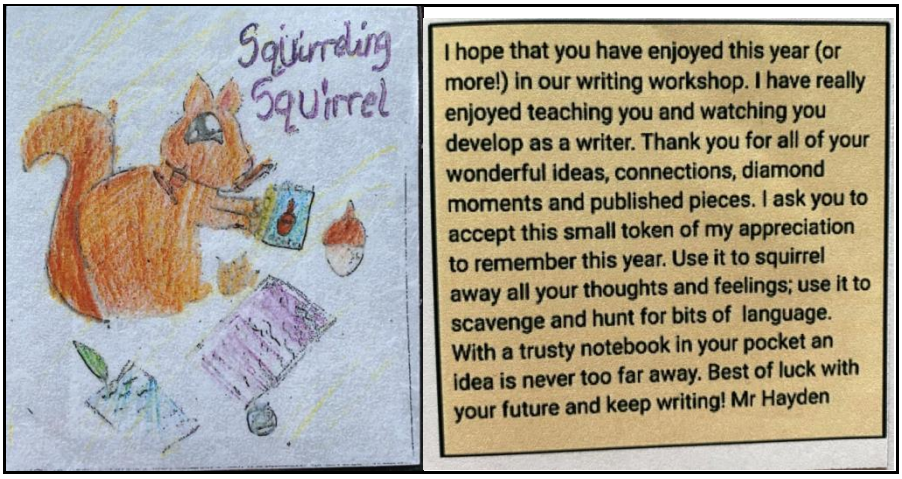
Squirrelling away - how to organise a notebook

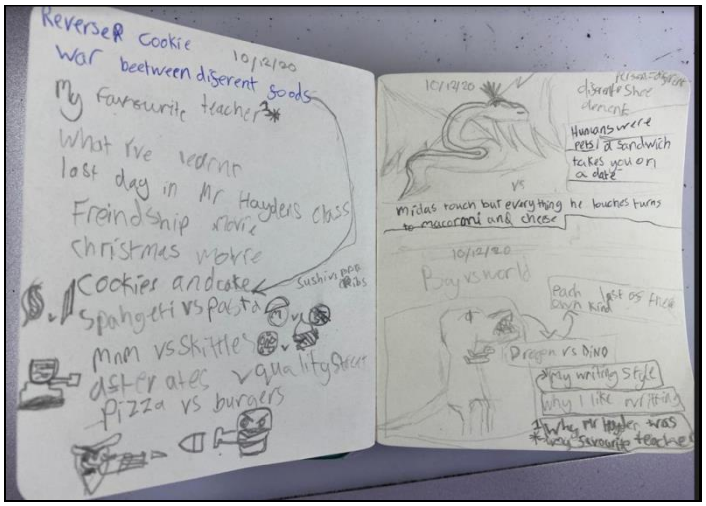
A writer's notebook gives you a place to live like a writer

- Ralph Fletcher

It's important that children have an opportunity to read and write every day. As teachers, we also try to ensure that children are reading for pleasure every day when they are at home too. One way to ensure children write at home is to give them a personal writing project book or a writer's notebook. This can go to and from home and school every day. It can also be around when they are reading. Great writers are great readers. They look to squirrel away great craft until such a time as they want to use it for themselves. This is something I've always tried to do when I'm reading and we can easily and profitably encourage children to do it too.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you sometimes squirrel away great craft in the back of your writing notebook while you're reading. After showing them your notebook and how you organise it, answer any questions they may have. Finally, invite them to try squirrelling away during that day's reading time.





Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Collecting language - speech

Out there, every day, there are millions of examples of 'language use' - spoken and written… we can scavenge for what we want from it

- Michael Rosen

I was in Specsavers sitting in the waiting area a few years ago when I overheard a woman say to her friend, *'You wouldn't think a pair of ankles would be strong enough to hold up all that weight.'* I glanced up from my magazine to take a look at who she was referring to and it got me thinking. I immediately pulled out my phone and typed it up as a note to myself. How often do we hear things like that, but just chuckle and move on with our day? What writers tend to do is record moments of speech that they hear around them; even their own speech. We can surprise ourselves sometimes. Not so long ago I found myself saying, '*Don't be so tight*', meaning don't be so mean. It was a word I probably hadn't used since primary school, but it suddenly jumped back into my vocabulary. Both of these examples could have become something or not, but the point is that we can encourage children to begin listening out for things which they find funny, unusual, striking, weird, gross, outrageous, unexplainable, indecipherable. Anything which pulls them up short.

Nowadays, although it is a lovely object to collect and fill, a physical notebook isn't a necessity, since notes can be stored digitally on smartphones. However we do it, this is a mini-lesson which can demonstrate the value of keeping our ears open and our minds alive to the possibilities all around us. I'm sure you'll begin noticing lots of examples of your own and sharing how you collected them would be a great place to start with your class. Show them your notebook and get them to ask you questions.

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

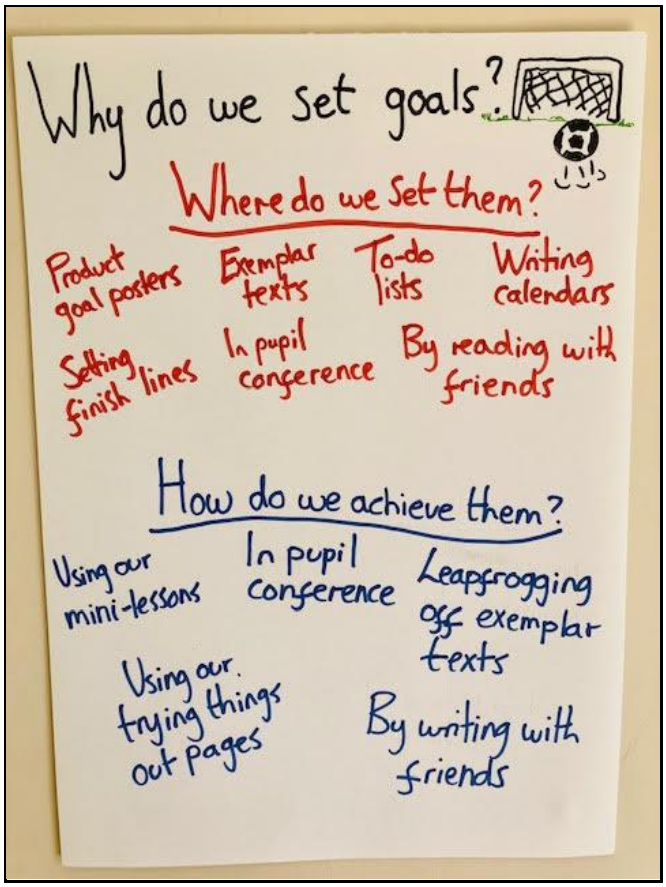
Why do we set goals?

Goal setting is by far the most effective practice teachers can employ to improve children's writing outcomes

- Young & Ferguson (2021 p.79)

Getting goal setting right in your classroom is essential. It significantly improves children's motivation to craft the best writing products they can. This mini-lesson is based on the excellent work of writer-teachers Melanie Meehan and Kelsey Sorum (2021). It's a mini-lesson that is as much for teachers as it is for children. It not only highlights where in your teaching you can set writing goals but where children can achieve them.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Begin by explaining that writers set themselves goals. They set themselves product goals - things they want their writing to do, include and achieve. They also set themselves process goals - things they want to get done during a session of writing time. Finally, writers have a distant goal in mind - a vision of what their writing will look like, where it will go and who will read it once it's done.

Next, explain where in your writing lessons children can set themselves writing goals.

1. *By creating a product goals poster as a whole class (Young & Ferguson 2020).*
2. *By looking at loads of exemplar texts*
3. *By writing a to-do list of things they want to get done during that day's writing time (see page 49)*
4. *By setting themselves a 'finish line' (see page 67)*
5. *By making a writing calendar (see page 68)*
6. *By having a pupil-conference (Ferguson & Young 2021)*
7. *By reading what they've crafted so far with friends (see page 195)*

Finally, explain how they can achieve their goals.

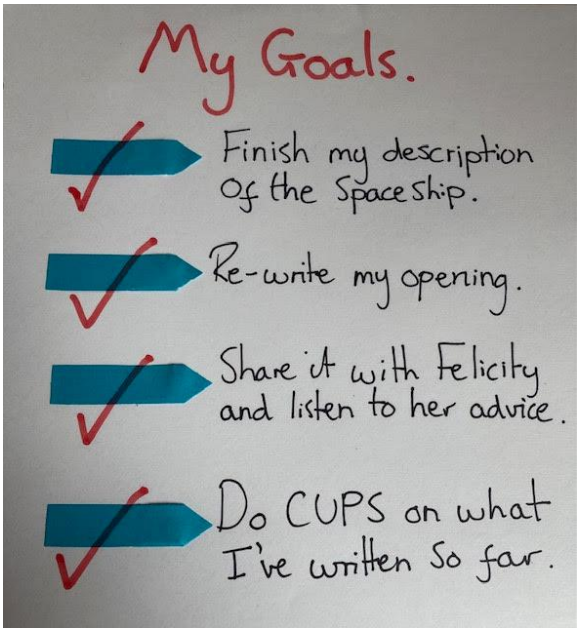
1. *By using what they've learnt about in that day's mini-lesson*
2. *By having a pupil-conference*
3. *By trying out the things they see in exemplar texts*
4. *By using their 'trying things out page' first (see page 291)*
5. *By working on their writing with a friend*

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, motivation; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Celebrating goals achieved

For some young writers, acknowledging and celebrating completing, including or trying something out in their writing can be the confidence boost they need. Inviting children to make a list of things they would like to try, do and/or include in their writing, and then asking them to tick these off as they do them, is, particularly for the most nervous or inexperienced writers, hugely effective practice. How these goals are arrived at is up to you but ideally you'd want to set them with the child. How these goals are celebrated once achieved is also up to you.



Here is an example of a goals poster. To know more about what is meant by 'CUPS,' please go to page 234.

For this mini-lesson, simply share some writing goals you set yourself for a piece of writing you once worked on and explain the feeling you had once you achieved them. You can invite children to write a list of things they'd like to do during that week's writing time.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, motivation; KS1, KS2

What went well yesterday?

We can all focus on the things that go badly. There is even science to back this up. And so, it's important that we continually reiterate the fact that getting good at writing and being a writer takes time and a lot of practice. Instead of always focusing on what we can't do (*yet*), it's important to focus on what's been achieved. This is especially true with your most inexperienced or nervous writers.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Things Anna can do:

1 Write her name on her book.
2 Write the title in her book.
3 Write the date in her book.
4 Begin each sentence with a capital letter.
5 Use speech marks.
6 Use a question mark at the end of a sentence.
7 Use a full stop at the end of a sentence.

Here is an example of a list Ross Young would add to the inside of Anna's notebook (Young & Ferguson 2020 p.125). It showed Anna all the things she was able to do that she couldn't do before.

For this mini-lesson, simply share something that went really well for you yesterday and then ask children to do the same. Give special attention to your most inexperienced or nervous writers. You can invite children to think about what they want to do well in today's writing time.

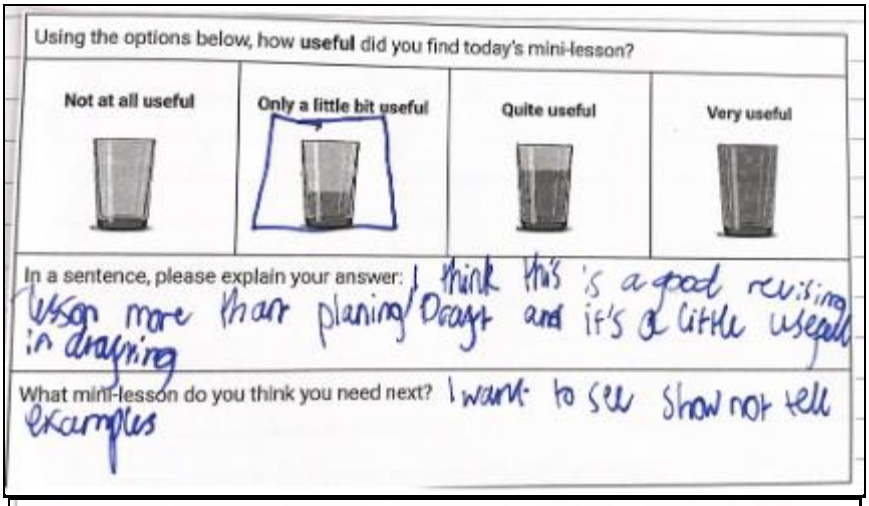
Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

What do you need mini-lessons on?

Writing teaching that is responsive to what your children need instruction in most is some of the most powerful writing instruction you can deliver (Young & Ferguson 2021). If children are lacking confidence in any aspect of writing composition, process or transcription, they should have an opportunity to learn about it from you. To this end, you should sometimes devote a mini-lesson to asking your class what they need mini-lessons about most.

Explain to children that the mini-lessons you share with them each day prior to writing time are there to help them be better writers and to help them write the great texts they want to write. The lessons are there to give them confidence. If there is anything they would like to learn more about, ask them to write it on a post-it note and put it into a suggestion box. You can then plan your future mini-lessons accordingly.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

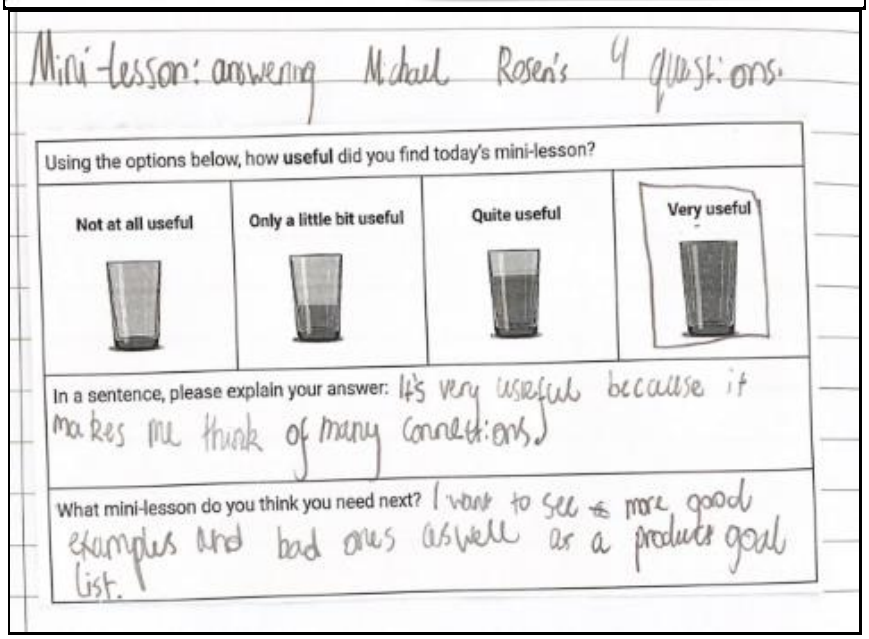


Using the options below, how **useful** did you find today's mini-lesson?

Not at all useful	Only a little bit useful	Quite useful	Very useful

In a sentence, please explain your answer: I think this is a good revising lesson more than planing/Draft and it's a little useful in drafting

What mini-lesson do you think you need next? I want to see show not tell examples



Mini-lesson: answering Michael Rosen's 4 questions.

Using the options below, how **useful** did you find today's mini-lesson?

Not at all useful	Only a little bit useful	Quite useful	Very useful

In a sentence, please explain your answer: It's very useful because it makes me think of many connections.

What mini-lesson do you think you need next? I want to see ~~a~~ more good examples and bad ones as well as a product goal list.

Here we can see examples of mini-lesson suggestion slips used by writer-teacher Tobias Hayden. As you can see, the children are first asked for their opinion on how useful the mini-lesson they received that day was. They then have an opportunity to suggest what they feel they need a mini-lesson on next. You can find blank versions of these slips in the Appendix.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence, agency; KS2

Can I copy you?

This mini-lesson comes from my own experience as a writer-teacher. I sometimes find it hard to generate my own ideas for short stories in a way that I find children don't. And so, I find that I am always so inspired by what children are writing about or how they've written it. I can't help but turn round and whisper to them: 'Can I copy you?' or 'Can I take that line and put it in my notebook?' This is how writers operate. We copy, collect and make something new. We need to ensure children know this to be part of being a writer too. This is a writing lesson that is especially important for our most nervous or inexperienced writers to learn. Knowing that you can copy and make something your own can be very reassuring.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, simply share an occasion where you've copied a child's writing idea or else copied a piece of their craft into your writer's notebook. You should also explain why. Alternatively, share a piece you've written based on something you've read by someone else. You could then challenge children to 'make their own' a piece of craft they like from their partner's writing or from the class library and use it for themselves during that day's writing time.

Please note how this mini-lesson is very different to the type of practice sometimes suggested where children are obliged to replicate or alter ever so slightly a text chosen by their teacher.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; confidence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Give a mentor text a hug

I've never been asked to write a football report. I also don't know anything about football. Therefore, if I was asked to write one, I know that I would look for a mentor text and would hug it quite close! The same goes for nervous and inexperienced child writers. Providing them with a variety of mentor texts that match the type of writing they are being invited to write themselves can be the confidence boost they need. However, when we show them how they can hug the 'road map' a mentor text can provide, they can feel even more reassured.

For this mini-lesson, simply share an occasion where you've had to hug a mentor text quite tightly because you've not been confident. You can then invite children to do the same if they are nervous during that day's writing time.

Please note how this mini-lesson is very different in purpose to the type of practice sometimes suggested where children are obliged to replicate or alter ever so slightly a text chosen by their teacher.

Tags: Being writers; planning, drafting; all genres; confidence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What's your best writing habit?

The writing habits below come from our book *Real-World Writers*. Writing habits are our own way of doing things. You might be an adventurer, who likes to draft first then use it as a plan for a second draft. Perhaps you're a planner, writing a tight plan to precede your draft.

Adventurer	Planner	Vomiter	Paragraph Piler	Sentence Stacker
Goes straight into their writing with a discovery draft. Uses this early draft as their plan.	Makes a plan before attempting a draft.	Plans, drafts their whole piece, and then revises and proof-reads it.	Drafts a paragraph before revising and editing it.	Drafts a sentence, revises and edits it until it is perfect before moving onto writing their next one.

(Young & Ferguson 2020 p.60)

Many people are vomiters, quickly drafting from a plan and attending later to revising and editing. Others are paragraph pilers, only drafting the next paragraph when they have revised and edited the one before. And there are sentence stackers, who perfect a sentence before moving on to the next. I have always identified myself as a dedicated sentence stacker, whereas my writing partner is a confirmed vomiter. It's totally amazing that we get our writing done together without too much pain. You can have great conversations with children about what kind of a writer they think they are, and they love giving themselves a writerly label and seeing how their friends identify themselves. Of course children can and will chop and change their writing habits depending on the type of writing they are doing or indeed the type of mood they find themselves in on that particular day.

The purpose of this mini-lesson is to tell children that they can experiment with different writing habits, and to invite them to try one out in their writing today. Point out that this will help them find their own preferred one in time. Show them examples from your own notebook where you have tried some different ones out, perhaps according to the type of writing you were doing.

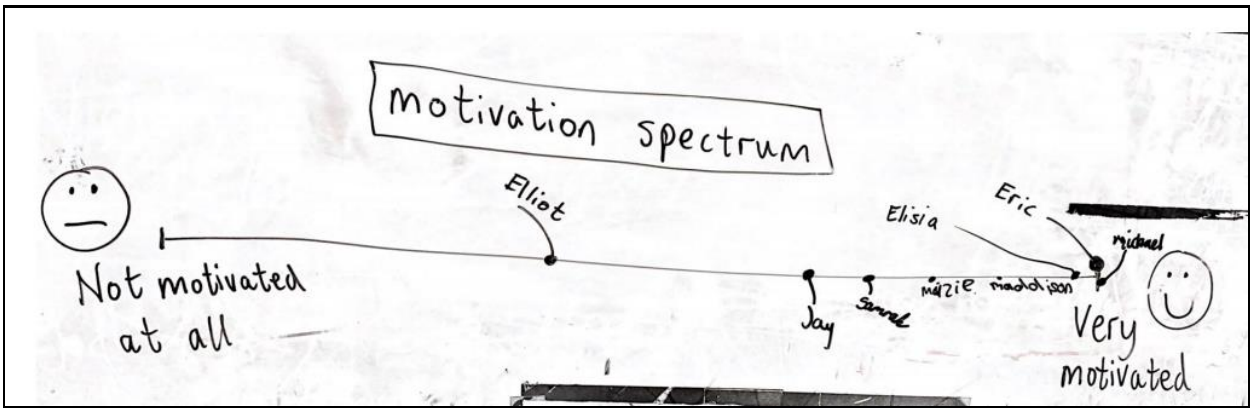
Tags: Being writers; drafting, revising; all genres; agency, self-regulation; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How motivated are we?

As teachers, we need to give special attention to children's motivation to write. Children need to feel the relevance and importance of a class writing project. After all, it's motivation that often gets children through the cognitively demanding activity that is writing. And, of course, children make less academic progress and are less successful if they are pursuing a writing idea they are not motivated to write about (Young & Ferguson 2021).

For this mini-lesson, simply draw a line on the whiteboard; marking either end with 'excited to write' and 'not excited to write'. Explain how important motivation is to writers. Passion for a project and a writing idea can make all the hard work that's involved in writing feel worth it. Ask that by the end of the lesson, everyone puts their name somewhere on the line. Reassure the children that this is to help you with your pupil-conferencing. This mini-lesson is a great way of working with the children who need you most at the beginning of a writing project. Children often want to be excited to write and if they are not, they will be grateful for a talk with you and you can help them solve whatever it is that's troubling them.



Here is an example of Tobias Hayden's class sharing how motivated they are by their latest class writing project.

Tags: Being writers; planning; all genres; agency, self-regulation; KS2

How should we celebrate?

Life is too short not to celebrate nice moments

- Jurgen Klopp

As teachers, we need to give special attention to children's motivation to write. Attending to children's motivation is just as important for their academic achievements as your focus on their cognitive learning. One way to attend to children's motivation is to encourage external and situational motivators (Young & Ferguson 2021), for example, through a publishing party. Commercial writers often celebrate the publication of their books, so why shouldn't your class?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, explain how commercial writers will often have a publishing party to celebrate the final publication of their writing. They celebrate all the time, thought, and energy they've put into creating something great (and the help they got from others along the way). Ask the children how they would like to celebrate once your latest class writing project is over and then make sure it happens.

Tags: Being writers; publishing and performing; all genres; motivation; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Why are we doing this project?

Children like the idea of projects. They like the idea that they are coming into the classroom every day to make something. In this case, they are making writing products and making them for others. In purposeful and authentic class writing projects, the explicit goals of a curriculum can meet the implicit reasons children are moved to write (Young & Ferguson 2021). Teachers who understand the importance of motivation ensure children know the rationale for why they are taking part in a class writing project. They will answer children's very important questions. For example:

- Why are we doing this project?
- Who are we making the writing for?
- What are we going to learn about writing and being a writer?

Children are motivated when they know their writing is going to be valued and used by others, and published or performed. For this mini-lesson, simply answer these three questions and any other questions the children may have. Also ask for their suggestions on how you can make the project even better.

Tags: Being writers; publishing and performing; all genres; motivation; EYFS, KS1, KS2

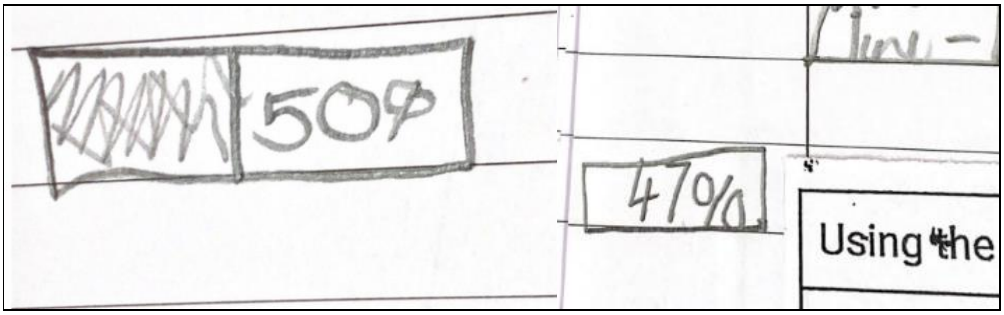
Percentage complete

I once had a young lad in my class who enjoyed writing a little percentage in the corner of his book. At the end of each writing session, he would rub it out and update it. He called it his 'percentage complete'. He really enjoyed computers and would regularly talk about them. He had a fascination for the progress bars that would often appear when downloading something or if an update was occurring. He also liked to do this with his writing. I guess it brought him a sense of progress and achievement each day - no bad thing. Anyway, the other children in class cottoned on to it and started doing it too.

For this mini-lesson, explain how good writing can sometimes take time. It is moulded and worked on over many writing sessions. This can be tough for some people. You could share how one child kept his motivation up by giving himself a little progress

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

percentage and updating it each day. The percentage he chose depended on how close he felt he was to final publication. You could invite other children to give it a try if they wanted.

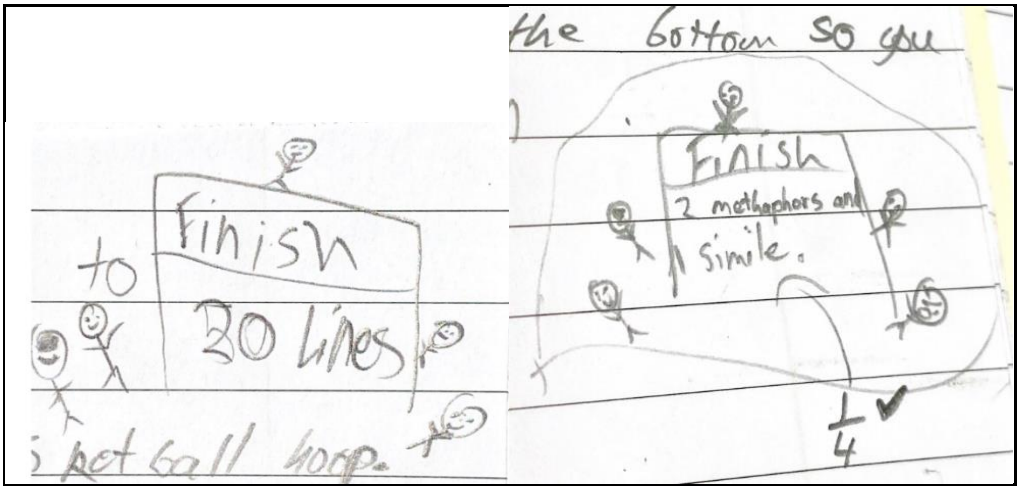


Tags: Being writers; publishing and performing; all genres; motivation; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Where's your finish line?

As a writer, I decide on what I want to achieve in a given writing session. I'm old enough and experienced enough to do this implicitly these days. However, for young writers, this discipline needs to be taught. This is particularly important for children who lack motivation, have ADHD, or might suffer from an emotional or behavioural disorder. It's really important for these children to keep in mind what it is they are meant to achieve in an individual writing session. That's why asking them to set themselves a 'finish line' for the lesson is a good idea. For example, can they make a certain number of pages in their picture book? Can they get all their drawings done? Can they write a certain number of lines? Can they focus on book-making or doing their writing for a certain period of time?

For this mini-lesson, explain how it's good to have a finish line in mind for a particular writing session. It makes you feel good and that you've achieved something. Tell the children what you hope to get done during the session before asking a few of the children what their 'finish lines' are going to be.



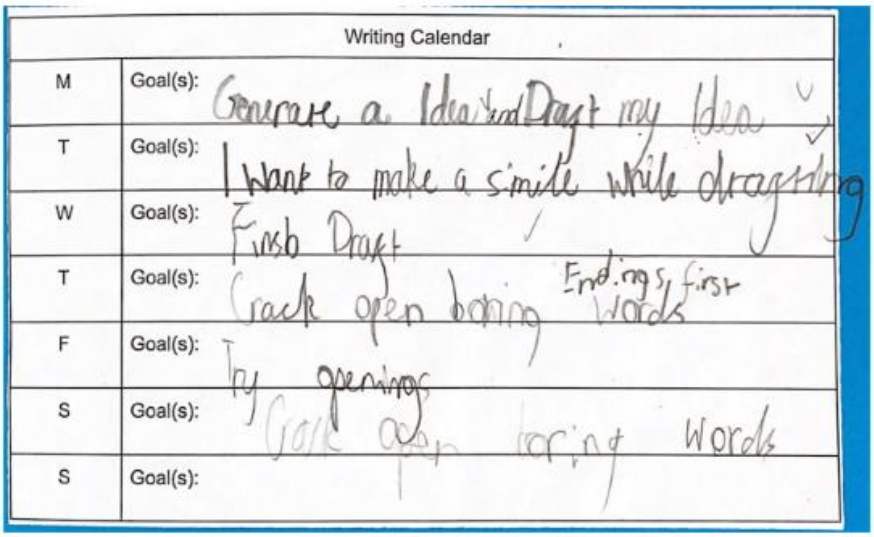
Tags: Being writers; all processes; all genres; motivation; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

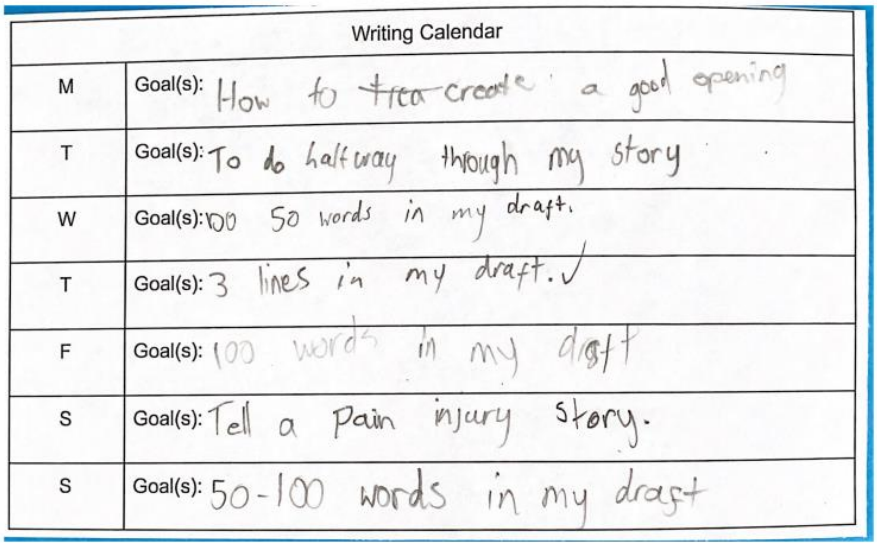
Using a writing calendar

As a writer, I have to set myself writing goals. I have to know when I'm going to get certain things done. When am I going to get that chapter drafted? When am I going to give it a reread? When I'm going to do the proof-reading? What's the publishing deadline? Am I going to meet it or do I need to let Bruce know it's going to be late (my publisher)! Children can appreciate being given the opportunity to behave and regulate themselves in the same way. We also know from research and case studies that setting writing goals like this is one of the most effective practices teachers can employ in the writing classroom; particularly for children lacking in confidence or motivation. This is also true for children with behavioural or emotional disorders.

For this mini-lesson, explain how you keep track of your daily writing. You might have an electronic calendar or use one on your phone. You could show this to you class and explain how it keeps you on track and makes you accountable for your daily writing. You can then invite them to try it out during that writing week.



Writing Calendar	
M	Goal(s): Generate a Idea and Draft my Idea
T	Goal(s): I want to make a simile while draghting
W	Goal(s): First Draft
T	Goal(s): Crack open boring Endings, first Words
F	Goal(s): Try openings
S	Goal(s): Crack open boring Words
S	Goal(s):



Writing Calendar	
M	Goal(s): How to ~~trea~~ create a good opening
T	Goal(s): To do halfway through my story
W	Goal(s): 00 50 words in my draft.
T	Goal(s): 3 lines in my draft.
F	Goal(s): 100 words in my draft
S	Goal(s): Tell a Pain injury story.
S	Goal(s): 50-100 words in my draft

Tags: Being writers; all processes; all genres; motivation, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Our writers' rights and responsibilities

Daniel Pennac, in his book The Rights Of The Reader, created 10 rights for child readers. In 2011, The National Writing Project produced its own ten rights for writers which includes the following:

1. The right not to share.
2. The right to change things and cross things out.
3. The right to write anywhere.
4. The right to a trusted audience.
5. The right to get lost in your writing and not know where you're going.
6. The right to throw things away.
7. The right to take time to think.
8. The right to borrow from other writers.
9. The right to experiment and break rules.
10. The right to work electronically, draw or use a pen and paper.

Jeni Smith helped write these rights and you can listen to her talk in the video here.

Using the poster as a springboard, I asked the children in my class what their rights and responsibilities were in the writing classroom. Below, you can see what they came up with. I have since placed them into a number of different categories which I find really interesting. The categories include: the role of the teacher, home writing, reader in the writer, what to write, how to write, sharing writing and 'getting your writing reader-ready'.

The Rights Of The Child Writer In 5RY

The role of the teacher:
The right to have a writer-teacher.
The right to be shown the 'writing tricks' other authors use.
The right to a pupil-conference where you receive genuine writing advice from a writer-teacher.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Home writing:
The right to a home/school writing journal.
The right to write anywhere.
The right to take writing to and from home.

Reader in the writer:
The right to magpie and borrow ideas from other writers.

What to write:
The right to write about the things you care about and express yourself.
The right to generate ideas in lots of different ways.
The right to write in many different genres,
The right to write Inspired by…poems.
The right to write a poem that doesn't rhyme.
The right to write memoir.
The right to write a gift for someone.

How to write:
The right to use 'planning grids' or else get your ideas together.
The right to move around the writing process – to write your own way.
The right to make mistakes, cross things out and change your mind.
The right to abandon personal writing projects.
The right to take time to think, to be unsure and to write freely.
The right to get lost in our writing and not know where you're going.
The right to experiment and take risks.

Sharing writing:
The right to be shy.
The right to give and receive 'author talks' from your peers.
The right to a supportive audience.

Getting your writing 'reader ready':
The right to circle unsure spellings whilst writing and deal with them later.
The right to have time to revise and edit your piece.
The right to work electronically and illustrate your manuscripts.
The right to publish your favourite writing into the class book-stock and beyond.
The right to make a few mistakes when you're publishing.

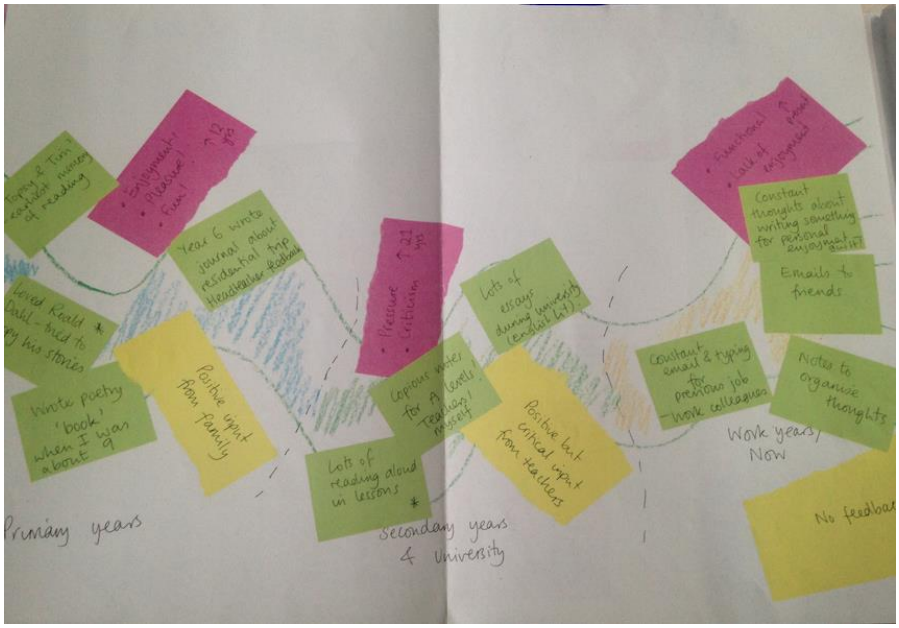
Hopefully, the instructions above provide enough information for you to do this for yourself in your own classroom. What I would say is that this particular mini-lesson may take longer than your usual 10-15 minutes.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; writer-identity; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Writing rivers

This mini-lesson was originally shared by writer-teacher Sadie Phillips. You can read all about it here. Essentially, children are asked to map along a river the writing they like to do outside of school. They can use a combination of drawings, labels and writing to achieve this. Sadie states how writing rivers gave her 'invaluable insights into their preferences as writers (often to type rather than scribe) and the different forms of writing they encountered at home. We had everything from 'secret diaries' and short stories, to birthday cards, shopping lists, reminders on post-it notes and letters to family, in addition to typing Whatsapp messages, song searches on Spotify and movie titles into Netflix. Some children also wrote in languages other than English. [It] certainly increased my own awareness of what it means to write and it enabled the children to reflect on how important the role of literacy is in our daily lives. I got to know my children's writing lives. It's a simple, yet incredibly effective way of gaining helpful insights into children's writing routines, and also (perhaps more importantly) for the children themselves to make the connections between their home and school literacy practices, and how they write for pleasure and purpose'.



Teacher Ellen Counter's writing river - showcasing her writing history and memories from 2-16.

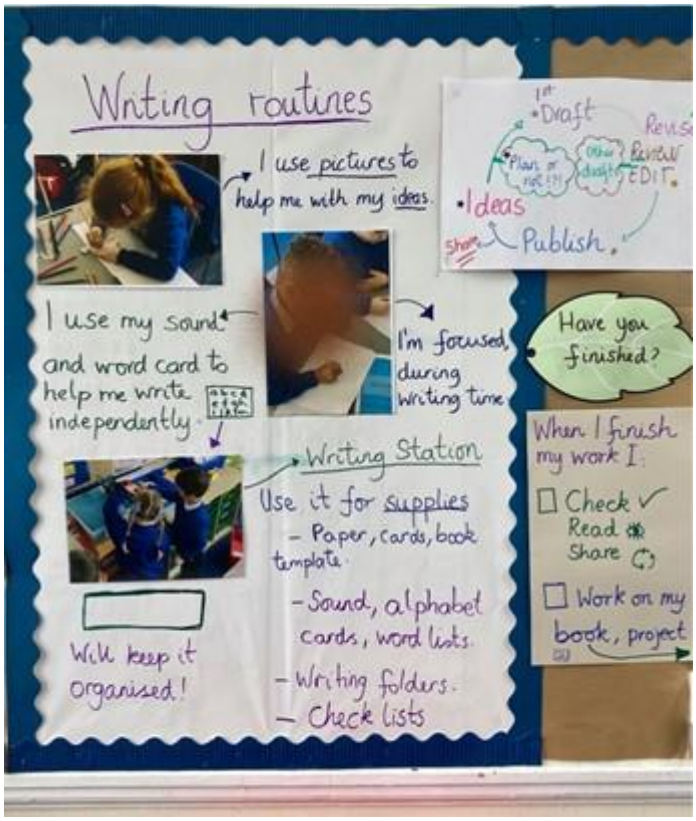
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, share your own 'writing river' just like Sadie did with her class. You can then invite children to think about and notice all the kinds of writing they do outside of school and create their own river to share with the class.

Tags: Being writers; any process; all genres; writer-identity; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Create a routine!

Teach the children to see writing for pleasure as part of their routine. Writers write every day. Establish a clear routine for the children in your classroom so, for example, they know what to do when they finish their class projects for the day.



Young children will benefit from a routine board created using their own pictures and showing the routines and habits in their writing workshop. This is best made in the first weeks with your class, when all these routines and habits are being established. They will learn where they can access their stationery and supplies, and will see examples of children reading their work to each other, sharing their work with the whole class, revising, thinking of ideas and accessing mini-lesson cards. All these routines and habits are part of being a writer. They help children feel safe, engaged and included. You can keep adding to this board or adapt it if needed. Children can also share the personal writerly routines and habits they have created. You don't need to make a monumental board; a picture of a child sharing their story, for example, is enough to show that sharing their work sometimes is part of the routine in a community of writers.

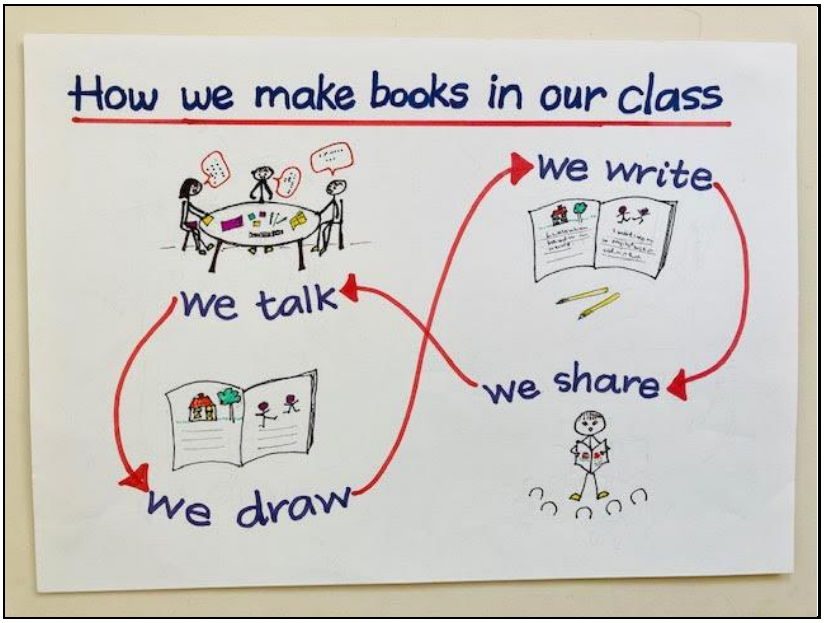
Tell the children that we are going to have a class board which will show the routines and habits that we will create in our writing workshop. Yesterday when you were writing, I took a picture of Stella re-reading her work. This is something that we do in our writing workshop, so it's going on the board. I also took a picture of Ethan - he was getting his personal writing project book because he had finished the class project for the day, so he decided to work on his own project. That's going on the board too.

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, confidence, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

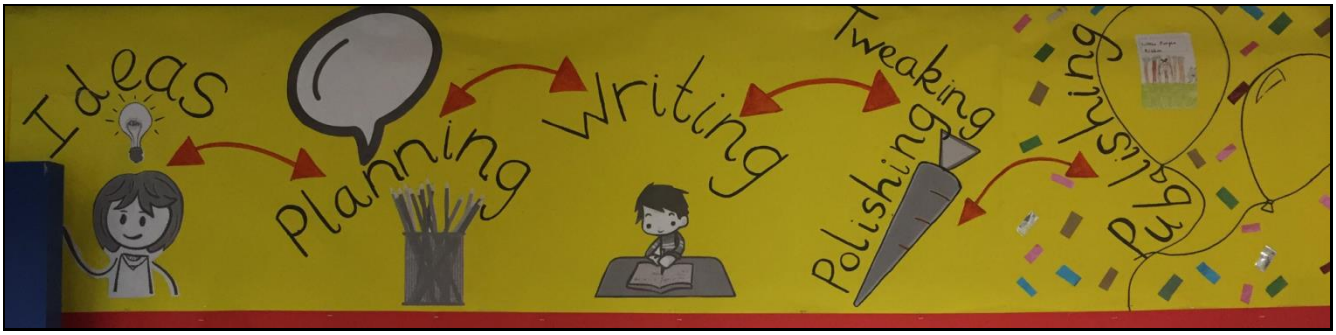
Knowing the writing processes

All writing goes through a process. We start with an idea and often end with a final written piece. A lot of things happen in between, and we discuss this in more detail in our books (Young & Ferguson 2020, 2021). It's important for children to know that there are different processes involved in crafting a great text. They can quickly internalise these processes and see a germ of an idea through to publication largely independently as a result. The best performing writing teachers ensure children know the writing processes and have them up on display (Young & Ferguson 2021). For example, here are the writing processes as conceived by Reception children:



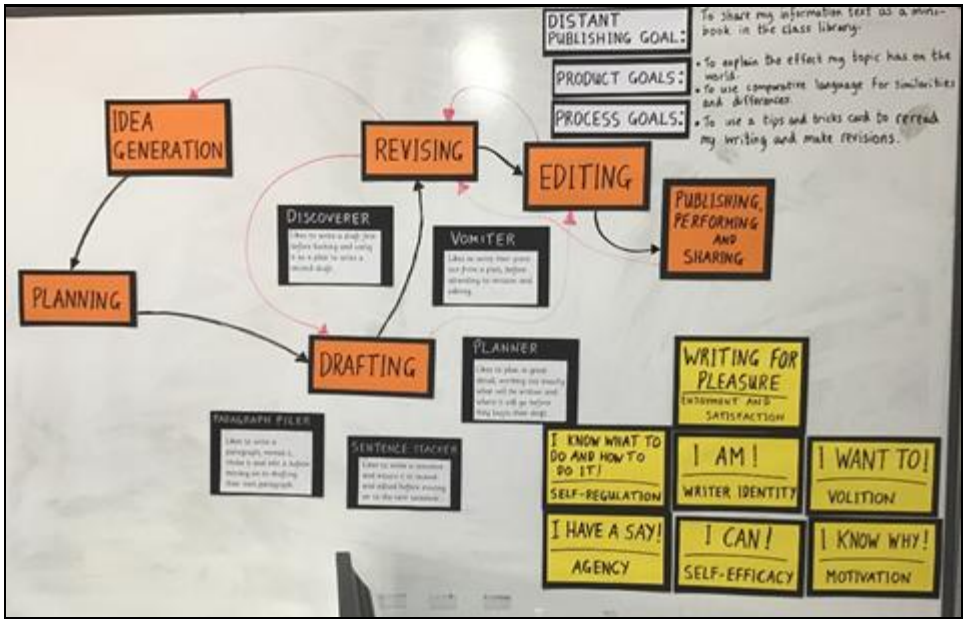
Here we can see how the figure of eight encourages children to see 'book making' time as a dynamic, productive and playful time for talking, writing, drawing and sharing.

Here are the writing processes as conceived by Laura's mixed Year One and Two class:



Here we see that children can move back and forth between the following processes: Ideas, planning (including talking and drawing), writing, tweaking (revising), polishing (editing) and publishing. Note that children offered up their own terminology for the display after having a mini-lesson about the writing processes.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Here is Tobias Hayden's writing processes display for his Year Four class. Again, notice how his arrows indicate how writers will move back and forth between the different processes. The processes include: idea generation, planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing, performing and sharing. You'll also notice how he displays the different writing habits children can use to draft (see page 64 for more information).

This mini-lesson might not be so mini and may need some time devoted to it. I can highly recommend reading 'How A Book Is Made' by Aliki before discussing the writing processes as shared above. It's also important to invite children to discuss how they see the different writing processes and to come up with their own vocabulary for the different processes. Finally, I can highly recommend creating a large poster to put on display.

Tags: Being writers; all processes; all genres; independence, writer-identity; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Perform

There is no buzz like performing for a live audience

- Jack Wild

It is important to present to the children the different possibilities for publishing their work if they wish to do so. Young children love to perform their stories, and this can be their way of publishing. Michael Rosen is a brilliant role model; he does it with great artistry and children watch with delight, so you can also share some of his videos with them. Another great performer is Joseph Coelho, look out for his videos and advice too.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

*Performing is when you speak or read aloud your writing to an audience. You can use your **voice**, **body, movement** or **props** to make it more interesting.*

- ***Volume**: loud, soft, whispering*
- ***Pitch**: low, high*
- ***Intonation**: rising, falling*
- ***Pace**: fast, slow*
- ***Tone/ Colour**: warm, cold, intense, relaxed*

You can be a role model too and perform a short piece you've written yourself. Ask the children for some feedback afterwards. Finally, invite the children to perform their stories if they want.

Tags: Being writers; narrative, motivation, confidence, EYFS, KS1

Muting Michael Rosen

This mini-lesson comes straight from Jonny Walker's book *How To Get Children Writing And Performing Poems*. In the book, Jonny recommends muting and showing your class Michael Rosen's performance of *The Hypnotiser*. Children are then asked to consider how much they think they learn about the poem through the expressions and hand gestures Michael uses. Children can then be invited to work with their friends to consider how they might like to perform their poems.

Tags: Being writers; poetry; publishing; confidence, writer-identity; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Choose something delicious from the publishing menu

Publishing is like stuffing a note into a bottle and hurling it into the sea. Some bottles drown, some come safe to land, where the notes are read and then possibly cherished, or else misinterpreted, or else understood all too well by those who hate the message

- Margaret Atwood

At the beginning of a new class writing project, I always give out what I call my 'publishing menu'. It's a place where children can see all the different options for where our writing could go when we publish at the end of the project. We talk about the menu options. We discuss their pros and cons. This kind of discussion inevitably leads to us talking about the possible audience for our writing too.

By the end of the mini-lesson, we will have chosen from the menu where our writing will end up. I must say this mini-lesson works particularly well if you've set up a class publishing house at the beginning of the year (see page 32).

Publishing & Performing Menu

Choose how you'd like to publish or perform your finished writing!

- Read it out during class sharing times (in your own or in another class).
- Have a live debate or political discussion evening centred around the writing.
- Read it out during assembly.
- Have a slam poetry evening.
- Have a lunchtime or after school 'coffee house' read-aloud club.
- Have a publishing party or a writers' picnic.
- Hold special writing celebration evenings or exhibitions where the community can be invited in to read, hear or see live/videoed performances.
- Put it in a frame or give it as a gift.
- Put it on your bedroom wall.
- Put it in the bathroom for people to read on the loo or while they're in the bath.
- Leave it in the car to read during traffic jams.
- Turn it into a presentation.
- Turn it into a film.
- Turn it into a piece of artwork.
- Add it to the class or school library.
- Send it to another school either here or abroad.
- Send it in the post to a friend or a family member.
- Take it home to share with the family.
- Mail it to a person who needs to read it.
- Send it to an expert, charity or association to see what they think.
- Collect it together with other pieces to make an anthology.
- Share with another class via their class library.
- Enter it into year group, school, local or national writing competition.
- Send it to a local or national newspaper, magazine or fanzine.
- Publish it online.
- Publish it in the school newsletter or newspaper.
- Have a 'lecture day' where people can sign up to hear different speakers discuss what they've learnt during class topics.
- Put on a book or poetry sale. You can sell your writing - especially if people know it's going to a good cause. It can feel good knowing your thoughts, passions and ideas are worth money.
- Make an audio recording for the class library or school website.
- Suggest that it be used as an 'exemplar-text', when the writing is kept by your teacher to help teach next year's class.
- Ask if you can place it anonymously in local establishments such as: libraries, places of worship, local history centres, museums, art galleries, train stations, bus stops, bookshops, cornershop windows, lamp posts, gates, fences, takeaways, retirement homes, cafes, coffee-houses, pubs, sports-clubs, dentists' or doctors' surgeries, on buses or trains.

This publishing menu can be found in any of our [class writing project resources]. However, I can highly recommend making your own - and ask your class what they think could go on the menu too. Children have great ideas about where their writing can end up.

Tags: Being writers; publishing; all genres; agency, motivation; EYFS, KS1, KS2

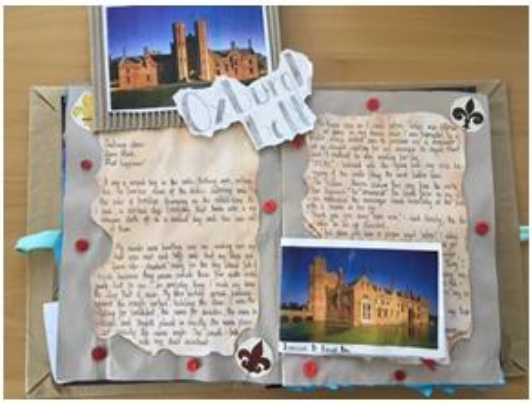
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Book making

Share with children the delight of self-made books...To make a book of one's own is to have found an enrichment of life and furthering of one's identity. Teachers who have made books with children know that when a book is part of a writing project, interest in, and devotion to, the acquisition of language skills increases phenomenally. Excellence in writing becomes a self-imposed objective, because the self-made book which houses the text is a treasured item.

- Paul Johnson

Book making is central to great writing teaching. Not only does it tell pupils that they write with serious intent, with real purpose and with a real audience in mind, it provides them with a real sense of personal satisfaction. It's an artefact that reflects all their hard work. It's the product that's come out of the process. Without book making, what are children writing for? And why should they bother writing anything good? There are a number of great books you can use to support book making. We can certainly recommend 'You Can Make Your Own Book!' and 'A Book Of One's Own' by Paul Johnson.



Here you can see examples of the types of books made by children in [Benjamin Harris' classroom](#).

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

An important part of this mini-lesson is to listen to the wise words of writer-teacher Paul Johnson who reminds us that 'teachers must experience the magic of making books too...if genuine enthusiasm is to be communicated to children'. With this in mind, you should be making books and sharing them with the children in your class. You can then invite them to make their own books in similar ways.

Tags: Being writers; all genres, motivation, writer-identity, EYFS, KS1, KS2

Revisit your book!

This mini-lesson will teach your children that it's possible to find the book(s) they have written a few months or weeks ago and make adjustments if they want. It gives them agency over their work. They don't have to change anything and they might be able to see how much they have grown as a writer - a real confidence-booster!

On Saturday, I thought, "Why not meet my book again?" because something I was reading reminded me of a story that I had written a few months ago. I wanted to read my story again, but when I did I realised that I could add and change a few things. It made me think I must have grown as a writer since then. We never stop growing as writers! Here you can share parts of your story/ writing that you have changed when you met it again, explaining the reasons behind it. And invite the children to meet their book again!

Here you can see the child has placed two time stamps on their picture book. One indicates it was the first edition and was published on the 20th of April. We can see it has been 're-printed' on the 15th of June as a second edition 'now with extra pages!'

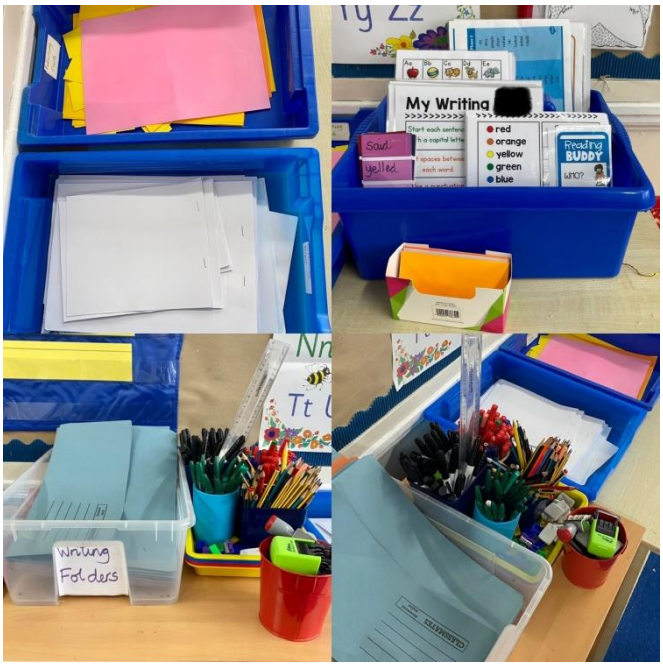
Tags: Being writers, revising; confidence, agency; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How to use your Writing Station

A place for everything, and everything in its place

- Benjamin Franklin



For young children, having a place in your classroom you call 'The Writing Area', 'Writing Centre' or 'Writing Station' is very important. It really does not matter what you name it. In my classroom we call it a 'Writing Station' and this is where we keep all the supplies and equipment the children might need to access during their writing time. The items I keep in there are stationery, date stamps, word lists, book templates, writing folders, mini-lesson cards, a variety of paper and cards for publishing or creating flaps in their books, sound/ alphabet cards, check lists, etc... It is essential that the children know what is in there and are taught how to use it. The Writing Station in my classroom is very important for the children's self-regulation, agency and growing independence. Additionally, it's important because it frees me to teach and support the children. Ensure that children are responsible for this area in your classroom and to maintain it organised.

This is our Writing Station, this is where you can find some extra stationery, book templates, different kinds of cards and paper, checklists, alphabet cards, date stamps, etc... So when you finish writing your book, you can use the date stamp to mark your publication date and you can get your new book template from this area. This week, I have chosen Sam and Paula to help me to keep it organised.

As the needs arise, you show the children where to get the items they need. If you introduce a new list or checklist that they can use, you let them know. If you add mini-lesson cards, you publicise it. If you are in the middle of a conference and realise that the child could use an item from the 'Writing Station', let them know. The idea is to have a space in your classroom where they can independently access the material they might need during their writing time. Show them how to choose the material, make decisions, and be independent and proactive.

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, confidence, EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

I get by with a little help from my friends: giving advice

This mini-lesson idea has close links to 'How to respond to your friends writing' (see page 56) and 'Can I copy you?' (see page 62). It works really well in a community of writers and is designed to let children know that anyone else's idea or technique can be borrowed to help someone else overcome a writing hurdle. A classic example of this happened recently when the children were compiling 'top five lists' to generate memoir ideas (see page 98). We started out by doing 'top five funny things that happened at school', but this then morphed into a range of other ideas. For instance, one girl wrote about the 'top five things that happened at hospital' because she had spent so much time there. What happens a lot when writer-teachers are conferencing with one child is that others benefit from the advice by 'overhearing' (Young & Ferguson 2020). Well, in this case one boy overheard his friend's difficulty with getting started and made a suggestion about how he could 'crack' this problem. He had written down the names of five friends and then attached his strongest memory to each one. He suggested that his friend could try the same. His friend agreed and it really helped him to get started. Sometimes the solutions lie all around us.

For this mini-lesson, what works really well is a short anecdote about a time when you were stuck with an aspect of the writing process and a friend gave you some advice which helped you get going again. It's even better if this has happened in your class recently! Remind them of it and they will probably remember it well. Invite them to ask each other for advice during that day's writing time, and to give you advice too. Start writing time by writing yourself at one of the children's tables and share your writing with them.

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

Design your own product goals!

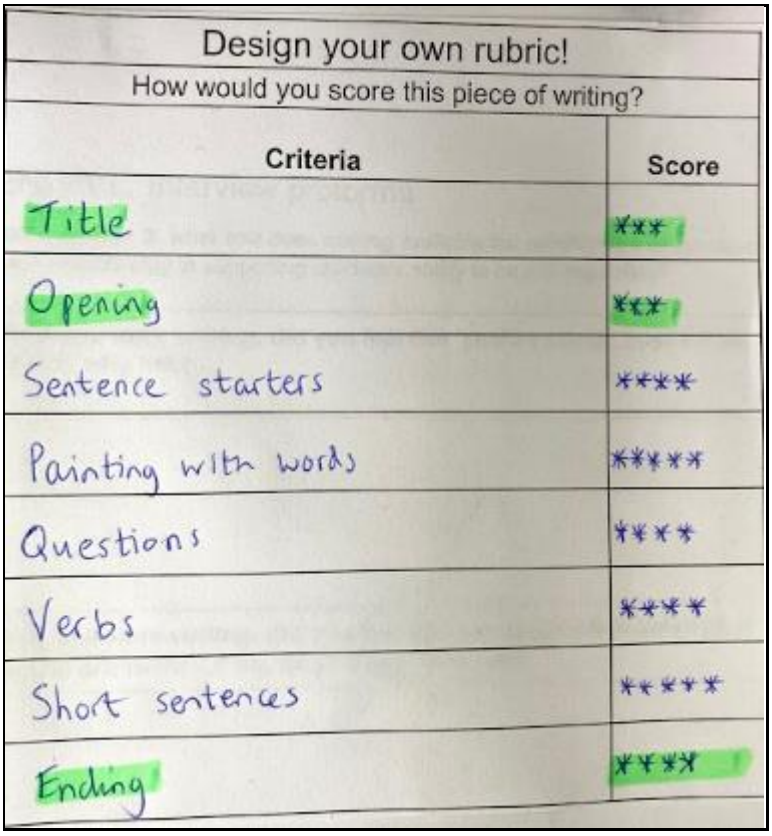
A culture that habitualizes self-assessment, reflection, goal setting, and growth is one that celebrates process over product. In such a classroom environment, students navigate their own learning. Self-assessment and self-selected goals are practices that are among the highest influences on student achievement

- John Hattie (cited in Meehan & Sorum 2021).

Applying a simple scoring system to your writing and developing your own criteria for doing so can be a powerful way to help writers to see where they may need to give more attention to their developing drafts. It is especially useful before you begin undertaking any major revisions and when I tried it I found the children rated this lesson highly on the motivation spectrum (see page 65) and they were very keen to try it out.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Scoring can be fun! Explain to the children that it is a useful way of just finding the parts of their writing that they have done really well (which is great for confidence!) and the bits which need to be developed/improved. Revision doesn't all have to be about fixing things; it can be celebratory too. When I tried it out I didn't realise how well I had painted with words and used snappy sentences for effect until the children pointed it out to me. Encourage the children to try it out with this dual perspective.

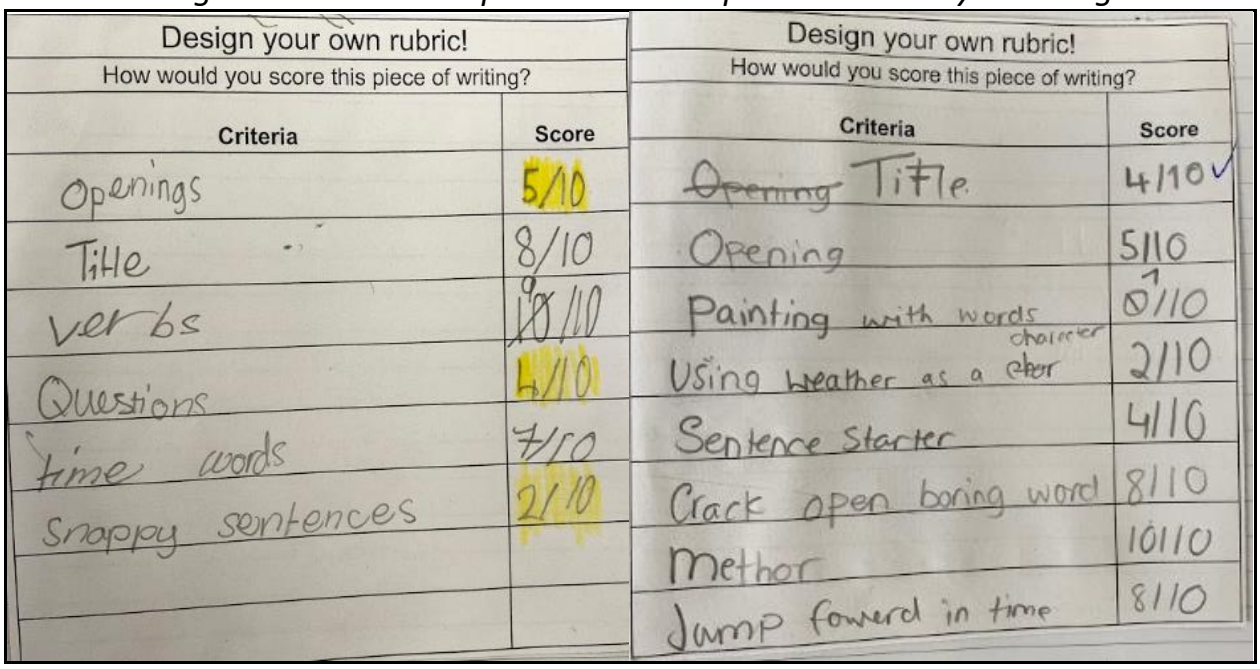


Design your own rubric!

How would you score this piece of writing?

Criteria	Score
Title	***
Opening	***
Sentence starters	****
Painting with words	*****
Questions	****
Verbs	****
Short sentences	*****
Ending	****

Tobias Hayden tried this out with his class while working on a scary story. After reading it through, the children called out some criteria that they noticed being addressed in the writing and then showed on their fingers how well they thought he had done it. He took an average and then developed the weaker parts in that day's writing time.



Design your own rubric!

How would you score this piece of writing?

Criteria	Score
Openings	5/10
Title	8/10
verbs	~~10~~ 9/10
Questions	4/10
time words	7/10
Snappy sentences	2/10

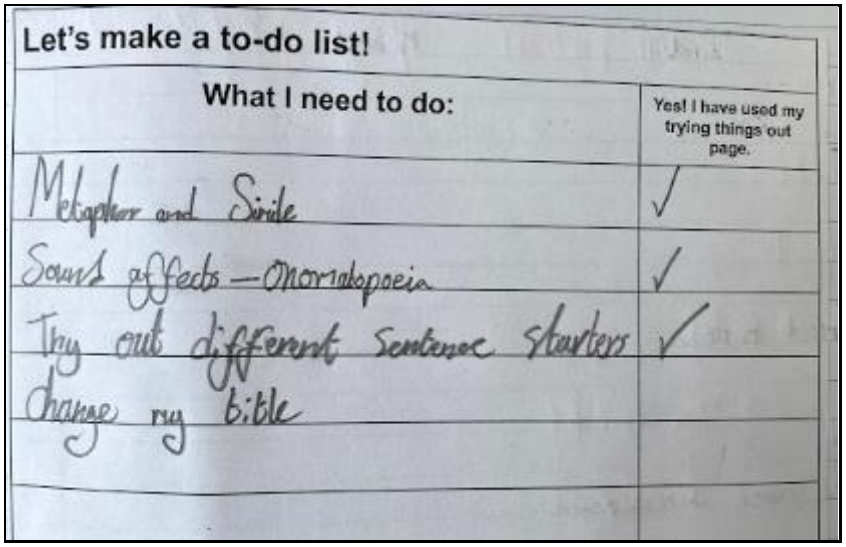
Design your own rubric!

How would you score this piece of writing?

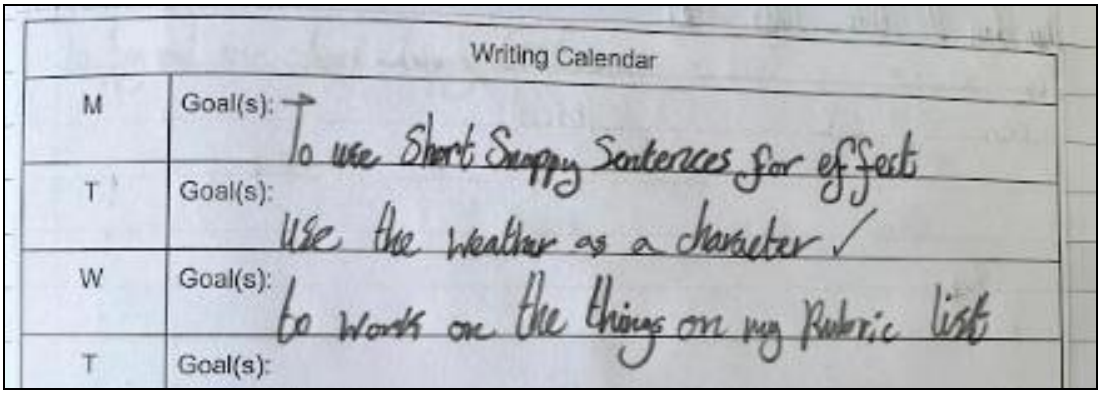
Criteria	Score
~~Opening~~ Tittle	4/10 ✓
Opening	5/10
Painting with words	0/10
Using weather as a ~~cher~~ character	2/10
Sentence Starter	4/10
Crack open boring word	8/10
Methor	10/10
Jump fowerd in time	8/10

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

In writer-teacher Tobias Hayden's class the children created their own criteria for assessing their writing as a part of the revision process. The scores were sometimes generated in discussion with other writers in the class, but some children preferred to self-evaluate. Where you can see some highlighting, these are the parts that the children most wanted to develop; these were transferred to their 'to-do' lists (see page 49) and worked on in that day's writing time. Some children even set themselves the goal of working on the things on their rubric as part of their writing calendar (see page 68).



Let's make a to-do list!	
What I need to do:	Yes! I have used my trying things out page.
Metaphor and Simile	✓
Sound effects – Onomatopoeia	✓
Try out different sentence starters	✓
change my bible	



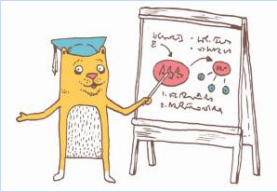
Writing Calendar	
M	Goal(s): To use Short Snappy Sentences for effect
T	Goal(s): Use the weather as a character ✓
W	Goal(s): to work on the things on my Rubric list
T	Goal(s):

Tags: Being writers; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

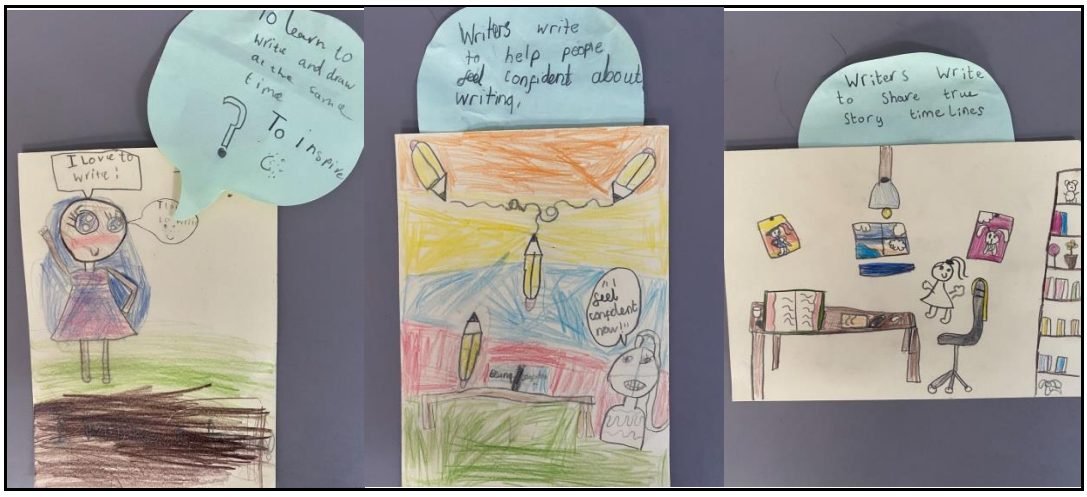
Why do writers write?

This mini-lesson is based on Young & Ferguson's (2020) reasons children are moved to write:

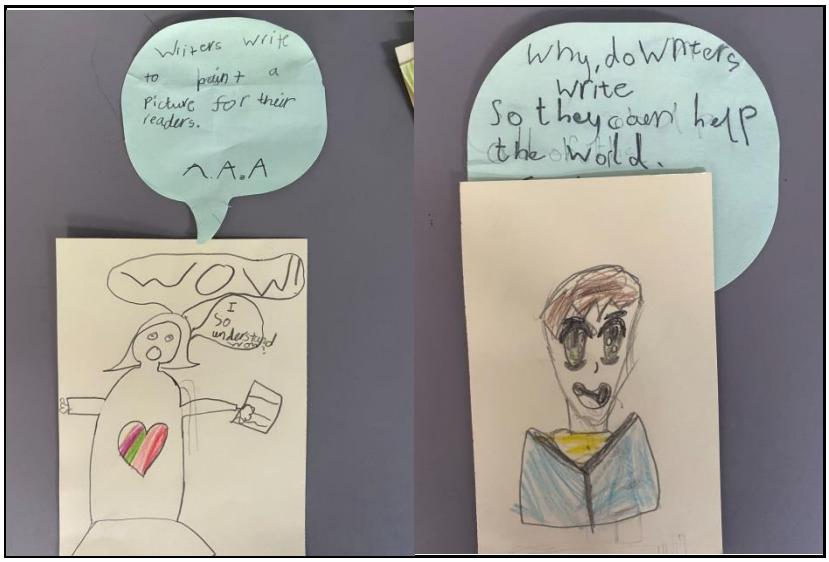
Writers who entertain	**Writers who teach** **Writers who learn then teach others** 	**Writers who share their thoughts and reflections**
Writers who record information	**Writers who influence and give their opinion**	**Writers who paint with words**

(Figures from Young & Ferguson 2020 p.5-7)

One great way to get the children to reflect on their own writing and ideas is to ask the children to think about: **Why do writers write?** So they can also reflect on why they write, what they like writing about and the purpose behind their writing and other writers' writing. You can create a poster for your class or the children can create and generate ideas in their books. When I taught this lesson it was good to have the display that the children had created because we kept referring to it, during conferencing and other mini lessons. They could confidently tell me and know why they were writing, increasing their **confidence** and **motivation**.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Tags: Being writers; all genres; motivation, confidence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

How do writers evaluate their writing?

Don't let anyone discourage you from writing. If you become a professional writer, there are plenty of editors, reviewers, critics, and book buyers to do that

- Jane Yolen

It's good to know our strengths and weaknesses as writers. We need to be kind to ourselves and be willing to acknowledge what we are good at. We also need to be willing to consider what we need to work on - however hard it can be to admit. We can share with children some of the ways writers try to evaluate their writing. In fact, we find the categories for which this book is organised to be a great starting point.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

KS2	
Being writers Did you enjoy making this writing? Why? Are you happy with what you crafted? Why? What did you learn about writing? What did you learn about yourself as a writer?	
Generating ideas Did you write something you really wanted to? Do you think you're going to get a good reaction from your readers? What have people's reactions been so far?	
Organisation Are you happy with how your writing is organised on the page or screen? Does it look good?	
Fluency Did you enjoy crafting this writing? Was it easy or hard? What made it easy or hard?	
Developing Did you write with interesting little details? Did you 'paint with words'? Did you explain important stuff? Did you describe important stuff?	
Word Choices Did you make any great word choices? Did you use any words for the first time?	
Clarity & Accuracy Do you think people will be able to read your text easily? Did you have any trouble with any punctuation or grammar conventions?	
Spellings What did you learn about the spelling of some 'unsure' words?	

For this mini-lesson, simply share how you've evaluated your writing using the categories above. You could share the piece of writing with your class and ask them what they think too. Add their comments to your poster. Finally, you can then invite children to do the same with their writing during that day's writing time. For a proforma, see our Appendix.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This lesson is particularly effective when the majority of your class are revising their pieces and preparing them for publication. It gives them time to make changes to their composition based on their reflections. Alternatively, it's something that can be done after they've published; giving them an opportunity to set themselves goals for future pieces.
Tags: Being writers; revising, publishing; all genres; motivation, writer-identity; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Generating Ideas

We know from research (Young & Ferguson 2021) that when children choose their own topics for writing, they are more engaged and motivated, write better texts and enjoy writing more. All children have things to write about, but they often need help with unearthing them. These mini-lessons will show you how to give your class the best ways of coming up with their own ideas for writing. Of course, all writers begin their projects by generating ideas and so this is a necessary part of any child's writerly education.

Let's have an ideas party

The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas
- Linus Pauling

Generating ideas is one of my favourite things about teaching young writers. Children have a wonderful ability to come up with unique and original ideas in a way that I can't. When you gather children onto the carpet with some flipchart paper next to you, write 'things we can write about' at the top and then invite them to come up with ideas for the class writing project, it's like a creative bomb goes off. This is especially true with children who have had a long apprenticeship with the principles of contemporary writing workshop approach (Young & Ferguson 2020, 2021). The best thing about generating ideas in a social way with others is that often other people's ideas spark your own ideas off too. You can pin these lists up around the room so children can refer to them over many days if they want to. With the youngest of children, you may want to draw diagrams of the things they suggest, as opposed to writing it down.

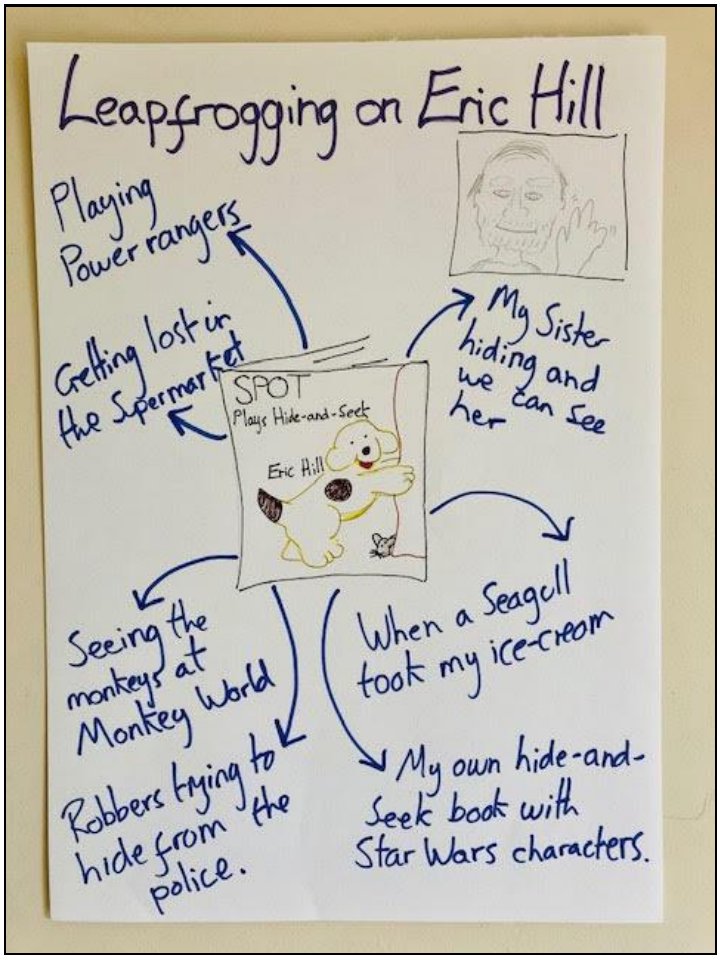
Share with your class what you're planning to write about for the class writing project and then ask children to talk about what they might want to write about. You can then invite children to share their ideas and write them up on the flipchart paper as you go. This mini-lesson works particularly well in conjunction with our writing register mini-lesson. See page 51.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; agency, motivation; all ages

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Leapfrogging using an author's book

One of the best places to find your own writing ideas is to 'watch your mind' as you're reading. I'm forever finding my own writing ideas in response to the things I read. We can share this with children too. This is usually easier to teach if you've already taught the mini-lesson above, as the basic premise is the same and children will understand what you're getting at, particularly if you share your own example.



For any writer-teacher, this mini-lesson is easy. You simply need to share a piece of writing you wrote in inspiration to something you read. Ideally, this will be a book you've already read to the children so they can see how you use it to 'leapfrog' yourself into your own writing idea. You can then invite children to try it out for themselves during writing time by taking a book they like from the class library and using it to make their own 'leapfrog'.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Leapfrogging using a friend's idea

I love generating ideas with others. When I hear the ideas of others, I always get great ideas of my own. We are very lucky as writer-teachers that we get to generate writing ideas with 30+ other young writers in the room. I've often been moved to write in reaction to something a child has written. Hopefully, you've done this too, and you've noticed that children do this all the time. I read an article by Eleanor Baker (1994) where she calls this phenomenon 'leapfrogging'. I really liked it and it's stuck ever since. It's a compliment to your friend that you are using them as a support, you are placing your hands on their back, to launch yourself into a whole new direction that you would never have gone to without them.

For any writer-teacher, this mini-lesson is easy. You simply need to share a piece of writing you wrote in inspiration to something a child wrote in your class. Explain how their idea 'leapfrogged' into an exciting piece of writing of your own. You can then invite children to try it out for themselves during writing time.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence; agency; EYFS, KS1, KS2

Change something about a text you love

We can learn a lot about writing by making a new version of a text we love. Children like to do this too. I'm not suggesting that you read *A Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and then ask all the children in your class to rewrite it a little by changing the animal or the items of food. That would be a waste of everyone's time and children would learn little. What I am suggesting is that we tell the children that they can go ahead and change any book they love in any way they like. Children doing this for themselves are likely to produce much richer and more creative outcomes than if they were limited by a teacher's choice.

Here are just some ways you can change a text you love:

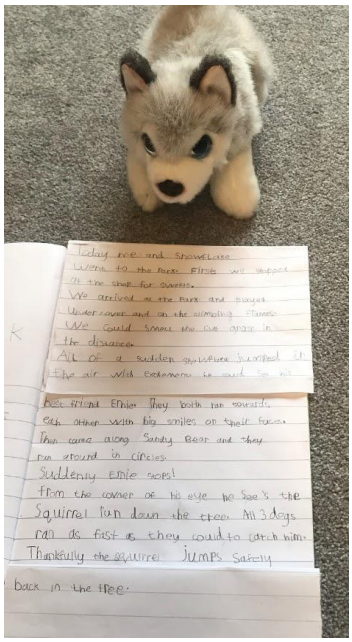
- Change the character(s)
- Change the setting(s)
- Change what happens
- Change the ending

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For any writer-teacher, this mini-lesson is easy. You simply need to show them a book you love and show them your new version of it. Tell them why you love the original book and explain how you changed it to make it something new. You could then invite children to take a book from the class library that they love and make a new version of it by changing it in some way.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; EYFS, KS1

Have your toy as a character



When I was a young child, I had a favourite pull-along detective dog toy that I took everywhere. Sherlock and I went to so many interesting places and we had so many adventures. I wrote about one of them today.
Young children spend a lot of time making up stories with their toys. So when you suggest that they use their toys as characters in their stories, they immediately connect and engage, because they have already rehearsed these stories a few times in their heads.

Invite children to write a story or some information about one of their own toys if they like the idea. Writing it as a picture book is one of the best ways to get very young children writing. Make sure you have written your own picture book toy story to share.

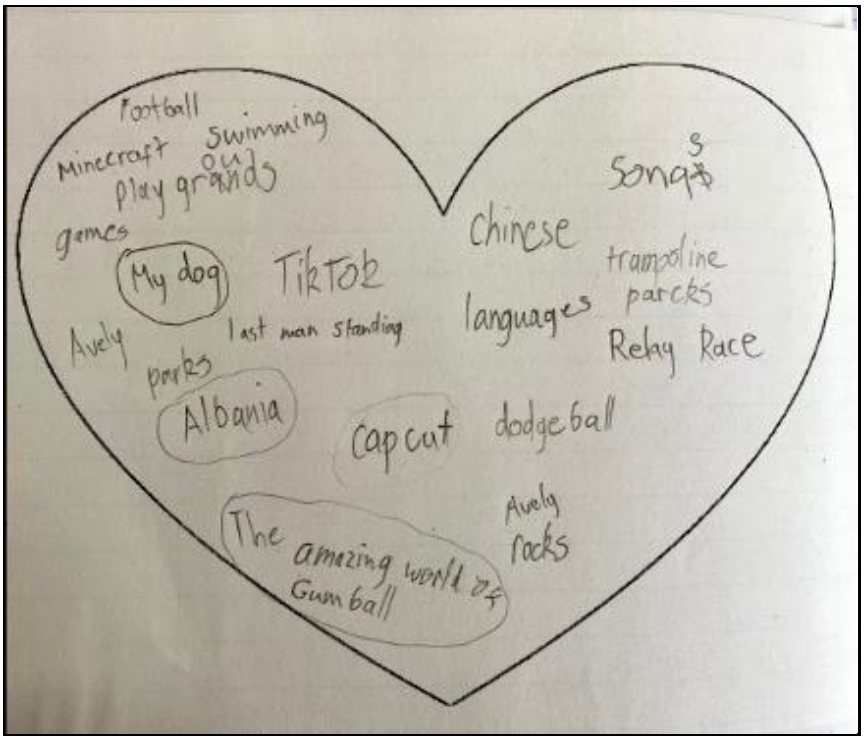
Tags: Generating ideas; narrative, non-fiction; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Ideas heart

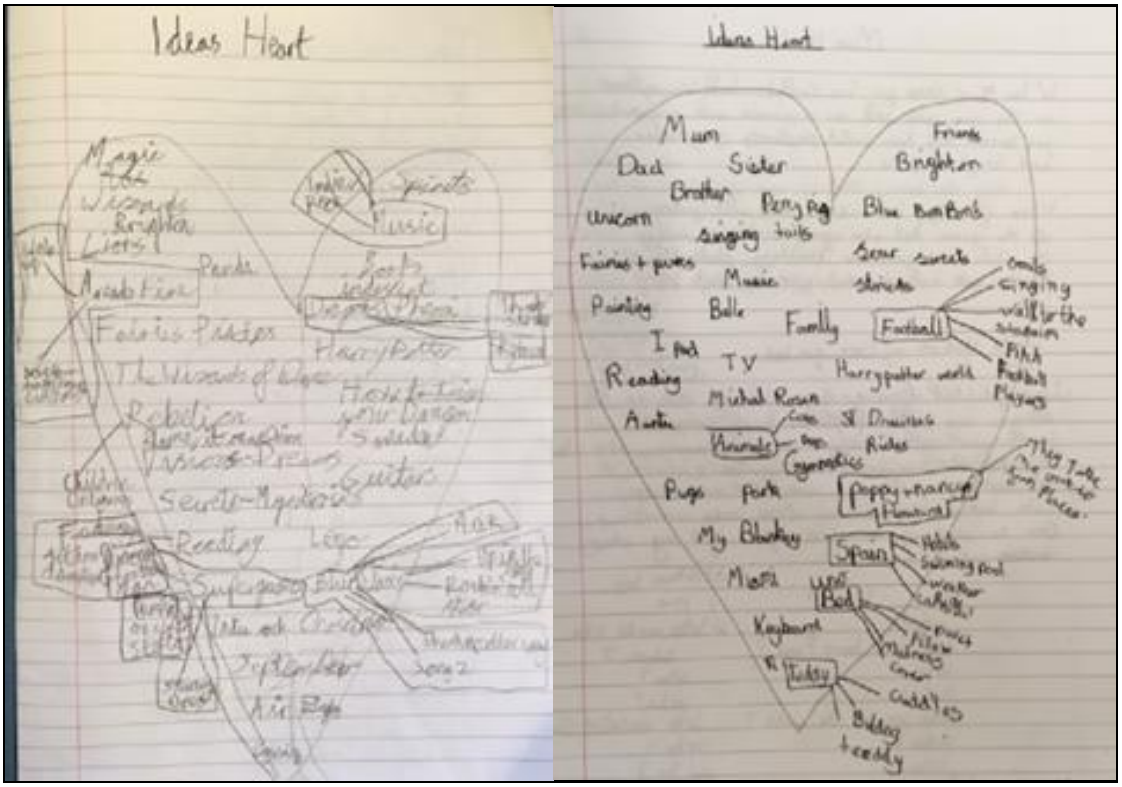
This mini-lesson comes from Georgia Heard's book *Awakening The Heart* and is one of the best ways of getting together a bank of writing ideas, and it's just as effective in Year 6 as in Years 3, 4 and 5. All you do is draw yourself a large heart shape and fill it with all the things you're interested in and that matter to you - people, places, pets, experiences, ideas, issues. The great thing is that you can add to it at any time, whenever a topic or an idea strikes, and you've always got it there for future reference. Your best-loved topics will create strong emotions which can then drive a piece of writing. You can find out more by reading Ross' example of practice.

I've found this a very useful ready resource for both me and the children, and I've shared mine with every class I've taught. Children showing their hearts to each other can often spark ideas in their peers. You can find out more about this technique by reading Georgia Heard's book 'Awakening The Heart'.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

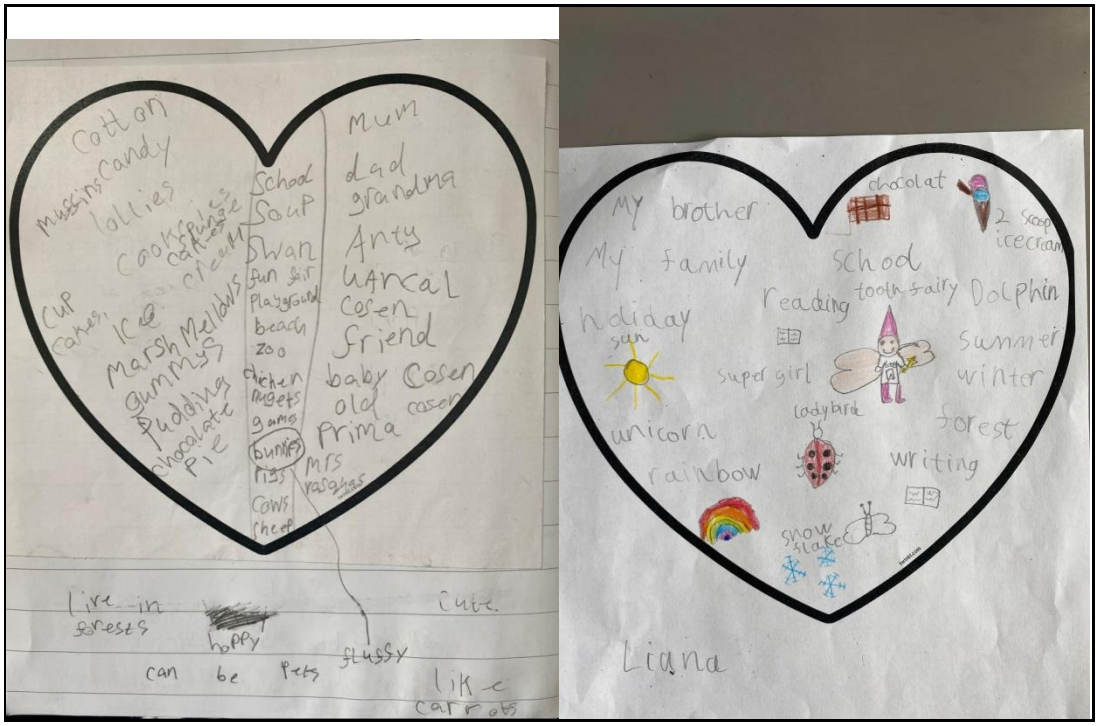


Here, Elisia shares with us her passions and interests. She has circled some of the ones she is particularly interested in 'cracking open' and turning into a piece of writing.



Here we can see Jake and Dolly 'cracking open' their interests and passions into sub-categories

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



These ideas hearts are examples of how children in KS1 can use them to generate ideas.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

What do you know?

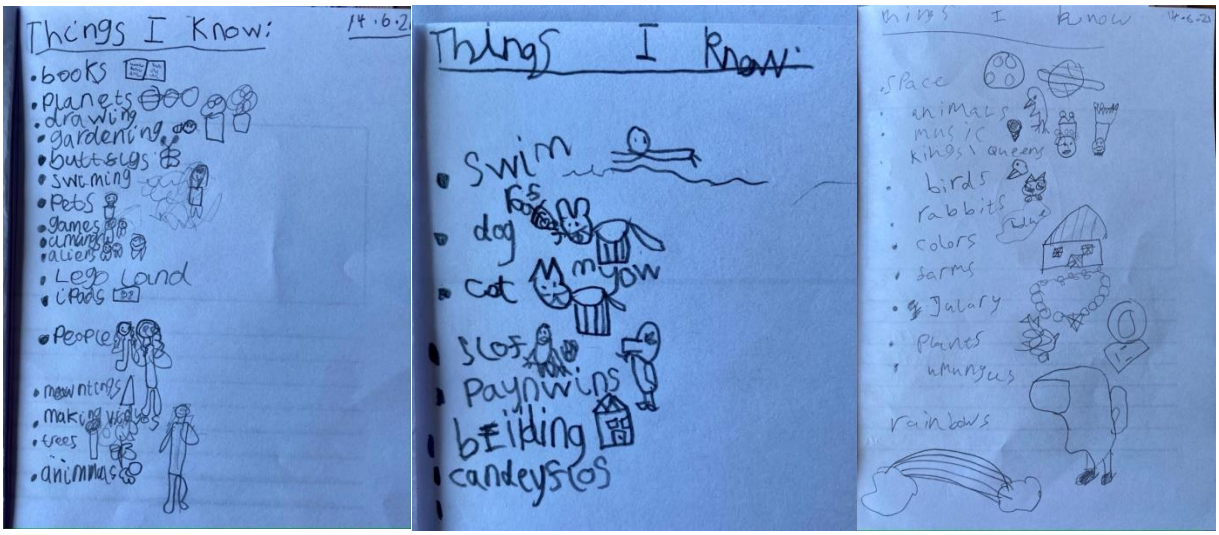
When children write about the things they know about, they are more engaged and they care more about their writing. A great way to help the children reflect on what they already know is to simply ask them: “What do you know about?” This way they share their ideas with the class and other children begin to make connections, relate and think about what they know about too. This works so much better than giving the whole class the same topic such as ‘animals in Antarctica’, which they cannot relate to, might have no interest in and know little about. This mini-lesson works particularly well when followed up with our mini-lesson *General To Specific* (see page 207).

Today we are going to think about what we could write about for our latest project. To help us, let’s each talk about what we know a lot about. You can make a list, a collection of drawings and use labels. Then we can decide which topic you might want to develop into a piece of writing.

As children become more experienced, you can help them be more specific. For example:

- Games: What kind of games?
- Swimming: Where? How?
- Cat: What breed? Your own? Domesticated or wild?
- Drawing: What kind of drawings?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



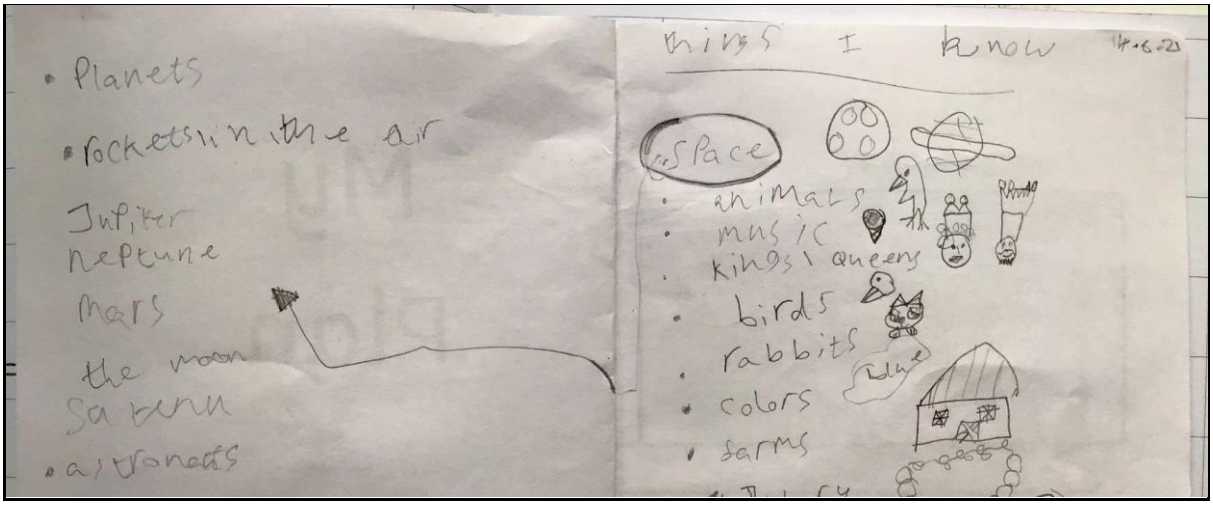
Here the children in Year 1 made their lists of the things they know and could write about.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-information; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

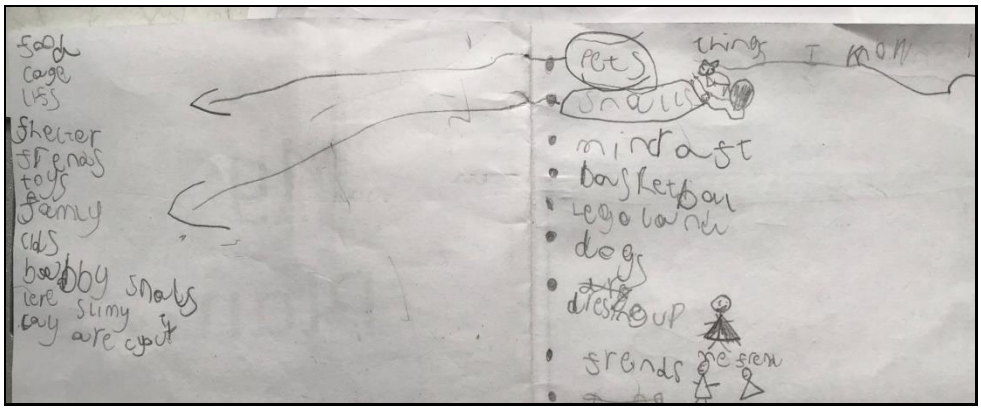
How well do you know?

When the children have thought about the things they know, it is time to ask: How well do you know your topic? This will help them elaborate on their ideas and to check what they really know. At this stage the children might start thinking about possible subheadings.

Now that you have thought carefully about the things you know, you need to consider: How well do you know? You could circle the topic on your list that you are confident about, then make a new list with drawings and labels to help you to organise your ideas.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Here we can see children selecting topics from their list and thinking carefully about what they could write about within the topic. We call this 'cracking open our topics'. In the process, they create a list of subcategories which they can then use to inform their planning, what they decide to put on each page of a picture book, their paragraphing, or even their headings.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

Read – draw – write

Imitation is not just the sincerest form of flattery – it's the sincerest form of learning

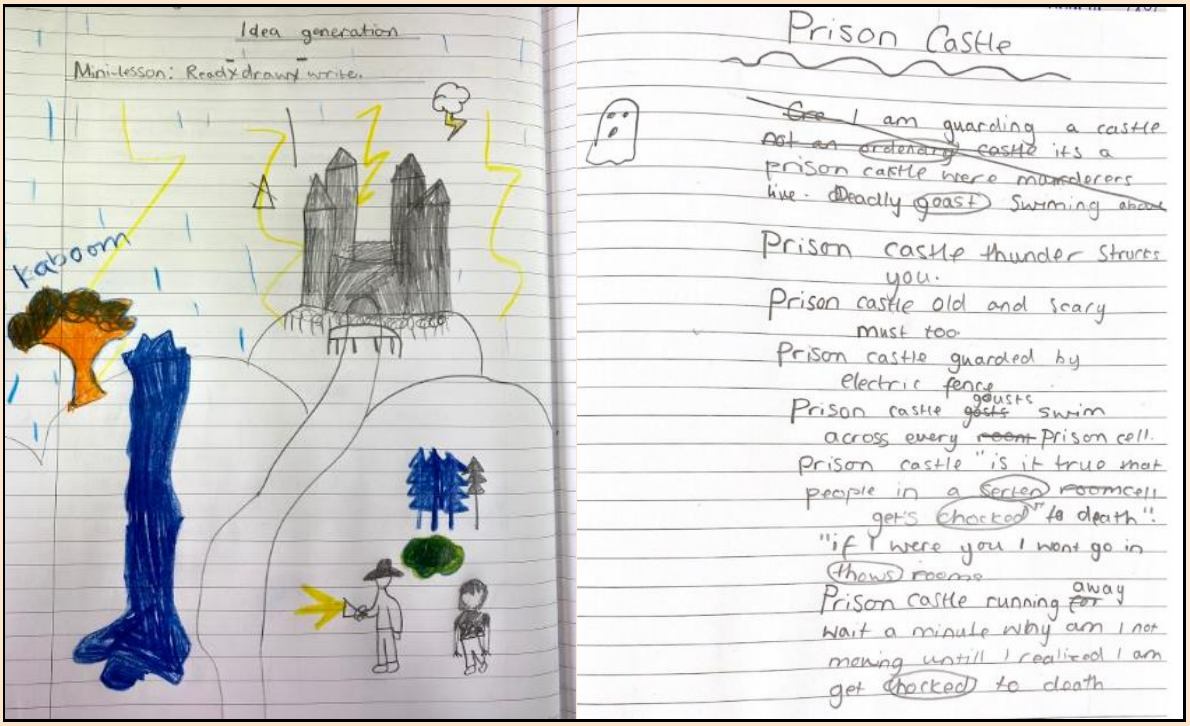
- George Bernard Shaw

This mini-lesson is almost like magic. Teachers can't quite believe how easy and effective it is. Children love it. I'm a 33 year old writer and I love it too! It's simple – give it a try for yourself. All you need to do is read something (for example a fable), put it away and then draw what you read. Then you can write what your drawing 'says'. Through this process, we create something new. It's not copying. Instead, we go through a process of intertextuality (see page 105 and 129) a process so vital to living the writer's life. All stories are written because of other stories.

For this mini-lesson, you're going to want to show children how you used this technique for yourself. Share with them a piece you've read, the subsequent drawings you made, and then the new piece you wrote as a result. Point out how yours differs from the original and how you reimagined the piece. Finally, invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time.

Here is an example from Kayleigh in Year Four. During independent reading time, Kayleigh was reading 'The Castle Ghosts' by Joseph Delaney. After reading, she was invited to draw what she had read that day and to turn her drawings into 'something' during writing time. Kayleigh decided to write a poem which you can see below:

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

Something I learnt: Warning stories and proverbs

We tell each other fables every day. We share things we've learnt so that others can learn from our mistakes and mishaps. We share warning stories and proverbs. In my experience, older children especially like to share warning stories with younger children and siblings.

In this mini-lesson, share a fable from your own childhood. You can tell it or write it down. You can then invite children to share fables from their own lives and they can then go on to write these down for children in the younger year groups to read.

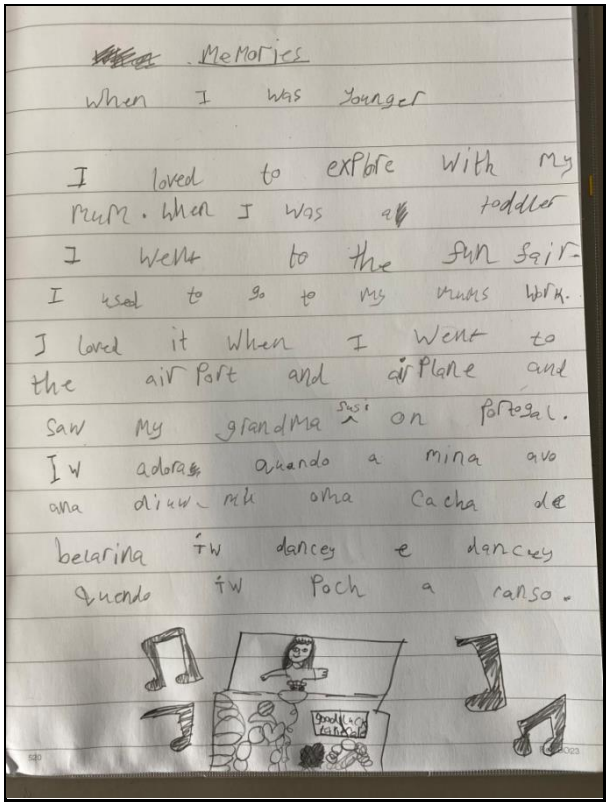
Tags: Generating ideas; narrative, confidence; agency; KS1, KS2

When I was younger…

The author Willa Cather has said that most of the basic material a writer works with is acquired in childhood, and she's right. You can have a wonderful class writing project develop by simply asking children to end this sentence: When I was younger....

Make sure you are all talking together as a whole class, in groups and in pairs for this. You'll have a whole mountain of writing ideas by the lesson's end. It's an amazing mini-lesson too because ideas often spark more ideas. Children begin to relate to one another and often have tales to tell on similar themes that come up.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



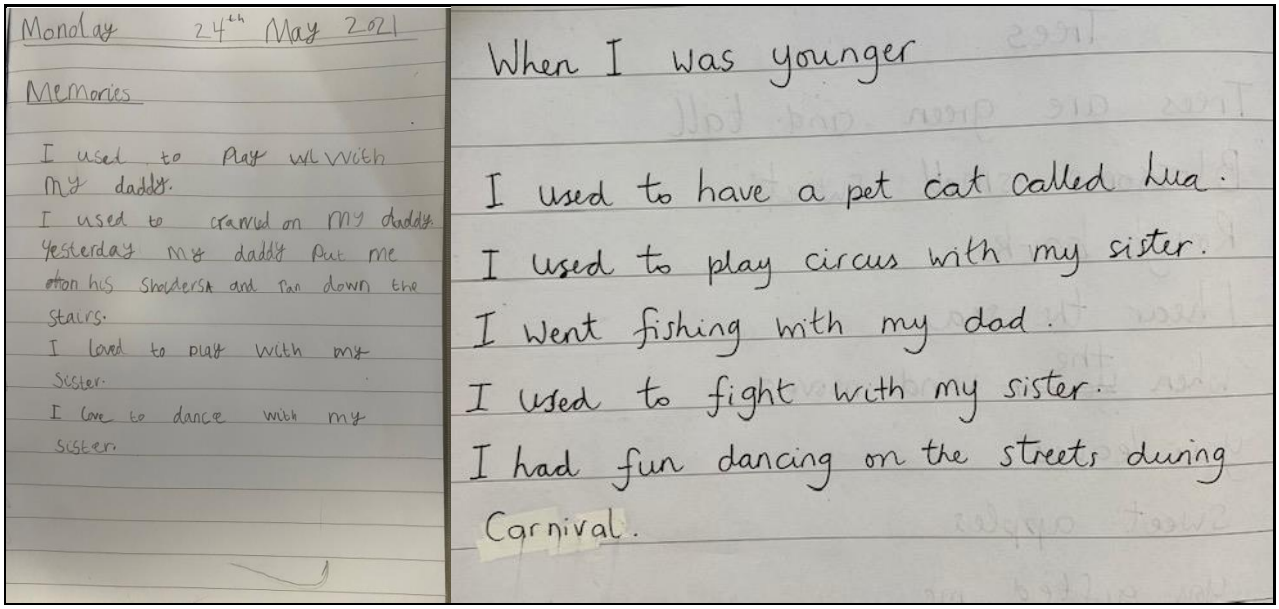
Memories

When I was younger

I loved to explore with my mum. When I was a toddler I went to the fun fair. I used to go to my mums work. I loved it when I went to the air port and airplane and saw my grandma on portugal. Eu adorava quando a mina avó ama diuw mik oma cacha de belarina tw dancey e dancey quando tw poch a ranso.

It's worth looking at some of the children's ideas and asking them to drill down into the essence of them.

With this mini-lesson, it's really great if you take part too. Share some memories from childhood with your class - they'll thank you for it and it gives them some good direction. If a particular theme seems to take hold and children want to talk about it, let the conversation go… you'll be surprised what kinds of interesting ideas can come from such discussion.



Monday 24th May 2021

Memories

I used to play wi with my daddy.
I used to cramed on my daddy
yesterday my daddy put me on his shoulders and ran down the stairs.
I loved to play with my sister.
I love to dance with my sister.

When I was younger

I used to have a pet cat called Lua.
I used to play circus with my sister.
I went fishing with my dad.
I used to fight with my sister.
I had fun dancing on the streets during Carnival.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Favourite objects

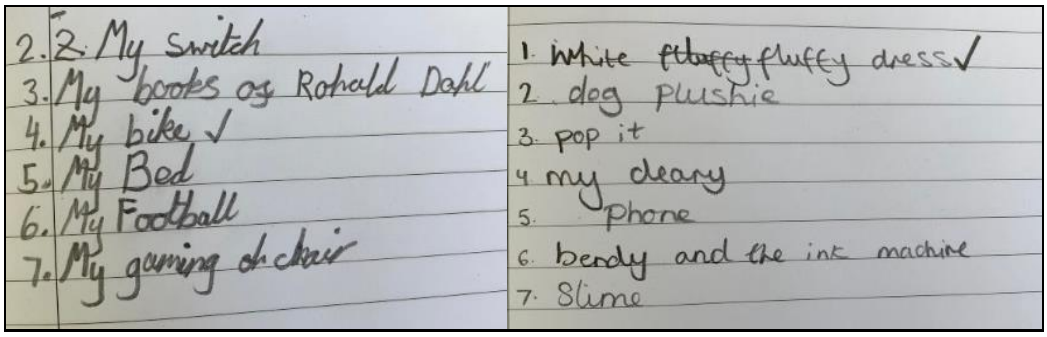
A great source for writing ideas is within the objects we hold most interesting or dear. For this writing project, you could ask children to draw or bring in a special object from home. Ask children to explain why it is important to them, the feelings and emotions the object stirs up in them. Why is the object of interest? They could dabble around their drawing with words, phrases and writing ideas.

Share a time in your writer's notebook where you yourself have tried this technique and explain to the class how you went about it. You can then invite their questions before they give it a try for themselves.

Mr Hayden's list:

1. My duck feather winter jacket
2. My Pantofola d'oro football boots
3. My cast iron cooking pan
4. My football trophies and medals
5. My piano
6. My wedding ring
7. My Global chopping knife

Tobias Hayden shared his favourite objects with his class and then invited them to try out generating a list of their own. This was part of a session where ideas were being generated for an information text project.



Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Favourite places

Our favourite places hold artefacts and memories which are rich sources for writing.

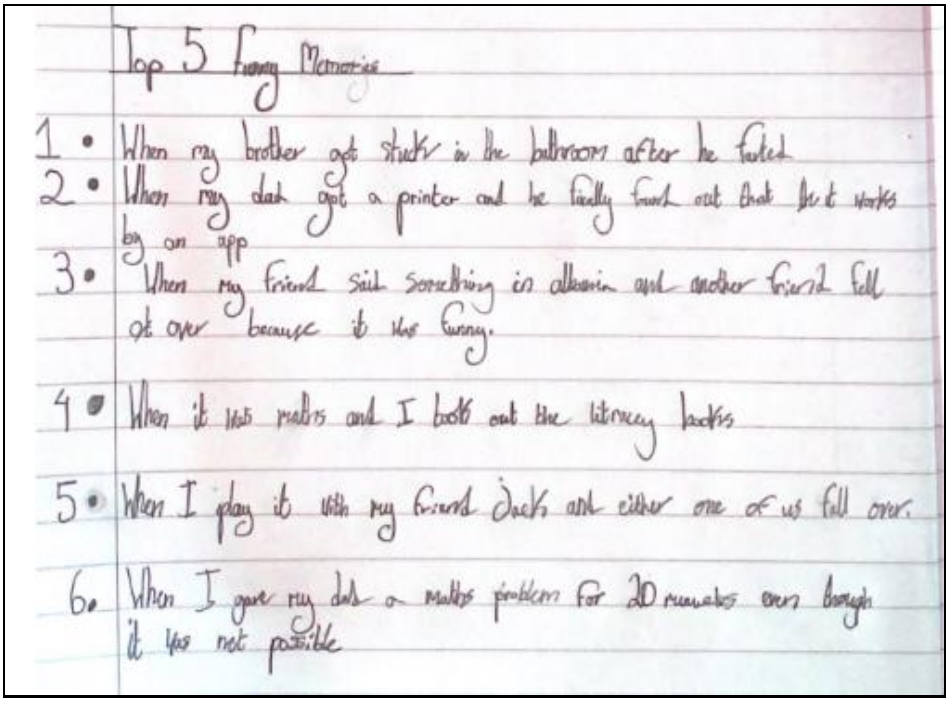
Invite children to think about their favourite places in the world. Why are they such a favourite? What happened there? How do they feel when they are there? This can be a rich source for prose poetry (memoir poetry). You can ask children to close their eyes and visualise their favourite place in their imaginations. This can then lead to a sketch and some dabbling. When they are ready, they can turn this prewriting into a poem.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Top fives and top tens

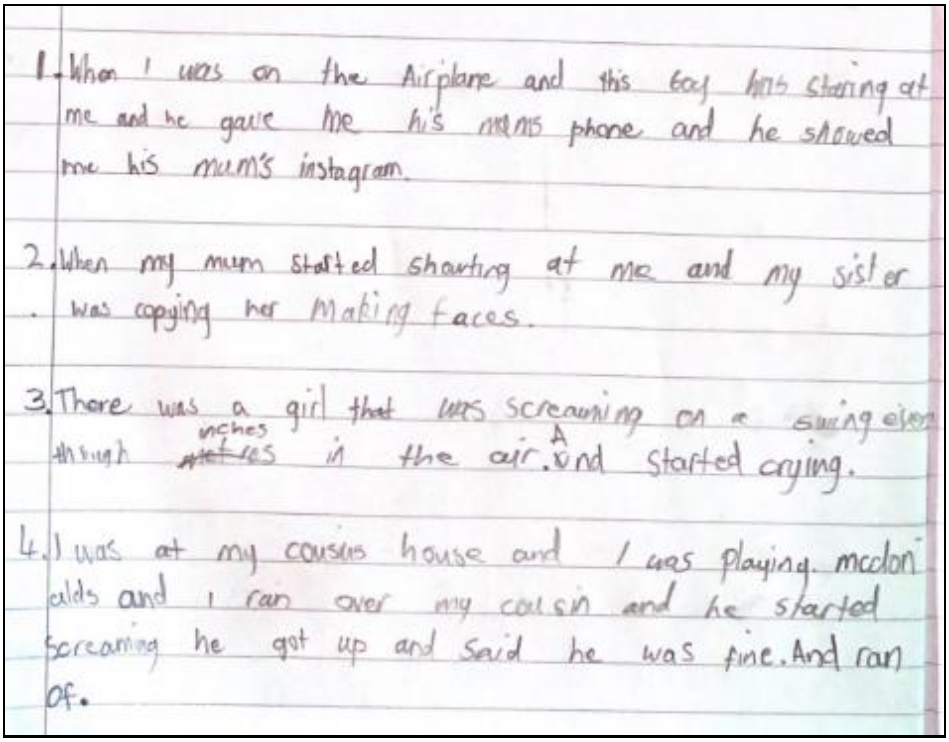
Children absolutely love making top five and top ten lists. Here are just some of the lists we've made in my classes over the years: top ten moments at school, top five funny moments at school, top five bitter-sweet moments in school, top ten things I care about, five things I do with friends, five things my family do together and top ten things I do when I'm not at school.

Show children a top five or ten you've done in your writer's notebook before inviting them to give it a go for themselves. Once done, ask them to discuss their lists with one another and to come to a decision about what they would like to write about.


Top 5 funny Memories

1. When my brother got stuck in the bathroom after he farted
2. When my dad got a printer and he finally found out that he it works by an app
3. When my friend said something in albanian and another friend fell of over because it was funny.
4. When it was maths and I took out the literacy books
5. When I play it with my friend Jack's and either one of us fell over.
6. When I gave my dad a maths problem for 20 minutes even though it was not possible

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



1. When I was on the Airplane and this boy was staring at me and he gave me his mums phone and he showed me his mum's instagram.

2. When my mum started shouting at me and my sister was copying her Making faces.

3. There was a girl that was screaming on a swing ~~eson~~ through ~~metres~~ inches in the air. And started crying.

4. I was at my cousins house and I was playing mcdonalds and I ran over my cousin and he started screaming he got up and said he was fine. And ran of.

Children love this lesson and here we can see that children often think of their own alternative lists.

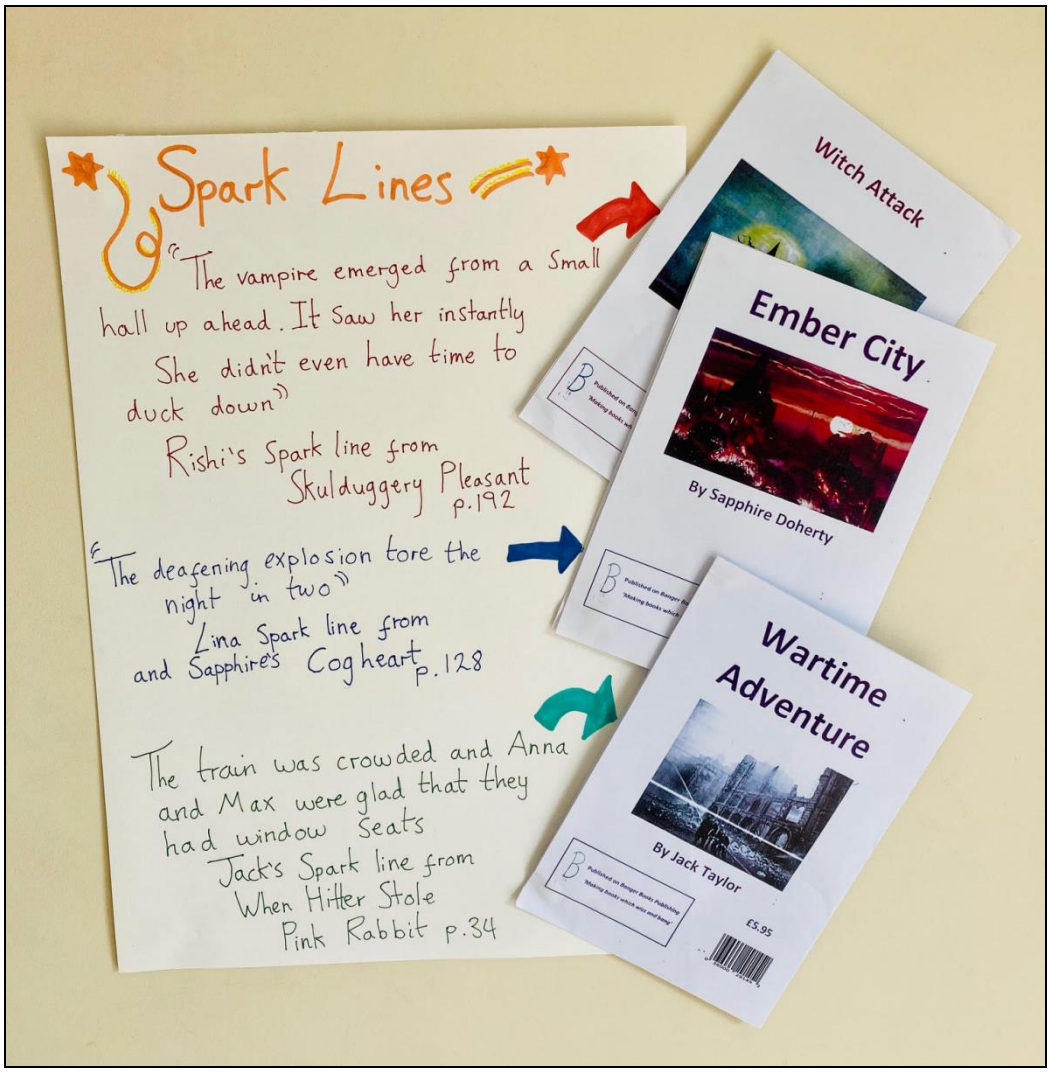
Tags: Generating ideas; narrative, non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Spark line

From a little spark may burst a flame
- Dante Alighieri

I often find it helpful to use a spark line to generate ideas for writing. This is where I take a line I like from a book, poem, or anything I'm reading actually, and turn it into something new. It's called a spark line because it's usually sparked something within my mind. I often 'watch my thoughts' when I do this kind of reading. Anything can trigger a response in me. A word, phrase, some painting with words, the style of the writer, what the writer is writing about, a setting, or a character.

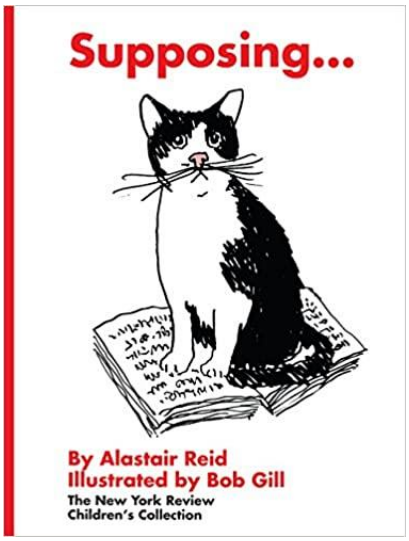


The easiest thing to do with this mini-lesson is to share with your class where you've done it yourself. Share with them a piece you've written as a result of a spark line and answer any of their questions about your process. You can then invite them to try it out during that day's writing time.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative, poetry; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

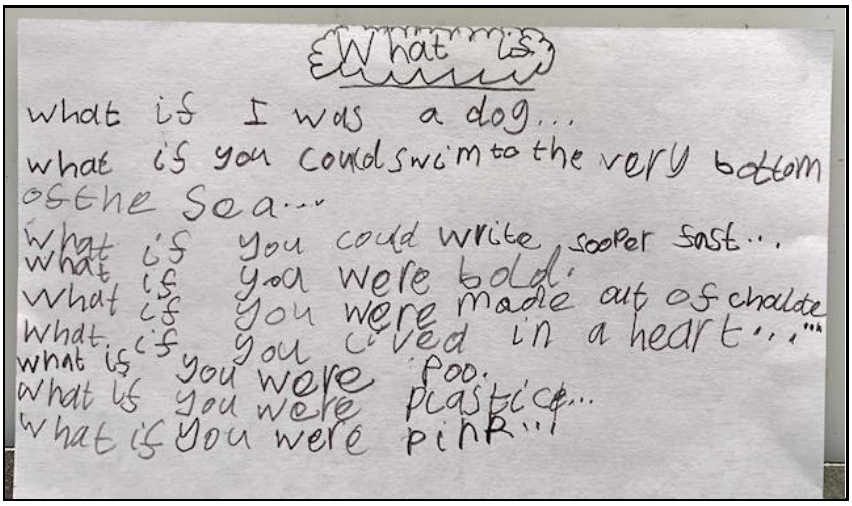
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

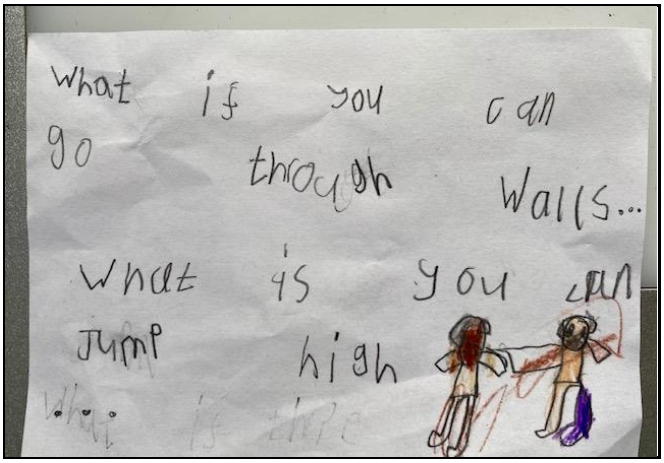
What if...



Roald Dahl famously came up with the story for Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by asking himself a What If… question. He wrote in his notebook. What if a crazy man ran a chocolate factory? - and his idea was born! Children enjoy writing what if… sentences together too. Why not take part yourself and gather a whole selection of story ideas as a class. You may also find the book 'Supposing' by Alastair Reid useful for this mini-lesson.

I've also enjoyed doing this mini-lesson as a whole class on a sheet of sugar paper. Ideas always lead to more ideas. You have 30+ minds in the classroom – why not take advantage of everyone's thinking? Once complete, children can be invited to choose the idea they've responded to the most and begin developing a story around it.





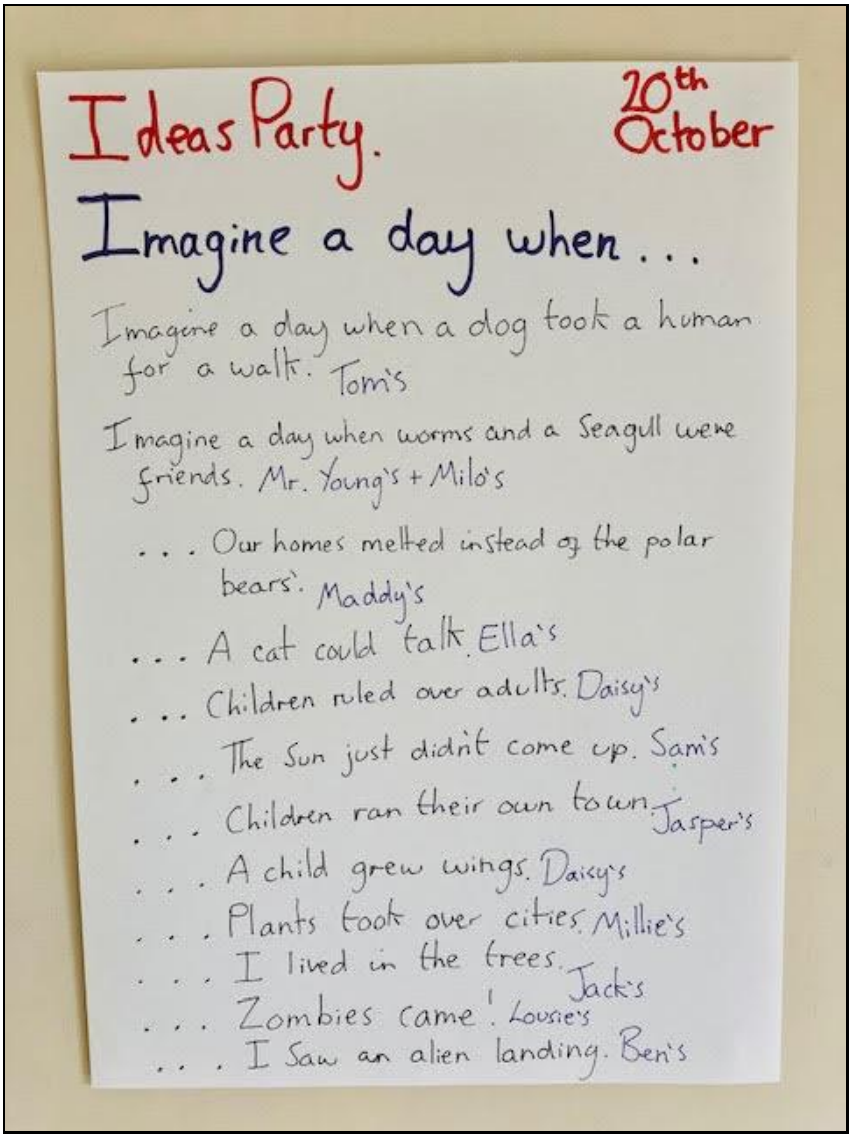
Here are some examples from KS1 children generating ideas for their picture books, using 'What if…' The following day, the children discussed their ideas with one another and decided which one was going to be their most profitable. I then took a writing register (see page 51).

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Imagine a day when…

Take five minutes to write a host of *Imagine a day when…* sentences in your writer's notebook. Invite friends or colleagues to take part too and see what you come up with. Generating ideas as a collective is a really enjoyable thing to do and supports the social and communal aspects of a writing community.



Share with children some of your 'Imagine a day when…' sentences before inviting them to contribute some too. After a while, ask children to choose their favourite and begin writing. This is a great idea generation technique because it can be used with a variety of genres (not just story writing). For example, from this starting point children can write opinion pieces, poetry and memoirs too.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Imagine a moment when…

The little things? The little moments? They aren't little

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Unlike the mini-lesson above, this idea generation technique isn't for short story writing. It's more useful when teaching **Flash-Fiction**. Flash-fiction is about writing a small moment in an otherwise much larger story. Take five minutes to write a host of *Imagine a moment when…* sentences in your writer's notebook. Invite friends or colleagues to take part too and see what you come up with.

Generating ideas as a collective is a really enjoyable thing to do and supports the social and communal aspects of a writing community.

Share with children some of your 'Imagine a moment when…' sentences before inviting them to contribute some too. After a while, ask children to choose their favourite and begin writing.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Inspired by… poems

This mini-lesson is based on our class writing project of the same name. Sometimes you read a poem and it jolts within you a powerful response. Your own thoughts, memories and ideas come to mind immediately. You've been inspired. From other poems come our own poems. This is called *intertextuality,*and writers use it all the time. I've always found the book Love That Dog by Sharon Creech to be a wonderful resource for this mini-lesson.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Original poem

Returning, we hear the larks

Sombre the night is:
And, though we have our lives, we know
What sinister threat lurks there.
Dragging these anguished limbs, we only know
This poison-blasted track opens on our camp—
On a little safe sleep.
But hark! Joy—joy—strange joy.
Lo! Heights of night ringing with unseen larks:
Music showering on our upturned listening faces.
Death could drop from the dark
As easily as song—
But song only dropped,
Like a blind man's dreams on the sand
By dangerous tides
Like a girl's dark hair, for she dreams no ruin lies there,
Or her kisses where a serpent hides.

by Isaac Rosenberg

My 'Inspired by ...' poem

Returning from bonfire night

Returning, we leave the noise and the smoke and the flames
Ears ringing, but not from the shrill shriek of shells,
We follow the path over the downs, in moonlight.
The chalk track burns before us like a white gash
Trees and bushes, looming black shapes, unfamiliar.
Not music, but silence, broken only by our low voices.

by Felicity Ferguson

Invite children to take a poem they like from the class library and use it as inspiration to craft their own. Show them a mentor text you've written where you've done exactly this. Allow children to compare it to the original. Your text might not look or sound at all like the original – you may have only been inspired by the subject. On other occasions, you may have taken lines that you liked but written about something completely different. It's good to show children both.

Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Intertextuality: Finding stories within stories (as a whole class)

Writers are magpies by nature, always collecting shiny things, storing them away and looking for connections of things

- John Connolly

We are always looking to make connections with the texts we read. They are like a friend and we are in conversation with them. The connections we make can be a rich source for generating our own ideas for writing. This is called intertextuality. It's where we take our connections from other texts to write our own.

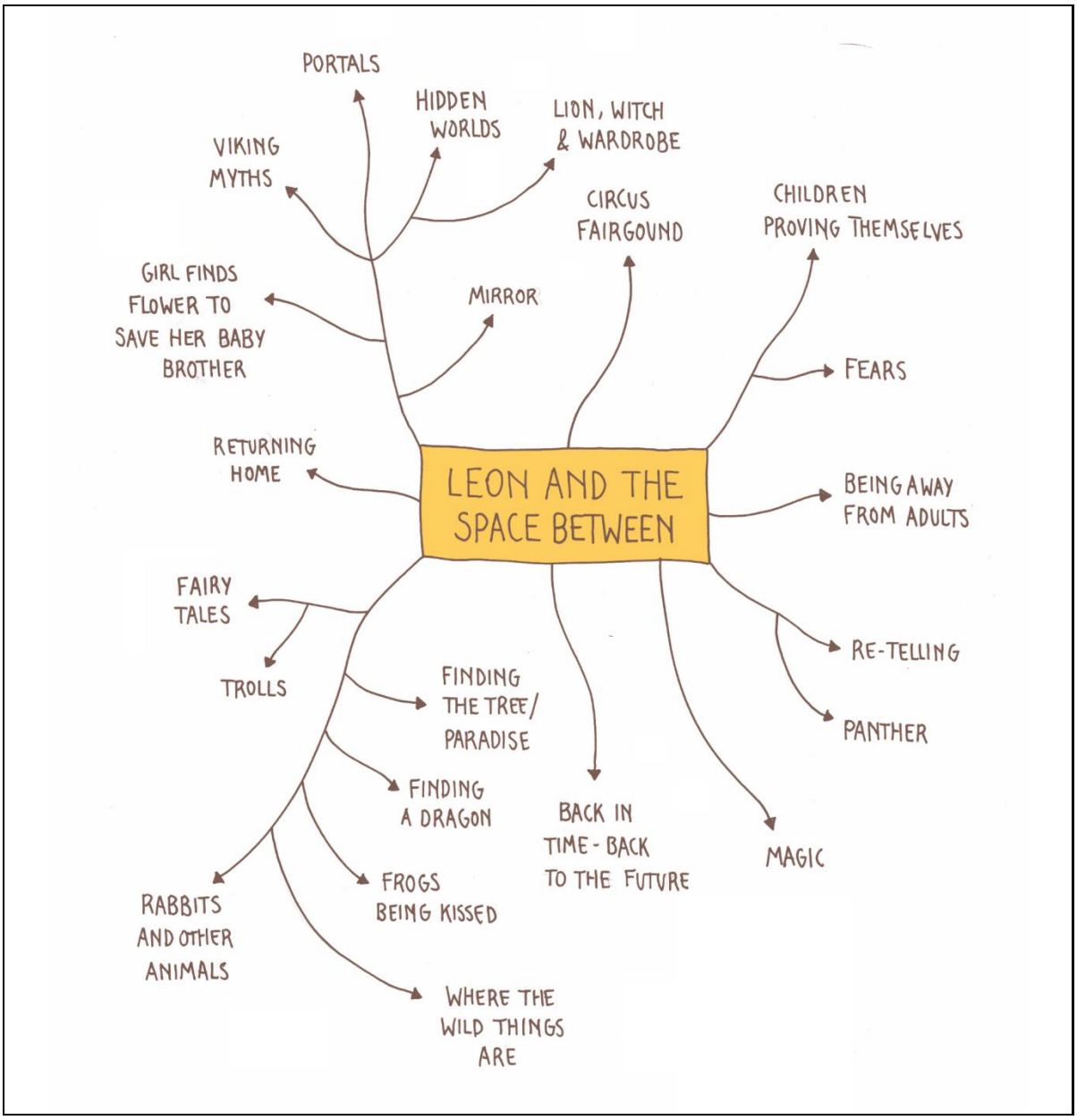
Sometimes I enjoy using the intertextuality of the whole class to come up with writing ideas together. For this mini-lesson, you'll need a picture book, your class novel or a poem and some flipchart paper. After reading to the children, you can ask them to select a few questions from the list below. Write their responses up on the flipchart paper. Once you feel you're ready, you can invite the children to use what's on the flipchart to come up with their own writing ideas. They could do this as a whole class, in groups or individually.

Text-to-self
What does this remind you of from your life?
What is this similar to in your life?
Has something like this ever happened to you?
What were your feelings when we read this?
How is this different from your life?

Text-to-text
Does this remind you of anything else you've read, seen or heard?
How is this similar to other things you've read?
How is this different from other things you've read?
Have you read about something like this before?

Text-to-world
Does this remind you of anything in the real world?
How is this text similar to things that happen in the real world?
How is it different to things that happen in the real world?
How does this text relate to the world around us?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



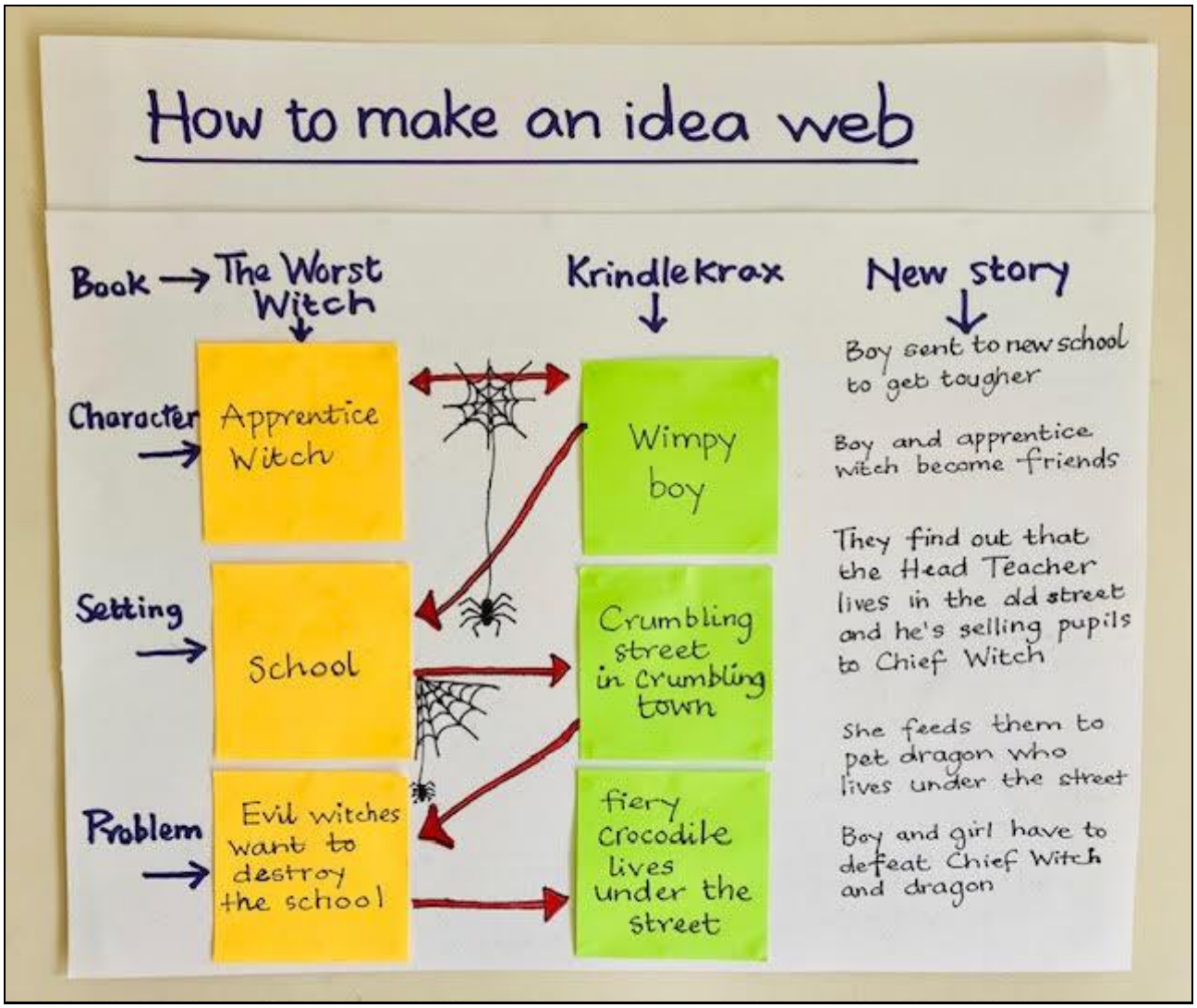
Here's an example taken from Ross' class which features in his book Real-World Writers (2020 p.97).

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, motivation; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Idea webs

Children really enjoy creating idea webs. The idea is simple. You take two characters, two settings and two problems from a collection of books you know and love. You then build a map around them. You draw lines and try to make connections between them to create an original writing idea. It can throw up storylines that you might never ever have thought of!



The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to do one together as a whole class first. Then you can invite children to have a go in groups, pairs or on their own. It's good to provide some time for children to share the ideas they generated with the rest of the class.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

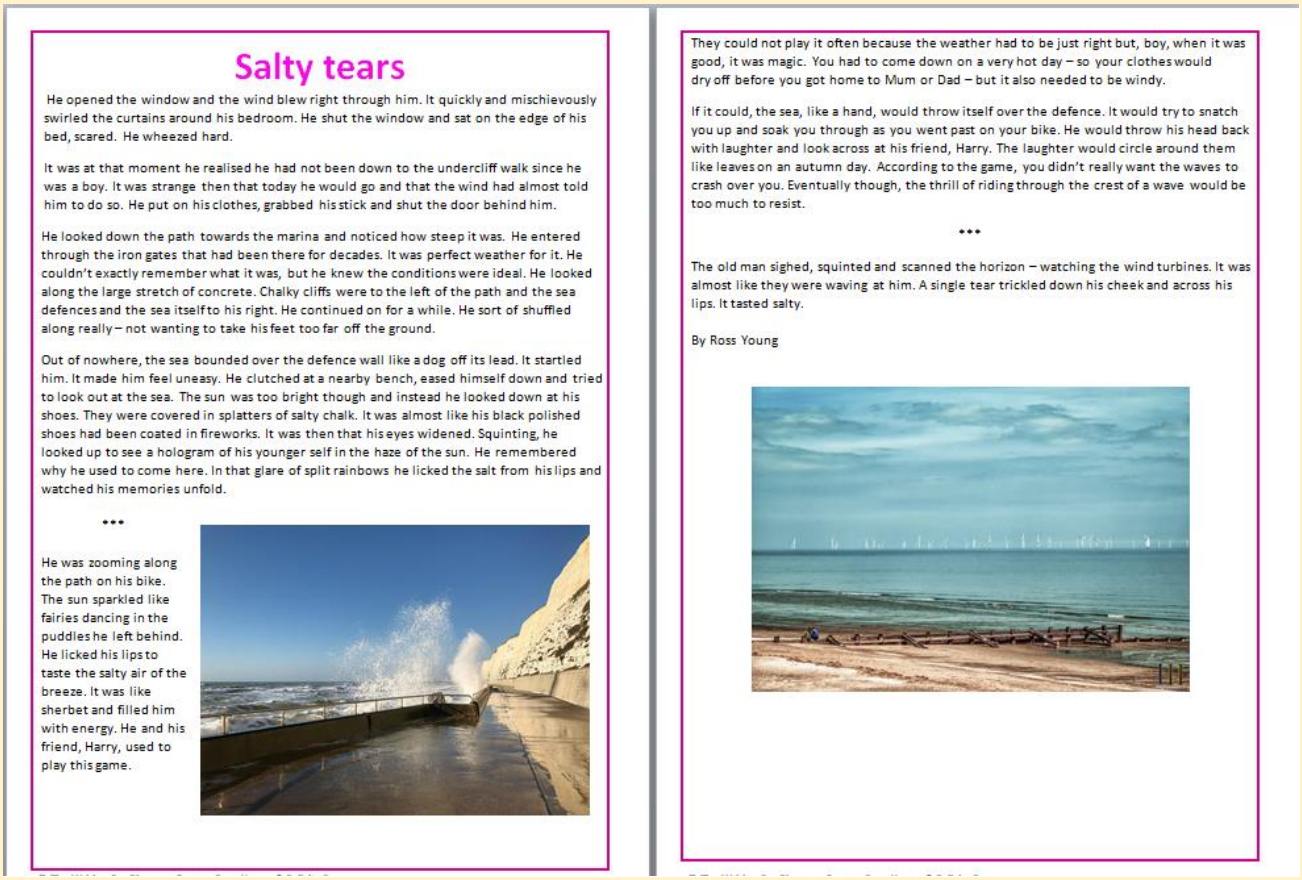
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Twenty words

This is one of my favourite mini-lessons to use with writer-teachers. They appreciate the immediacy and low-stakes nature of the lesson. The lack of words can actually free them up. Once they've written something using only twenty words, they feel in a good position to develop it into a short story.

"The old man sits. Waves crash against the rocks. He dreams about a day and turns back the clock."

Becomes!



Salty tears

He opened the window and the wind blew right through him. It quickly and mischievously swirled the curtains around his bedroom. He shut the window and sat on the edge of his bed, scared. He wheezed hard.

It was at that moment he realised he had not been down to the undercliff walk since he was a boy. It was strange then that today he would go and that the wind had almost told him to do so. He put on his clothes, grabbed his stick and shut the door behind him.

He looked down the path towards the marina and noticed how steep it was. He entered through the iron gates that had been there for decades. It was perfect weather for it. He couldn't exactly remember what it was, but he knew the conditions were ideal. He looked along the large stretch of concrete. Chalky cliffs were to the left of the path and the sea defences and the sea itself to his right. He continued on for a while. He sort of shuffled along really – not wanting to take his feet too far off the ground.

Out of nowhere, the sea bounded over the defence wall like a dog off its lead. It startled him. It made him feel uneasy. He clutched at a nearby bench, eased himself down and tried to look out at the sea. The sun was too bright though and instead he looked down at his shoes. They were covered in splatters of salty chalk. It was almost like his black polished shoes had been coated in fireworks. It was then that his eyes widened. Squinting, he looked up to see a hologram of his younger self in the haze of the sun. He remembered why he used to come here. In that glare of split rainbows he licked the salt from his lips and watched his memories unfold.

***

He was zooming along the path on his bike. The sun sparkled like fairies dancing in the puddles he left behind. He licked his lips to taste the salty air of the breeze. It was like sherbet and filled him with energy. He and his friend, Harry, used to play this game.

They could not play it often because the weather had to be just right but, boy, when it was good, it was magic. You had to come down on a very hot day – so your clothes would dry off before you got home to Mum or Dad – but it also needed to be windy.

If it could, the sea, like a hand, would throw itself over the defence. It would try to snatch you up and soak you through as you went past on your bike. He would throw his head back with laughter and look across at his friend, Harry. The laughter would circle around them like leaves on an autumn day. According to the game, you didn't really want the waves to crash over you. Eventually though, the thrill of riding through the crest of a wave would be too much to resist.

***

The old man sighed, squinted and scanned the horizon – watching the wind turbines. It was almost like they were waving at him. A single tear trickled down his cheek and across his lips. It tasted salty.

By Ross Young

Here we see an example of a twenty word story turning into a setting-focused short story.

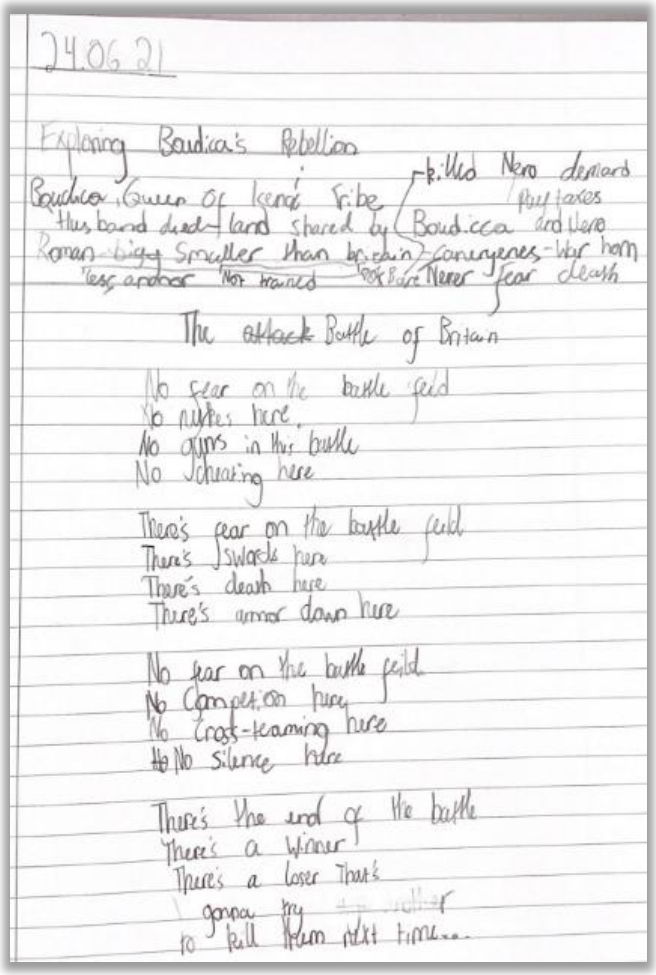
Start this mini-lesson by sharing with your class your own twenty-word story. A twenty word story is usually no more than four or five sentences long. Encourage children to cut out any unnecessary words but also try to engage their reader's attention. Often, once children have written their story in twenty words, they want to keep going. You can invite them to write it as a 50 word story and then 100 words etc...

Tags: Generating ideas; planning; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Write about topic lessons

How often do you ask your class – how could we write about our topic? You should, because the children come up with the most imaginative ideas – usually a lot better than those in published schemes or (and I'm sorry to say it) the ones you devise during PPA time. In our book *Writing For Pleasure*, we talk about how children can be 'knowledge tellers,' 'knowledge transformers' and 'knowledge crafters'. In a typical lesson, we either ask children to regurgitate in writing everything they can remember about the topic, or else we come up with a writing task that asks them to transform the knowledge in a new way, for example writing a newspaper article about Howard Carter finding the tomb of Tutankhamun. However, children can often come up with much better ideas than this tired example – particularly if you invite them to work as a collective.


24.06.21

Exploring Boudica's Rebellion

Boudica, Queen of Iceni Tribe killed Nero demand pay taxes
Her husband died land shared by Boudicca and Nero
Roman bigger smaller than Britain convenyences war horn
less armour Not trained Never fear death

The ~~attack~~ Battle of Britain

No fear on the battle feild
No rules here.
No guns in this battle
No cheating here

There's fear on the battle feild
There's swords here
There's death here
There's armor down here

No fear on the battle feild
No Competion here
No Cross-teaming here
~~No~~ No Silence here

There's the end of the battle
There's a Winner
There's a loser That's
gonna try
to kill them next time...

Introduce this mini-lesson by explaining to your class that they can use what they are learning about in other subjects to generate their own writing ideas for class writing projects. Invite the class to generate some writing ideas while you write them down on the board.

Here, Jay writes in personal response to learning about Boudicca's rebellion. At the top of the page, you can see some notes he has made after watching a short video about the event. Given the choice of how to respond, he opted for a poem which captures the essence of the battle and, by extension, his learning.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

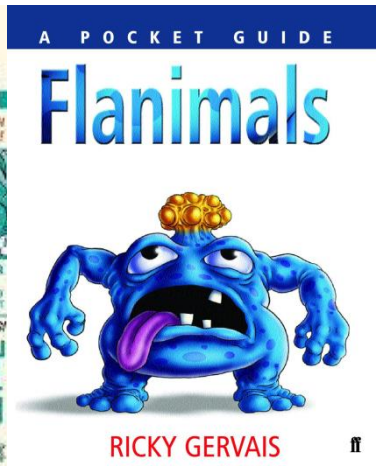
Thinking 'faction'

You'll probably guess from the name that faction is a mix-up of fact and fiction. Children really like writing faction because it's very versatile - you can write in lots of different genres and be creative and innovative. These are just a few of the ways of writing it:

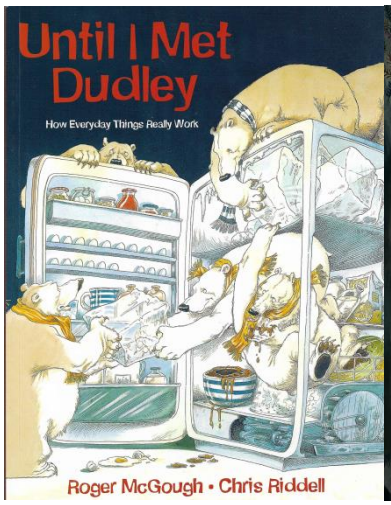
- Take something from a fictional world you've read about and turn it into an information or explanation text.
- Think of a character from history and weave your own invented story around them.
- Think of an event that happened in real life and write a fictitious ending for it.
- Take a scientific fact and write a fictional explanation for it.
- Write a fictional story but introduce someone from real life as a (possibly minor) character in it.
- Take a real-life hero or heroine and write the story of their life, filling in the details from your imagination.

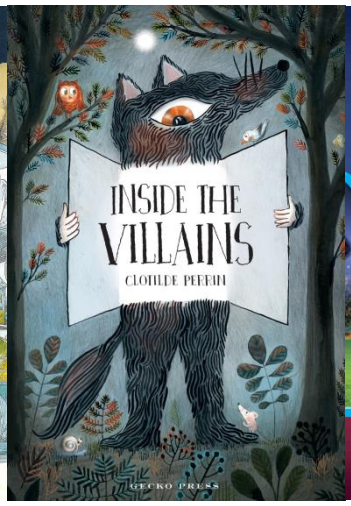
Whenever children in my class write faction, the results are amazingly imaginative. The piece that stands out in my mind was a factual explanation about the very realistic and practical ways - as well as the pitfalls- of looking after a creature totally invented by the writer. Try getting the children to think of as many different ways as possible of doing it, and put them up as a list on the wall. Some of the books in the class library were very helpful in sparking ideas and showing how it could be done:

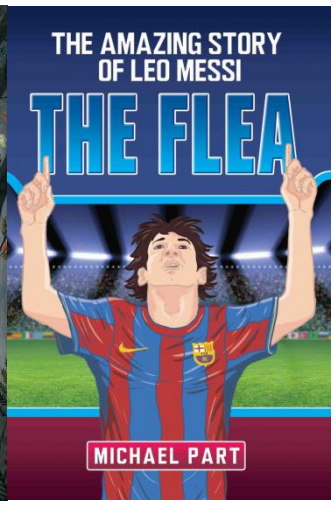
- *How to make friends with a ghost - Rebecca Green*
- *The Zoological Times; The Prehistoric Times - Stella Gurney*
- *Until I met Dudley - Chris Riddell*
- *Inside the Villains - Clotilde Perrin*
- *The Flea: Leo Messi - Michael Part*
- *Flanimals – Ricky Gervais*



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.







Of course, share your own piece of faction and explain why you were motivated to write it - I'm willing to speculate that it would have been to entertain! The children can write theirs in their personal project books and be given some sharing time to entertain each other.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Fanfiction

Fanfiction isn't copying. It's a celebration. One long party, from the first capital letter to the last full stop

- Jasper Forde

Sometimes you might want to write a story in a style rather like that of an author you admire. There's nothing wrong with this! As Oscar Wilde said: Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. And according to G.B.Shaw, it's the sincerest form of learning.

Think about your favourite author - what do you like most about their style, the way they write? Is there a particular character or a setting that has caught your imagination? You can take these ideas, be inspired by them, build on them in your own writing, and write like your hero author. In years 3 and 4 we've been getting children to write twists on fairytales, changing and subverting them to make something new, and writing fanfiction is much the same thing. I've found that it's helped me sometimes to get writing ideas, develop a character and spark off a new plot.

Try it yourself and share your story with the class. Tell them what moved you to write it. Invite them to jot down some of their favourite characters or situations from books they've read, and then have a go in their writer's notebook. It might develop into a favourite piece of writing! Could they use any of these ideas in their class project writing this week?

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

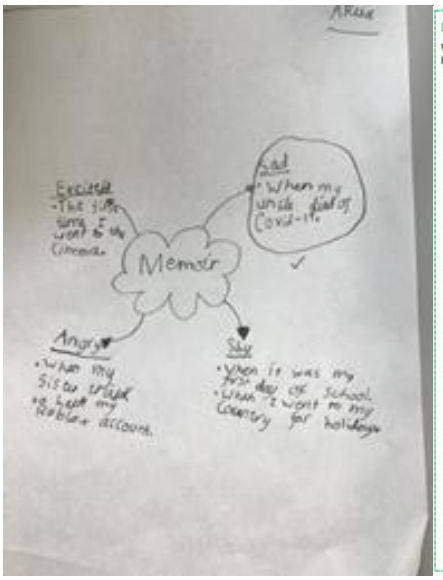
Memoir with strong feelings

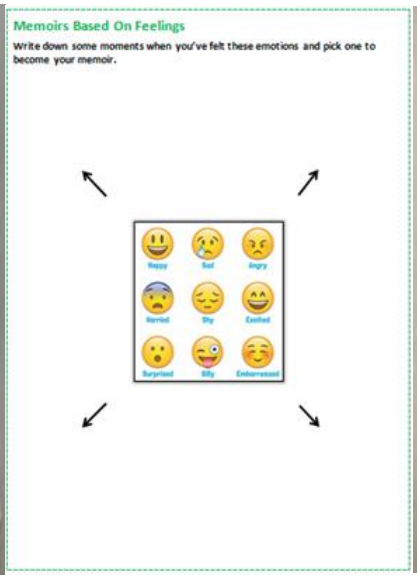
In terms of what I write about, I consider no subject too small. Often it's the small moments, that through the amplification of poetry, reveal the larger, more profound truths that we all come to recognize and treasure

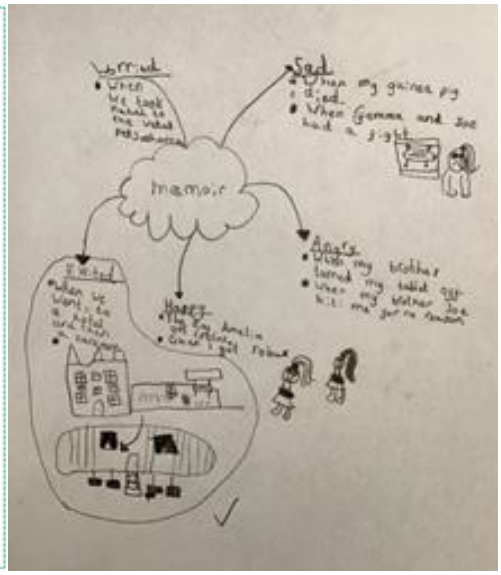
- Allison Joseph

Memoirs are usually written because they carry within them a memory with strong feelings. This is what people often find interesting about others' memoirs. Feelings and emotions, whether they are happy or sad, are all part of being human. Children can use these feelings as a way to inspire ideas for their own memoirs.

I can highly recommend reading 'You Have To Write' by Janet Wong and Teresa Flavin prior to this mini-lesson. Ideally, during read-aloud. For this lesson, you simply need to invite the children to call out different types of emotions and feelings while you write them out on the board. Once you've got a pretty good list together, invite the children to choose an emotion and to write a list of memories they associate with that feeling. You should do this too. By the end of the session, you could ask children to circle a memory they think could stand up as a good memoir and invite children to talk to each other about their idea. In our Memoir resources, writer-teacher Marcela Vasques has provided the helpful sheet you can see below:







Tags: Generating ideas, planning; narrative, poetry; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Something different happened this time

But how could you live and have no story to tell?

- Fyodor Dostoesvsky

I like to introduce this lesson by asking children to call out a list of things that they do all the time. What you can call 'always times'. These are things that happen time and time again. Things that they do every day or every year that are part of their routine. Next, get them to think about when one of these 'always times' was interrupted. When something out of the ordinary happened. They can then take one of these extraordinary incidents and turn it into a memoir.

Birthdays, Ramadan, eating lunch, watching TV, changing nappies, or even visiting the dentist! We have our routine and things we have to do time and again. It's good to introduce this lesson with a list of your own ordinary moments that have become extraordinary because they were interrupted, before inviting the children to try it out for themselves.

Tags: Generating ideas, planning; narrative, poetry; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

What do you do when you're not at school?

It's a wonderful thing to announce to your class 'teach me something'. I can't think of a greater personal satisfaction from teaching than learning about things from my pupils. Children only learn a fraction of what they know about the world through going to school. 87% of their time is spent outside the school walls. This means that their outside lives are a rich source for information texts and for teaching others about the things they know and care about most.

For this mini-lesson, give children a time-sheet to take home over the weekend or the holidays and ask them to fill it in with the things that they got up to in each hour. It's good to show children your own example and examples from previous years to let them know the sort of thing you are looking for. It's also important that children (and parents!) see an example which isn't all singing and dancing. It doesn't have to be filled with earth shattering and life altering events. It just needs to be honest. Once children have filled their time-sheet in, they can discuss them together and mine them for ideas for information texts!

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

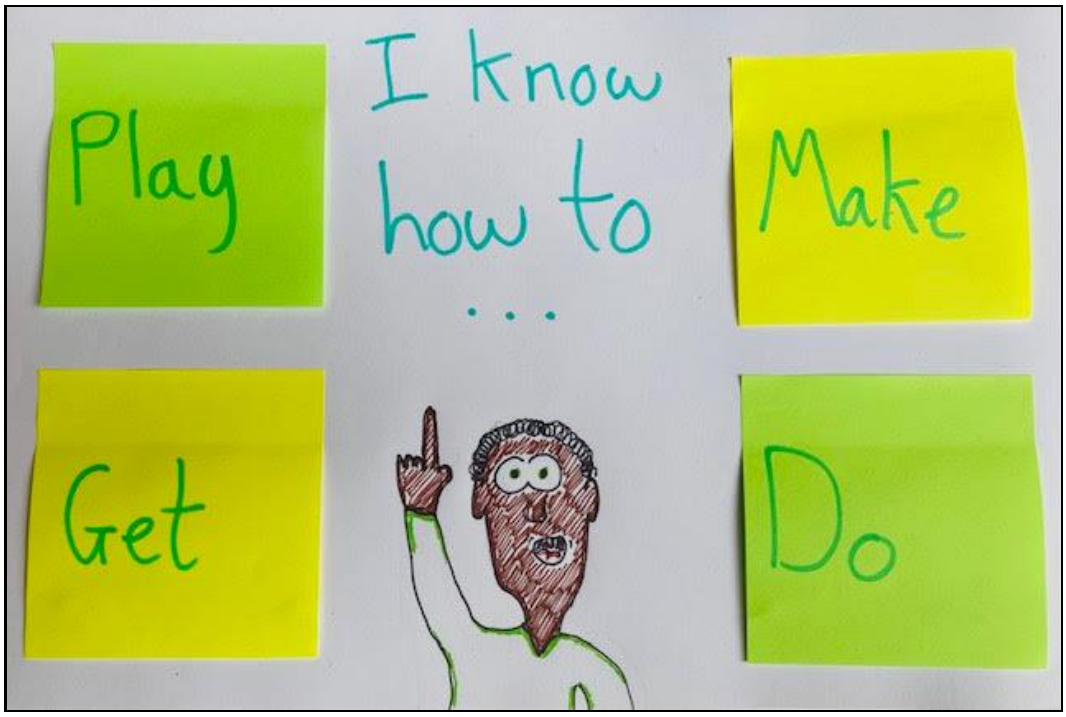
I know how to…

Imagine what a harmonious world it could be if every single person, both young and old, shared a little of what he is good at doing

- Quincy Jones

Children love to write about themselves and the things they know how to do. They are show offs. It's therefore easy to invite your young writers to craft 'how to…' books. The following prompts should spark a whole host of writing ideas:

- I know how to play…
- I know how to make…
- I know how to get…
- I know how to do…



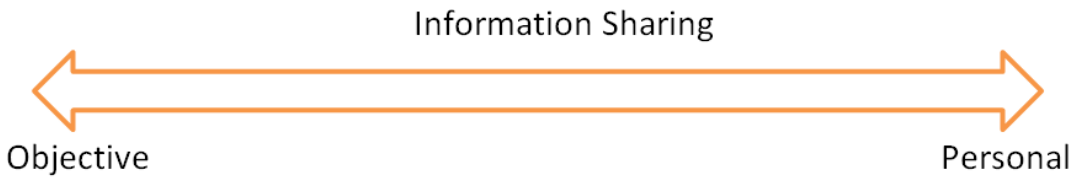
For this mini-lesson, I'm going to ask you to share your knowledge so that we can all learn things about and from one another. Finish some of these sentences off for me, choose your favourite idea, and turn it into a 'how to...guide'. Here's one I made for you all. It's about...

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Let me tell you…

We forget that when we share things about our lives, we are often teaching people something about them too. Memoir and information sharing often combine beautifully. You can see this on the continuum below. At one end we can share cold, hard facts with our reader through a more traditional conception of an information text. At the other end, we can share anecdotes from our lives that just so happen to carry an element of information sharing and teaching too.



The following prompts show how children can share information in a more personal way.

For example:

- Let me tell you what happens when… *I do my physiotherapy.*
- Let me tell you what I did when… *a baby bird fell out of its nest.*
- Let me tell you what happens at… *Dad's garage.*
- This is what I do… *at football training.*

For this mini-lesson, show children an information text you've written or ones children have written in previous years using these prompts. Ask the children whether they think it is more of an objective text or a personal one. What do they think about that? Which do they prefer? Why? Ask the children to use the prompts to come up with their own ideas for information texts they might like to write and share with others.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Information is held in the objects we treasure

There is often a lot of knowledge held within the objects we hold most dear. They are a great source for inspiration when wanting to teach people about things you're interested in or passionate about.

This mini-lesson is simple. All you need to do is share with your class a list of objects you treasure. You might want to pick one item from your list and tell children what you know and share some information about it. You can then invite the children to write their own lists and talk to each other about them. This can then lead to children writing information texts.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

I’m an expert in

This is MY idea, I thought. No one knows it like I do. And it’s okay if it’s different, and weird, and maybe a little crazy… I cared for it. I fed it good food. I worked with it, I played with it. But most of all, I gave it my attention

- Kobi Yamada in ‘What To Do With An Idea’

Children love to teach each other things. There’s nothing like the feeling of confidence and pride in yourself that comes with being able to tell others about something you feel you are an expert in, especially if they don’t know much about the topic but would really like to learn something. You don’t have to know everything about your subject, but you do need to know enough to write with a bit of authority and passion. Being an expert obviously helps with most types of non-fiction writing, including instructions, explanation, information and also discussion, where you need to be able to give some kind of factual evidence for and against different points of view.

Having children write about their own funds of knowledge is one of my favourite things to do in the writing classroom. The idea that you are the class expert on something can bring a new sense of confidence to children who previously may have had little. Every child is an expert in something. You can give them these two headings to write in their notebook:

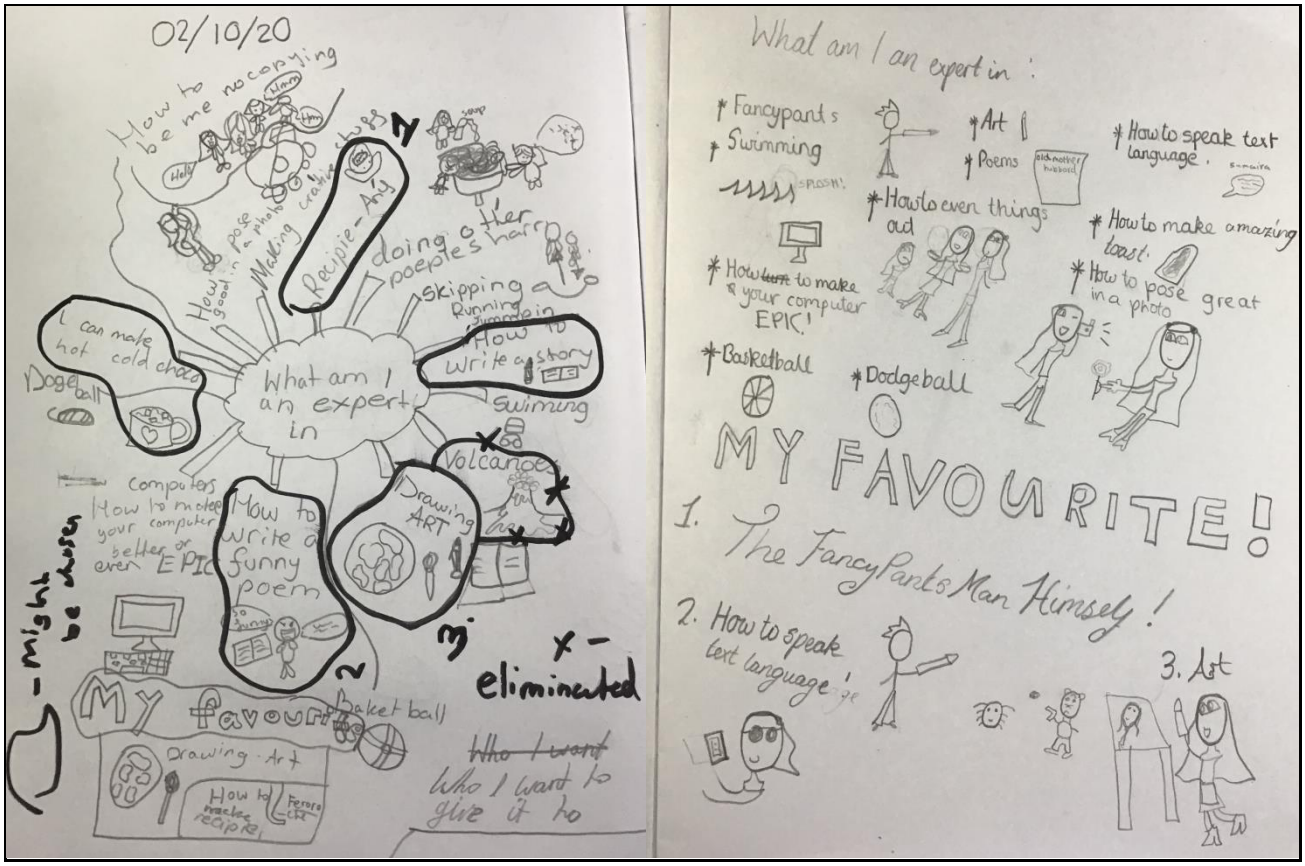
1. *Things I can do.*
2. *Things I know a lot about.*

Start this mini-lesson with everyone writing a list of things they think they might be a bit of an expert in. It could include anything, from supercars or unicorns, to making friendship bracelets, collecting crisp packets or doing Taekwondo - anything goes as long as children’s writing shares their expertise, shows their passion and rouses their reader’s curiosity and interest. With the youngest of writers, you may want to do this as a whole-class on flipchart paper as an ideas party (see page 87).

Invite them to try something out from the list in their personal project books or use some of their information that day as part of a class writing project. The classes I’ve taught have liked to collect these expert pieces (including mine) into an anthology for our class library - it showcases the amazing variety of children’s knowledge and interests, which we often overlook or don’t find out about. It’s our very own encyclopaedia!

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Here some children in Tobias Hayden's class have had a go at making a poster of all the things they think they have some expertise in. They have then circled a few options to explore further with the view to creating an explanation text as part of a class project.



Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; EYFS, KS1, KS2

I want to learn more about...

Children can spend a great deal of time and energy researching about a topic they are interested in when they are invited to and given enough time and support to do their research. It also teaches children one of the fundamental reasons we are *moved* to write. We write to learn. We write so as to better understand something for ourselves. We write to make newly acquired knowledge our own.

For this mini-lesson, I want you to write a list of things you'd love to learn more about. This can be something from our topic but it doesn't have to be. It can be about something from outside school. Let's start by maybe making a list together on flipchart paper and then you can make your own lists in your notebooks. What I would love is for us to get these pieces of writing together and put them into the class library as an anthology once they are done, and then we can learn from one another.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Conversations about photographs

We take photos as a return ticket to a moment otherwise gone
– Katie Thurmes

Photographs are held onto for a reason. Within them lies a 'diamond moment' captured in time. The famous saying of course is that a photograph can speak a thousand words, so why not use them as a great place to spark conversation with someone and to generate ideas for a people's history text?

For this mini-lesson, I suggest that you show children a photograph given you by someone you spoke to when you created your own people's history text. Explain how the photograph sparked off a conversation. You might even want to show them your notes and the planning that came about. You can then invite children to think about how they could talk over some photographs in preparation for this writing project.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Take a seed of truth and grow a story

Fiction is the truth inside a lie
- Stephen King

Some argue that all writing is in some way autobiographical and that we can't really remove ourselves from our writing. You can certainly see this in the writing of young authors. Children quite enjoy writing themselves into fictional stories for example. It's called 'social dreaming'. It's an opportunity to place themselves in alternative worlds and realities. It's also a great way for them to share something about themselves, but in a way that isn't so direct as it is in the writing of personal narrative. For this reason, it's nice to teach this mini-lesson in a personal narrative project - it can be an alternative for some children who might not want to share about themselves or their lives directly. You can read more about how

For this mini-lesson, share a fictional story you've written which has a seed of truth about you and your life within it. Explain why you decided to wrap up this moment in a fictional story, and what benefits it brought you as a writer. You can then invite children to generate their own 'social dreaming' stories where they place part of themselves into an otherwise fictional story.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; agency, motivation; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The history that hides in objects

I am intrigued by objects. They're a piece of history, someone's statement and ideas of life
– Mike Mills

A great source for writing ideas is within the objects people hold most interesting or dear. For this writing project, children could ask people to draw or show them a special object which holds within it a story. Children can ask why the object is important to them as well as the feelings and emotions the object stirs up in them. What stories are sitting inside their object waiting to be written about?

Share a time in your writer's notebook where you yourself have tried this technique and explain to the class how you went about it. You can then invite their questions before asking them to give it a try over the holidays in preparation for this writing project.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Collect one week – write the next week

It wanted food. It wanted to play. Actually, it wanted a lot of attention
- Kobi Yamada in 'What To Do With An Idea'

Sometimes finding the right writing idea takes time. Writing ideas can also hit us at any moment in the day. This is something that must be taught to children and they must experience it for themselves. For example, I have a whole host of writing ideas on my phone, ready for when I want to sit down and write. I never allow myself to be in a situation where I don't have a collection of ideas that need crafting. Hopefully, you've given your class personal writing project books which are allowed to go to and from school and home for this reason - any time is a time for a writing idea to present itself.

With this mini-lesson you want to explain that the class are to spend the whole week collecting potential writing ideas in their writing notebooks in preparation for writing the following week. It's important that you've done this yourself and can show children your writer's notebook. Invite them to ask you questions and answer any questions they might have.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Dreamcatcher to story catcher

For me, a time for creative thought is when I first awaken in the morning. Those floating moments between sleeping and waking invite me to drift, to let my mind wander over the tale I've been tossing around in my head or the character that's walked onto the stage of my imagination and refuses to disappear

- Nancy Lamb

As Nancy Lamb points out, in moments of dreaming, ideas for stories can come. This is also true of daydreaming. You can invite children to participate in 'daydreaming' time and make a note of anything that comes to mind (drawings or writings). Alternatively, you can ask children to keep their personal writing project books on their bed-side table and make any notes of things that cross their mind. You could do this for a week before inviting the children to choose their most promising story idea.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; independence, agency; KS2

What I'm sorry about

This mini-lesson isn't intended to elicit morbidly confessional writing - but we've all done things we regret, and some of them can provide great ideas for memoir, fables, story writing, poetry or even information texts. The writer D.H. Lawrence once wrote a whole poem about how he felt after throwing a log at a snake.

One of the things I was most sorry to have done was, having spotted a mole popping up for air on a French campsite, excitedly telling a fellow camper about it because it's quite rare to have sight of a mole in the flesh. He immediately set his dog to dig it out, and I felt terrible for days afterwards. I later wrote an information piece about moles and started it with this story as a way of making an initial impact.

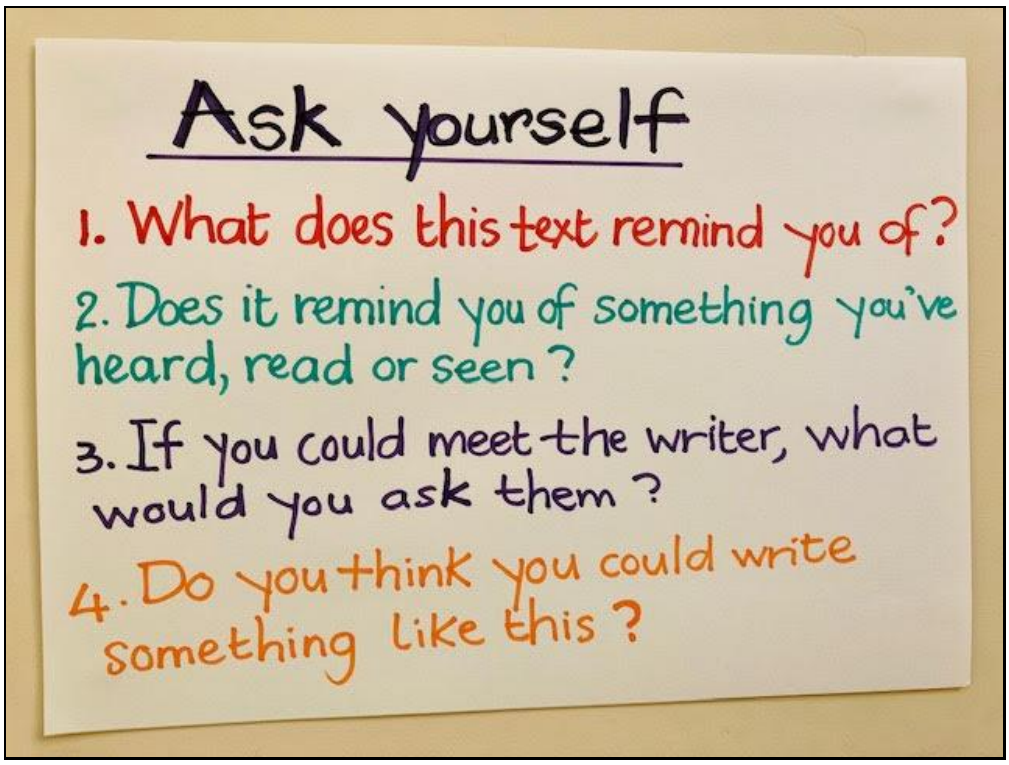
It's essential to share with the children this and other similar experiences you've had. It gives them confidence to share their sorry moments too.Showing others your own vulnerability is a powerful part of living and working in a community of writers. It also helps you get to know each other as people.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Answering Michael Rosen's four questions

As we are reading, we often think of our own imaginative ideas in response. We are reminded of aspects of our own lives, or else something we've read sparks our own creative idea. When we do this, it's called intertextuality. Our writing ideas get mixed up with the texts we've read. Michael Rosen, in his book Did I Hear You Write?, rather cleverly devised four questions that we can use in the classroom which will often result in the class developing a whole host of writing ideas in response to a text read.

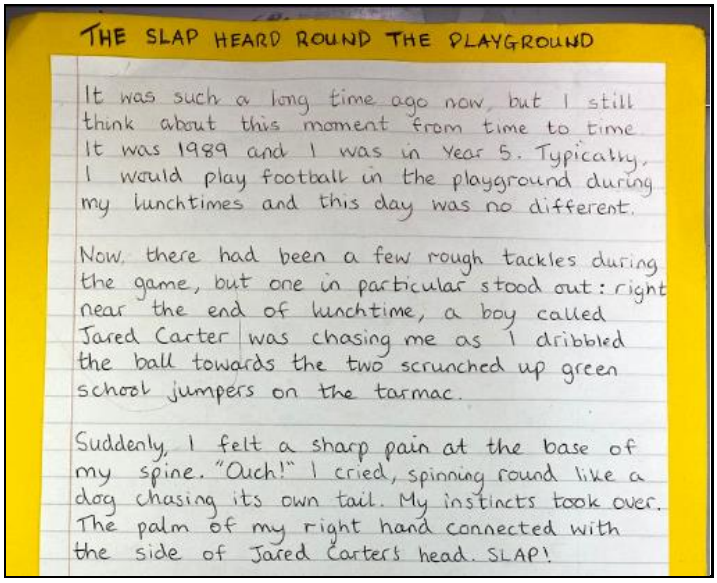


1. What does this text remind you of?
2. Does this text remind you of anything else you have read or seen?
3. If you could meet the writer, what would you ask them?
4. Do you think you could write something like that?

It's good to explain to children what intertextuality means and that all writers do it. Share an example of a piece of writing you've crafted which has been in response to something you've read. You can then choose an exemplar text from the class library which represents the same genre as your class writing project. After you've read the text together, ask the class Michael's four questions and write down their responses on flip-chart paper. You'll then have a whole host of writing ideas that children can pick and choose from.

A little aside. If you've not done this lesson before, I recommend giving it a try with a short poem first.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



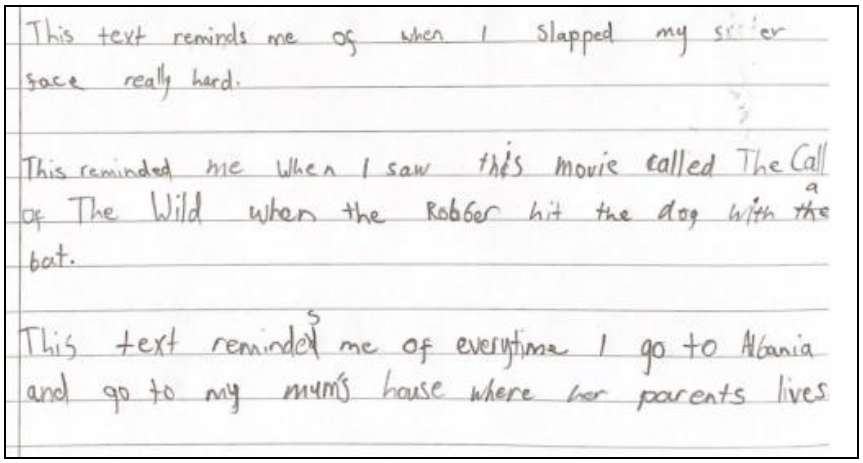
THE SLAP HEARD ROUND THE PLAYGROUND

It was such a long time ago now, but I still think about this moment from time to time. It was 1989 and I was in Year 5. Typically, I would play football in the playground during my lunchtimes and this day was no different.

Now, there had been a few rough tackles during the game, but one in particular stood out: right near the end of lunchtime, a boy called Jared Carter was chasing me as I dribbled the ball towards the two scrunched up green school jumpers on the tarmac.

Suddenly, I felt a sharp pain at the base of my spine. "Ouch!" I cried, spinning round like a dog chasing its own tail. My instincts took over. The palm of my right hand connected with the side of Jared Carter's head. SLAP!

After reading a memoir of an incident from his school days titled The Slap Heard Round The Playground, writer-teacher Tobias Hayden invited the children to make connections using this technique.



This text reminds me of when I slapped my sister face really hard.

This reminded me when I saw this movie called The Call of The Wild when the Robber hit the dog with the bat.

This text reminded me of everytime I go to Albania and go to my mum's house where her parents lives

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

Read a moment

I can't tell you the number of times when I've been reading and I reach for my notebook and start writing. Sometimes I just love the way a writer has described something, or I like a character point, or a plot twist and I want to use it for myself. It happens with non-fiction too. The writer will make a powerful or controversial point and I can't help but want to pick up from where they've left off and write something for myself. We can teach this to children too.

Start this mini-lesson by asking the children to choose a text that they have loved reading this year. Encourage them to look for a moment in the text that they would love to have a go at rewriting for themselves and turning it into a short story.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Comb your reading book

There's nothing like getting good advice about something from an expert. The books in your class library are a wonderful resource to turn to when you need help with your writing. You can comb them for all kinds of things:

- Interesting words, phrases or sentences that strike you and that you might like to use in your writing
- How a character is described
- How a setting is described
- Openings and endings
- How different items of punctuation have been used and the effect they've created
- Same with grammar - why has the writer used this particular item and what's the impact?
- Techniques like time passing or writing dialogue

Invite the children to spend a dedicated session combing a book for things they might like to 'squirrel away' in their writer's notebook and use later on.

The point of this mini-lesson is to make sure children know that they can always go to their favourite books whenever they need help with crafting their writing, including all the things mentioned above. I always suggest they do it after I teach a particular piece of grammar or punctuation. The results are often surprising!

It's a good idea to check in and remind them they can do this at any time in the writing session. Show them your own notebook where you've jotted down eye-catching words and phrases from a book you've been reading. Maybe children would like to share times where they've done it too. Finally, a sign of a good writing classroom is one where children are writing whilst surrounded by a variety of books.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

Free-writing

A wonderful teacher of writing called Peter Elbow came up with a brilliant technique for generating a writing idea. He called it 'free-writing'. We all have a continuous flow of feelings, thoughts and reactions running through our minds, and we can tap into them through free-writing. This mini-lesson shows one of three ways in which you can use the free-writing technique with your class, and it's one I'll often use to help children generate a writing idea.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The idea is simple. For 5-10 minutes, sit down quietly and note down everything that comes in and out of your mind. You can then 'mine' this writing for promising writing ideas.

Share a time in your writer's notebook where you yourself have tried to use this technique, and explain to the children how you went about it. You can then invite their questions. It's particularly important to explain how you read through your free-writing and circled any topics or thoughts you felt had potential and were worth exploring further.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

Free-writing on an idea

A wonderful teacher of writing called Peter Elbow came up with a brilliant technique for developing a writing idea. He called it 'free-writing'.We all have a continuous flow of feelings, thoughts and reactions running through our minds, and we can tap into them through free-writing.

This mini-lesson shows one of the ways in which you can use the free-writing technique with your class, and it's one I'll often use to help them develop an idea they've just begun to formulate in their mind.

The idea is so simple. If you already have the seed of a writing idea, simply write down quickly for 5-15 minutes everything that comes into your mind when you think about your idea or topic. This will throw up the most promising things you could develop into your piece. You might be surprised to find that what emerges looks something like an unplanned first draft (see *Adventuring* on p.64).

Share a time in your writer's notebook where you yourself have used this technique, and explain to the children how you went about it. You can then invite their questions. It's particularly important to explain how you read through your free-writing and circled any thoughts you had about the topic which you felt had potential and were worth exploring further.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

Free-writing across the curriculum

A wonderful teacher of writing called Peter Elbow came up with a brilliant technique for developing a writing idea. He called it 'free-writing'. We all have a continuous flow of feelings, thoughts and reactions running through our minds, and we can tap into them through free-writing.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This mini-lesson shows how you can use the free-writing technique to help your class develop their writing in the foundation subjects. It's one I have used with great success when I really want to give children the opportunity to use their personal response to the learning and transform what they've learned into something new.

The idea is simple. When children have read about, experienced, watched and otherwise learned something about a particular topic in a lesson, they can write down for 5-15 minutes any thoughts or questions which come into their minds related to the topic. They can then turn these notes into 'something,' whether it be a: reflection, summary, memoir, story or a poem. It might be a simple information text or an explanation or discussion piece. The important thing to remember is that this is a powerful way of ensuring that children are making the newly learnt knowledge their own. By crafting it into something new which they will share with others later not only means they will remember the content for longer, they also write better texts (Young & Ferguson 2021).

Share a time in your writer's notebook where you yourself have used this technique, and explain to the children how you went about it. You can then invite their questions. It's particularly important to explain how you read through your free-writing and circled any thoughts you had about the topic which you felt you wanted to explore further and turn 'into something'. Make sure you show them what you turned your free-writing into.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning; all genres; independence, agency; KS2

My life would be different if…

Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere

- Albert Einstein

This is a simple mini-lesson that I've used in the past for generating all sorts of writing. It's good for developing imagined future autobiographies, realistic fiction, fantasy and of course social and political poetry.

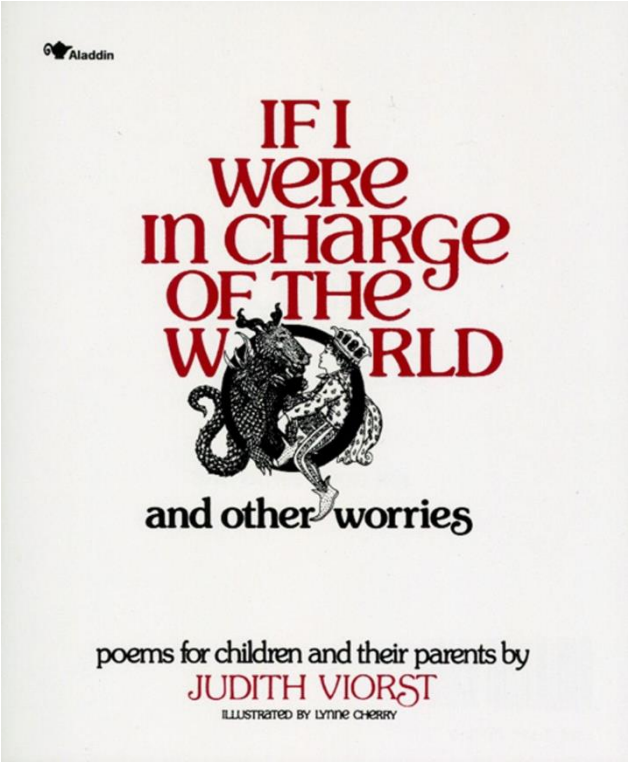
For this mini-lesson simply show children your list of sentences beginning with this prompt and give them the opportunity to ask you questions. You could also show them how generating these sentences has led you to pursue a poem. You can explain why you chose the sentence you did. Finally, invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

If I were in charge of the world…?

This mini-lesson was originally inspired by reading the book *If I Were in Charge Of The World And Other Worries: Poems For Children And Their Parents* by Judith Viorst, with my year four class. The poems inside and the prompt of beginning your poem with this phrase really grabbed the children and generated within them a whole host of writing ideas.

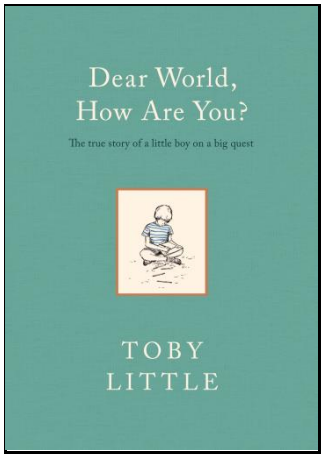


For this mini-lesson, share the book with the class (if you have it). Otherwise, show children how you've used the sentence prompt to come up with a whole host of writing ideas in your writing journal. You can give children an opportunity to ask you about it and explain what idea you might pursue as a poem and why. Finally, you can invite the children to use the technique for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Dear world, how are you?



This mini-lesson was originally inspired by reading the book *Dear World, How Are You?* by (then) five-year-old Toby Little. The letters inside can prompt your class to consider who they would like to write to and what they would like to tell them about. They can also think about what they would like to ask them - just like Toby does. Finally, they might like to create an anthology just like Toby has done. It can include copies of their letters and their replies.

Show children the book and share some of Toby's letters to your class prior to this mini-lesson. Ideally, during read-aloud. For the mini-lesson itself, simply have an ideas party (see page 87) and ask the children who they would like to write to. If they can't think of a specific person, ask them what type of person, e.g. 'Someone who goes to the Arctic'. You can then research suitable people they could write to.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; EYFS, KS1, KS2

What makes you cross?

The most solid advice for a writer is this, I think...when you get angry, get good and angry. Try to be alive

- Ernest Hemingway

This is a brilliant starting point for writing a protest poem. We all have different things we find incredibly annoying or which make us angry because of the sheer injustice of them. Changing things may not be easy, but writing a poem about them can at least help you let off steam. You might find that groups of children naturally want to write about the same issues, especially ones which are given huge publicity in the local community, but it's fine to write about national and international issues too. Take Hemingway's advice and give your protest some real welly.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Of course, you can also write about something in your family life that gets you down. Michael Rosen, for example, wrote a poem about his brother's protest against brown bread.

For this mini-lesson, generate together a whole list of issues that you feel strongly about which merit a protest. Show children the list you made yourself and explain why you 've chosen the one you're going to write about. Children can then make their own choice from the ideas they've collectively come up with.

Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

That's not fair!

As we know, children have a very well-developed sense of justice and injustice, and a poem is a great way to let off steam about the unfairness they see in the wider world or closer to home. Just the phrase 'It's not fair!' will be enough to spark off a host of writing ideas.

For this mini-lesson, create with the class a list of issues they feel need to be exposed and addressed. Share your own ideas for the poem you're going to write and explain why you felt you had to speak up about these issues. How will you choose just one of them?. Or show them the poem you've already written. Maybe you used 'That's not fair!' as a kind of refrain? They could try this out today if they wanted.

Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

Poetry with strong feelings

Poems can be written to carry within them a memory with strong feelings. This is often what's interesting about reading other people's poems. Feelings and emotions, whether they are happy or sad, are all part of being human. Children can use these feelings as a way to inspire ideas for their own social and political poetry.

For this lesson, you simply need to invite the children to call out different types of emotions and feelings while you write them out on the board. Once you've got a pretty good list together, invite the children to choose an emotion and to write a list of memories they associate with that feeling. You should do this too. By the end of the session, you could ask children to circle a memory they think could stand up as a good social or political poem and invite children to talk to each other about their idea.

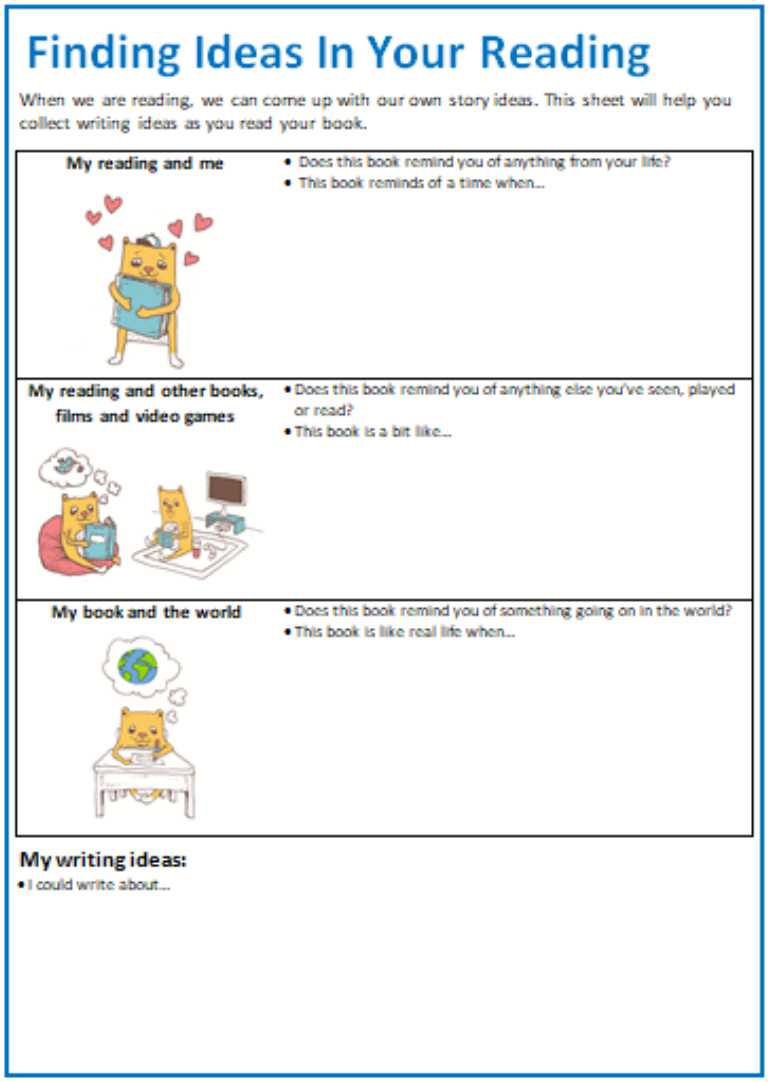
Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Intertextuality: Finding stories within stories

We are always looking to make connections with the texts we read. They are like friends,and we are in conversation with them. The connections we make can be a rich source for generating our own ideas for writing. This is called intertextuality. It's where we take our connections from other texts to write our own.

The prompt sheet below, which comes as part of our narrative class writing projects, is a great way to help children generate their own story ideas from their reading. It can be given out during reading times or whilst you're reading your class novel. It can also be used to generate ideas for poetry from other poems.



Finding Ideas In Your Reading

When we are reading, we can come up with our own story ideas. This sheet will help you collect writing ideas as you read your book.

My reading and me	• Does this book remind you of anything from your life? • This book reminds of a time when...
My reading and other books, films and video games	• Does this book remind you of anything else you've seen, played or read? • This book is a bit like...
My book and the world	• Does this book remind you of something going on in the world? • This book is like real life when...

My writing ideas:

• I could write about...

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to share the story ideas you generated by using the prompt sheet yourself. You can then invite them to ask you questions about how you used it as you read. Finally, ask the children to give it a try during reading time to help them come up with writing ideas for the class writing project. Children should also be given time to share their ideas with others on their tables.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Write about what you're most afraid of

Instagram poet Nayyirah Waheed and writer Donald Barthelme both advise apprentice writers to write about what they're most afraid of. What keeps you up at night? What is always on your mind when you're taking a walk? What really gets on your nerves? What do you try to avoid thinking about? How can this be channelled into a character for a story?

It's essential that you start this mini-lesson off by sharing what you're most afraid of. This then gives children confidence to share what gives them the creeps too! Talk about the different types of fears people commonly have. Try to move beyond concentrating on nouns or objects (ghosts, rats, big scary dogs) and instead encourage discussion about deep feelings and emotions. Not everything we are afraid of is tangible. and so this mini-lesson has value beyond simply generating ideas for writing.Showing others your own vulnerability is a powerful part of living and working in a community of writers, It also helps you get to know each other as people.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS2

Playing on your audience's fears

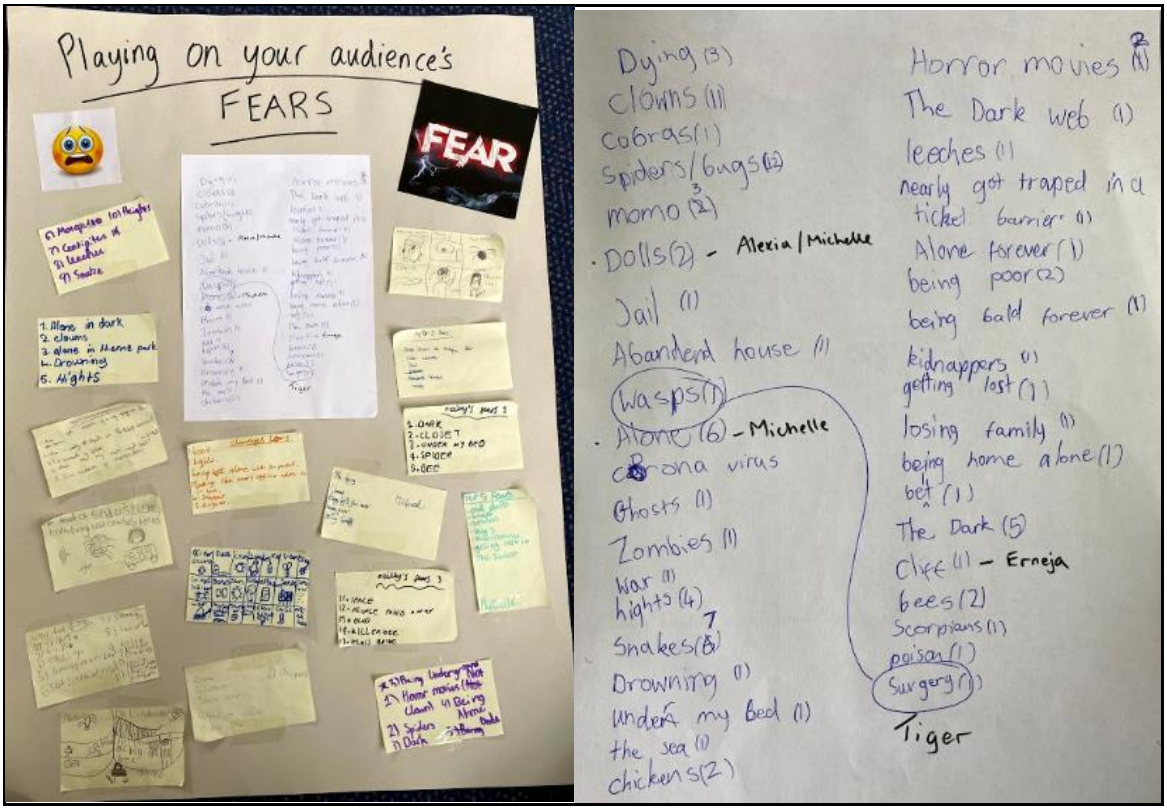
The only way to get rid of my fears is to make films about them

- Alfred Hitchcock

This mini-lesson is similar to '*Write about what you're most afraid of*' (see page 130), but instead focuses on the fears of the other people in the class. It's a good way to find out what the most common fears are, but also throws up some strange and unlikely possibilities. For instance, in my class recently, some children came up with these gems: being afraid of cliffs, going bald, surgery, the ticket barriers on the London underground and being poor. In this session we combined it with making individual top five lists (see page 98). Then, two children collated all the ideas using a kind of tally chart so we could see the most common fears. Children were then invited to write about one of their own ideas, or one from the class list.

When we know what other people are afraid of it can be a good way to get ideas for our stories. Asking your audience helps to know what other people are likely to be scared of and can really help us as writers to write something that the audience is going to be affected by.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Here is a class poster showing all the fears that were collected. Alongside it is the tally chart of the most common ones.

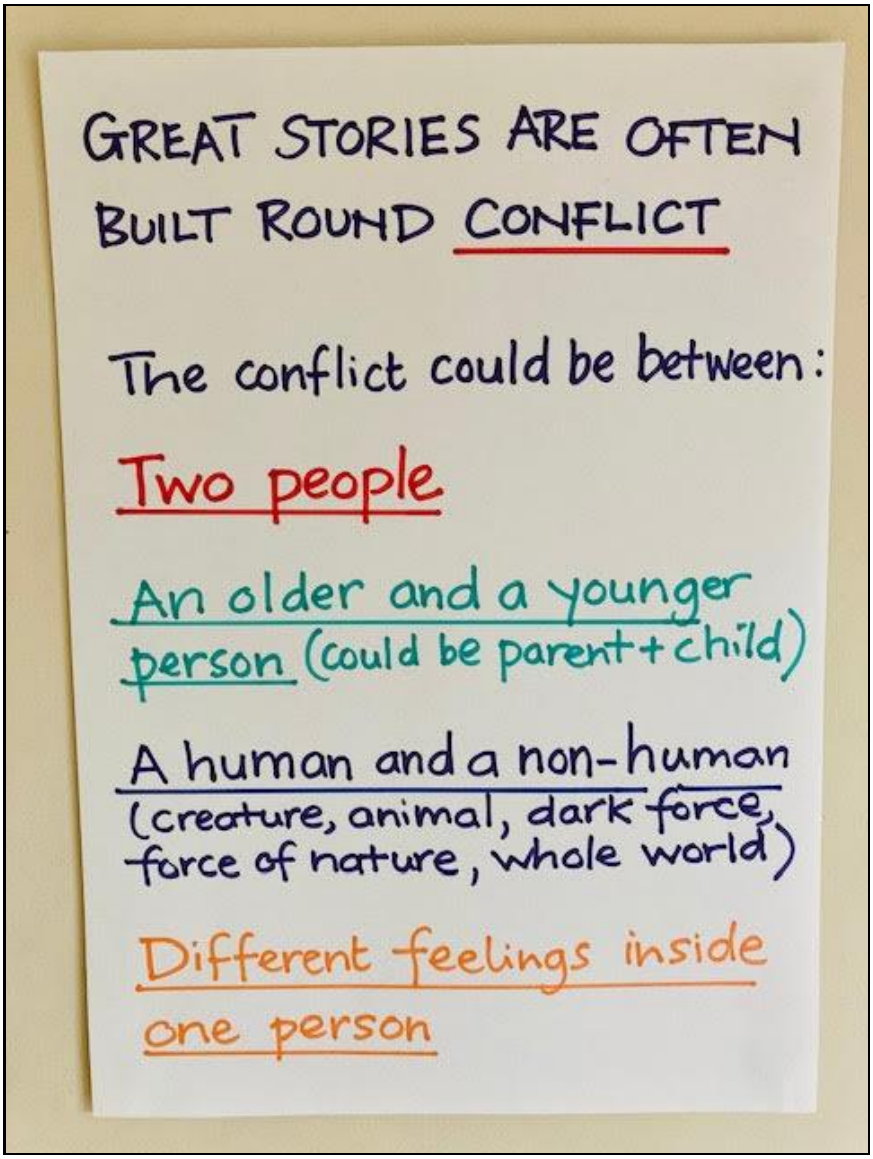
Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; independence, agency; KS2

Conflict: Stories about people

Stories often involve a person coming into conflict with something. The conflict can be:

- Between people with different opinions about something.
- Between an older and a younger person.
- Between a person and something non-human, which could be a creature, an animal, a dark force, a force of nature, or even society itself.
- Inside the person as they struggle to deal with feelings which pull them first one way and then the other. Have a look at the stories you're reading at the moment and see which kind of conflict is at the heart of them. Do they only have one type or can there be several going on at the same time? Can you add any more kinds?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



I found that I, as well as the children, really liked thinking about this. We even made a list of all the categories of conflict we could think of and displayed it on the working wall. This was good for helping with generating an idea for a story, and then giving a direction and a focus for the writing. Share a time in your writer's notebook when you used one of these categories and discuss how it helped you develop your characters.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning, narrative; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Lost or gained? Positive or negative?

This is a resource that I originally made for myself. I went on a screen-writing course a number of years ago and my trainer discussed how script-writers will often use Maslow's *Hierarchy Of Needs* as a way of considering the plot points in their films. I went home and created my own and stapled it into my writer's notebook. I then started to share it with some of the children in my class when we were in conference together and it became rather popular. It's now a resource which comes as part of our narrative class writing projects.

Lost or gained? Positive or negative?

Why do characters do things? Well, it's either because they've lost something and they want to try and get it back or else they are hoping to gain something they have never had. This doesn't just mean *stuff*. It often means trying to find *happiness*, for example, or losing it. You could think about things happening to people in stories as positive or negative. Here are some examples:

↑ Gained		↓ Lost
Finding heaven, beauty, helping others, getting what you dream of, finding the meaning of life.	**Happiness** talent – joy – excitement - dreams coming true - life is beautiful – life is perfect	Materialistic, destruction, being conquered, boredom, anger, dread, fear, self-obsession
Making the world better, learning new skills, rewards, being powerful	**Confidence** respect – status – admiration – recognition – strength - freedom	Life is hard, no respect, feeling worthless, depressed, wanting perfection, being a slave
Feeling accepted, loved, liked, being friendly, sociable, popular understood, caring	**Friendship & Love** belonging - connection – family – togetherness	Feeling alone, abandoned, disliked, rejected, not good enough, hated, stopped caring.
Finding a safe place, trusting someone, risk taking, adventure, challenge, feeling unafraid	**Feeling Safe** certainty - money – stuff – health – home - protection	Danger, feeling vulnerable, hurt, injured, lost, paranoid, scared, suspicious
Sharing, finding, stealing, hiding, surviving	**Staying Alive** air - water – food – shelter - sleep	Starvation, sickness, death, hell

The rationale behind it is that you have a character and, depending on what actions they take or how they react to events, they:

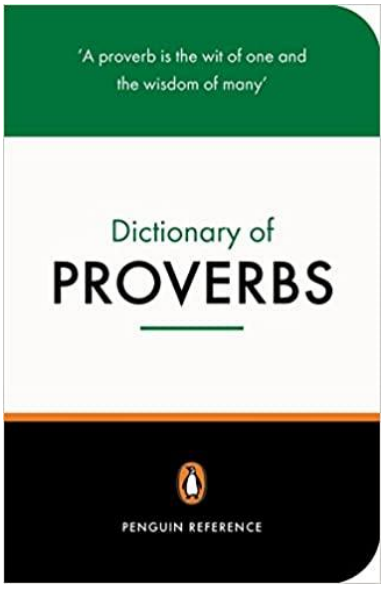
- Run the risk of losing something psychologically important to them
- Become self-destructive and the architect of their own downfall
- Are presented with an opportunity to improve their psychological situation
- Try reaching for something aspirational and achieve it
- Try reaching for something and are aspirational, but ultimately fail

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is discuss how you yourself have used one of the ideas to craft your own short story. You can also ask children where they think some of their favourite characters from the books they've read might be on the scale. Invite children to use it to discuss the writing ideas they are coming up with during that day's writing time. Sometimes it's enough for children to read a single word from the resource and they are away! Finally, it's a great resource to keep on you during pupil-conferencing when you want to talk about the children's developing compositions.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning, narrative; confidence, agency; KS2

Proverbs inspire narratives



All stories carry within them a proverb. Proverbs are perceived, common-sense truths about life and the actions we take in it. If we share these proverbs with children, they can respond to them with their own story ideas. They can create stories that are for or against the proverb's message.

Providing children with a list of proverbs is an excellent way for them to mine their lives for memoir moments and so it works well for personal narrative writing projects too.

The best way to introduce this mini-lesson is to first show how you generated an idea using it yourself. You can share the story ideas you had in response to one of the proverbs or you can share the memories, anecdotes and memoirs that came to mind from your own life in relation to the proverb's message. It's good to show all the ideas you generated and explain why you rejected some and how you decided upon the one you picked to develop.

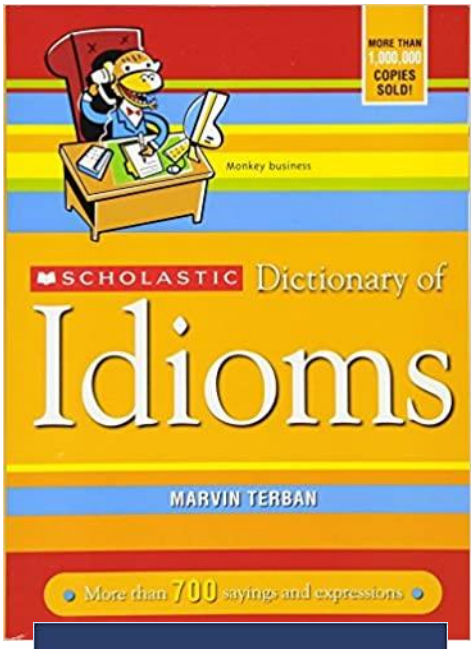
You can also use a single proverb to generate story ideas as a whole-class on flipchart paper. Alternatively, you can share the resource with the children and they can generate ideas in groups or in pairs. Finally, it's possible for children to use the resource just for themselves.

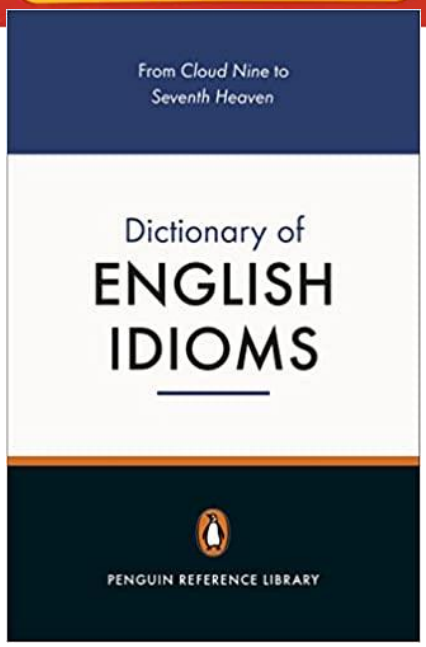
Tags: Generating ideas; planning, narrative; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Idioms inspire narratives

Idioms aren't meant to be taken literally (pigs might fly) but children can use them to generate writing ideas for fictional stories or personal narratives. Idioms also make for great titles, promising first lines, or an impactful final line.





The best way to introduce this mini-lesson is to first show how you generated an idea using one yourself. You can share the story ideas you had in response to one of the idioms or you can share the memories, anecdotes and memoirs that came to mind from your own life in relation to the idiom's meaning. It's good to show all the ideas you generated and explain why you rejected some and how you decided upon the one you picked to develop.

Another technique is to ask children to choose an idiom they like and to use it as a working title for a memoir or short story. They can then change the title once the piece is finished - or keep it!

You can also usually use a single idiom to generate a whole host of memoir or story ideas as a whole-class using flipchart paper. Alternatively, you can share the resource with the children and they can generate ideas in groups or in pairs. Finally, it's possible for children to use the resource just for themselves.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning, narrative; independence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Themes for great stories

Good stories work on metaphoric and symbolic, as well as literal levels. Children filter stories through their unique history and imagination, using them in ways we can not possibly understand or even imagine.

- Frank Clancy

One of my favourite things to do is to take a psychological, sociological or philosophical theme and to craft a short story that reflects it. I love it because it gets down to what stories are really about and why they are written. Children enjoy this too.

Themes for great stories

The elements: earth, air, fire and water
Gods
Mortals
Supernatural
Good
Evil
Good deeds
Sin
Lust
Gluttony
Greed
Sloth
Wrath
Envy
Pride
Right and wrong
Heaven
Hell
Dystopia
Utopia
Nirvana
Peace
War
Violence
Human goodness
Resurrection
Justice
Victory
Defeat
Courage
Cowardice
Prize
A wager
Criminal
Victim
Hero
Villain
Ignorance
Temptation
Crime
Tragedy
Comedy
Romance
Disguise
Mistaken identity

An uncontrollable response
A controlled and calculated response
Reward
Punishment
Risk
Strength
Weakness
Love
Hate
Rage
Hostility
Calm
Anxious
Enemies
Friends
Frenemies
Phobias
Inappropriate
Oppressed
Emancipation
Favouritism
Inequality
Captured
Imprisoned
Released
Enslaved
Liberation
Resistance
Rebellion
Tyranny
Powerful
Powerless
Segregation
Freedom
Agency
Civil rights
Human rights
Animals rights
Environmental rights
Responsibility
Ego
Inferiority

The individual
The collective
Sharing
Hiding
Knowledge
Skills
Memory
Learning
Understanding
Teacher
Student
Boss
Worker
Doubt
Forgetting
Remembering
Intelligence
Wisdom
Naivety
Life-affirming
Toxic
Friendship
Isolation
Brotherhood
Sisterhood
Solidarity
Union
Society
Community
Loneliness
Togetherness
Alienation
Belonging
Struggle
Mourning
Celebrating
Loss
Gain
Disgrace
Honour
Sickness
Truth
Lies
Fact
Fiction
Reality
Real
Fake

Discovery
Tolerance
Denial
Unchanging
Breaking
Mending
Stranger
Friend
Remote
Distant
Close
Buying
Selling
Taking
Giving
Abandoning
Together
Apart
Spying
Hiding
Flaunting
Silence
Noise
Instinct
Interruption
Excitement
Dull
Revisited
Connected
Time
Place
Ecstasy
Despair
Heart
Head
Leader
Follower
Control
Controlled
Active
Passive
Secret
Deserving
Undeserving
Order

Consequences
Helping others
Restless
Content
Longing
Acceptance
Rejection
Morals
Ethics
Problems
Solutions
Fantasy
Magic
Surreal
Nonsense
Real-Life
Animals
Omens
Myths
Legends
Prophesy
Hearing Voices
Sacrifice
Savagery
Treachery
Betrayal
Dark
Neglect
Kindness
Inner conflict
Haunted by the past
Mischievous
Naughty
Cheeky
Subversive
Killing
Saving
Protecting
Empowering
Grief
Misfortune
Fortunate
Maverick
Obedient
Disobedient
Selfish
Selfless

Themes for great stories

Displaying animal behaviour
Beasts and creatures
Transformation
Recklessness
Split personality
Mind versus body
Heart versus head
The soul
Spirits
Ghosts
Haunting
Afterlife
Dreams
Hallucination
Nightmares
Haunted
Mind control
Manipulated
Trance and hypnosis
Natural forces
Attraction and repulsion
Identity
Struggle
Fighting
Abandoning
Hysteria
Terror
Trauma
Creation
Destruction
Decay
Death
Rebirth
Growth
Building
Evolution
Change
Hope

Recognition
Confidence
Doubt
Motivation
Desire
Success
Failure
Forgiveness
Revenge
Jealousy
Admiration
Scared
Brave
Unique & special
Surrender
Leader
Follower
Harmful
Beneficial
Food and drink
Warmth
Money
Shelter
Safety
Stability
Friendship
Relationships
Achievement
Adversity
Breakthrough
Suffering
Overlooked
Respect
Disrespect
Beauty
Ugliness
Happiness
Sadness
Surprise
Disgust
Anger
Fear
Jealousy
Obsession
Threat

The wild
City
Country
Pioneer
Survival
Poverty
Affluence
Class conflict
Subconscious
Unconscious
Nature and nurture
Family characteristics
Family dysfunction
Fathers
Mothers
Children
Parents
Parent
Child
Childhood
Adolescence
Teenager
Youth culture
Adulthood
Old age
Kindness
Cruelty
Difficult
Easy
Challenge
Separation
Reunited
Open
Closed
Cared for
Deserted
Future
Past
Present
Trust
Faith
Suspicion
Pain
Comfort

Chaos
Stupidity
Genius
Absurdity
Madness
Strange
Normal
History writing
Science-fiction
Technology
Pleasure
Making a deal with the devil
Horror
Thriller
Detective
Mysteries
Metamorphosis
Transformation
Difference
Sameness
The end of the world
Searching for the meaning of life
Finding out who you are
Rags to riches
Two perspectives of the same story
Intertwined stories
Harmony
Paranoia
Guilt
Real-life concerns
Real
Fake
Perception
Rituals
Celebrations

Natural
Unnatural
Curiosity
Denial
Resilience
Determination
Blame
Forgiveness
Home
Away
Movement
Journey
Maze
Exploration
Traveling
Migration
Adventure
The unknown
Displaced
Disasters
Panic
Miracles
Beliefs
Fate
Destiny
Faith
Conform
Defy
Rules
Laws
Disagreeing
Best
Worst
Possibility
Impossibility

To help children with this, we provided these suggested themes as part of our narrative [class writing projects](). The best way to introduce this resource is to first use it together as a whole class. Choose one of the themes from our list and ask children to generate story ideas in response. You can create a great list of potential writing ideas on flipchart paper this way. Once children are comfortable with the resource, they will begin to use it for themselves.

Tags: Generating ideas; planning, narrative; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Give a voice to those who can't be heard

It only takes one voice, at the right pitch, to start an avalanche
- Dianna Hardy

When we as poets are given an opportunity to perform, we are given the undivided attention of our listeners. Unless they are very rude, our audience cannot leave. This gives us the ideal opportunity to give voice to things that otherwise wouldn't be heard about. Some in privileged positions are given ample voice - but this isn't everyone. Whose voices do we hear most often? Who do we rarely hear from? Additionally, our physical communities, the natural environment and the animals with whom we share this planet cannot speak - and so it's the job of the poet to give them a voice. This mini-lesson asks children to consider who or what they can give a voice to who would otherwise go unheard or underappreciated.

In this mini-lesson, it's good to write a whole list of things that children believe go underappreciated, neglected or ignored. This could be a list of people they rarely hear from, or otherwise places, things or animals that aren't given enough care and thought. They could then be invited to write a poem about something from their list and so give a voice to those who can't be heard...

Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; independence, agency; KS2

Have you ever wondered about...?

Asking this question is a great way in to thinking about something that interests you and that you care about, something you know a bit or a lot about, something that puzzles you or perhaps even annoys you, or that you'd like to find out more about. Once you've asked this question, you can turn it into a piece of writing in which you can maybe give out some information, give instructions and express your feelings.

You'll have your reader in your mind when you are thinking, making notes, planning and writing. Will they like reading about your topic? What might they need to know about it from you ? What can you tell them about why it's important to you?

You could get the children to briefly share their chosen topic in one of the mini- lessons using a 'Writing Register' (see page 51). By doing this, you have set them up for anticipating reading about a lot of new topics and finding out what each other is interested in. As always, it's never just about a writing product! They will be totally intrigued to know what your important subject is, so show them your own example, tell them how you came to choose it and share the notes you made about it before you started writing.

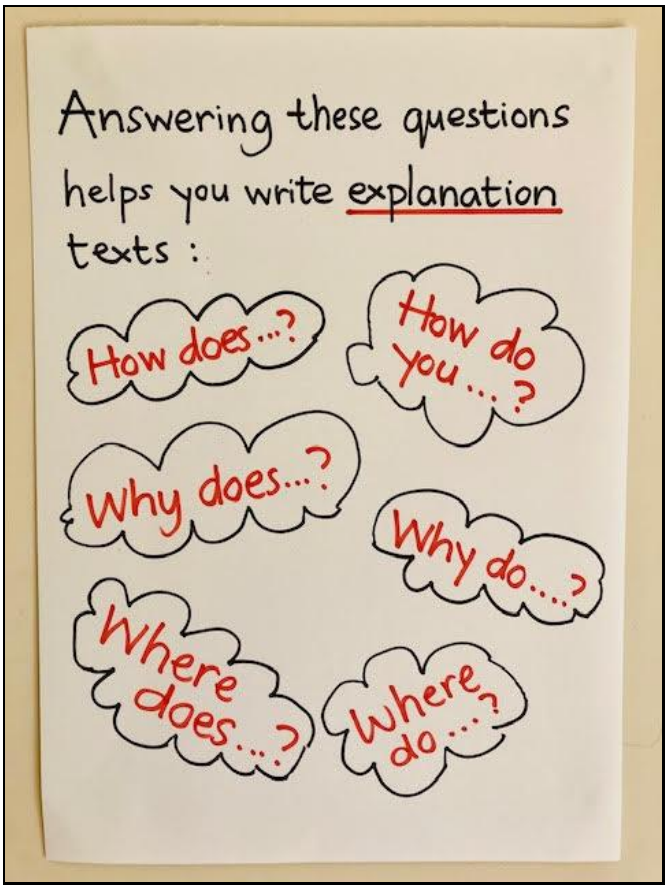
Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Asking questions

When we are explaining, we are answering people's questions. We often try to pre-empt the things they are going to ask. This is also a great way of coming up with ideas for explanation texts. What questions do you think you can answer for people who know less about a subject than you? What sorts of things do you often find yourself explaining to people? This might be answering questions from people older or younger than you. It might be people who are interested in the same things you are but have less expertise than you' Whatever the case may be, by answering the sorts of questions below you can find rich material for explanation texts:

- How does …
- Why does …
- How to …
- Where does …
- Why do …
- Where do …



This mini-lesson is simple. Just show your class the list you created by finishing off these questions – you can then tell them how you turned one into an explanation text.

Tags: Generating ideas, planning; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What have I always wanted to find out about?

Writing enables us to find out what we know - and what we don't know- about whatever it is we are trying to learn

- William Zinssner

This mini-lesson is about 'writing to learn'. Writing is an amazing way of learning about something new. By writing about a new subject of interest for ourselves, we are better able to understand it. We transform our reading/learning into something that becomes our own understanding. We can then share this understanding with others for the benefit of all.

For this mini-lesson, ask your class: Have you ever really wanted to find out about something but never had the time? Has something you have never known much about caught your attention recently?

On flipchart paper, write a list together of the sorts of things everyone would like to find out about. You could also invite children to write their own lists, individually or in groups. Finally, ask children to choose one topic of interest. You can then invite them to do some research on the subject and challenge them to write up an explanation for the class library.

Tags: Generating ideas, planning; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

Ask your audience …

It can feel really good to teach your classmates about something. Children can ask each other if there's something they have always wanted to learn more about, from history for example. They could then write in response. They might even like to score each suggestion in terms of their friend's interest level and how much they know about it.

Suggestions	My interest level score: 0-10	My knowledge score: 0-10

For this mini-lesson, it's nice to show how you've done this yourself. Why not ask your colleagues what they would like to learn about from you – you might even want to fill in your own chart so you can show your class. You could then invite them to do the same during writing time.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Suggestions	My interest level score: 0-10	My knowledge score: 0-10
How are you so good on your PS4?(my sister)	8	10
What would you like to be when you are older? (my Mum)	6	1
What did you learn today in homeschooling? (my Dad)	7	9
How much do you know about what coronavirus is? (my Cousin)	5	4

Suggestions	My interest level score: 0-10	My knowledge score: 0-10
What can you tell me about when I was born? (my sister)	9	8
Who was Captain Tom Moore? (my grandad)	7	5
How is a glass made? (my Nan)	10	2
How do we hear? (my brother)	7	9

A child from Tobias Hayden's class surveys his family to get suggestions for a non-fiction piece he is working on. Despite having a low knowledge score, he was very interested in writing an explanation about how glass is made. After conducting some research, he went on to write a very engaging piece.

Tags: Generating ideas, planning; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

Use newspapers and magazines

Another good way of finding writing ideas is to leaf through local and national newspapers or magazines and see what pops up. You might be inspired by an eye-catching headline or maybe even a short phrase such as 'boy finds Roman coin in burger'. It's often said that truth is stranger than fiction, so the kinds of real-life situations you read about in the press can be a really good source for getting ideas for fantastic new stories, or they can be retold with the details imagined and filled in. In addition, children may want to discuss, in writing, points of local interest and concern. I really like this as a strategy because you can find things which can be used as a starting point for almost any kind of writing. For example, you could write an imagined life story of someone who's been mentioned in a news article.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Make sure you always have in the class library a good selection of newspapers and magazines which will be of interest to your children. You could show how it's done by starting with a whole class session, when everyone finds a word, an image or a headline and comes up with a possible writing idea. As always, show them where you have written in response to something you've read, and suggest that they might like to try it out themselves today in their personal project book.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; independence, agency; KS2

What itch needs scratching?

Have you ever read the comments section on local news websites? Or letters to the editor in the local press? Maybe you're someone who writes these yourself? The reason we write in this way is because we have an itch that needs scratching, and we are compelled to discuss it with others.

I often find that I turn to writing if I want to get something off my chest that's bothering me in some way, maybe making me annoyed or puzzled or sad or angry, and I think it's good for children to understand that they can do this. It's worth talking about how you can write in private, to let off steam or sort out your own feelings, just for yourself. Or how you might want to write it for someone else to see because maybe you want to explain something to them, ask for their help in solving a problem, or ignite a healthy discussion. It is really worth considering these other functions of writing because they are not generally made available or explored in the typical school writing curriculum. Of course, if children want to, they can turn their issue into a piece of writing for a wider audience, especially if it's a global or a community matter which can affect others besides them. A rant about something can be a force for good!

Things that are happening to children in their own lives and in the local community can be a powerful catalyst for writing ideas, but obviously we need to treat such writing with respect and sensitivity. With this in mind, share your own list of itches that you need to scratch through writing, and invite children to contribute their own.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

What do you believe?

As you get more experienced, you are ready to start taking on bigger themes as writing ideas - philosophical, psychological, even political. Sometimes you have quite deep and difficult questions to ask about the world, and writing about the topic or the issue can help you sort out what you think, even if you don't always form a definite opinion by the end.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

A good way to start is to ask yourself a question. It could be something really big, like 'Does God exist?' or 'Is there life after death?' or 'Do we really need to go to school?' It could be about something environmental or scientific, about a global or a local issue, or something that intrigues you, such as 'Are there such things as ghosts?' You can weigh up different arguments for or against, and back up your ideas with evidence, personal experiences or anecdotes.

This is a great opportunity for children to be reflective and let their own voice be clearly heard. Below is a list of books I've used in the past to help my classes think about bigger themes.

- *The Philosophy Book by Dorling Kindersley*
- *This New Season: Our Class, Our Schools, Our World by Chris Searle*
- *Stepney Words by Chris Searle*
- *England: Poems From A School*
- *Poetry For A Change by Otter-Barry*
- *If I Were In Charge Of The World by Judith Viorst*
- *Real-Life Mysteries by Susan Martineau*
- *Thinkers' Games by Jason Buckley*
- *Politics for Beginners by Louie Stowell*
- *The If Machine: Philosophical Enquiry in the Classroom by Peter Worley*
- *The Philosophy Shop by Peter Worley*
- *History's Mysteries by Kitson Jazynka and National Geographic Kids*
- *What Is Right and Wrong? Who Decides? Where Do Values Come From? And Other Big Questions by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young*

I've found that getting children to begin by listing a few questions and then discussing them with the class generates huge interest and sparks off other ideas, debates, and questions. And performing or publishing the finished pieces, including your own, as a kind of anthology of belief and critical discussion, will stimulate further thought and reflections for weeks to come. What's learnt in this project can also help children in other areas of the curriculum, for example, when conducting scientific,historical or geographical enquiry.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

Be outrageous

When I teach this mini-lesson, I can't help but think of both Christopher and Peter Hitchens, journalist brothers who rarely held the same position on matters of political and social importance, but who both had the incredible ability to grab their audience's attention by using bold and controversial statements. It's a technique as old as the press itself. Starting your discussion piece with a strong or surprising claim before detailing arguments both for and against it is a powerful technique. Readers are likely

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

to react quickly and strongly and be hooked in. It's good to explain to children that it is okay if they don't believe their claim entirely, as this can actually help them to explore both sides of an argument or energetically set themselves up against it.

It's useful to look at newspapers and magazines for this mini-lesson. Discuss attention-grabbing headlines. Why are they used? Why are they powerful? And how can we use the technique for ourselves? Encourage children to consider how they can introduce their discussion text and the different sides of the argument during that day's writing time. This mini-lesson is particularly effective when the majority of your class are revising.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

Make a change!

I liked being with my idea. It made me feel more alive. Like I could do anything. It encouraged me to think big… and then to think bigger… I realised what you do with an idea… You change the world

- Kobi Yamada in 'What To Do With An Idea'

Everyone can think of something in their life or in their environment they wish was different. Sometimes you can do something about it, but it takes a lot of thought about the best way of trying to make a change, including making a direct request or putting forward an argument, either in speech or in writing. In either case you will need to focus on being persuasive, and that means being clear about why you want the change and how it will benefit others besides you. You'll need to make sure your request is a reasonable one, that there are good reasons for it, and that you're making it to the right person - the one who might actually be able to make the change you want.

The point of this mini-lesson is to show children how they can use writing in a powerful way to achieve something. They'll need to come up with a subject they feel genuinely passionate about - this isn't a rehearsal or a dummy run but is concerned with a real-life situation, so it will probably be focused on something at school, at home or in the community. They will be interested to read your persuasive piece of writing,how you went about writing it, and if you were successful. It's good to remember that you don't always get what you want, but you can have a really good try!

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Personal issues to global issues

Think about anything you have discussed recently with people who may have different positions.

Write down what you think about some of these issues. Add any more topics you can think of. Which issues are important to you? Are there any you are undecided about? Have a look at the lists here and see whether you can think of any more. Discuss with your friends and draw your own table of ideas.

Personal issues	Community issues	National issues	Global issues
Should our family get a dog? Should a child choose their own bedtime?	Should children be forced to pick up litter as community service? Should police be allowed to stop and search?	Should the government implement a sugar tax? Should everyone have to have at least some army training?	Should people be allowed to move around the world freely? Should people only be allowed to earn a maximum amount of money?

This is a great mini-lesson to do as a whole class, but of course you can ask children to have a go in groups or on their own too. It's good to share some of your own discussion text ideas that you've either rejected or else haven't got round to writing yet. Explain why you rejected some while others you thought of had potential. You can then invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

Ten most important things about me

An autobiography is a life story. It starts when you are born

- Richard Hell

This is a great way to help children generate ideas for an autobiography or even an anthology of personal narrative poetry. Each important thing can either turn out to be a subheading - with an anecdote underneath explaining why that thing is important. Or else each important thing can be a poem. In my experience, having all ten things included in an autobiography can render them a bit unwieldy and long, so sometimes it's good to ask the children to choose just a few. Finally, I can highly recommend teaching this mini-lesson alongside reading *Hey world, here I am!* by Jean Little

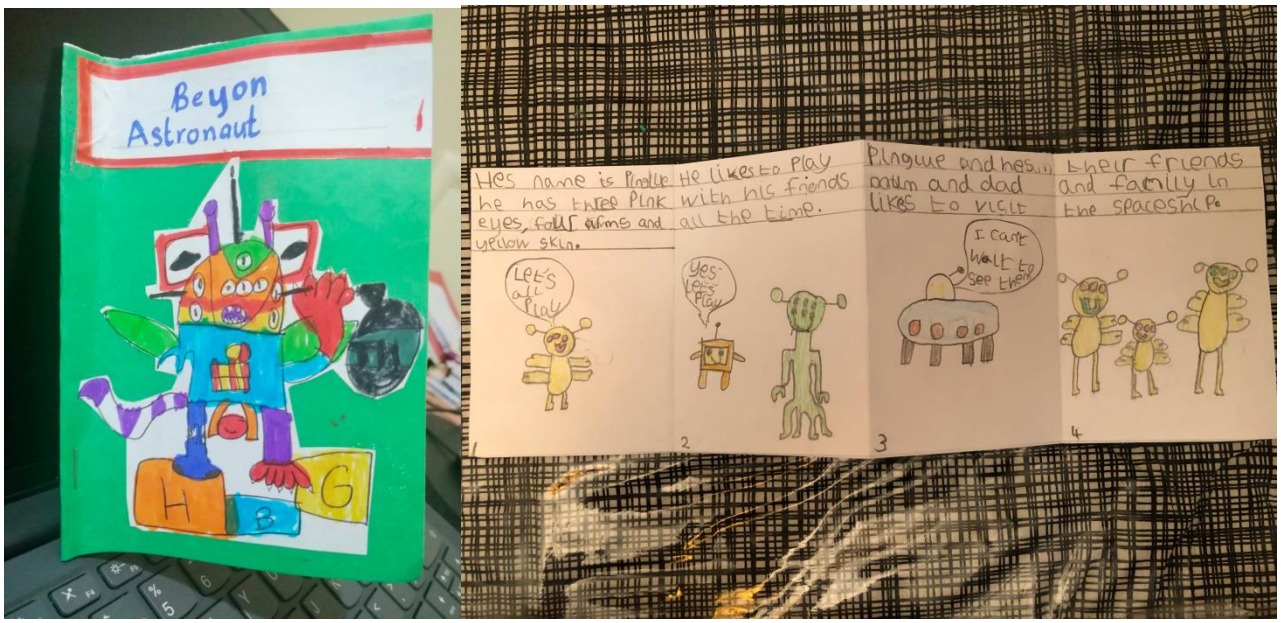
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This is a great mini-lesson to do as a whole class, but of course you can ask children to have a go in groups or on their own too. It's good to share some of your discussion text ideas that you've either rejected or else haven't got round to writing yet. Explain why you rejected some while others you thought of had potential. You can then invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Generating ideas; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS2

Create character mini-books

Great stories are driven by great characters. We remember the best stories because the characters are remarkable. Actions alone do not make a story happen. Alice, Frankenstein's monster and Peter Pan are characters we remember because they are three- dimensional, strongly constructed and drive the story.



One way that writers think of stories is to create their characters first. Some writers like to think carefully about their appearance and personality before developing the stories they want to tell, and they do this by borrowing ideas from other stories and by observing people around them. They make mini-books to portray their characters and collect ideas. Some writers make a collection of mini books of characters they can weave their stories around. Create your own character mini books and share them with the children.

Tags: Generating ideas; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Write a list!

Young children love writing lists, from who is coming to their birthday party to what they like eating, playing or wearing. Lists are a great source for generating ideas for all kinds of genres, so they should be added to all the time inside a writing folder or at the back of their personal writing project books.

I love writing lists, and I wanted to share with you some I have written because I found out that they are great to help me to think of writing ideas. This list is about my favourite things to do, this is what I am expert at, this one is about places I know and this one is a list of things I want to know more about. Why not have a go yourself today at writing or drawing a list, and see if it sparks off any writing ideas.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; agency; KS1

People watching

I often find myself sitting on my balcony watching the events below. I look at people going by and ask myself some questions: why are they doing what they are doing? What's making them do it? This can be a great way to see things from other people's perspectives and can in turn inspire ideas for writing. Earlier today, I was watching a local greyhound called Ted who was out for his walk with his elderly owner. After he had done his business by the wall and she had scooped it up into a bag, she did something which I've never seen before: she pulled out of her jacket pocket an old bottle of washing up liquid which she had refilled with what I imagined was some kind of clear disinfectant, and she squirted it over the area which Ted had befouled. It helps to have a place to store these observations and I like to have a people watching section in my notebook.

Show the page in your notebook which you keep for observations like the one about Ted, and invite children to set up a people-watching page in their notebook today.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; agency; KS2

Language popping like Pinter!

I really enjoy teaching children this mini-lesson. Its title is inspired by Harold Pinter's Nobel Prize lecture where he explained '*most of my ideas are engendered by a given line, word or image. The given word is often shortly followed by the image. I shall give two examples of two lines which came right out of the blue into my head, followed by an image, followed by me:*

"What have you done with the scissors?"
Dark.'

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

These two bits of language formed the openings for two of his most famous plays, but is Pinter the only writer who gets language popping into his head? I doubt it. I'm sure it happens to all of us; the trick is to be on the lookout for it. Admittedly, this mini-lesson is a slow-burner and should really be combined with a mini-lesson in 'behaving like a writer' perhaps alongside keeping a notebook, but it can garner some amazing ideas. What you do with that piece of language is up to you.

I find language popping into my head at the strangest times. When I am out jogging, trying to fall asleep, making tea, driving, pushing a trolley, or at any other random time, thoughts will pop into my mind. They might be responsive to an immediate stimulus; it could be memories, worries, or hopes and dreams. Whatever the thoughts, that 'bit' of language, be it a single word, a line of speech or an image, can be a spark for a piece of writing and is worthy of a place in your notebook.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; agency; KS2

I know and it's important to me

My idea grew and grew. And so did my love for it

- Kobi Yamada in *What To Do With An Idea*

When I wrote a story for the children in my class called 'Pedro and the little red bag of hope' (a Twisted Fairy Tale), I knew that was a topic that was important to me. Before writing this story, I thought carefully and asked myself the question: *What is this important to me? What do I really want to communicate to other people? Do I know it well?* I thought I wanted to write about the children who live in the streets of Rio de Janeiro. I knew I couldn't write from their perspective as I haven't lived their reality, but I could write about what I saw as a child from inside a car, from walking down the street and from crossing their path. I wanted to tell them, "I saw you!", "I cared about you" and "You are still in my heart." So, I created Pedro and told his story. Some children in my class selected a range of topics that were important to them. One girl wrote about her experience of visiting her family in Ghana, a boy wrote stories about Hoovers (Henry and his friends), another boy wrote about his mother's garden and how it was important for both of them.

To teach this lesson you can start by sharing what is important to you and how you know. Then ask the children to share what is important to them and how they know.

Last night, I was thinking about the children who live in the streets of Rio Janeiro. I have seen them, it always made me really upset to know that they have no place to live. I took my son to Rio with me for holiday when he was just 5, he couldn't believe that these children didn't have a home, he cried in anger! So I thought that I really wanted to write about them, to try to give them a voice, to let people know they exist and they are important too. For this reason today I want to ask you what is important to you?

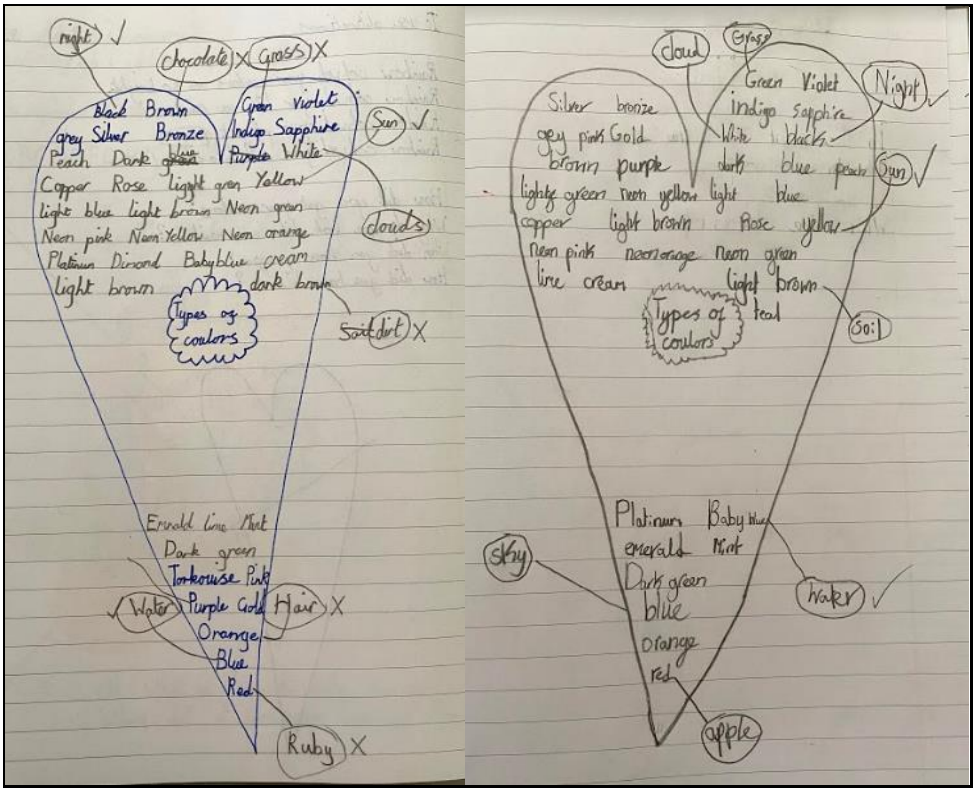
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Here you might give examples of what other children considered to be important to them. Give them space to reflect and talk about what you said and to think about what is important to them. Invite the children to write about what is important to them. I wrote a twisted fairy tale with what was important to me, but they can incorporate their ideas with a range of genres (fiction and nonfiction).

Tags: Generating ideas; memoir; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Colour-noun-poem

A couple of boys in my class came up with this idea together recently after being taught a mini-lesson about using an idea heart. They adapted it slightly and filled it with all the colours they could think of. They then used those colours to generate nouns, circled some of their favourites and then tried to turn them into poems. This mini-lesson works well when you are teaching the children about 'where poetry hides'. The book Adder, Bluebell, Lobster has some great examples of nature poems with single word titles. The boys who came up with this idea shared it with the class during the Author's Chair part of our lesson, and other children have since tried it out.

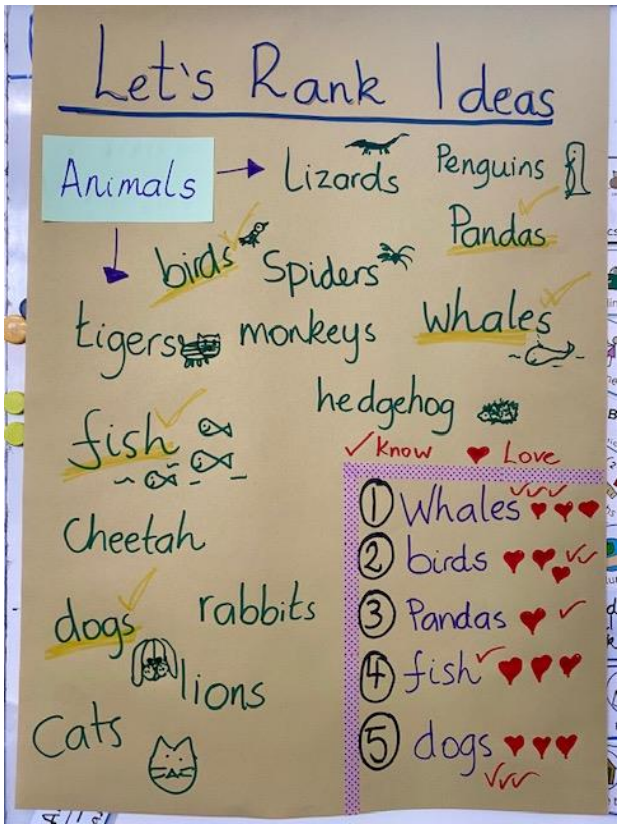


Tags: Generating ideas; poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

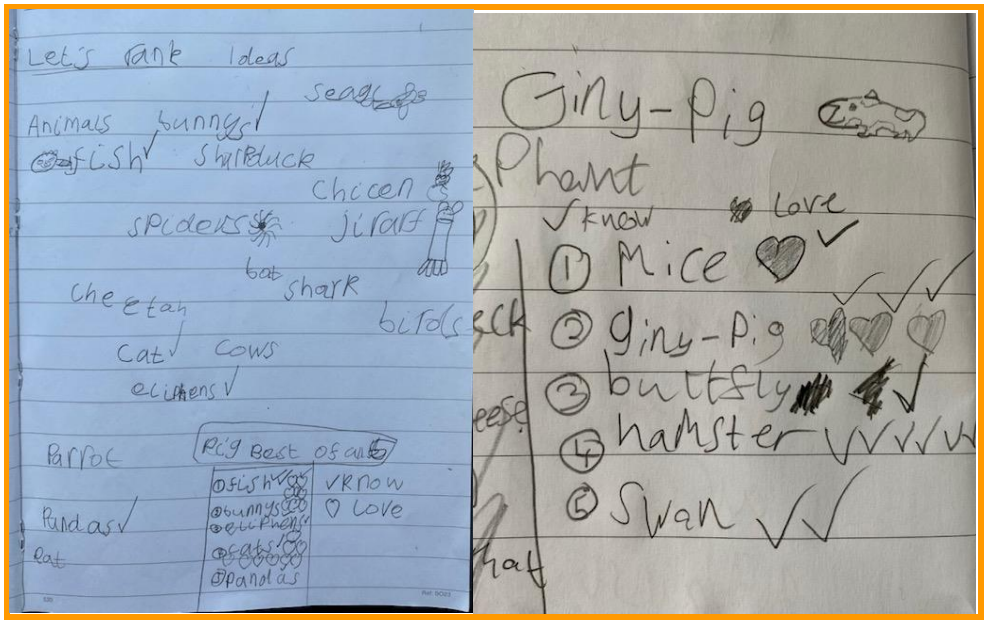
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Let's rank

Your first idea isn't always your best idea. By generating writing ideas, more ideas come. By sharing ideas with others, more ideas come. By hearing other people's ideas, more ideas come. When you're taking time to generate writing ideas for a class writing project, children can accumulate a lot of ideas. As teachers, we need to give children time to reflect and discuss with others which idea may be their best. Asking children to work with others to rank their potential ideas from most to least promising is an important aspect of being a writer. It also encourages really sophisticated talk; with children considering the appropriateness, purpose and audience for the writing.



For this mini-lesson, show children how you ranked your own list of writing ideas and explain how you reached the decision you made. Invite them into the process too and come to a conclusion on a final ranked order. Show how you're considering the purpose and audience for the writing. You can then invite children to do the same with their peers at their tables.



Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; motivation, writer-identity; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

I've got more ideas than I know what to do with!

What to do when you have more writing ideas than you know what to do with?! This can become a regular occurrence for children. When generating ideas for what they would like to write about, as part of a class writing project, children can find it tough to choose the one idea they want to pursue. In *Writing For Pleasure* classrooms, though, they need not worry. Writing for pleasure teachers will always ensure children have access to a personal writing project book. This is a writer's notebook that can go between home and school every day and is a place where children can pursue other writing projects and ideas away from the demands of the class' writing project. This is the perfect place for children to pursue the other ideas they've generated.

For this mini-lesson, show children how you collect any excess writing ideas and add them to your 'future writing projects list' at the back of your notebook. You can explain that the children could start creating such a list too and that they are free to work on these other projects during personal project time and when they are at home. End the mini-lesson by giving children some time to set up their 'future writing project lists'.

Tags: Generating ideas; all genres; agency, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Organisation & Structure

It's the ambition of most writers to ensure that their readers don't end up in a state of confusion and frustration at having been unable to follow the sequence and logical progression of a text. If a piece of writing lacks cohesion and 'flow', the writer's efforts have probably been fruitless. While text organisation is mostly thought of as being linked to planning, these mini-lessons will give children strategies to attend to it at other stages in the whole writing process too.

What do you notice about books?

Children come into our classrooms with a range of understandings about books and how they are crafted by writers. Some children already show a lot of understanding about how books work, how they are designed and how they should be used. Others are not so sure. This mini-lesson helps establish a solid knowledge about books so that children can feel confident in doing with their books what authors and publishers do with theirs.

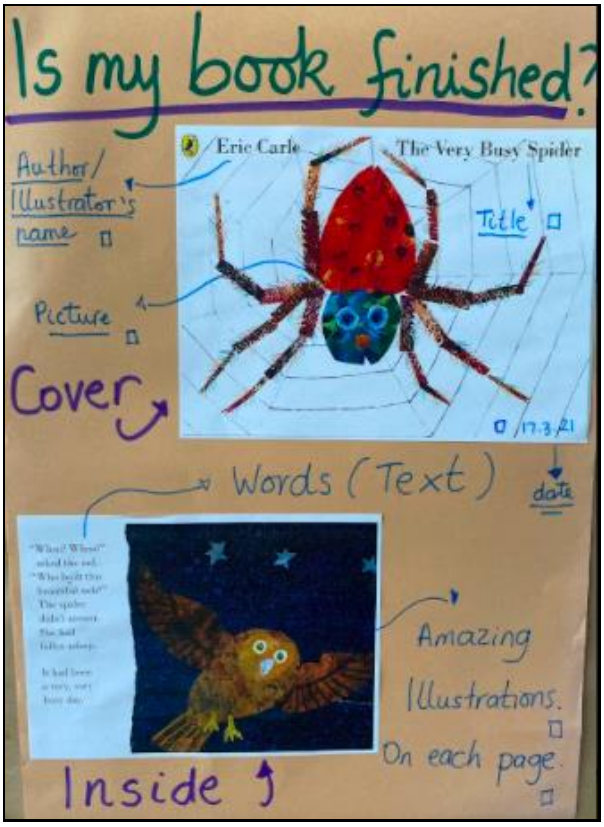
For this mini-lesson, it's good to have a variety of books out on the tables, all over the carpet, and some set on your easel. Ask children to investigate the books and tell you what they notice about how books are made. What is on their front covers? What's on the back? What do you usually find inside? Children will typically notice the following sorts of things: title, pages, pages numbers, words, pictures, photographs, facts/information (non-fiction texts), author and illustrator's name, funny, sad, scary, stories (fiction), classroom library. Once children spot these features of texts, they begin to use them themselves when they are making their own books. You can say to your class 'you can make books like this'. Finally, it's good to create a class poster of these features and leave it up on the working wall.

Tags: Organisation & structure; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

When is a book finished?

At the beginning of the year, it's good to clarify the expectation of what constitutes a 'finished' or 'published' picture book. Using the mini-lesson above, you could ask again what the children noticed about the published picture books and what they will have to do to ensure theirs are published in the same kind of ways.



A poster from Marcela Vasques' classroom showing children how to check if their book is finished.

For this mini-lesson, it's good to set out a checklist on flipchart paper for the class working wall. Children typically notice that a picture book is ready to be published into the classroom library when:

- *All its pages are full of writing and illustrations.*
- *It has the date it was published and the author's and illustrator's name on the front.*
- *My words match my pictures.*
- *I have shared it with someone.*

Tags: Organisation & structure; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

New thing? New page

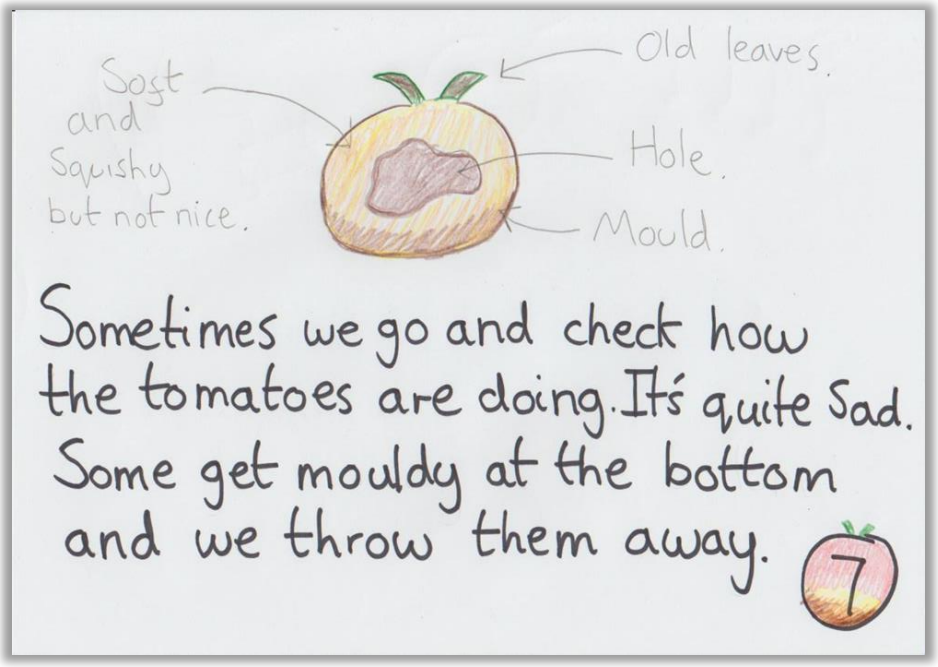
When the very earliest of writers are learning to make books during writing time, it's important to show them how many of the picture books in the classroom library will share a new piece of information on each page. You can then invite them to make sure that their information books do the same thing.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how the non-fiction picture book you've made shares a new piece of information about your chosen topic on every page. This mini-lesson also works quite well with inexperienced writers who are writing fiction too; something new can happen on each page.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting; non-fiction, narrative; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Using labels to help the reader when you're not there

Children need to understand that they can't always be around to tell their reader what their pictures are about. That's why we use writing. It's also why we use labels. Labels can point to a picture and tell our reader what it is.



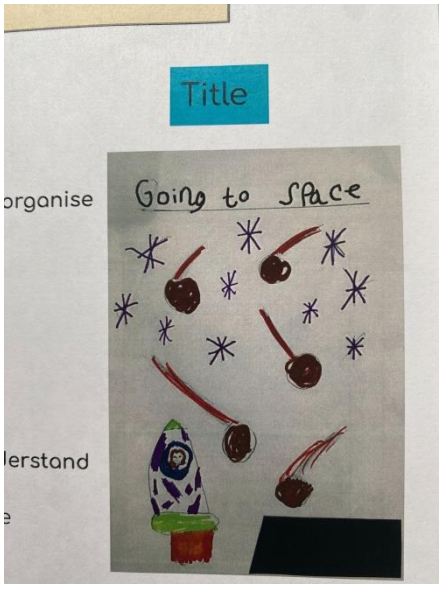
For this mini-lesson, show children a picture book you're crafting and point out how you've used labels to tell your readers what your pictures are all about. Explain that you've done it because you might not always be there to tell your readers. You can invite children to try out using labels during book-making that day.

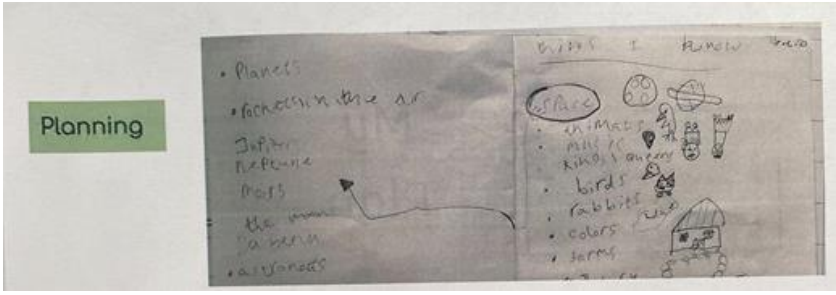
Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; independence, confidence, EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Organise what you know

If the children in your class are finding it hard to make their text cohesive, it is important that we teach them to organise their ideas, especially when they know the subject really well. They will be very motivated to write and it is essential that they select the information they want to write about to make their writing organised, thinking carefully about their title, headings and subheadings. After they have generated their ideas and thought a bit more about how well they know their topic (see mini-lesson '*How well do you know?*'), the children can now think about their heading and title. Additionally, when the children are revising they might want to change the title and headings and subheadings. However, considering them might help the children who are finding it hard to write cohesive texts.





What? Use what you know and **organise** your ideas using:

- Title
- Heading
- Sub-headings

Why? It will help your reader to **understand** your writing and make your information **clearer, cohesive** and more **organised**.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, independence, confidence, EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Free writing: Why I love...

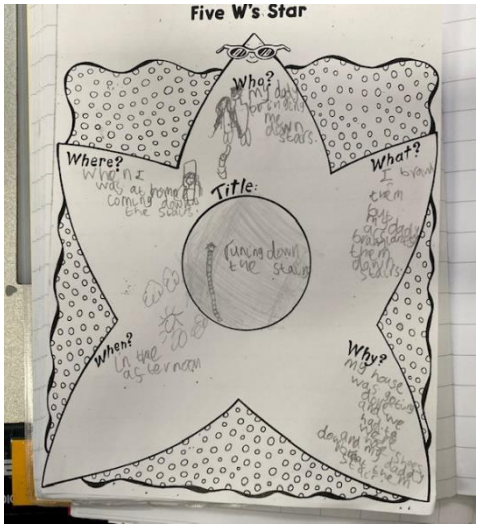
This is a very simple mini-lesson but a powerful one. I've used it on many occasions when teaching non-fiction-based projects. After the children have decided upon an initial idea, I ask them to 'free-write' on the topic for 5-10 minutes (see page 123) using the opening line *Why I love…* This free-written material then helps them organise and structure their piece. For that reason, it sits quite well between generating their ideas and formal planning.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children your own free-write in your notebook before inviting the children to do the same with their chosen ideas during writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Star plan to shine

Children in my KS1 class love to plan their stories like this as it is a great visual tool and practical way to organise their ideas before they start writing their draft. When the children use the 'Five W's Star' to plan they will be thinking about their characters, setting, purpose, time and title. This kind of planning is useful to use when planning narratives, and the children in our class found it very useful to plan their memoirs.



It is important to emphasize that the title can be changed and encourage them to use drawings during their planning stage if they want. When the children shared their plans, having the 5 W's made it very dynamic to talk about their ideas, helping the children to further organise and develop what they intended to write about. Additionally, the children used the plan during the drafting stage and some changed details in their plan before continuing their draft. Model to the children how you have used the 'Five W's Star' to plan and to organise your ideas.

These 'Star Plans' are from Jennifer Jacobson's book '[Graphic Organizers - Reading & Writing]'

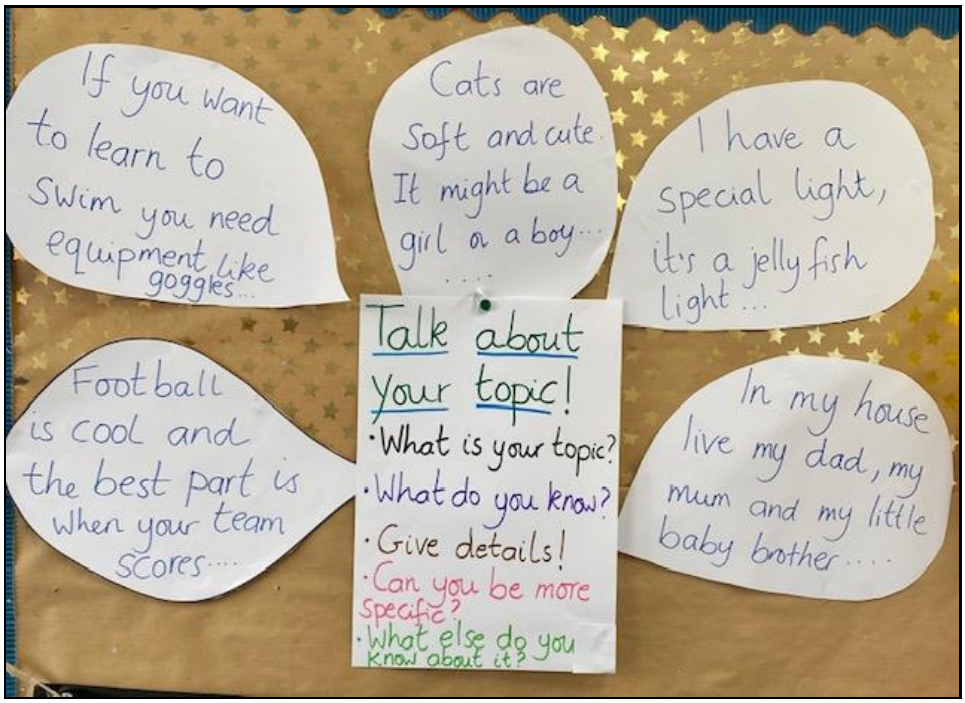
Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Talk about your topic…
Tell your story...

This is a mini-lesson for any writer of any age. It's good to talk, and it's good for children to talk too. Asking children to talk about a non-fiction topic they are interested in for 1-2 minutes with their partner is a good way for them to gauge whether they have enough material to write a page about it.

Asking children to tell their stories in 1-2 minutes (even if it's just a rough idea) before they write them is another good planning technique. Their partners will often give them some helpful additions or ideas too.



The best thing you can do for this mini-lesson is to model the technique for yourself. Share a topic or story you're currently thinking of working on with your class and talk about it for a minute or two. After you've shared, ask them what they think. You can then invite children to do the same thing at their tables.

Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; all genres; confidence; all ages

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Discovery drafts: write it in five minutes!

A discovery draft is sometimes the best way to plan. The idea is simple. You 'free-write'. You write as quickly as you can about your non-fiction topic of choice for 5-10 minutes. You then use this as the basis for a cohesive 'proper draft'. It also works well for stories. Challenge yourself to write a story as quickly as you can in only 5-10 minutes. This can then be used as a plan for a fuller and more developed version of the story.

For this mini-lesson, show children some examples of your own discovery drafts and explain the process. Next, show them the more developed drafts that followed. Finally, invite the class to try out writing a 'discovery draft' during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; all genres; confidence; KS1, KS2

Keep it simple: using story arcs

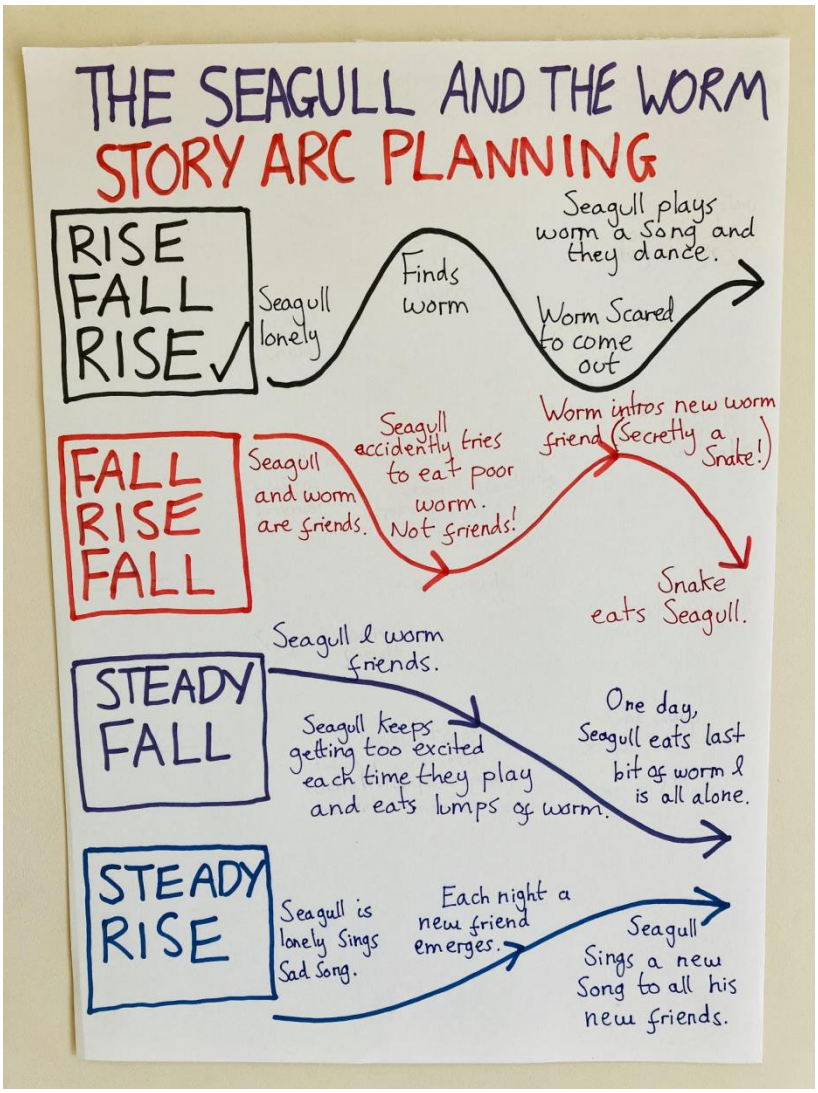
The difference between truth and fiction is that fiction has to make sense

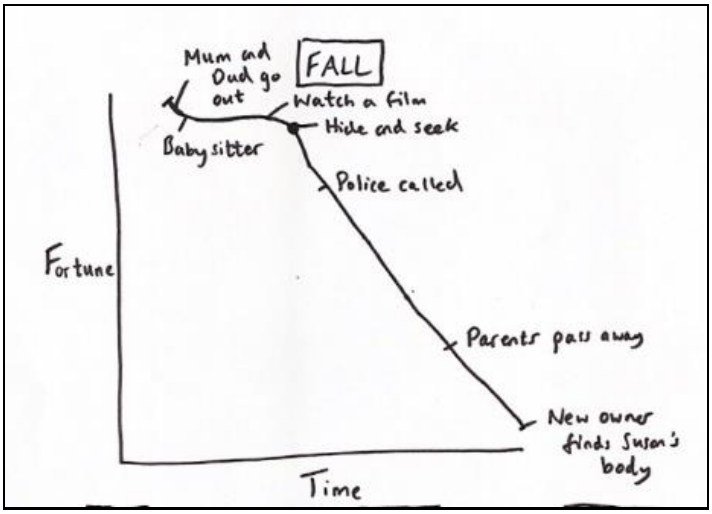
- Mark Twain

Good stories can be very simple. You'll probably remember Vladimir Propp and his life's work of analysing the underlying structures of fairy and folk tales from all parts of the world. According to him, the stories all share a series of 'moves', broadly conforming to: an act of villainy performed by one character upon another, a failed attempt (possibly involving a journey) to defeat the villainy, some help from well-wishing animals and maybe natural phenomena, and the final triumph over the villain. He also defined the characters who drive the narrative as largely one-dimensional and in conflict with each other through their contrasting attributes such as: good or evil, old or young, greedy or unselfish, beautiful or ugly, rich or poor, big or little. Such simple plots and characters give children the scope to really concentrate on the movement of their story, with all its repetitions, rhythms and distinctive language.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

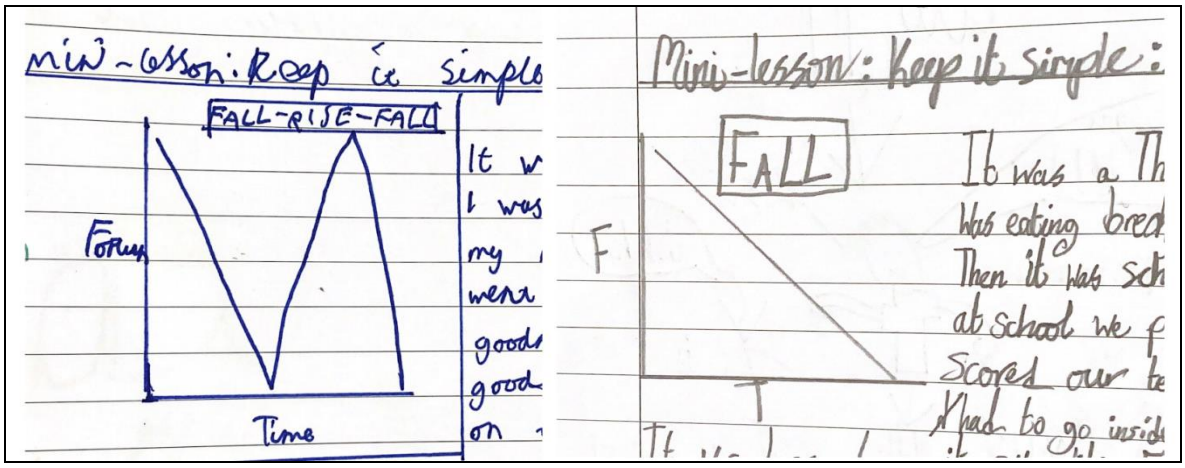
This mini-lesson is most helpful to children when they are planning their story. Why not tell them briefly about Vladimir Propp and his discoveries? Show the children your own story, share how you went about planning it and the shape you gave it. If you drew a diagram or a story arc in your planning, show that too (see the different story arcs in our narrative Genre Booklets for more information). Then invite children to draw their own story shape, and annotate it to outline both the characteristics of the protagonists (good/evil, greedy/ generous, kind/ selfish) and the events which will take place. Simply drawing a story shape sometimes helps children to generate the whole idea for their story.





Here, Tobias Hayden shows his class how he plotted out the events, and his main character's fortunes, for what was to become his scary story entitled 'Lost And Found'.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



Above are two examples of children trying it out for themselves in that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Life mapping

I've always found that children enjoy making maps and so this mini-lesson is often a winner. The idea is simple - you ask children to draw a picture of where they live in the centre of a piece of paper. They then draw dotted lines or roads to other places they've been which hold significant memories. This could be confined to just their street or local area, or, if they want, they can go global! Once they've drawn their maps, the children can discuss them together and choose a memory that they feel may be worthy of a memoir.

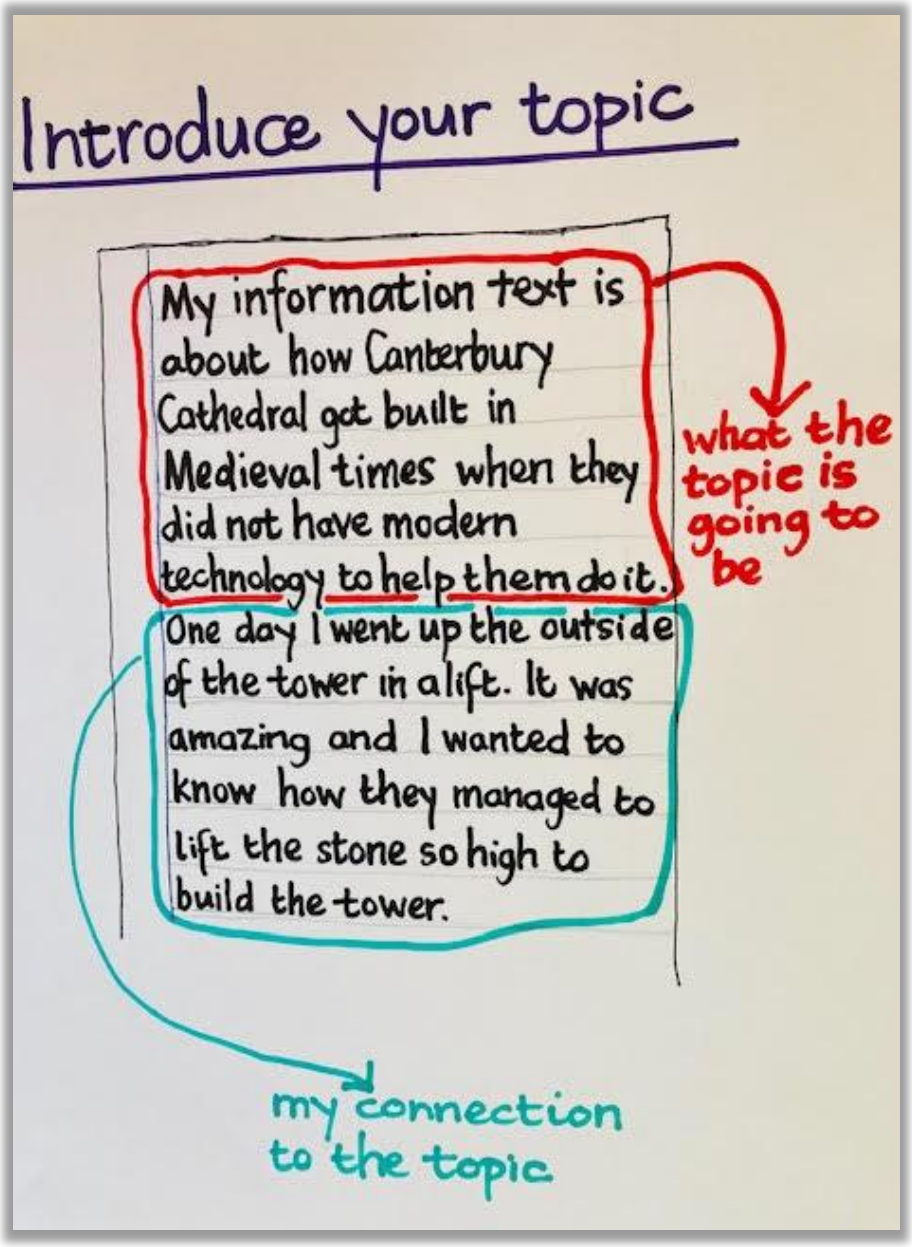
With this mini-lesson, it's good to have made your own to show the children. Give them an opportunity to ask you questions about how you went about making it too. Finally, share what you are going to write your memoir about.

Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; poetry, narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Introduce your topic

Introducing a topic is like introducing a friend to someone they've never met before. It's usually good manners to share the basics about the person as you introduce them. You might even go on to share an anecdote about how you came to be such good friends. Children can do this with their information texts too. Orientate their reader by sharing the basics about their subject and then share an anecdote about what brought them and their subject together.



For this mini-lesson, share an introduction you're working on for an information text. Show the children how you are trying to introduce the reader to the subject and orientate them. You could also show how you've made a personal connection with the subject you're going to share information about.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, drafting; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

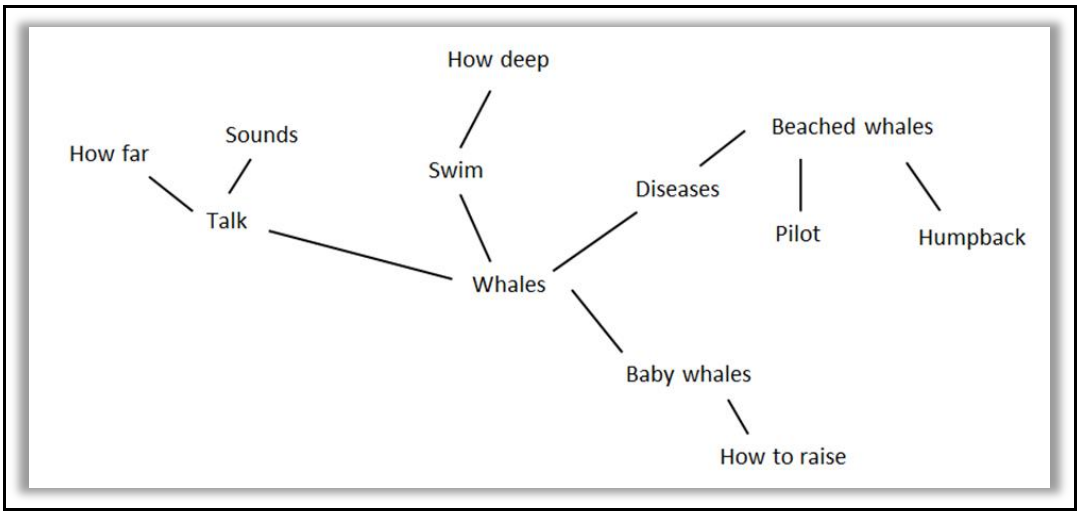
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Webbing

Planning is one of the most idiosyncratic parts of a writer's process. Some will go straight in with a discovery draft, others plan their writing as if they are about to undertake a military operation, with no detail left unattended to. I've seen writers' notebooks which are more like artbooks, with very little writing inside. Then you have the brainstormers, dabblers, mind-mappers and webbers (see our 'Real-World Writers' for more information).

Here's an example of webbing taken from writer-teacher Donald Graves' book 'Investigate NonFiction'. Here he is discovering what he knows and can discuss on the subject of whales.

For this mini-lesson, the best thing to do is show children an example of your own webbing for an information text you've written. You can then invite them to try it themselves during that day's writing time. This mini-lesson is obviously best taught when children are planning.



Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, drafting; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

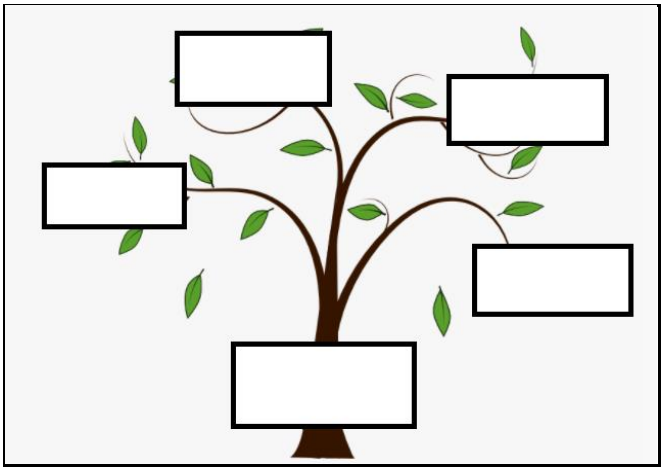
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Classification diagrams: Make a topic tree, then you'll see

This mini-lesson originally came from Lori Rog's book *Marvelous Minilessons For Teaching Beginning Writing*. The title comes from my own classroom experience. I had taught this mini-lesson a few weeks ago and, like all good mini-lessons, the strategy had become part of the children's writing repertoire. During some personal project time, I overheard Elio tell Sasha to 'make a topic tree, then you'll see'. The name stuck and many children used the planning technique thereafter.

Essentially what Elio was saying was, through the process of making a topic tree, a good 'diamond moment' idea will emerge. See page 204 for the importance of teaching about diamond moments.

Typically, children choose ideas that are too broad or too large for them to handle as developing writers. They are usually more successful when they can zoom in on an aspect of their topic 'a branch on the tree'. Using a diagram like the one below, children can write their topic idea in the trunk of the tree, before considering what its different branches might be. We want children to understand that each branch can and should represent a piece of writing in its own right. Sasha understood how it would be a great idea generation technique because filling in the branches of the tree forced him to 'see' what he could write about.



For this mini-lesson, it's a good idea to share your own topic tree from your writer's notebook and explain how you went about deciding which branch to eventually write about. You might also want to share the final piece you ended up writing. You can then invite children to use the topic tree for themselves during that day's writing time. I usually ask them to circle the idea they've finally decided upon, and I've also found it easier to simply ask children to draw their own rudimentary tree in their notebooks as opposed to printing it out as a worksheet.

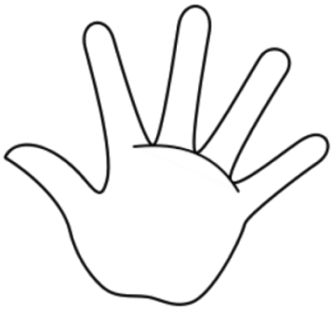
Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Five finger planning

This mini-lesson originally came from Lori Rog's book *Marvelous Minilessons For Teaching Beginning Writing*. I find this planning technique works best with non-fiction. Simply ask children to draw around their hand and five fingers. Next, ask children to write the subject for their non-fiction text in the palm of their hand. Finally, they can consider five things they might want to say about that topic and place them in each of the fingers. Children can draw or write them. Alternatively, with more experienced writers, these could be five subheadings for their text.

For this mini-lesson, it's a good idea to share your own five finger planning before inviting children to give it a go during writing time.



Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Plan it by post-it

Some writers love post-its. I've seen them being used almost like film directors use storyboards. Children like planning on post-it notes too. It allows them to move things around and to try out putting things in a different order. For this reason, this mini-lesson is usually best suited to memoir or narrative writing, though it can easily be used for non-fiction writing.

Less experienced writers can simply draw on each post-it note before deciding on an order of events, almost as if they are making a comic strip version of their narrative. More experienced writers can obviously be invited to write brief written notes.

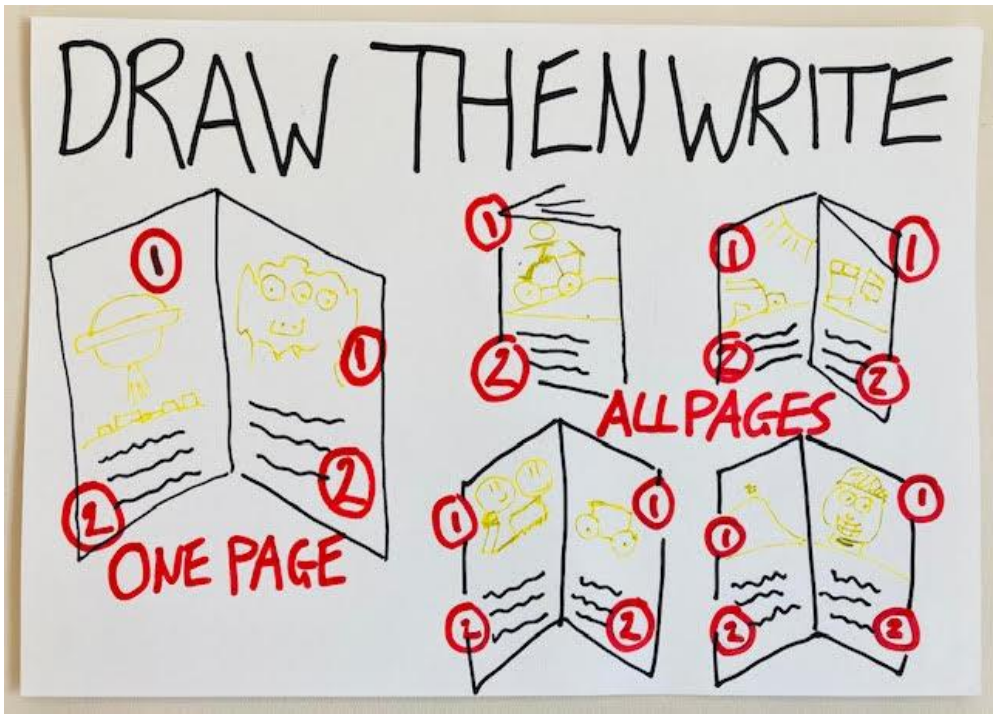
For this mini-lesson, it's a good idea to share your post-it note planning before inviting the children to do it for themselves. Finally, it's a good idea to make post- it notes available to children within your writing supplies, so children can use the strategy for themselves in future writing projects.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Draw then write

In the EYFS and KS1, it is rarely necessary to ask children to produce a formal plan. There are three main reasons for this:



1. The children are often writing in the moment.
2. Children aren't writing enough to justify the writing of a formal plan. In my experience, their plans are usually as long as their final pieces.
3. Children's drawings often act as their plans. For example, many children will draw the pictures for each page of their picture book before doing their writing. This is great for children who sometimes return to their writing and can't remember what they are working on, and their drawings act as a natural reminder and plan.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you've drawn all the illustrations for your picture book and how you're now going to add your writing based on those illustrations. You can then invite them to do the same thing during writing time that day.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Draw a map

I started with a map, and made the story fit

- Tolkien

The Writer's Map edited by Huw Lewis-Jones shows real-life examples of planning maps created by some of the best writers around. It's an ideal resource for teaching this wonderful mini-lesson. Another title I like to use for this mini-lesson is *The Atlas Of Fairy Tales* by Claudia Bordin

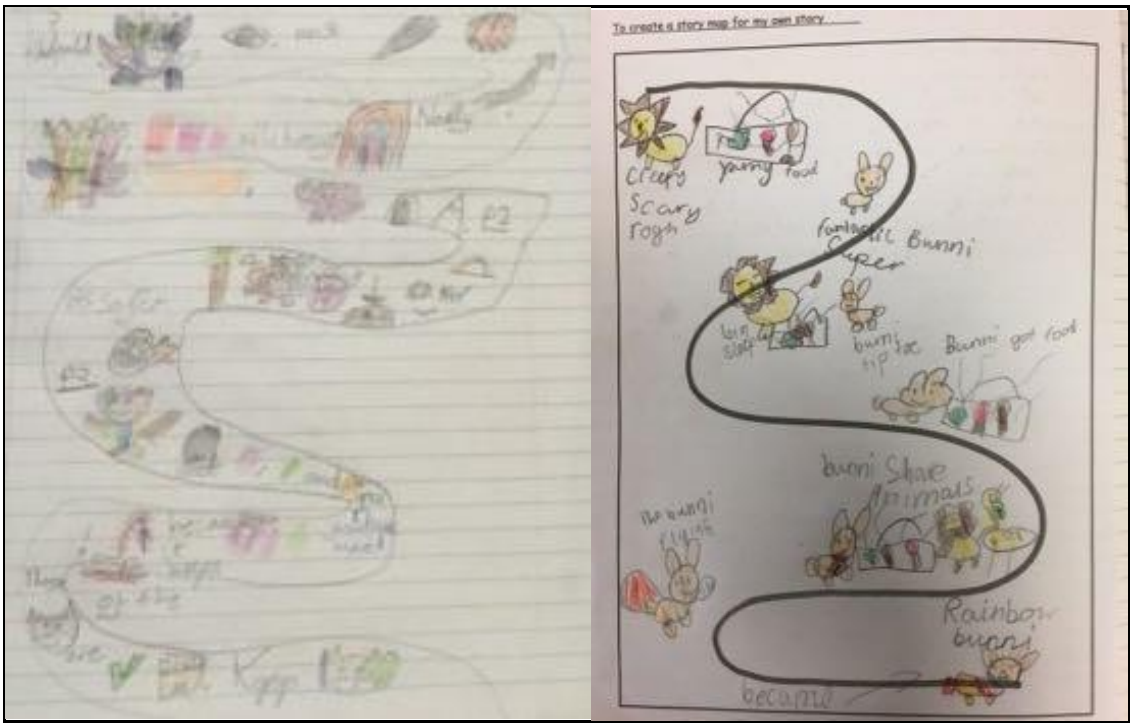
I suggest showing your class 'The Writer's Map' before this mini-lesson; ideally in read-aloud time. You can then show children how you made a planning map to help you organise your story and generate ideas. Of course, children can also be invited to draw maps of the places where they live or have really been. This is an excellent planning technique for finding memoir ideas. Finally, as always, invite children to do the same thing during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; narrative, poetry; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Planning rivers

The ancient Egyptians used symbols to share meaning in around 3,000 BC and it wasn't a bad system. It's an idea still used by writers today. Below are some examples. Children are invited to plan their writing using symbols, pictures or other images. Some children put the plan on a line or in a river. Others like to use arrows to show how they go from one point to the next. Planning rivers can be used for any type of writing.



For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you've used a planning map to plan a piece of your own writing. You can then invite them to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

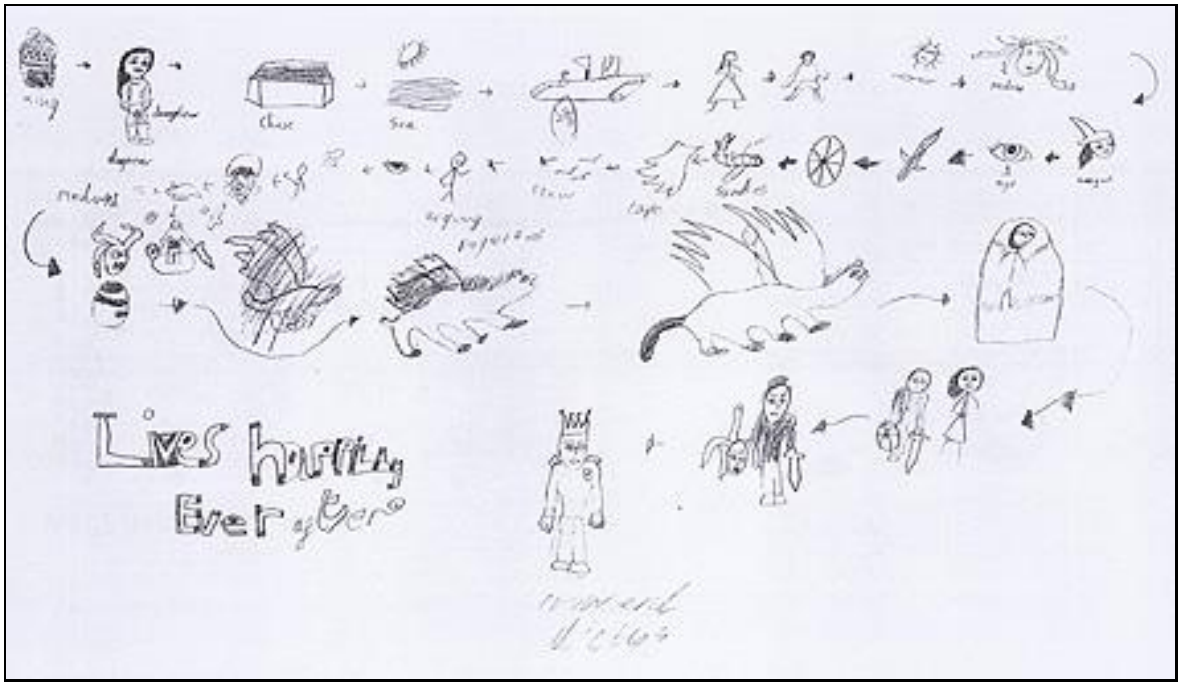
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Journey Planning

Structure is nothing more than a way of looking at your story material so that it's organised

- Jack Bickham

The ancient Egyptians used symbols to share meaning in around 3,000 BC. and it wasn't a bad system. It's an idea still used by writers today. Below are some examples. Children are invited to plan their writing using symbols, pictures or other images. Some children put the plan on a line or in a river. Others like to use arrows to show how they go from one point to the next. Planning maps can be used for any type of writing.



For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you've used a planning map to plan a piece of your own writing. You can then invite them to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

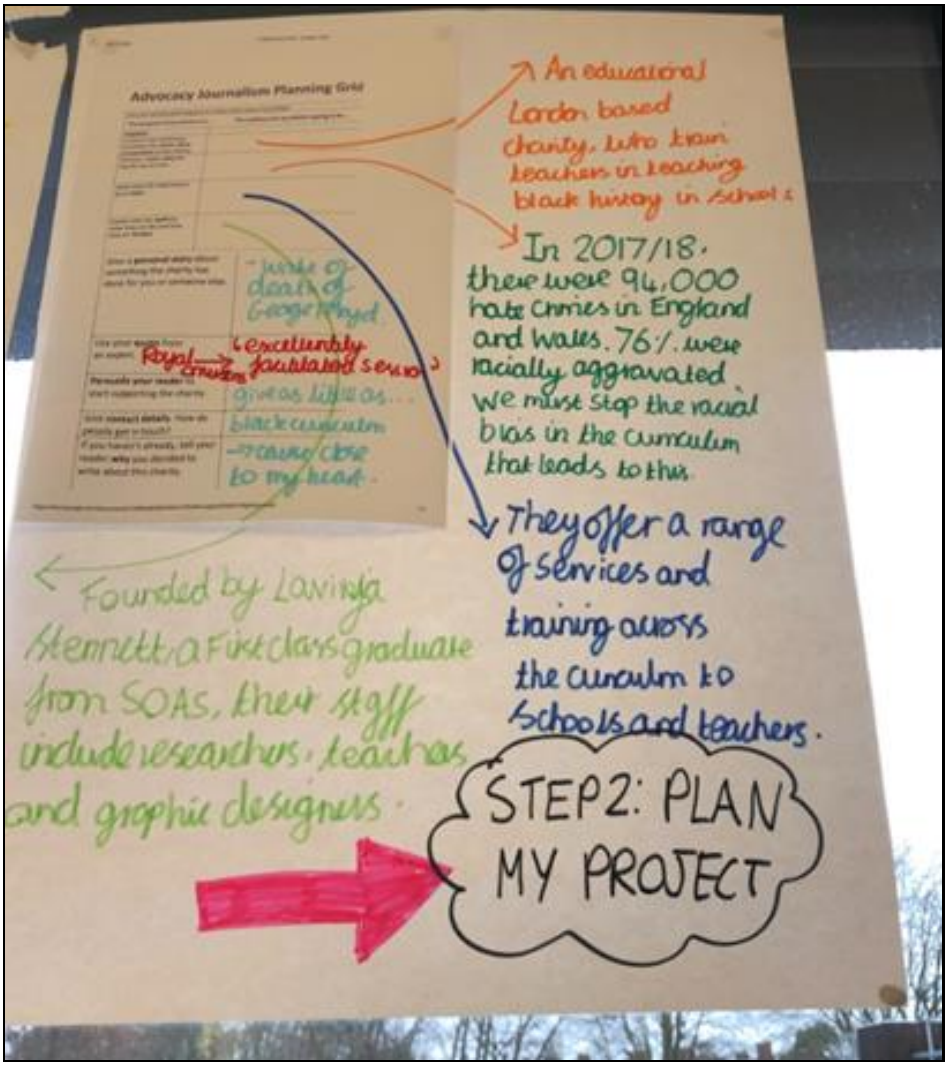
Planning grids

Plans are of little importance, but planning is essential

- Winston Churchill

Let me tell you something. Being given some directions so you don't get lost makes life a lot easier. That's how I feel about planning grids. Planning grids are like directions. They guide children as they are planning. They help children get a handle on their ideas and intentions. Of course, once they get going with their drafting, they don't have to stick to what they'd put down on their planning grid but it's always there to orientate them if they get lost.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you've used a planning grid to get your ideas together. You can then take any of their questions about it. Finally, invite them to use a planning grid during that day's writing time.



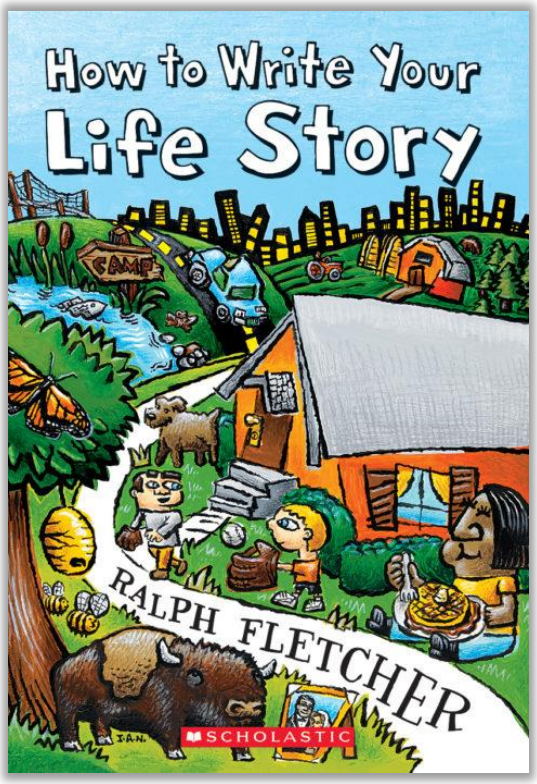
Here we can see how teacher Katy Pegg showcases her own planning grid. Note that it has been made large enough for the whole class to see it. For example planning grids, please see our [class writing project resources](#).

Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Timeline

Hopefully your children are well acquainted with the idea of timelines from their history lessons. It makes this mini-lesson a lot easier. Drawing out a timeline and marking it with your age and significant dates can be just the nudge your mind needs to remember certain events that have happened in your life that might be worth writing about. For more information, I can highly recommend reading '[How To Write Your Life Story]' by Ralph Fletcher



For this mini-lesson, the best thing to do is show children your own timeline and the list of writing ideas that came as a result of making it. Give them time to ask you any questions about your process before inviting them to try it out during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; generating ideas, planning; poetry, narrative; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Thinking in paragraphs

The more fiction you read and write, the more you'll find your paragraphs forming on their own

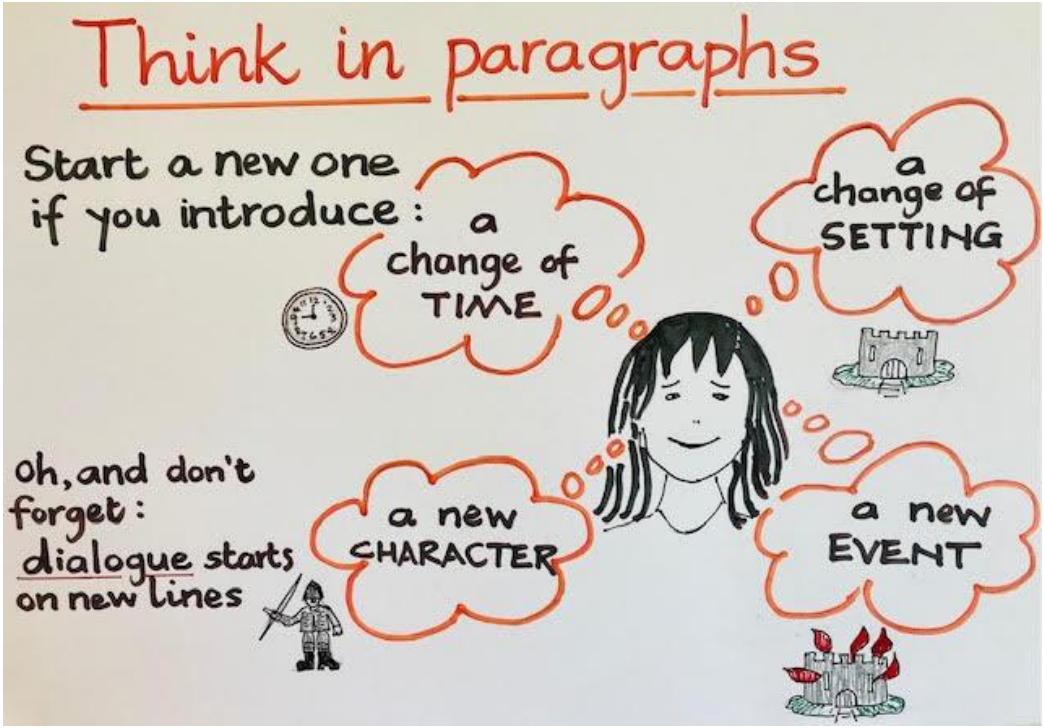
- Stephen King

Anne Lamott once said: My older brother, who was ten years old at the time, was trying to get a report on birds. He was at the kitchen table close to tears...Then my father sat down beside him, put his arm around him, and said, "Bird by bird, buddy. Just take it bird by bird." That's why in my class, we call paragraphing taking it 'bird by bird'. It's about taking it 'chunk by chunk' and making our writing easy and manageable to read.

Paragraphs are, quite simply, a way of grouping sentences which deal with a particular point or idea in a topic, or with a particular part of a story. Using them can be really useful for two reasons:

1. Readers are always thankful for paragraphs because they break up the writing into manageable chunks.
2. Paragraphs help you structure your thoughts before you write.

Jotting down ideas first and putting them under headings can be very useful when it comes to paragraphing– particularly when organising non-fiction writing. Spider diagrams or webbing are also good planning techniques to help with structuring paragraphs in any genre of writing. You can also produce a poster alongside your class. Ask them why they think authors start a new paragraph in their stories. They are likely to come up with something like this:



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini lesson, show the children a piece of your own writing in which you have included paragraphs. It's also a good idea to have them look in the books they are currently reading and see how and why other authors do it. Do they notice that writers sometimes write a single-sentence paragraph? Neil Gaiman does it quite a lot in 'Coraline', for example.

Invite the children to include paragraphing in their writing that day. For stories and memoirs, it is helpful to have the class create a poster for the working wall to help them remember to start a new paragraph each time they want to change the time, the setting, introduce a new event, or bring in a new character.

Tags: Organisation and structure; drafting, revising; all genres; independence, confidence; KS2

Pilcrows: Marking paragraphs

Children like to know how things began, so they might appreciate this story. In their writing, the Ancient Greeks had the habit of running all their sentences together so you never knew where one idea in a topic or one part of the story began and where it ended. It must have been incredibly maddening for Ancient Greek readers (there was also a time when they didn't leave spaces between the words either, but that's another story). One day a particularly clever Greek clearly had a Eureka moment and hit on the notion of using a rather decorative little symbol ¶ (a pilcrow) to mark the places in the text where the ideas in a topic or discussion needed to be separated, or where the different movements or events in a story needed to be made clear. And so the paragraph was born.

***

For this mini-lesson, show children the different ways we typically mark paragraphs, for example, indenting to the right, leaving a line or a bigger space between them,or giving each paragraph a heading (in non-fiction). They might like to imitate the Greeks and invent their own symbol or little illustration as a marker. I've always found that giving children choice about how they would like to paragraph helps them remember to use them. It's an opportunity for them to have their own style. If you wanted, you could share what I was taught way back: if you've forgotten to paragraph your draft, stick a couple of diagonal parallel lines ***//*** *in the margin where you should have put one so you'll remember to do it when you're writing the version to be published.*

~~~~~

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.
~~~~~

It's interesting to have children investigate the authors in the class library and see how different publishing houses will often have different conventions of paragraphing writing. Children may notice a difference depending on the genre of writing. Non-fiction, stories and poems can all be paragraphed in different ways.

Tags: Organisation and structure; drafting, revising; all genres; independence, confidence; KS2

Persona

Something should always change in a poem. The persona should learn something

- JamesTate

Persona poetry is when we take on the role of someone else to tell the story of our poem. The identity of the character we've created is not always known and can remain a mystery. Sometimes it's good to change the perspective of a poem you've crafted to see what it looks like from another's imagined point of view. What's learnt here will also come in useful when children undertake our Flash-Fiction writing projects; where they are encouraged to write multiple plots and from a variety of perspectives.

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is share a poem where you've 'written in role'. You've told the poem as someone else. Explain to the children why you did this and invite their questions before asking them to consider the technique for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, drafting; poetry; confidence, independence; KS2

Symbolism

Manly Hall tells us that symbolism is 'the language of the mysteries'. By using symbols, we can communicate to each other thoughts which somehow transcend the limitations of language. As writers, we can take objects and characters and use them to represent our thoughts, feelings and philosophical ideas. We can write our most honest and truthful writing when we use the language of poetry and symbolism. I've always explained to children I've taught that it's the sort of writing that makes your reader look up from the page for a moment and have a think to themselves.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This mini-lesson can sometimes feel like a magician revealing their secrets! Share with your class a piece of writing where you definitely used an object, setting or character to represent something else – a mood, a philosophical idea or a human quality. You can then invite children to consider what the characters, settings or objects in their writing are there to represent.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, drafting; poetry, narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

Is your last line really necessary?

The ancient Romans had a useful bit of advice : 'The art of poetry is not to say everything.' Bob Dylan knows how to hold back in his poetry. He simply suggests that there might be an answer to all his pressing questions, then leaves it blowin' in the wind - and the rest is up to us.

It's tempting to want to tie up your poem's meaning in the last line, just in case it isn't clear enough in the rest of the poem. But there's another possibility - like the Romans said, you don't have to explain everything. Poet and teacher Kate Clanchy suggests taking away the last line of your poem and seeing if anything is lost.

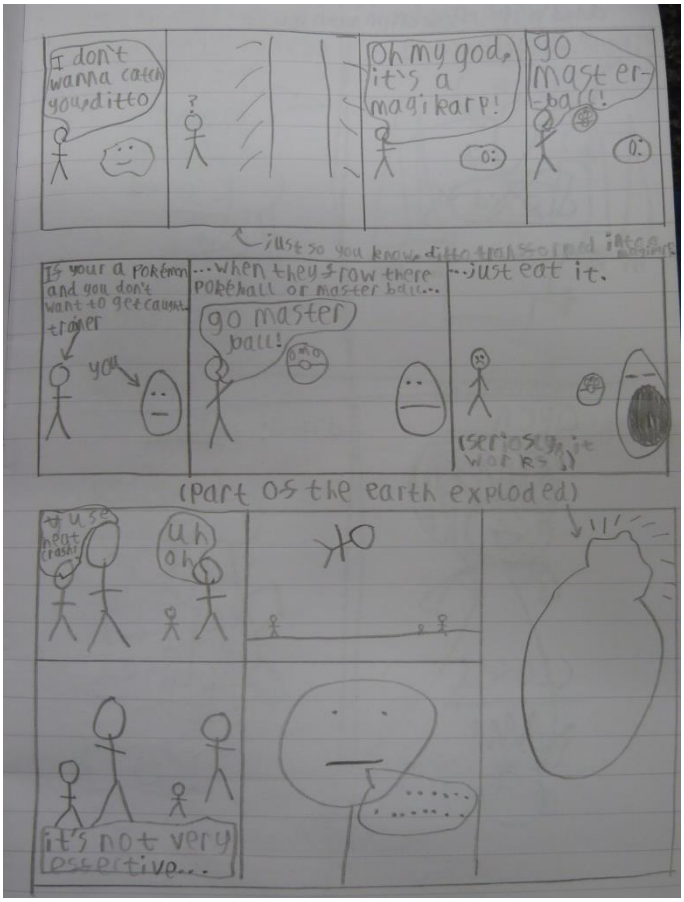
As always, read lots of poetry with the children. The best way to teach this quite subtle mini-lesson is to show the children an example from your notebook of where you've stopped short of explaining your meaning in the last line, or where you could have got rid of that line but didn't. Dylan, of course, can help you out, and so can other poets. Invite the children to think about this in their poetry writing today if they're drafting or revising their poem. Ask them to read their poem aloud to themselves, with and without that last line. Check in later and see if anyone felt the poem was stronger without it.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Storyboarding

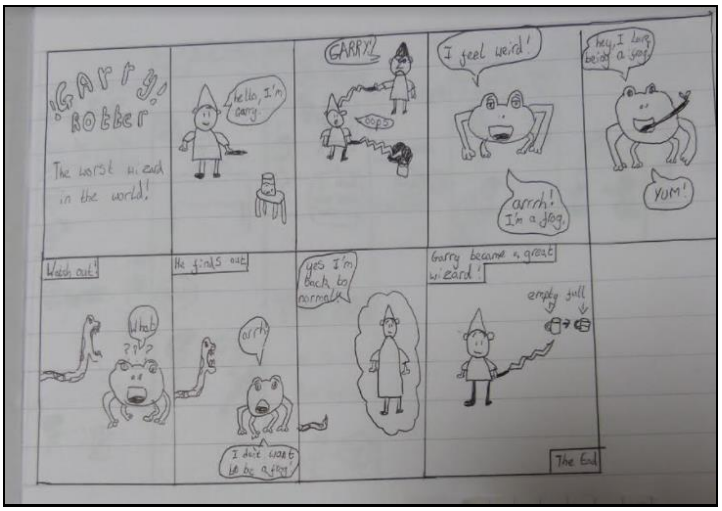
The first thing I put down on paper is a storyboard, like a film director
– Anthony Browne



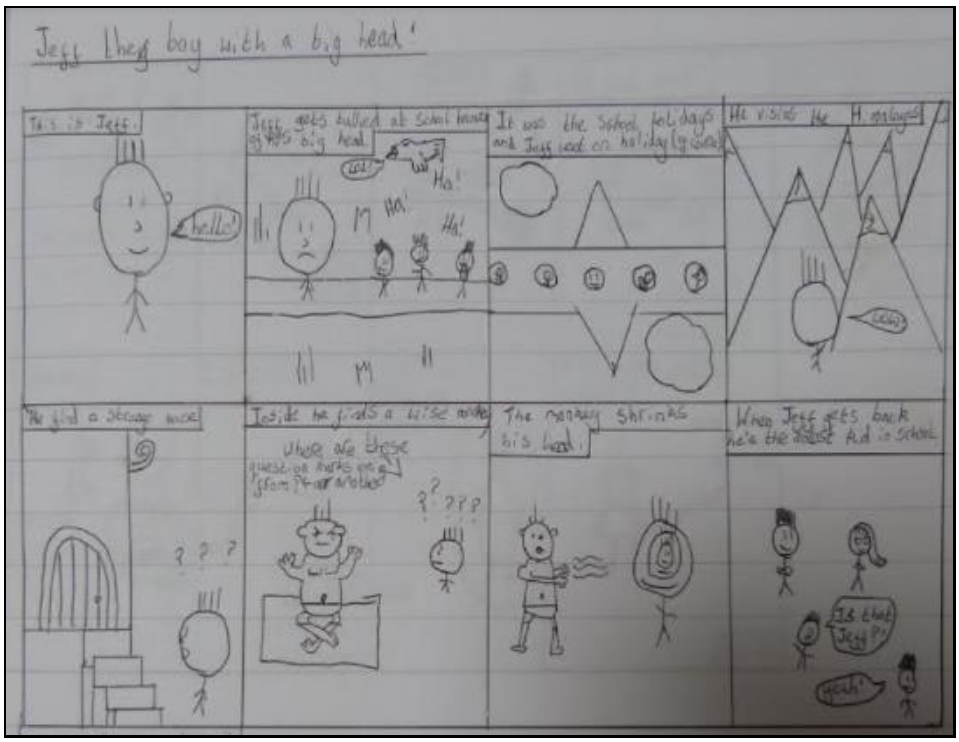
We recommend that after our young graphic novelists have written their story, they will begin the process of 'storyboarding'. However, as we can see from the quote from Anthony Browne, not every writer works this way. Perhaps children could be invited to storyboard before and after they've written their short story? Whatever you decide to do, storyboarding is when you make a draft copy of your graphic novel. It is where you will consider the following things:

- How many pages will you need?
- How many panels will you need on each page?
- Can you create a rough drawing or note of what is going to go in each panel?
- Can you create notes and drawings of how you are going to describe your setting and develop your character in your illustrations?
- What captions are you going to use? Captions can include things like: where the story is, what has taken place and what time has passed.
- What sort of dialogue (if any) are you going to have on each page?

Personally, I often divide my page up into six panels and make notes to show which part of my story goes in each section.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



(These examples are taken from Lucy Taylor's '[We Read, We Write]' project.

This example comes from writer-teacher Katy Pegg's class

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, it's best to show examples of storyboards from famous graphic novelists. You can usually find examples through a quick browse on the internet – using the novelists from your classroom library is best. You should also show examples from previous years and of course your own storyboards for the graphic novel(s) you've written. You can then invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

Playing God: Choosing a narrator

If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change

- Wayne Dyer

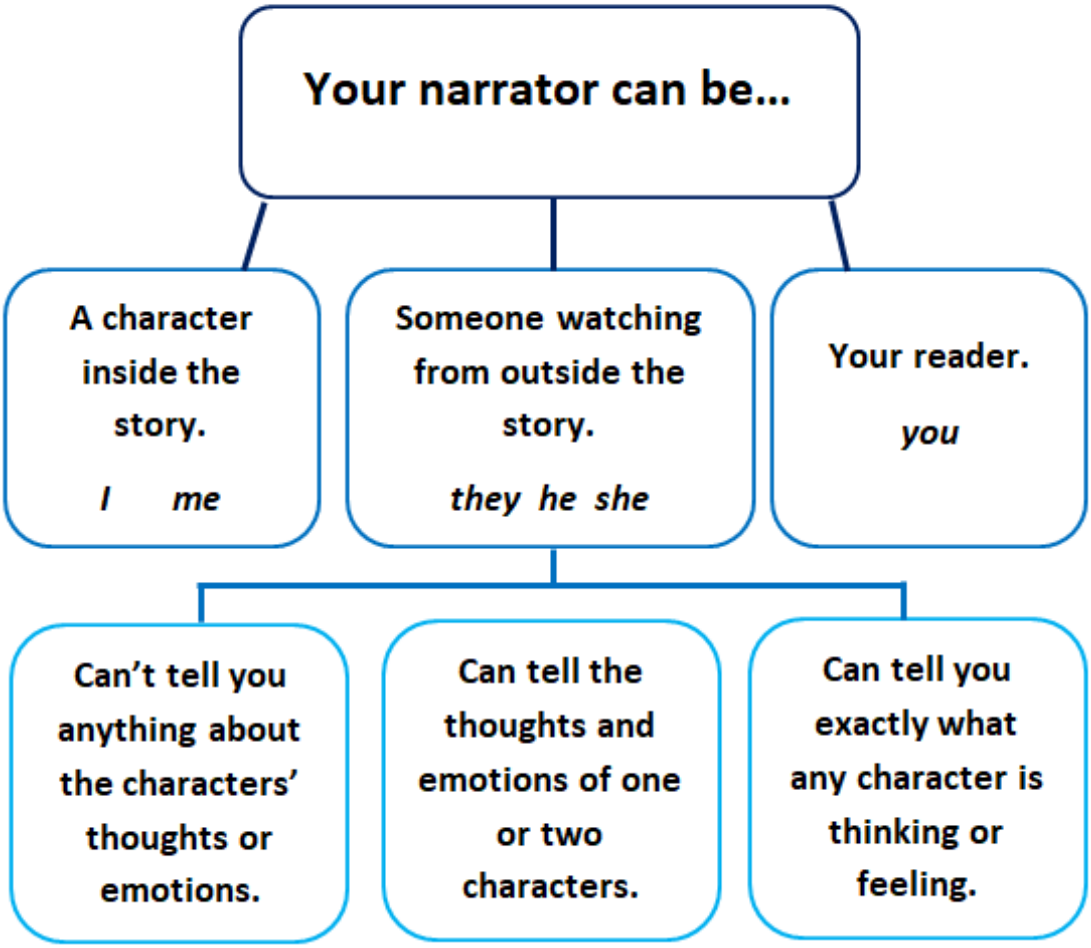
In our experience, children naturally gravitate towards third-person fiction. It allows them to 'play' with their characters as if they were toys. They can make them behave how they want, say what they want and they can play 'god' by telling us what they're thinking and feeling.

However, don't forget, your class have also learnt to write first person narratives through our Memoir writing projects. They may also write in first person if they enjoy writing realistic fiction. You may also have children in your class who enjoy writing 'choose your own adventure' stories which carry the convention of writing in the second person so that the reader feels like they are the one in the story - and the one making the decisions.

By the time children reach Year Six, they are experienced enough to begin thinking about the choices they make for their narrator and they can even experiment with writing the same piece from different points of view to see which works best. Flash-Fiction is an ideal time and opportunity for this kind of mini-lesson because children write a wide variety of pieces in a short amount of time.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Choosing your narrator



When we write in the **third-person objective**, the narrator can only act as a mere mortal – they do not have the power to read characters' minds nor can they know for sure how the characters are feeling. In the **third-person limited**, the narrator is almost at a level of demi-god. They can read one or two character's thoughts and emotions. Finally, **third-person omniscient**, allows the narrator to play god. They know everything about everyone. They are all knowing!

The best thing to do in this mini-lesson is show children examples of writing you've crafted which show different narrator choices. For example, show them a memoir, a choose your own adventure tale, and a variety of third-person narratives. Ask them why they think you made the decisions you did. You could also show them where you've written the same story but tried out different narrator perspectives – you could ask them which one they think works best and discuss why. Finally, invite children to experiment with some of their stories; using different narrators.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Writing in role: Teaching in role

Sometimes, we can write in role as our subject. For example, when sharing information about StarWars, I could write in role as Yoda. If I wanted to share information about how a sandwich gets digested, I could write as the sandwich itself! This is a great way of not only entertaining your reader but also teaching them something too!

For this mini-lesson, it's sometimes nice to take a 'writing-register' first. Once everyone knows each other's ideas for their information texts, the class can consider which ones might be perfect for writing in role as the subject of the piece. You can also talk about which topics don't suit and why. Finally, invite children to give writing in role a try during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; planning, drafting; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Begin by setting the scene

> Past places of dread, we walk in the center of the road, looking up at the torn wall-papers of browny blacks and purples as the mournful remains of derelict shoulder-to shoulder houses, their safety now replaced by trepidation. Local kids ransack empty houses, and small and wide-eyed, I join them, balancing across exposed beams and racing into wet black cellars… Half-felled by the local council, houses are then left slowly crumbling and become croft waste ground for children to find new excitements with no lights for miles.
>
> Morrissey: Autobiography (2013 p.3-4)

The autobiography of Steven Morrissey, singer from the band The Smiths, starts with a rich and bleak description of his hometown. Information texts often start by orientating the reader and classifying the topic of the piece. However, this doesn't have to be done in an objective and analytical way. You can start a piece of non-fiction with a beautiful description of the phenomenon. TV documentaries are a particularly good example of this. Before the narrator begins, we'll often see wide-angled and close-up shots of whatever the subject of the programme is. Children can do this in their writing too – if we show them how.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, show your class how you've introduced a piece you've written by orientating the reader with some rich description. I find this is a particularly good mini-lesson to teach when the majority of your class are revising their pieces. You can invite them to try writing an alternative introduction to their piece on their 'trying things out page' (see page 291) and, if they like it, include it in their final published piece.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

The power of using 'you'

You may have noticed that we are regularly talking directly to you in these mini-lesson explanations. This isn't by accident – we've actively thought about it. By using 'you' throughout these lessons, we make you feel more involved, more like we are having a conversation together over coffee in the staff room. It's friendly, and hopefully it makes you feel part of the dialogue. It's also a way of calling you to action. If we suggest, invite or tell you to do something, you're more likely to do it than if we are talking about the phantom third person. This can work in information sharing too. The classic, of course, is 'did you know…'

For this mini-lesson, show children how you've used the power of 'you' in your own writing. Ask them why they think you might have done this – see if they can figure it out. You can then invite them to give it a try too during that day's writing time. Finally, I find this mini-lesson is best taught when the majority of your class are revising.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Lead your reader to the instructions

Never think that non-fiction writing has to be a cold, hard, stodgy presentation of facts, and that you as the writer have to keep yourself hidden or well out of the writing. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, what makes a piece of non-fiction lively and interesting for the reader is when you mix in some more ingredients for extra flavour:

Let your personal presence pop up every now and then, and keep your reader engaged with you and with what you are saying.

One thing I've tried is getting the children to write down in writing time that day several different ways of starting their piece of non-fiction writing using the possibilities above, and then choose the one they like the best. This can set the tone for the rest of the writing. And, as always, show them in your notebook where you have tried out different ways of opening your non-fiction piece.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Would a robot be able to follow my instructions?

Sometimes, when we are passionate about something, we can run away with ourselves. We can assume that everyone knows what we know about a subject. What might seem basic to us might be news to others! That's why it's sometimes good to read through your own writing and ask yourself – would a robot be able to follow my instructions? This is particularly true with technical or subject specific vocabulary – this usually needs to be explained through description, poetic metaphor or through diagrams or pictures.

For this mini-lesson, show how you've read through your drafted piece – or, better still, how you've asked someone else to read through your drafted piece – and show the children on a visualizer where your manuscript has been marked or underlined and 'robot' has been written in the margin. Show children a revised draft where you have attended to the marked parts of the writing.

As an aside, if you've asked someone else to mark your manuscript for 'robot' moments, don't feel you're obliged to make changes. Show the children where you decided not to take the editor's advice.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Add a glossary

Glossaries are there to help your reader out. Sometimes we forget that we might use vocabulary that seems quite natural but might be utterly alien to our readers. A glossary can help. It's nice to point these out to children during reading times – but it's also important to encourage them to include a glossary in their texts when they are using words and phrases you as their teacher don't understand. When we invite children to write about their passions and interests, we can often find ourselves on the back foot for a change! We don't always understand their lingo. It's nice to point this out to children. They like the idea that they know more than you! However, you should also explain that this is making it hard for you to engage in their topic. You can then encourage them to write a glossary.

For this mini-lesson, simply showcase some glossaries from the texts in the classroom library. Alternatively, show them where you've had to put together a glossary – school policies aren't a bad place to look!

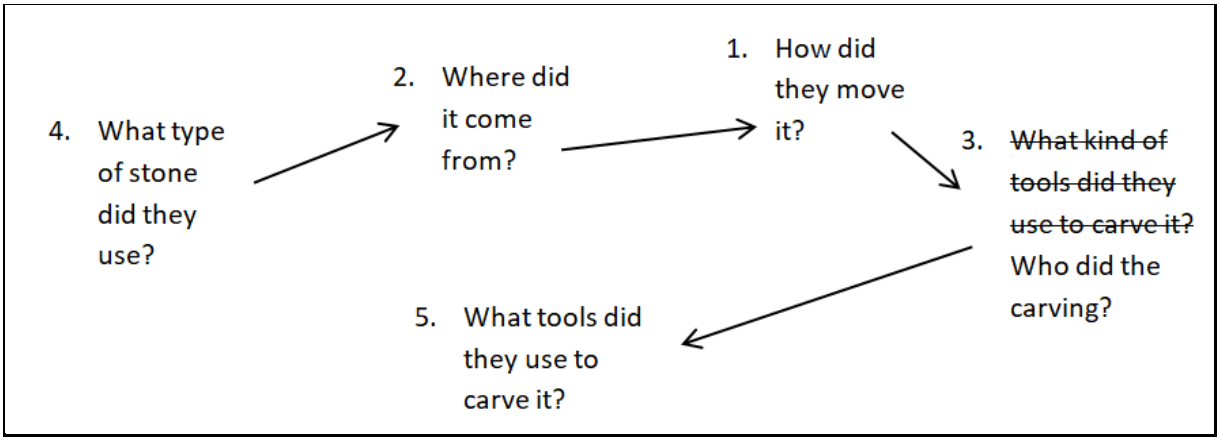
Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Question Web

There's always more information to find out about a subject even if you think you know it inside out. But deciding what extra information you want to pursue and then organising it can be a problem. After I've got my initial ideas and information together, I follow up with the Question Web. Asking questions about a topic is such an effective strategy because it helps you focus on what further information you might want or need, and you can then go back to your sources to find it. It's an important part of planning.

In this lesson, show how, when you were planning your information text, you took one piece of your information and wrote down a few (maybe 3-5) questions you wanted to ask about it. Here's an example of how I did this when I was wondering about how they built cathedrals in medieval times:



Encourage children to do this when they have gathered their first bits of information.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Make Notes

This is something which some children and adults have never learned to do, but it's quite simple once you understand that one word can stand for a whole idea. It's obviously a very economical and focused way of recording information, and you can abstract from all kinds of sources, including those which have been written, heard or seen.

A test of good note-taking is to first write down the important words from a source as a list and then see if you can talk to someone about the information you've gathered using just the list. You will see where you might need to add to the notes or where you could take some out if they aren't useful. You can show the children how you do this yourself, and invite them to do it too with a partner, once they have underlined and

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

listed the key words in the text they are reading for information that day or during the project. If they have made a Question Web (page 182) they can enter the relevant notes under each question.

Here's an example of how I did this when I was wondering about how they built cathedrals in medieval times:

What type of stone? *Limestone* *Hard – lasts* *Soft – carvable*	*Where from?* *Northern France (Canterbury Cathedral)* *and southern England*
How did they move it? *By sea and river* *Cart and oxen*	*What tools did the use to carve it?* *Chisels – pointed – metal* *Small picks. Mallet hit the chisel.*
Who carved it? *Skilled stonemasons* *Travelled for work* *Lived in tents* *Long hours* *On ground at first*	

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

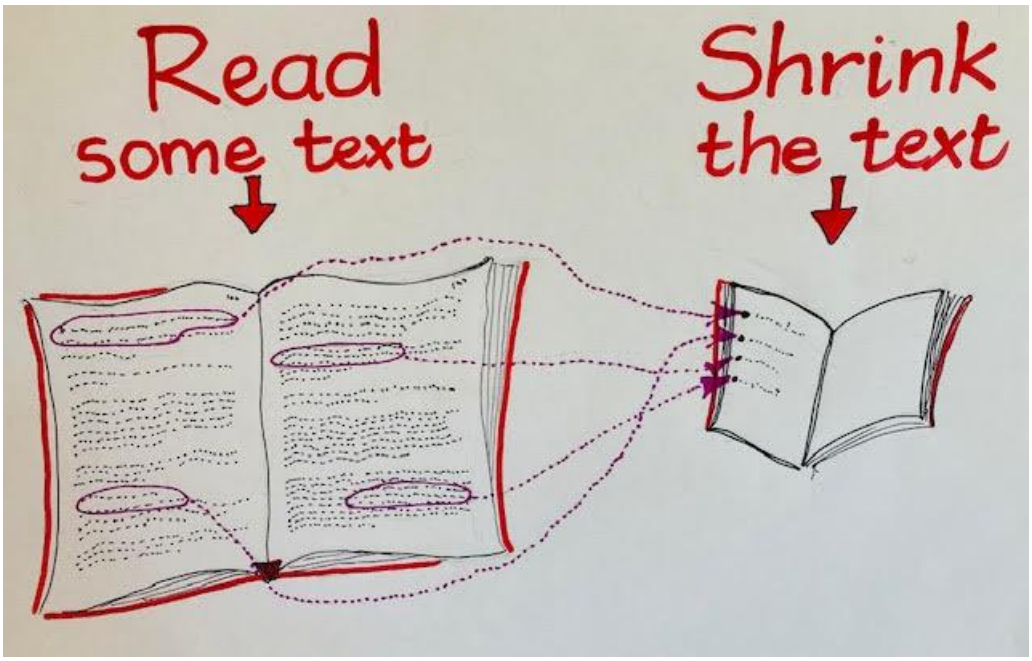
Read some text – shrink the text

He listens well who takes notes

–Dante Alighieri

As a writer of academic texts and articles, it's interesting to reflect on how I read to inform my own writing. My set- up is quite simple and hasn't really changed since university. I will have the book I'm reading on my right and my notebook on my left. I will read, highlighting things of interest or parts I want to rework and use for myself. At the same time, I will stop periodically – usually after a page but sometimes after each paragraph – and shrink what I've read down to a single bullet point. By the end of my reading, I have a list of bullet points which summarize what the article was about and my personal responses to it. This is what I call 'read a little – shrink a little'. I've taught this technique to my pupils for years.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



All you need to do for this mini-lesson is showcase where you've used the technique yourself. It's good to show how you work under a visualizer too. Once children have seen how you work and you've answered any of their questions, you can invite them to do it for themselves during that day's writing time.

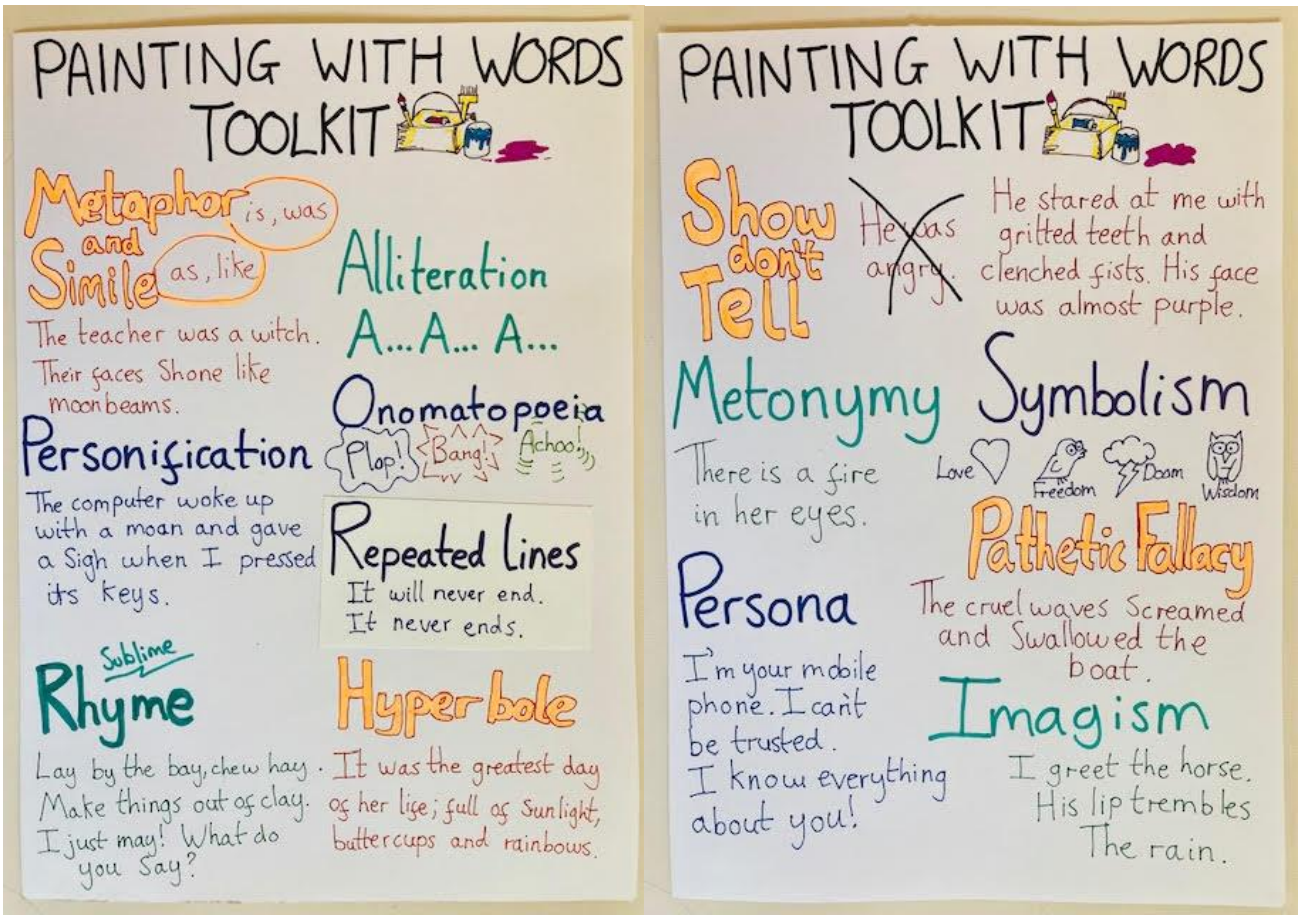
Finally, I once had a boy who would read a passage and stick a post- it note over the top of it once he had read it, with his summary of what it was about. He would then collect up the post-it notes and craft them into something new. Some children in your class might like to try this too.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Not enough facts? Paint with words

Sometimes children can go into some non-fiction writing thinking they know a whole heap of things about their topic of choice. This is usually true and they do just fine. However, on other occasions, children (or indeed their teachers) can fall into the trap of believing their non-fiction texts have to be overly objective and *overly* reliant on delivering to their reader a whole host of facts. Obviously part of informing people (teaching them) through writing is ensuring that they leave your piece knowing more about the subject than they did before. That's why we advocate for children also teaching people about why they *love* the subject they are writing about in addition to giving factual information (for example see our mini-lesson on page 279). They can also employ imagery. They can paint with words to give their reader a clear image and description of the phenomena they are informing you about. A combination of factual information, personal response and poetic description can make for a wonderfully rounded piece of non-fiction writing.



This mini-lesson works particularly well if you've already taught our mini-lesson *Painting With Words* (see page 269).

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson simply show children where you've tried 'painting with words' within your non-fiction piece. You can also show them examples from other commercial texts. Finally, you can invite children to write 'painting with words' during that day's writing time.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Leave space for your readers!

It is interesting to make the children aware of how much they are describing or giving away to the readers. Are they giving the readers too much? If they do it well, the writing will have a great impact on the reader because they will have to use their own imagination to fill the gaps, it will feel closer to them. However, it needs to be just the right amount otherwise the writing might be cold, too vague making your children aware of it. These are some questions for you to reflect on:

- Are the readers taking part in the story because the writer leaves a gap for them to fill?
- Are the readers interacting with the story?
- Are they working with the writer to compose the story?

In literature, before the modernists, writers would tell or show you their world in every detail. However, the modernist writers broke away from this perspective of 'knowing and telling it all', and their writing invited the readers to take part in the story, to connect, to fill in the gaps - to decide on an ending, for example. An excellent illustration of this is by Herman Melville in his short story "Bartleby, the scrivener" where *Bartleby* is described through the perspective of a very unsure narrator who is puzzled and drawn by the character's behaviour, and so are the readers!

> "But I waive the biographies of all other scriveners for a few passages in the life of Bartleby, who was a scrivener of the strangest I ever saw or heard of. While of other law-copyists I might write the complete life of Bartleby, nothing of that sort can be done. I believe that no materials exist for a full and satisfactory biography of this man. It is an irreparable loss to literature. Bartleby was one of those beings of whom nothing is ascertainable, except from the original sources, and in his case those are very small. What my own astonished eyes saw of Bartleby, *that* is all I know of him, except, indeed, one vague report which will appear in the sequel."
>
> - *Bartleby, The Scrivener* by Herman Melville (1853)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

You can teach this lesson by comparing and contrasting. Using your own writing is preferable. As you revise it, you can show how you can cut or rewrite parts of your story leaving a gap for your readers to fill. *When I was reading my story to my friend, we realised that he wasn't making a great connection with it, because I was simply giving away too much, and there was little for him as a reader to do or to imagine. So I rewrote this part of the story, trying to leave a gap for my reader to fill. I will read both versions to you. Let me know if you notice the difference.*

Invite the children to think about their own writing in this way. They could also read their peers' writing, checking whether they have any work to do as the reader.

Tags: Organisation & structure; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, self-regulation; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Fluency

We know that writing daily and for a sustained period of time is essential for developing fluency. We also know that getting thoughts down in draft as quickly and as happily as possible is a priority and is what will best suit young writers until they develop their own writing habits and process (Young & Ferguson 2020). These mini-lessons teach children strategies and techniques for fluent drafting which will be useful to them for all writing projects. They also give instruction on how fluency can be achieved by considering the length, types and complexity of crafted sentences.

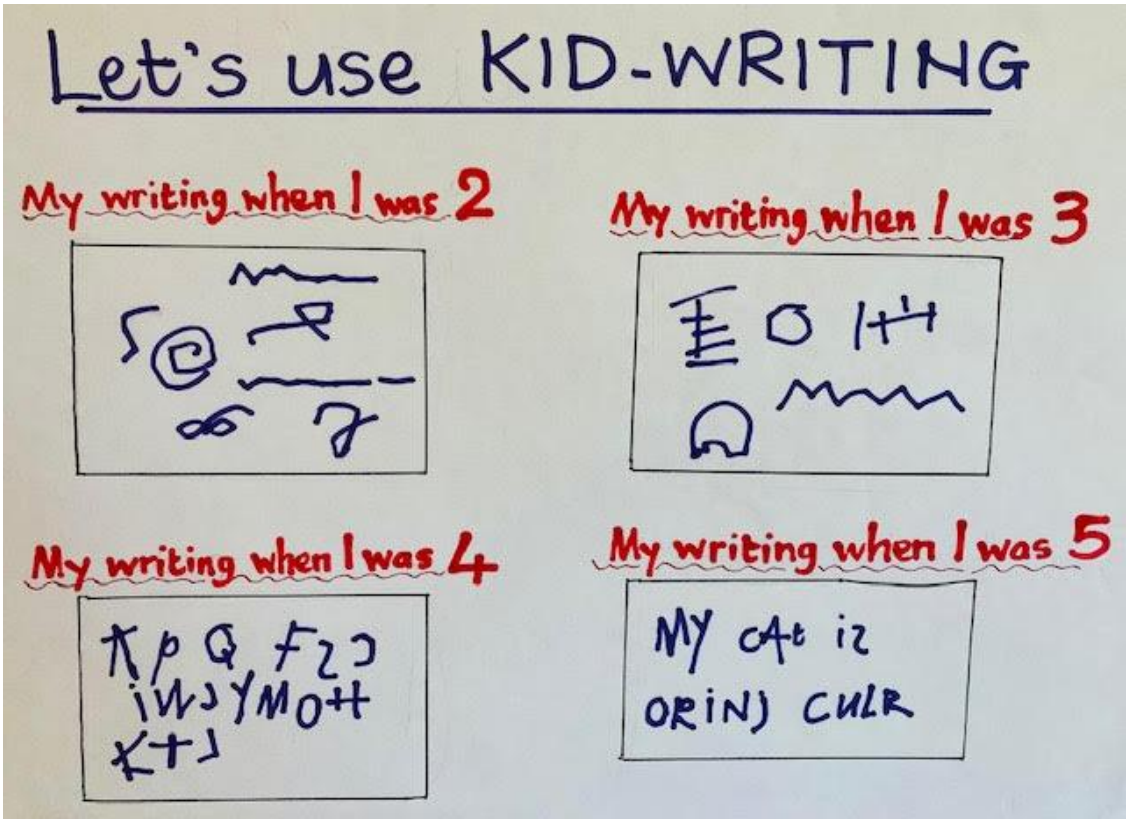
Let's use 'kid writing'

A long time ago there lived a three-year-old author. Me.

- Helen Lester

The job of teachers in the early years of children's writing development is to nurture children who see themselves as writers and to help them write happily. It's never a good sign nor is it healthy for a class to fear writing to such an extent that they become children who constantly need to ask 'Is this right?,' or 'I don't know how to write it - can you do it?'. That's why it's a good idea at the beginning of the year to teach a few mini-lessons on how to make *kid writing*. Even before mastering letter/sound correspondence or becoming a formal reader, a student can scribble or approximate every single word they know. Therefore, all children can write if we set up the expectation that they should use a mixture of kid writing (using their imaginations and approximations to make and use marks) and 'adult writing', using their developing knowledge of letter/sound correspondence and their sound and word mat resources. Finally, I can highly recommend reading *Author: A True Story* by Helen Lester. Ideally, before you deliver this mini-lesson. For example, during read-aloud.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



When I was your age, only three, four or five, I hadn't learnt how to write 'adult writing' yet, so while I was learning I used my own writing - or what we can call 'kid writing'. Let me show you what kid writing can look like.

At this point, it's a good idea to show children some of the writing you've collected from children at different stages of development so they can see for themselves what kid writing can look like:

- Squiggles
- Letter-like shapes
- A selection of known letters
- Invented spellings

As you can see, while these children were learning more about adult writing, they used 'kid writing'. You can use your own writing in your books too! Why don't we have a go at making and using our own writing today during book making time? Which type of writing are you going to use today? By the way, If you want to use some adult writing that you know, that's great too.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; all genres, confidence; independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Write the first sound, then use kid writing

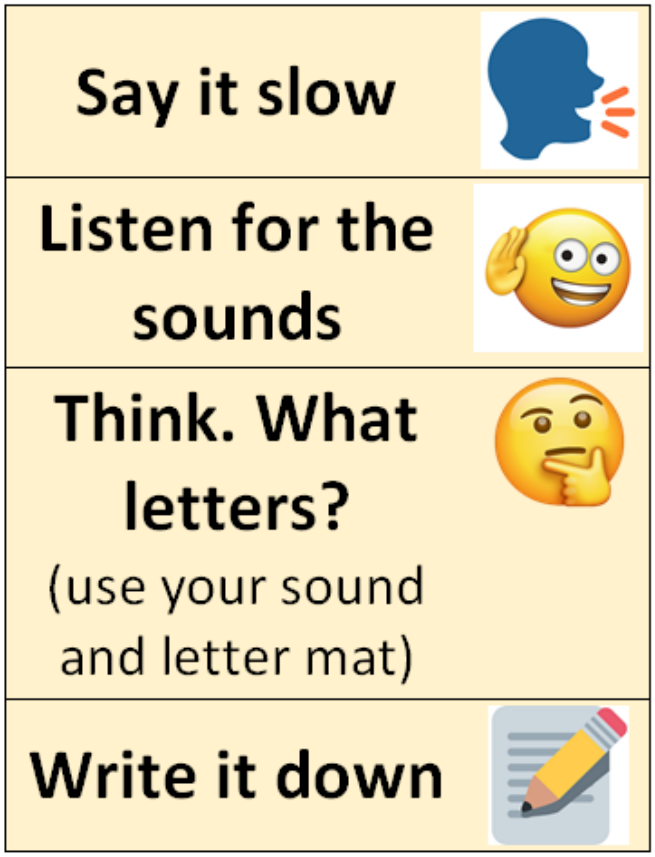
As children develop as writers, they can begin to use a mixture of kid writing (using their imaginations and approximations to make and use marks) and 'adult writing', using their developing knowledge of letter/sound correspondence and their sound and word mat resources. This usually needs to be modelled for children before they are able to do it for themselves.

In this mini-lesson, I want to show you how you can use everything you're learning in our phonics and letter formation lessons, in book making time. Let me show you what I used to do when I was your age. I would write down the first sound (and any of the sounds I could hear in a word) using my sound mat to help me. I would then use 'kid writing' for the rest of the word that I didn't know how to write yet. You can do this too! Let's give this a try during today's book making time.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; all genres, confidence; independence; EYFS, KS1

Go from sounds to letters

As children develop as writers, they can begin to use all that they learn in their phonics sessions to encode sounds into letters. We can and should model this process to children when we write with them during book making time. We should also model it when we 'write aloud' with them.



In this mini-lesson, I want to show you how you can use everything you're learning in our phonics and letter formation lessons, in book making time. Let me show you what I used to do when I was your age. I would say the word I wanted to write down really slowly. I would listen for the sounds. When I heard one, I would write the letters for it really quickly! You might want to create a poster similar to the one above to help as a guide during book making time.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; all genres, confidence; independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Talk to yourself

Some teachers can feel pretty smug if and when their children are silently getting on with their writing, and it's true that this can be a good feeling. However, this doesn't work for all young writers. Some children really benefit from being in conversation with themselves as they are drawing. Children literally talk their texts into being.

For this mini-lesson, simply model talking to yourself as you continue crafting a picture book you're working on. You can ask the children why they think you like to talk as you draw and write. You can then invite them to give it a try during book-making time.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; all genres, confidence; independence; EYFS, KS1

Write it *in* the line if you can't write it *on* the line.

This is a very specific mini-lesson for children who may find letter formation and handwriting particularly stressful during daily book-making and writing time. There comes a point when we need to move children away from writing in line-less picture books to writing on lines. Some children can find this transition hard.It can be helpful to bridge the gap by asking them to write **in** the line rather than on the line until they build up their skills and confidence. If you ask the child to write in pen and you put the lines in their book with pencil, they can rub out the lines after they've finished and feel a sense of satisfaction in seeing their writing adhering more closely to typical conventions. This can often give them the confidence and motivation to begin writing on the line.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; all genres, confidence; independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Pencil microphone: Say it, then write it

Verbal recoding is one way to help children take the packets of images and information that they have in their head and convert them into written language on paper.

In this mini-lesson, I want to show you how using your pencil as a microphone can help you as you write. Sometimes, as I'm writing, I'll put the head of the pencil up to my lips and whisper what it is I want to put onto my paper. Almost like I'm speaking into a microphone. I will then write down what it is I just said. I find this really helps me, and it might help you too. Let's all give it a try during writing time today.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Whisper your sentence, hold it and keep it!

Young children find holding their sentences in their mind a task in itself, but here are some strategies that will help. Saying the sentence aloud works well, but I find that whispering it into their hands and holding it there will help all children, especially those that might feel too shy to say their sentences aloud. Their hands will bring the sounds back to their ears.

When I was 5 or 6, I used to have so many lovely ideas that I wanted to write, but sometimes when I was in the middle of a sentence, I would forget what I was writing about. So to help me, I used to whisper my sentence to my hands a few times, hold it and write it down.

Demonstrate how to do it. Place your hands together, making a little bowl, whisper your sentence to your hands, then close your hands to hold it inside. You might want to repeat this a few times, then write the sentence down. *Invite the children to try it out.*

Tags: Fluency; all processes; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

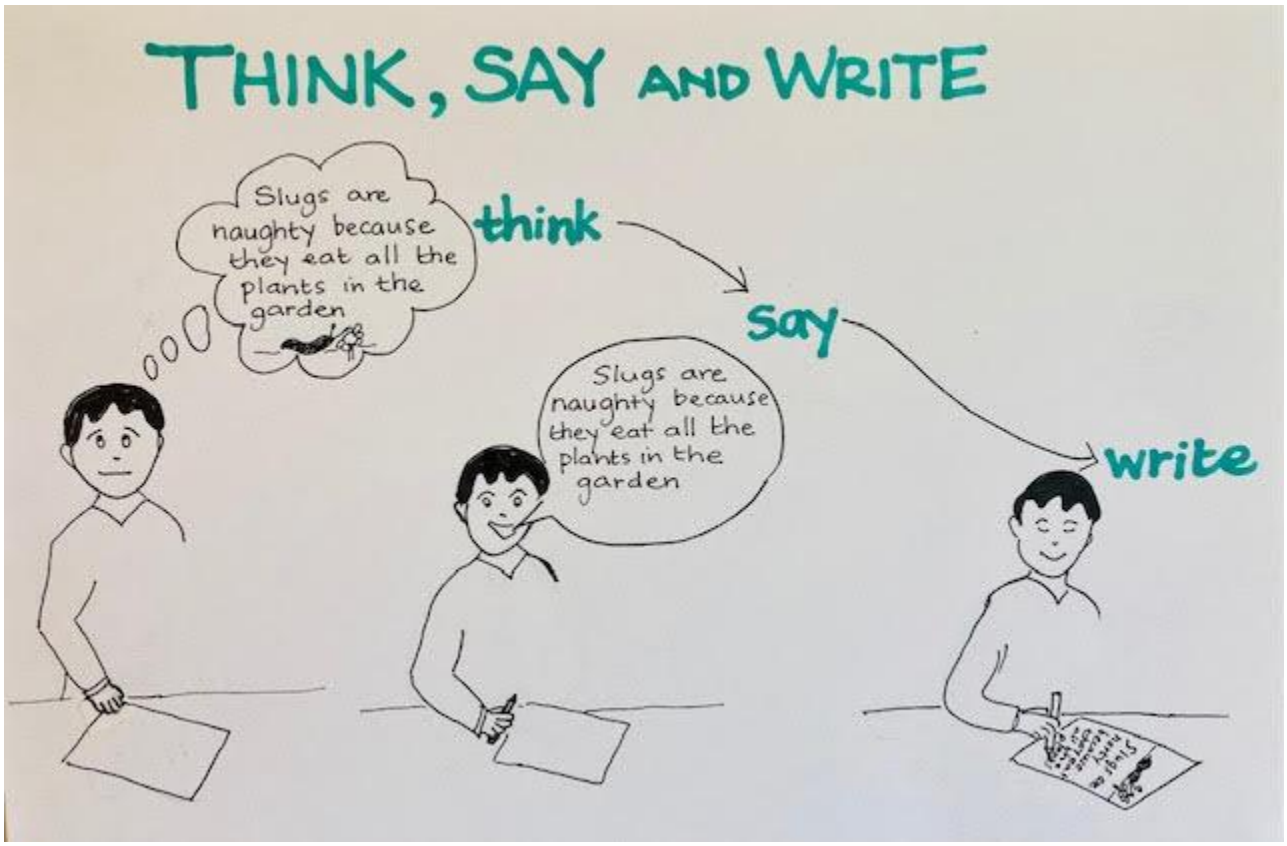
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Think, say and write

Imagine what it is going to sound like. I hear the sentence in my head all the way to the end and then just write it down

- Elliott

This is another way to help the children to work independently and with confidence, remembering what they want to write. It is important to demonstrate to the children how you take your time to think of a sentence, then rehearse it by saying it aloud before writing. Additionally, it will support the children with their planning and with checking if their sentences make sense before writing. When the children are a bit older these steps might occur more automatically, but younger children will benefit from rehearsing what they want to write first.



Another great way to remember what I want to write about, is to think carefully about what I want to say, I say it aloud a few times, then I write it.. This way I can also check if my sentence makes sense. Invite the children to try it out!

Tags: Fluency; all processes; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

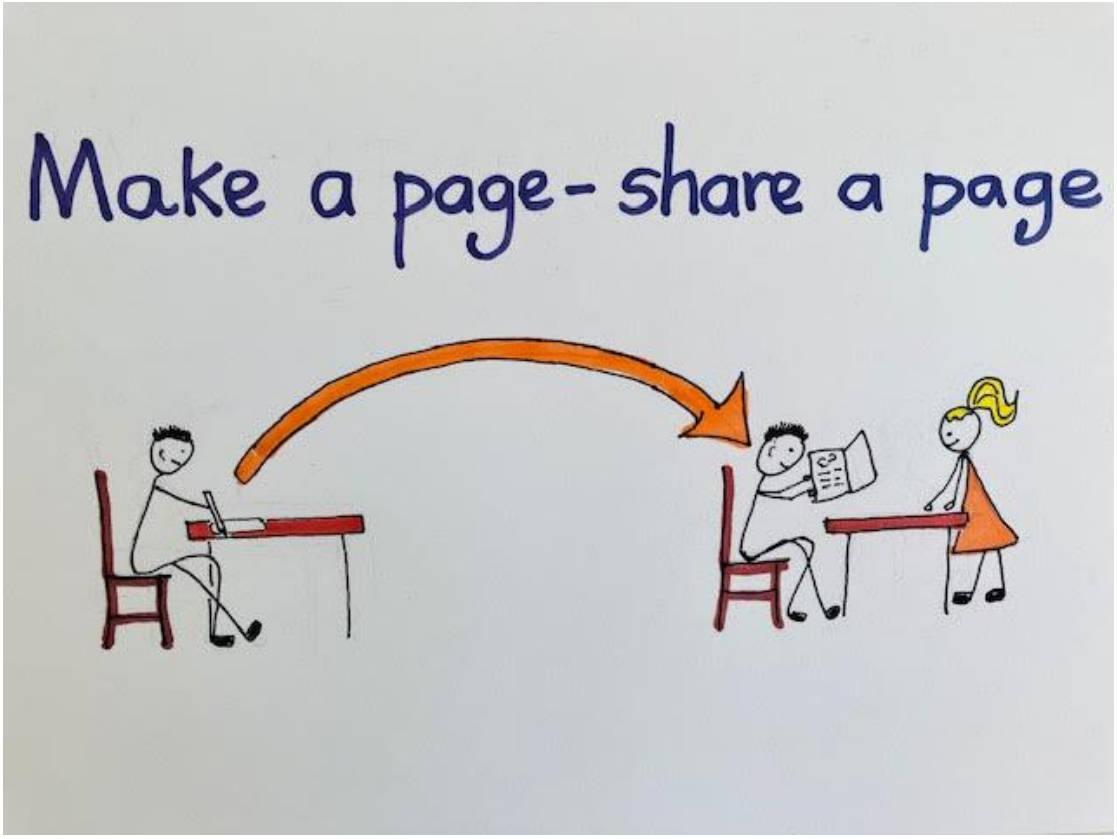
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Make a page - share a page

Writing is about sharing meaning with others. It's about creating an artefact that aids us to share and convey what it is we want to say. We need to *teach* this to the youngest of writers. One way to help them understand this vital lesson is to show them how they should engage in 'make a page - share a page'. The concept is simple. Every time they finish a page during book-making time, they should share it with a friend. This helps them:

- Stay on track
- Feel like they are achieving and getting things done
- Maintain the true meaning of writing - sharing meaning
- Get feedback from a reader

It gives them an opportunity to make changes (revising) now that they've shared it with someone else. It also provides them with an opportunity to talk and therefore plan what is going to come next on the following page.



The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to model it. With the children watching, make a page in a picture book you're working on and then share it with one of your pupils. Then quickly make the next page - before sharing it with them again. You can then invite children to give it a try during book-making time that day. You can then follow this up with a poster for the working wall - this can act as a reminder until the strategy has become embedded in their daily routine.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Write a little - share a page

Based on writer-teacher Laura Whittick's practice, this strategy not only helps children with their fluency but also helps them maintain the cohesion for their piece. Sharing your writing with an 'audience' as you're crafting it can really help maintain your energy and focus. The concept is simple. Throughout writing time, have an alarm sound. This tells children to stop crafting and share what they've been working on with their partner before continuing. This helps children:

- Stay on track
- Feel like they are achieving and getting things done
- Maintain the true meaning of writing - sharing meaning
- Get feedback from a reader

It gives them an opportunity to make changes (revising) now that they've shared it with someone else. It also provides them with an opportunity to talk and therefore plan what is going to come next.

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is explain it, explain the rationale behind it before giving it a try during that day's writing time. You might want to finish your writing session a little earlier than normal to ask the children what they thought of the strategy. Over time, children learn to do this for themselves and you no longer need to sound an alarm to remind them to do it.

Tags: Fluency; all processes; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Using our drafting advice

Getting children drafting quickly, fluently and happily is essential to their writing success. It's while drafting that children discover, perhaps for the first time, what it is exactly they want to say. This is no easy task and we can often make this process even harder by inundating children with additional burdens. While meaning well, we are directing children to focus on the wrong things at the wrong time. Children simply must be allowed to draft freely. They can attend to additional demands like curriculum objectives when they are revising. I use this drafting advice myself in my own writing and this has always made teaching about it easier.

Drafting Advice	
Got a sticky or a yawny bit? - Put a line under the bit you are unsure about. - Carry on.	**Don't know how to spell a word?** - Invent the spelling. - Put a circle around it. - Carry on.
Don't know what to write next? - Read it to a partner. - Get your partner to ask you questions.	**Not sure of punctuation?** - Put a box where the punctuation might need to go. - Carry on.
Think you have finished? Start or continue with a personal writing project!	

(Taken from *Real-World Writers* Young & Ferguson 2020)

It's a good idea to teach this mini-lesson at the beginning of the year. It's also useful to share this advice across a whole school, and a poster on the working wall is helpful. For this mini-lesson, it's good to share a piece of your own writing where you've applied the advice. You can then discuss how you attend to items during revising and proof-reading. Let the children ask any questions about your writing process too. Over time, you'll find children beginning to develop their own idiosyncratic ways of drafting.

Tags: Fluency; drafting; all genres, confidence; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

State the obvious

Sometimes we can overthink things. We can try to be fancy and elaborate when actually it might just be better on that occasion to write exactly what it is we want to say. For example, if I'm writing a story about a worm and a seagull. I can write just that: *This is a story about a worm and a seagull.* If I'm writing a non-fiction text about my Fender Telecaster guitar, I can write just that: *This book is all about my Fender Telecaster guitar.* If I want people to know I really love my guitar, I can simply say it: *I really love my guitar. It's like a friend to me. I love it because...*

The best way to teach this mini-lesson is through the context of your own writing and through pupil-conferencing with individual writers (Ferguson & Young 2021). Show children examples from your own writing where you simply stated the obvious when you found yourself struggling. Whenever you're in doubt, just write down exactly what it is you want to say - don't delay. Invite your children to try this technique during writing time that day.

Tags: Fluency; drafting; all genres, confidence; independence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Well, what do you want to *say* next?

This is actually based on a very effective pupil-conferencing technique (Ferguson & Young 2021). However, I added it to these mini-lessons because it is something you can teach your class to do for their peers during writing time if you're not available for a conference. The idea is simple. Often, when a child isn't sure what to write next, simply asking them to *tell* you what they would like to say next is enough. Indeed, they usually articulate it perfectly. All you need to do is say: 'That's it! Write down exactly what you just said to me...' and they are away.

The best way to teach this mini-lesson is through the context of pupil-conferencing. Explain that when you're not sure what to write next, tell your partner you're having a bit of trouble. They should then reply with 'well, what do you want to say next ?' The child can then reply, and usually their writer's block is unknotted.

1. *I don't know what to write next.*
2. *Well, what do you want to say next?*
3. *Tell your partner.*
4. *Write down what you said.*

Tags: Fluency; drafting; all genres, confidence; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Pause at a special place

Sometimes when we return to a piece of writing it is hard to get back into the flow of thoughts and ideas you had when you started. One way to help us with the fluency and flow in our writing is to pause it at a special place, to be continued later on. It does not need to be a cliffhanger but a place where you can get back into the flow, a corner just before you turn.

Share a piece of writing with your class where you have paused at a special place, explain to your class what piece of punctuation you used to do this and why you decided to stop there. Show how you have made some notes to help you to continue. However, writing notes might not be necessary or desirable if you want to continue with a fresh mindset. Read your piece of writing to the children and try to continue writing the same piece alongside the children for a few minutes and then share how you have again paused your writing. Invite the children to try to do the same and to share their writing if they would like to do so.

Tags: Fluency; drafting; all genres, confidence; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Clarity & Accuracy

Obviously, it's important for writers to be clear about the point they want to make in their writing, whether it be fiction, non-fiction or personal narrative, and to make it clear for readers by keeping their focus on it. It's about keeping in mind what you are writing, who you are writing it for and why you were moved to write it in the first place. These are things that can easily get lost by children as they craft their writing. Therefore it's important to give young writers instruction in how to find their focus and then to maintain it, with the knowledge that it might take on a new perspective during the writing.

Go back and wake your writing up!

It's important to get children into the habit of rereading what they have been crafting. As experienced writers, we do this fairly naturally but it is something that needs to be explicitly taught and practised by younger writers.

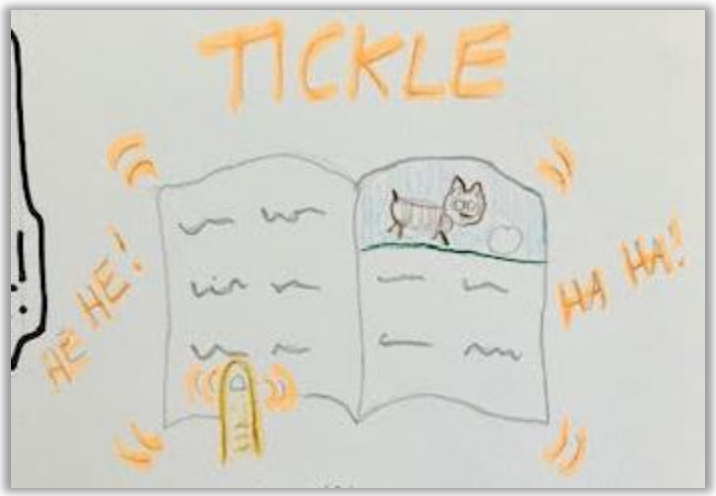
After we've written for a while, our writing can get a bit sleepy and forgetful. That's why as writers we must go back and wake our writing up! In this class, we always write a little and then read a little. Let's practise that today. After you've written for a little while, go back and read out loud what you've written before carrying on.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting; all genres; independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Give your writing a tickle

As children progress from mark-making to conventional print, they need to understand the difference between retelling and re-reading. Before children begin writing conventional print, they are happy to 'tell' their writing as opposed to reading it. However, as their transcription progresses, we want to bring their attention to the fact that print is there to be read. To do this, we can encourage them to put their finger under their writing and move it along as they read. This applies whether children are writing conventionally or using linear scribbles and letter-like symbols. You should model how you can give your writing a 'tickle' as you read, using a variety of exemplar texts from different developmental stages.



When writers read their books to others, they either tell the story off by heart because they know it really well, or they read it. A good way of reading like a writer is to put your finger under your writing and move it along as you read. This is like giving your writing a little tickle. Watch, I'll show you…

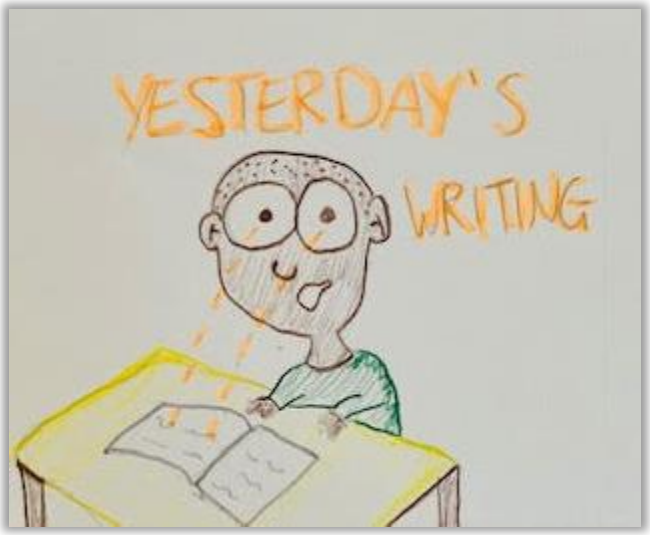
During share time today, maybe we can practise giving our writing a little tickle with our finger as we read it to our friends.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; publishing and performing; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Look again: going back to yesterday's writing

What's wonderful about writing teaching is that it's based on making *time* more important than *task.* What I mean by this is that writing can carry on over many sessions. It doesn't have to be completed in a single sitting. However, children (and teachers) often have the misconception that the things we do at school are completed in single periods of time. A single lesson with a single outcome. This can make coming back to writing difficult for some. Children who learn about writing and being a writer through a contemporary writing workshop approach from an early age seldom have this problem (Young & Ferguson 2020, 2021) but give them a little reminder to do this from time to time.



Before I start any new writing for the day, I always look over what I've crafted the day before. It's really important to look at your writing from yesterday so that you remember what you were planning to do today. That's something I'd like us to practise today. At the beginning of writing time, can you please read what you've done so far before you start any new writing.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Tell it to a friend

Writing can sometimes be a little lonely. However, when you get to write in a community of writers in a classroom, you have wonderful social resources all around you. You have your fellow writers. It's good to take advantage of that. Before getting started on any new writing, it's nice to sit with a friend and explain what you've done so far. The youngest and most inexperienced writers appreciate having this opportunity too.

Some of you might know that the teachers at this school have their own after-school writing group. We get together, write together and share together - just like we do every day in writing workshop. Anyway, I've noticed that before we start writing, we like to share what we've been working on with a friend and have a little talk about it. This seems to help us. I thought we could try this today. So before you start crafting, I want you to share what you've been working on so far with your friend.

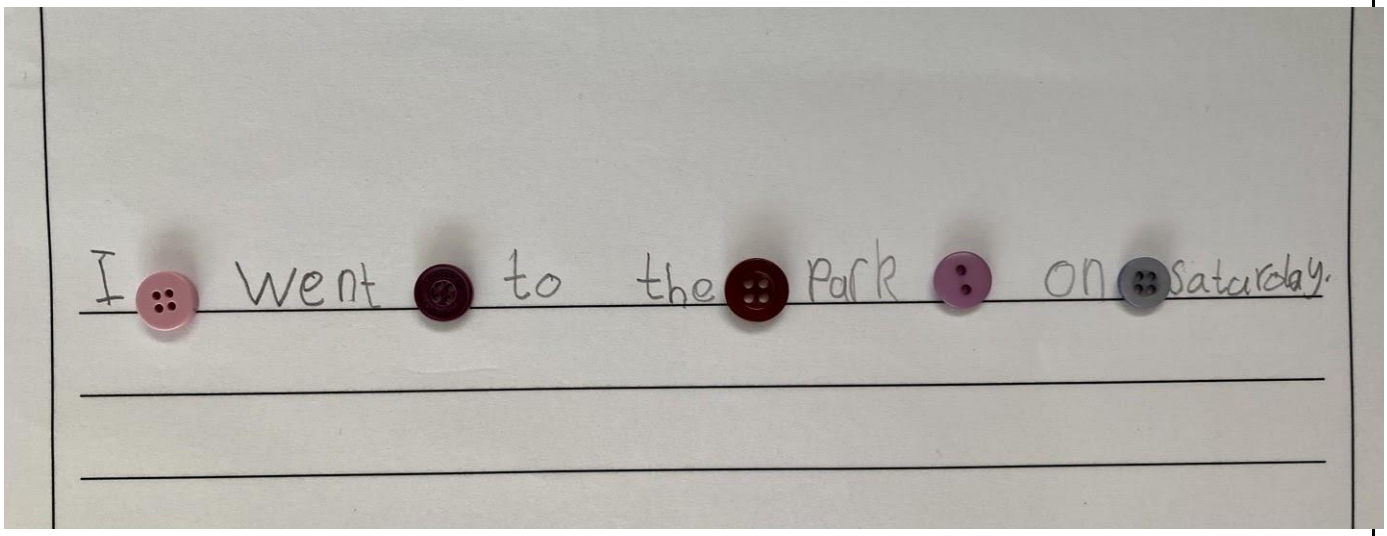
Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Use your finger spaces

Because children are looking at and reading picture books every single day, they want their picture books to look the same. They notice that words have spaces between them. Teaching finger spaces can be a long process, so this mini lesson will be very useful to use during conferences (Ferguson & Young 2021).

Start by showing them a picture book and point out that there are spaces between each word. Ask the children why writers do this. Explain that as writers, they will need to do the same thing too. You can then show them how you did it when you were younger – by either using your finger, a pom-pom or a button. You can then invite children to do the same thing during that day's book making time.



Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Finding your diamond moment

I doubt if much would come of just 'snow,' as a subject

-Ted Hughes

When I've chosen my topic to write about, I try to find within it what I call my diamond moment. My topics for writing always feel like a big pile of rocks and I have to sift through them all to find the one shiny diamond moment I want to focus my writing on.

There are always lots of individual ideas within a topic and so it's important to choose what's going to be your focus and to think about why you want to write about it.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

You may have seen this in your classroom. Children will choose a topic to write about - for example 'dogs,' but they haven't considered what their diamond moment is going to be. Are they going to write about their dog? If so, what are they going to write about specifically? And how are they going to make it shine? Why are people going to want to read about it? Why is it special? The diamond moment, as well as being the focus, the diamond moment is also important when considering 'Who is going to care that I've written this? Why is it important that I write this down?'

Share with your class an example of a time when you had to find a diamond moment to focus on within your writing. Show them your notebook and explain how you made a decision on what to write about and why. Finally, you can ask the class to share what they are going to focus on. One way of doing this is by taking a 'writing register' (Young & Ferguson 2020). In the future, during pupil-conferencing you should be able to ask individual children what the diamond moment for their piece is and they should be able to tell you. Children will often ask each other too.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning, revising; all genres; confidence, motivation; KS1, KS2

Find your theme by looking inside yourself

Life itself is the most wonderful fairytale

- Hans Christian Andersen

Whoever we are and wherever we live, we share many of the same anxieties, fears and preoccupations. Part of the theory of fairytales, for example, is that they reflect these universally felt and deep- seated concerns, and so it's possible to see striking similarities in the themes and characteristics of tales originating in different countries and different cultures. The most frequently recurring themes are surely reward and punishment, together with the sense of moral justice and getting your come-uppance (which children particularly enjoy), and the triumph of good over evil. Typical elements which serve the theme are: a threatening presence (a monster, giant or witch); transformations involving clothes, appearances and buildings; shape-shifting; difficult tasks to perform; wicked step-parents and orphaned children; journeys; animals as helpers, and the essential ingredients- magic and a happy ending.

It's well worth using this mini-lesson to discuss with children what they think a good story needs and why, drawing on their own experiences of reading, hearing or watching them. Write their ideas up on a flipchart and get them to think about their theme and which elements they might choose to put in their own tale. Share the plan you wrote yourself for your own story, and invite the children to begin working on their plan in writing time that day.

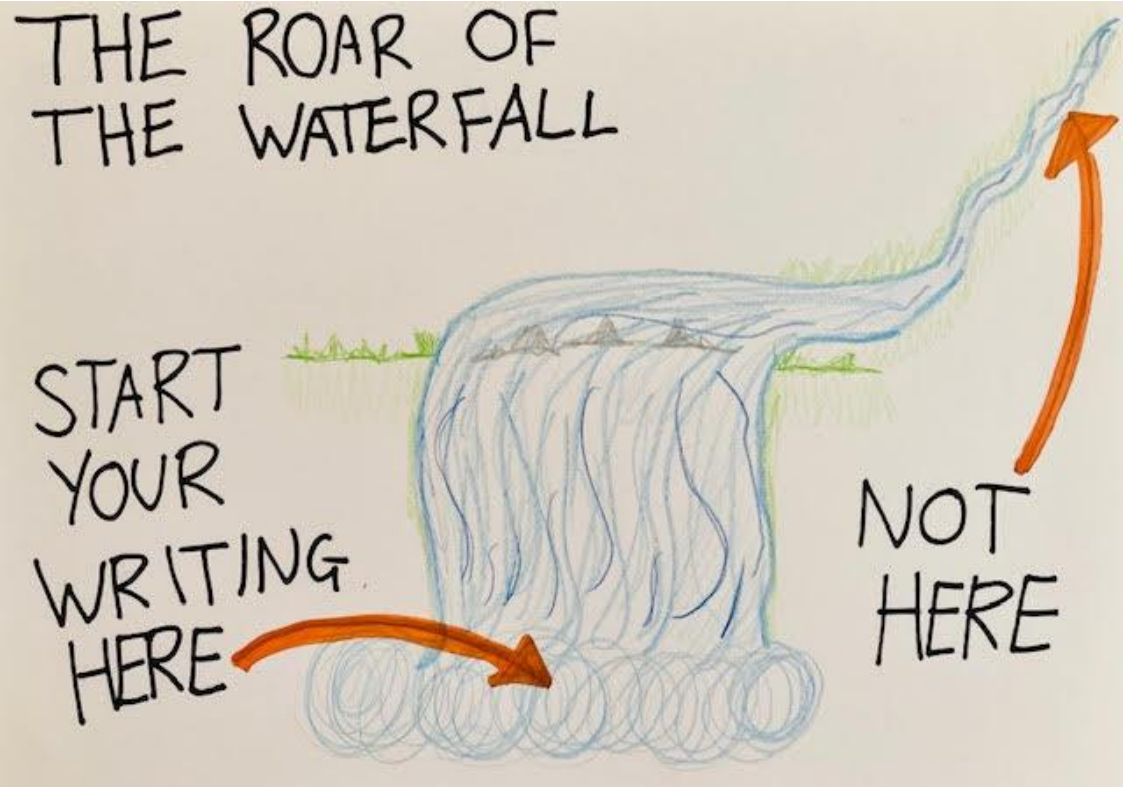
Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; narrative; confidence, motivation; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The roar of the waterfall

How many times have you had to read every single pointless detail in a child's writing? For example: a trip to the seaside. Do we need to hear about how they got up, brushed their teeth, had breakfast, got in the car, got bored in the car, got out of the car, got the stuff out of the car, found a spot on the beach, laid out their towel, ate their sandwiches and everything else that happened before they get to the part which is clearly their diamond moment? In this case – Dad getting his ear clipped by a crab when he was asleep!

This is a lesson I learnt from writer-teacher Nancie Atwell. I've always found children to be relieved when I've taught this mini-lesson. They too often hold the misconception that they must start at the beginning and include everything and anything in between events. Rarely are they taught that they can start at the moment they want to write about most - their diamond moment. They often start their writing too far away from the waterfall, too far upstream and away from the action.



This is a great mini-lesson. It's good to use a child's writing to illustrate the point. (Obviously, check that the child is happy to have their writing used as a teaching point for others). Explain that we can all fall into the trap of too much detail, though sometimes we write like this as a way of getting started.
However, once we are at a stage where we can revise our writing, it's worth cutting away this unnecessary stuff.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

General to specific

One of the things I've learnt about my own writing but particularly children's writing is that it is often more meaningful and successful when it concentrates on something specific within a chosen subject. Children can often choose to write in too general a way and so lose out on expressing distinctive details. You can encourage children to write about specific people, places, things, moments or experiences rather than generally. For example, children can write about that particular autumn day rather than autumn days in general; that particular starry night instead of all such nights; your cat as opposed to cats as a whole.

Share a time in your writer's notebook where you yourself have used this technique and explain how you went about it. You can then invite their questions. It's particularly important to say how you went about finding the specifics within your topic. For example, did you use lists, webbing or doodles?

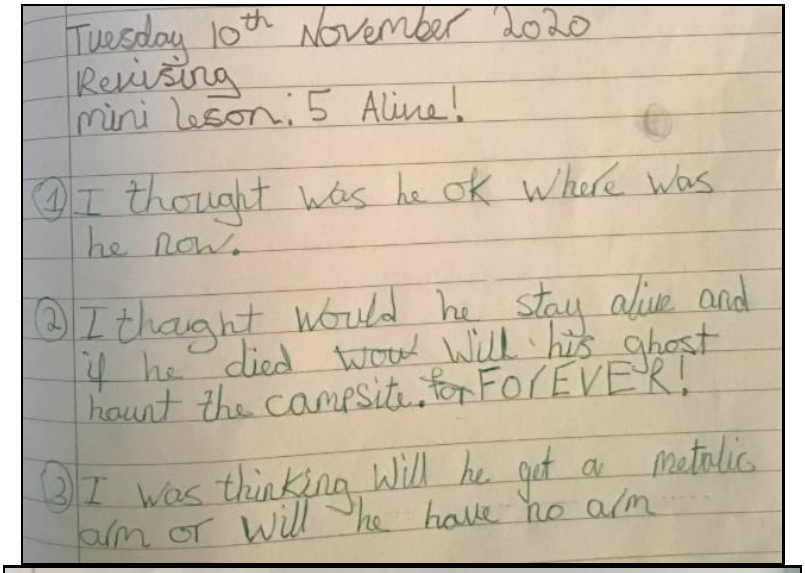
Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; all genres; confidence, motivation; KS1, KS2

Five alive!

I hate doing this at the time but afterwards I'm always glad I did it. Five alive is about taking a sentence that isn't quite working and rewriting it at least five different ways. You can play around with word order, language and style. Then you can decide which is best.

Show children how you have used this technique yourself in your writer's notebook. You can explain how you went about it and answer any of the children's questions. You can then invite your young writers to have a go in their own writing that day. In my experience, this mini-lesson is most effective when the majority of your class are revising their pieces.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

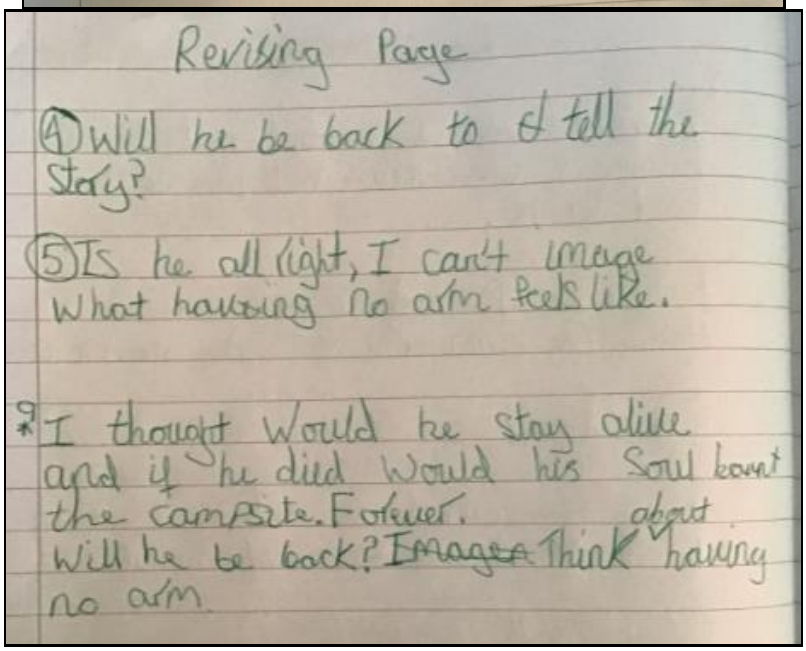


Tuesday 10th November 2020
Revising
mini leson: 5 Aline!

1 I thought was he ok where was he now.

2 I thaught would he stay alive and if he died ~~wou~~ Will his ghost haunt the campsite. ~~for~~ FOREVER!

3 I was thinking Will he get a metalic arm or Will he have no arm



Revising Page

4 Will he be back to ~~d~~ tell the story?

5 Is he all right, I can't image what having no arm feels like.

* I thought would he stay alive and if he died would his Soul haunt the campsite. Forever. Will he be back? ~~Imagen~~ Think about having no arm

Above, Archie tries out this technique on his 'revising and trying things out page (see page 291). In the end, after some feedback from the class, he combined two of his sentences together and added it to his manuscript.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; revising; all genres; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Change the word order

It's not just the way they begin that's typical of the fairytale genre. Sometimes the writers of stories change the expected order of words, usually for dramatic effect or to give an extra feeling of surprise and speed. For example:

The door opened and **in** strode the giant. **Out** jumped Jack with the hen under his arm and **away** he ran as fast as he could. **After** him ran the giant, the giant's wife and the giant's shaggy old dog.

It can even be whole phrases which are moved forwards, as in:

Above the river and over the hills flew the seven ravens.

Doing this can also make the writing sound really poetic. Children will probably already be familiar with the device from their own reading of and listening to fairytales, picture books and other stories.

For this mini-lesson, show children examples from tales where this happens, and particularly where you have done it yourself in your own story writing. They can then use the technique for themselves in their writing that day, changing some of the word order in their own story or writing out different examples as practice on their trying-out page.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; revising; all genres; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Traffic-light sentences

This particular mini-lesson is inspired by Lori Rog's wonderful book: *Marvelous Minilessons For Teaching Beginning Writing*. I adapted it slightly to suit my needs. Essentially, it's a mini-lesson which gives you an opportunity to talk about openings, conjunctions, subordination and punctuation.

The idea is that you create with your class a poster for the working wall with examples of ways in which you can open a sentence (green light). Then you can discuss conjunctions and/or commas for subordination (amber light - meaning carry on but be careful). Finally, you can discuss punctuation which stops the reader (red light).

Green lights	Amber lights	Red lights
When Stanley was younger, He She They It Whenever anything went wrong, Stanley Supposedly, If it weren't for the fact that, Stanley's father	And But So , - (...) Although That Then By	. ! ? ...

This mini-lesson can be done over three sessions and of course you can return to it throughout the year too. *In your first session, I recommend asking children to look at what words they use to start off their sentences and also to look in books at ways in which other writers do it too. You can add these to the 'green light' part of your poster. In your next session, look at conjunctions and commas for subordination. You can add these to your 'amber light' section. Finally, look at the ways in which writers end their sentences. You can add these to your 'red light' section. Obviously, as part of this mini-lesson, you should be asking children to consider what they've learnt during that day's writing time. That means you may find yourself adding to your list during writing time itself and perhaps during class sharing too.*

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Fixing your sticky bits

When we are on a roll with our writing, we can find ourselves drafting pretty quickly. Sometimes this results in us making a few errors and our writing can be difficult to read as a consequence. With children this can include getting their verb tenses mixed up, using strange pronouns, or missing whole words from their sentences. In our classroom, we call these things 'sticky bits'. This is where our writing, for whatever reason, doesn't read or sound quite right. Usually our friends are better able to notice sticky bits than we are. We are usually too close to our writing to notice them ourselves. That's why a good writing friend can come in handy.

For this mini-lesson, explain how you will sometimes ask a friend to listen to and/or read your writing to see where there might be 'sticky bits'. Sticky bits are things that don't make sense or sound 'weird' when you read them. Once your friend points these things out to you, you can fix them (usually together). Invite children to give this a try during that day's writing time and encourage them to do it regularly for themselves.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Cutting the string: Avoiding *stringy* bits

This is a mini-lesson taught by a teacher at Elmhurst Primary School. It was obviously something the class had discussed in the past because it already had its own name - 'stringy bits'. These were moments in your writing where you fell into the trap of saying 'and… and… and then… and… and then…' The children already knew that this was something to keep an eye out for and that when it happened they had to make a decision to 'cut the string'.. At the end of the mini-lesson, the teacher simply asked the children to check each other's writing for stringy bits and to 'fix' them together with their partner if they found them.

For the mini-lesson, show children a 'before and after' in your own writing. Show them where you noticed you fell into the trap of 'stringing your writing along' and how you fixed it. Invite children to work together to locate and make changes in their own writing today.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Repeated lines

Repeated lines are not there by accident. They are there to make a point. The author has made a decision to include a line more than once. This can of course be a topic for conversation when looking at poems. It's important to consider, though, why you may have wanted to repeat a line in your own poetry. After all, repeated lines are not there by accident.

What I like to do with any poetic technique lesson is ask the children to comb through books from the classroom library for examples that they particularly love. You'll see that we've given some examples of what this can look like in the Genre-Booklet. Children can write some of their favourites into their writer's notebook and you can have a discussion about why they like them so much. Afterwards, you can invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time – and you can do it too.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; poetry; confidence; KS1, KS2

Hyperbole

When I think of hyperbole, I always think of the famous misquotation from The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance: when truth becomes legend, print the legend. We are all guilty of it. When we tell a story, we often bend the truth a little, exaggerate here or there. We can go over the top, beyond what was actually true. You can use this technique in all types of writing of course – after all, it's the very best literary technique that has ever existed in the whole entire wide world ever.

What I like to do with any poetic technique lesson is ask the children to comb through books from the classroom library for examples that they particularly love. You'll see that we've given some examples of what this can look like in the Genre-Booklet. Children can write some of their favourites into their writer's notebook and you can have a discussion about why they like them so much. Afterwards, you can invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time – and you can do it too.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Imagism

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.

- William Carlos Williams

This poem entitled The Red Wheelbarrow is probably one of the most famous examples of imagism. Imagism is about giving an analytical, clear and sharp description of something at that moment. It's almost like trying to obtain complete objectivity. The argument being that by writing so analytically, we show things as they really are and in the process reveal their true essence and meaning. It's like a haiku. Here's what Williams had to say about it: 'First we have to see. Or first we have to be taught to see. We have to be taught to see here, because here is everywhere, related to everywhere else, and if we don't see, hear, taste, smell and feel in this place – not only will we never know anything but the world of sense will be by that much diminished everywhere'.

For this mini-lesson, simply share this poem and explain what William Carlos Williams was trying to do. You could then share your own imagism inspired poem with your class and ask them to comment. Finally, invite children to think about imagism while they write during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; poetry; confidence, independence; KS2

The action reveal!

To be or not to be, that is the question

- William Shakespeare

We could also add 'to do or not to do' to the list when creating and portraying characters. It is important that the actions of the characters reveal their personality and their story. Additionally, actions also reveal the relationships with the other

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

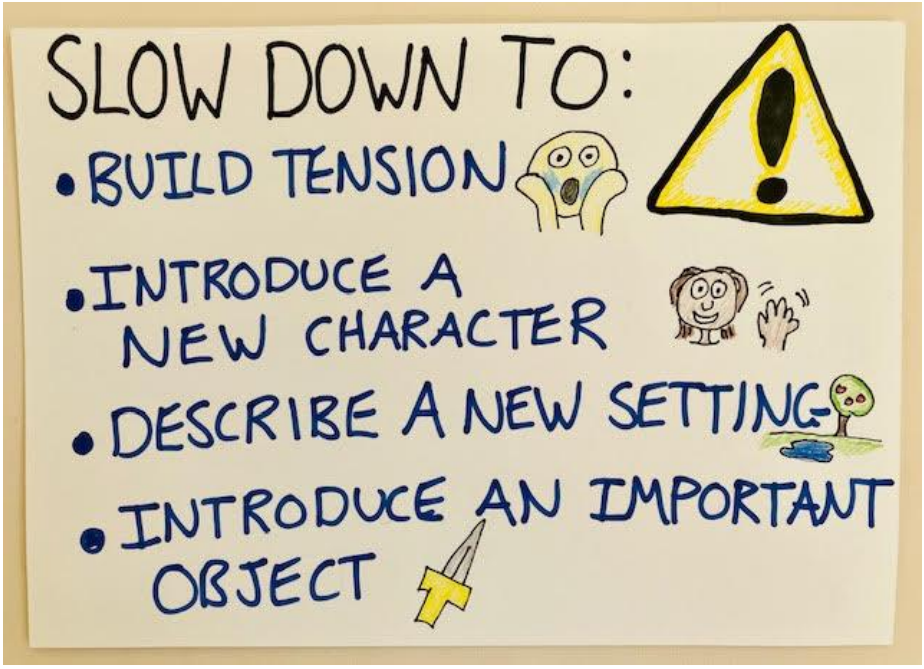
characters around them. I always ask the children the question - "*How do you know that your characters are mean or kind? What do they do that tells us how they are?"* Let the actions reveal how they are and why they might be behaving in certain ways. Think about the verbs carefully and use them in the story - *the person is what happens to them.* Creating a list about a character's personality is interesting and might be helpful, but the actions are what bring them and the story to life. Could they walk around you or do they live in a different time, world or space? Why? What has happened to them? Tell us, show us, involve your reader in your story through their actions.

In order to teach this mini lesson, it might be useful to think about the actions that will happen in your story and then write them to reveal your character. This works really well in the opening when you are introducing the main characters. Share your piece of writing or a mentor text that uses actions to reveal the characters' personality and their story.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; publishing; narrative, agency, confidence, KS1, KS2

Moving quickly and slowly in a story

Writing a story is a lot like being a film director. Sometimes you want to use a wide panoramic view and other times you want the camera to zoom right in on the smallest detail. Sometimes you want to create a sense of frantic action and other times you want your audience to sit quietly and be reflective. Children can often appreciate this kind of discussion – particularly those who love video games, TV and cinema. The penny really begins to drop that their stories can be films on paper.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

In this mini-lesson, introduce the idea of changing the speed and level of detail in different parts of a story. Explain that writers will often slow down when they are:

- *Building up to their climax*
- *Introducing a character for the first time*
- *Changing their setting*
- *Introducing an object of particular importance for the first time*

Writers will often move quickly when they are:

- *Wanting to move through time*
- *Wanting to move through a setting*
- *When they are writing dialogue*

This mini-lesson is particularly helpful when children are revising their stories. You can ask them to consider where in their pieces they may want to take time out from progressing the plot to provide their reader with interesting details or some character development, and where they might be able to make cuts and speed up the story.

Trouble at Granny's

Tommy was a slim boy with horribly scarred knees, a peppering of light freckles across the bridge of his nose and according to most of his friends, slightly sticky-out ears. He grabbed a Wagon Wheel and a bag of Wotsits and stuffed them into his hoodie pockets.

I started with some character description.

Tommy's dad was taking him and his best friend Luthor to Hollywood Bowl. The whole journey there in the car was filled with chatter about football. The windows were down and a cassette of Hall and Oates' greatest hits was blaring away. It was just about tea-time, which got Tommy visualising the Wimpy burger and chips they could be munching on down on the seafront; if his dad was in the mood that is.

I moved forward quickly by introducing the character's intentions.

SCREECH! Their brown Vauxhall pulled up outside Tommy's granny's place. "Are we taking granny with us?" Tommy asked, not convinced by his own question.
"No. I'm just dropping you two off here. Hop it you little urchin," Tommy's dad replied.

I used a sound effect to move suddenly from the character's thoughts to a new setting.

The living room was musty and crowded with furniture and clutter. Tommy perched on a stack of old copies of the Radio Times and Luthor sat in the scruffy armchair by the three-bar fire. Tommy didn't want to sit in his grandad's old chair: he had kicked the bucket the year before, which was the only time he had seen his dad cry. There were half-drunk cups of tea on the side table and pictures of the Pope and the Virgin Mary on all the walls.

I jumped into the setting by just going straight into a description. Here I slowed right down to get the reader to reflect.

Here we can see writer-teacher Tobias Hayden trying this mini-lesson out in his own story, 'Trouble At Granny's'. The above shows how he shared the thought process behind his writerly decisions with his class. He then invited the children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Would an alien understand what I'm writing about?

Sometimes, when we are passionate about something, we can run away with ourselves. We can assume that everyone knows what we know about a subject. What might seem basic to us might be news to others! That's why it's sometimes good to read through your own writing and ask yourself – would an alien understand what I'm talking about? This is particularly true with technical or subject-specific vocabulary which usually needs to be explained through description, poetic metaphor or through diagrams, pictures or glossaries.

For this mini-lesson show how you've read through your drafted piece – or better, how you've asked someone else to read through your drafted piece – and show the children on a visualizer where your manuscript has been marked or underlined and 'alien' has been written in the margin. Show children a revised draft where you have attended to the marked parts of the writing.

As an aside, if you've asked someone else to mark your manuscript for 'alien' moments, don't feel like you're obligated to make changes. Show the children where you decided not to take the editor's advice.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Time-travelling markers

This is essentially an extension of the kind of mini-lessons we provide in our minibook *Grammar mini-lessons for 5-11 year olds* (Young & Ferguson 2021). Time markers are helpful because they are like strings which can keep our texts in place. They help us maintain cohesion. They can also help children out of a bind when they are unsure how to move their writing on. Suggesting the use of a time marker during pupil-conferencing can often be all the help they need.

Time Travel By Using:

First, next, then, lastly, finally, later, later that day, the next day, As day turned to night, As the sun disappeared beyond the mountains, eventually, after a while, once that was sorted, meanwhile, in the meantime, while all that was going on, in the end, at the end of the day, suddenly, As the hours went by, as time crept up on them, before long, all of sudden, without notice, afterwards, as soon as they could, over time.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children your own use of time markers in some of your own writing. You could also invite children to look at the time markers used by other authors in the classroom library. Finally, talk about why they are useful and invite children to use them during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; all ages

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Teleporting location markers

This is essentially an extension of the kind of mini-lessons we provide in our minibook *Grammar mini-lessons for 5-11 year olds* (Young & Ferguson 2021). Location markers are helpful because they are like strings which can keep our texts in place. They help us maintain cohesion. They can also help children out of a bind when they are unsure how to move their writing on. Suggesting the use of a time marker during pupil-conferencing can often be all the help they need.

Teleport By Using:

In the middle, to the right, on the other side, in the distance, right in front of their faces, at the centre, here and there, beyond the pines, adjacent to, opposite to, across from the, set apart from the rest of the, heading over, past the river, over the seas

For this mini-lesson, simply show children your own use of location markers in some of your own writing. You could also invite children to look at the location markers used by other authors in the classroom library. Finally, talk about why they are useful and invite children to use them during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; all ages

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Ed… sentences

This is essentially an extension of the kind of mini-lessons we provide in our minibook *Grammar mini-lessons for 5-11 year olds* (Young & Ferguson 2021). *Ed…* sentences start with an adjective before sharing the rest of your sentence. For example:

Ed… Sentences

- Scared, Lucy lifted the lid of the box.
- Pleased with what she saw, the Lady Mayoress sat down.
- Tired, Poppy flopped herself into Emily's lap.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children your own use of Ed… sentences. You could also invite children to look for any Ed… sentences in the books they are reading. Finally, invite children to try out the sentence structure during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Ing… sentences

This is essentially an extension of the kind of mini-lessons we provide in our minibook *Grammar mini-lessons for 5-11 year olds* (Young & Ferguson 2021). *Ing…* sentences start with a verb before continuing the rest of your sentence. For example:

Ing… Sentences

- Climbing to the very top, he looked over his new kingdom.
- Kicking it out for a corner, Ronaldo knew the game was won.
- Pressing the rubber hard into the paper, she took out all her frustrations.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children your own use of Ing… sentences. You could also invite children to look for any Ing… sentences in the books they are reading. Finally, invite children to try out the sentence structure during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; all ages

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

If… then… sentences

This is essentially an extension of the kind of mini-lessons we provide in our minibook *Grammar mini-lessons for 5-11 year olds* (Young & Ferguson 2021). *If… then…* sentences start with a proposition and end with a suggestion. For example:

If… Then… Sentences

- If that man hits the ramp at that speed, then he is going to die.
- If you try to run, if you try to hide, if you try to call the police, then I will find you and I will kill you.
- If you stir the mixture for 15 minutes, then you'll have perfect cookie dough.
- If you bend the guitar string around your index finger first, and if you take your time, then restringing is a piece of cake.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children 'If… then…' sentences from your own writings. You could also invite children to look in the books they are reading for any examples. Finally, invite children to try out the sentence structure during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; all ages

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What is the cause?

This type of mini-lesson is not always necessary. Often the purpose and audience for our writing naturally dictate the types of language we are going to use and not the other way around. If I'm looking to explain something to others, I'm quite naturally going to use causal conjunctions. It's going to happen by definition. For example, throughout this document I've used conjunctions such as: *because, so, therefore, even though, but* and *however* to explain the cause of something to you.

Share The Cause By Using:

as a result, because, so, therefore, even though, but, however

In this mini-lesson, simply highlight in a text you've written yourself how using conjunctions like the ones above allowed you to explain something for your reader. You can then invite children to use these conjunctions for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

What is the condition?

This type of mini-lesson is not always necessary. Often, the purpose and audience for our writing naturally dictate the types of language we are going to use and not the other way around. If I'm looking to explain something to others, I'm quite naturally going to use conditional conjunctions. It's going to happen by definition. For example, throughout this document I've used conjunctions such as: *if, then, provided that, as long as*, and *may even* to explain why things happen in certain situations.

Share The Condition By Using:

by, if, then, provided that, as long as, may even.

In this mini-lesson, simply highlight in a text you've written yourself how using conjunctions like the ones above allowed you to explain something for your reader. You can then invite children to use these conjunctions for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What does it compare to?

This type of mini-lesson is not always necessary. Often, the purpose and audience for our writing naturally dictate the types of language we are going to use and not the other way around. If I'm looking to describe and explain something to others, I might quite naturally contrast and compare it to something I think my audience might know.

Contrast And Compare By Using:

unlike, and yet, however, on the other hand, just as, in a similar way, in contrast, if we compare this to...

In this mini-lesson, simply highlight in a text you've written yourself how using comparison transitions like the ones above allowed you to explain something for your reader. You can then invite children to use these transitions for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Giving examples and bringing in the experts

Sometimes we need proof. Sometimes we need to give an example. Sometimes we need to bring in other experts to help us make our point.

Give Examples By Using:

for example, similarly, in comparison, also, such as, in contrast to this

Bring In An Expert By Using:

according to, suggested by, as shown by, demonstrated by

In this mini-lesson, simply highlight in a text you've written yourself how using examples and experts help you write a more successful piece of writing. You can then invite children to use these devices for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

By what means does it happen?

This type of mini-lesson is not always necessary. Often, the purpose and audience for our writing naturally dictate the types of language we are going to use and not the other way around. If I'm looking to explain something to others, I'm quite naturally going to use *by.* It's going to happen by definition. By doing this, I can share how something happens.

In this mini-lesson, simply highlight in a text you've written yourself how using 'by' allowed you to explain something for your reader. You can then invite children to use it for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Order-of-mention

Linguist David Crystal reminds us how important order-of-mention is if we want our writing to express our meaning clearly and unambiguously. Think how annoying it could be to follow a set of instructions if they dotted about in time:

1.Cover the cake with the whipped cream
2. Chill for 30 minutes
3. Sugar should be added to the cream before whipping.

However, it's possible to show your 'greater depth' writing mettle - avoiding possible dullness and the over-use of *and* - by sometimes varying the order-of -mention without compromising clarity. In storytelling for example, conjunctions such as *before* and *after,* and adverbials which manage time shifts: *once, already, long ago, two hours earlier, the year before,* help you write in a more mature and sophisticated way.

For this minilesson, show examples of your writing where you have neatly varied the order- of -mention. Get children to look in the books they are reading to see how their favourite authors do it, and invite them to try it too in their writing that day.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The gang of three

What I tell you three times is true

- Lewis Carroll

The technical name for this mini-lesson is parallel construction. It allows you to write with clarity and a rhythm that is quite pleasing. It works by uniting phrases with a common grammatical construction. For example:

> The pilot focused his eyes, tightened his helmet and clapped his hands. "Let's go!' he announced.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children an example from your own notebook where you've used the 'gang of three' technique. Ask them what they think. You can then invite them to give it a try during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

Beware of 'it'

In 1986, Stephen King wrote a book called 'it'. The book is about a group of children who are terrorised by a mysterious and obscure evil entity. Grammarians believe 'it' to be an 'obscure pronominal reference'. It's something young writers often fall into the habit of doing. They leave an 'it' hanging in a sentence without a clear reference to what the 'it' actually is. This can make their writing hard to follow.

For this mini-lesson, try to show an example of a child's piece which falls into this trap. Ask the children why the use of 'it' is confusing and what should be done. You can then invite them to look at their own compositions to see whether they've fallen into the 'it' trap themselves.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Pack a punch and share the detail

Sometimes, when people are explaining things, they can go off in this direction and that, and their sentences can be long and winding, feeling like they are never going to end, one piece of information, followed by another, followed by another. It's all too much. Readers need variety. In non-fiction, sometimes it's right to 'pack a punch' with a short sentence, and other times it's right to use a longer one to share detail. This is worth explaining to your class.

In this mini-lesson, show children a text you've crafted and highlight in one colour your short sentences and use another colour for your longer one. See if there is a variety. Where do the short sentences lie in the text? Why? What difference do they think it makes to the piece? Finally, invite children to consider whether they've used a variety of sentence lengths in their piece. This mini-lesson is best taught whilst the majority of your class are revising.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Switching it up

For me writing is a question of finding a certain rhythm. I compare it to the rhythms of jazz

– Françoise Sagan

When we write sentences, we have options. I can, if I want to, place clauses in different positions within my sentence. It's a beautiful thing; it really is! Without going overboard, it's a good thing to show children how they can switch up their clause placement. This can help keep your reader on their toes and create a more natural rhythm to your writing. I like to have up on my working wall a simple poster like this:

[Opener] , sentence.

Sent , [oh by the way] , ence.

Sentence ; [a little bit extra] .

For this mini-lesson, I would use an example of your own writing alongside the

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

poster explained above. You can show children the options they have available to them as they construct sentences. You can then invite them to think about how they've crafted their developing compositions during that day's writing time. For this reason, it's a good idea to teach this mini-lesson when the majority of your class are revising their pieces.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Sentences as daisy chains

This mini-lesson is inspired by the book 'Revision Decisions' by Deborah Dean & Jeff Anderson. As writers, we can 'daisy chain' words and phrases together by connecting them. This helps our reader to glide along happily and to share extra insights and information. There are a number of ways to make 'daisy chains':

- Through punctuation (semi-colons, colons, dashes, brackets, commas)
- Through conjunctions (coordinating or subordinating)
- Through prepositions and relative pronouns (who, whom, which, that, those, whose, where, when, why and what)

How [Peter Bunzl] makes daisy chains	
Example from the book [*Moonlocket*]	**What [Peter] is using and why**
They found themselves in a long, narrow room	Preposition *in* to say where.
with an earthen floor, which stretched out under the street. In its centre was a large manhole cover.	Preposition *with* to explain the wooden floor in the room.
which stretched out under the street.	Preposition *under* to explain where.
In its centre was a large manhole cover.	Preposition *in* to tell you about the manhole cover.
Finlo took out his crowbar once more and forced it open.	Coordinating conjunction *and* to connect Finlo getting the crowbar out with forcing the manhole cover open.
Air wafted from the hole, humid and claggy, and filled with a fecund stink.	Commas to add humid and claggy to the description of the air.
There it was: the Fleet Sewer.	Colon to introduce the name of the sewer.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How [Philip Pullman] makes daisy chains	
Example from the book [*The Ruby In The Smoke*]	**What [Philip] is using and why**
One cold, fretful afternoon in early October, 1872, a hansom cab drew up outside the offices of Lockhart and Selby	The commas allow Philip to share the date 1872
, Shipping Agents in the financial heart of London	The comma allows Philip to add more information about Lockhart and Selby
, and a young girl got out and paid the driver.	The commas allows Philip to add more information about who got out of the cab.
She was a person of sixteen or so - alone, and uncommonly pretty.	The dash allows Philip to tell us more about the young girl.
She was slender and pale, and dressed in mourning, with a black bonnet under which she tucked back a straying twist of blonde hair that the wind had teased loose.	The commas allow Philip to tell us about how she was dressed The relative pronoun *that* allows Philip to tell us more about what her hair was doing.
She had unusually dark brown eyes for one so fair.	The coordinating conjunction *for* allows Philip to tell us about her complexion.
Her name was Sally Lockhart; and within fifteen minutes, she was going to kill a man.	The semicolon allows Philip to tell us that she is going to kill a man in the next fifteen minutes.

For this mini-lesson simply show children your own example of the above. It's good if you use your own writing or else an extract from a book the class knows well. You can then give out a blank version of the box and ask children to look at their 'daisy chains' during that day's writing time.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How I've made daisy chains	
Example from my writing	**What I'm using and why**

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Borrow from what you've read: Referencing

How often do teachers set homework to investigate a topic and write about it, only for the manuscripts to be a 'copy and paste' from Wikipedia? I feel sorry for the children in this situation as I'm sure a lot of them don't mean to. They've never been shown how to reference other texts alongside their own writing. We can teach them how writers ethically borrow from what they've read by using quotations and referencing.

In this mini-lesson, simply show children how you've borrowed from things you've read when producing your own texts. Our university essays are a good place to start. Explain why you did it and how you did it. Show them the typical conventions for quoting including: quotation marks, name of the author, publication date, page number and listing the title of the book at the end of the piece. You can then invite children to do this during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; planning; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Save it for later

Every now and then, while I'm writing, a word, a phrase, a great line or maybe a striking metaphor will leap into my mind, and I'll like how it sounds so much that I'll feel I must include it in my piece- that it's too good to be left out. But when I come to re-read or revise the writing, I'll realise that it doesn't quite seem to fit. Then I find I'll have a struggle with myself about leaving it out, just because I'm rather taken with it. But leaving it out is just what I need to do. However, there's a solution to this problem, which is to copy that great line or that arresting metaphor into my notebook, and save it for another time, when it will have an even better effect. As writer Edith Sitwell said: *All in the end is harvest.* I usually feel good when I've made myself do this. It shows I can sometimes be self-disciplined!

If you've taught your children the other mini-lessons about squirrelling good stuff away in their notebook, they will understand how saving bits of their own great writing for later is a real writerly strategy they can use at any time, now and in the future. Explain to them that they could today write a 'good stuff I've written' heading in their notebook, and show them where you've done this in yours. They could also revise their text with this strategy in mind today. Tell them too that being able to park something you're attached to and use it at a more appropriate time is a sign of a discriminating writer operating at greater depth.

Tags: Clarity and accuracy, drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

If in doubt, cut it out: Getting rid of 'yawny bits'

It's important to scrutinize every word, phrase, and clause—to see whether you can cut it to give you a sentence that conveys the same meaning more swiftly

- Bruce Larson

Our writing is like ice cream. If you put too many toppings on it (because you like them all) you ruin the ice cream and make yourself sick. If we keep everything we like in our writing, we can sometimes make our readers sick too. We have to know when there's too much and remove anything that's ruining the overall quality of our piece.

Get rid of:

- Words that are just standing around and not doing anything
- Unnecessary repetition
- Yawny bits.

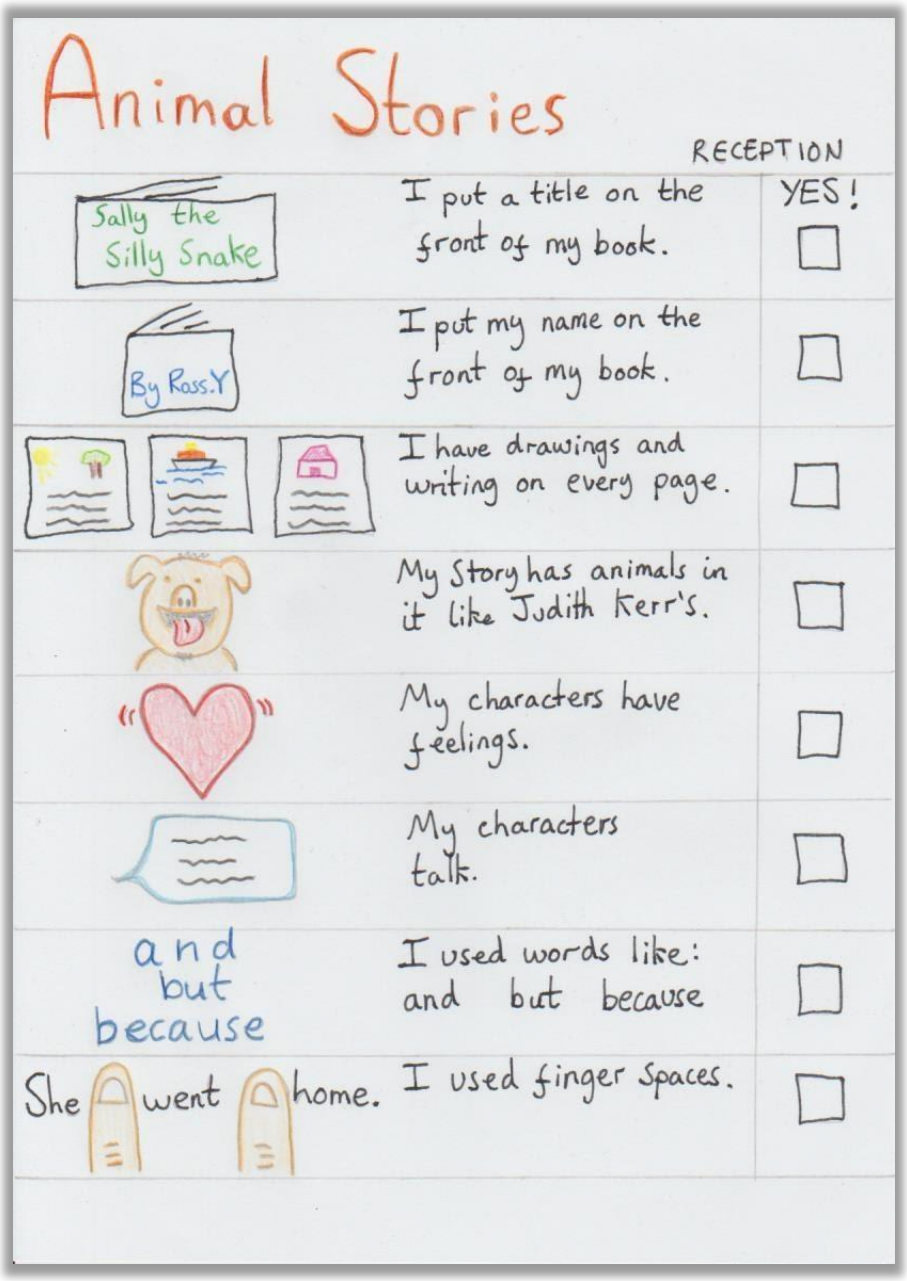
The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to invite your class to critique a piece you're currently working on. Ask them what words need to go, where there is repetition and where your yawny bits are. Discuss with them what they have to say. You don't have to always agree with them - you can justify yourself if you want to keep certain things in. Finally, invite children to do some cutting during that day's writing time.

Tags: Clarity and accuracy; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

YES! I did it! EYFS checklists

Children like to know what they have to do and how to do it. They also get a great deal of satisfaction and confidence in knowing they are doing a good job. That's what checklists in the EYFS are all about.



Animal Stories

RECEPTION

		YES!
Sally the Silly Snake	I put a title on the front of my book.	☐
By Ross.Y	I put my name on the front of my book.	☐
	I have drawings and writing on every page.	☐
	My Story has animals in it like Judith Kerr's.	☐
	My characters have feelings.	☐
	My characters talk.	☐
and but because	I used words like: and but because	☐
She went home.	I used finger spaces.	☐

The best way to introduce the concept of checklists is to show how you've used one with your own picture book making. Explain your process and invite questions from the children before giving them an opportunity to use the checklist for themselves during book making time. I would provide one word of caution. The best checklists are the ones you construct with your class collaboratively, in response to where your children are developmentally, and influenced by the particular writing project they are working on. For example, the checklist above was made for a Reception class in the summer term who were making animal picture books like Judith Kerr's Mog The Forgetful Cat.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How to use a revision checklist

In our book Real-World Writers, we share that if drafting is finding out what it is we want to say, revising is about how best to say it. Revising, then, is about re-seeing, re-thinking, reviewing and otherwise transforming drafted writing. Annie Dillard has always summed it up for me. She talks about it being a privilege to revise and muck about in sentences all morning. I've always seen revision as an opportunity for children to splash around in their existing writing.

The revision checklists we supply in our Genre booklets originally came from a need I had as an adult writer. I've always been aware of what makes for great writing but whilst I'm drafting I can find it hard to keep these things in mind. I began making lists of things I knew I wanted to consider once I had got a draft onto paper. Even to this day, I staple these notes to the inside of my notebooks. They help me immensely, and so I provided them for my classes too.

The best way to introduce the concept of revision checklists is to show how you've used one with your own writing. Explain your process and invite questions from the children before giving them an opportunity to use them themselves during writing time. I would provide one word of caution. You'll note that on our checklists we have put 'I gave it a try'. What this means is that the child considered the item, they may have tried something out on their 'trying things out page,' or else they've made direct changes to their draft. What it doesn't mean is that the child must include everything that's on the checklist. For example, they try something out on their 'trying things out page' and decide it's not right for their piece.In my opinion, this is a sign of a greater-depth writer. Lastly, the best revision checklists are the ones you construct with your class collaboratively.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Getting it 'reader ready': How to use an editing checklist

Proof-reading is the writers' equivalent of tidying up the house before your parents get home. I've always told children it's about preparing their writing for publication. We are getting it 'reader ready'. This is an important point. Children are far more willing to put the time and energy into ensuring their writing follows all necessary conventions if they know it's being done for a reason. They are also more willing when they (and you) care deeply about their writing doing well. When children feel they own their writing, they want to take care of it.

On the whole, the children I've worked with like to tackle proof-reading little by little. I suggest that they only attend to one part of the editing checklist in a single writing session. If you want quality proof-reading, it takes time. I also suggest you give children time away from their manuscripts before they begin editing them. A few days is usually good.

It's worth spending a number of mini-lessons on how to use an editing checklist. You want to model and showcase how to attend to each aspect on the checklist and show children how you work through the processes yourself. A visualiser and a genuine unedited manuscript of your own is essential here. Dedicate a mini-lesson to each aspect of the checklist; you may need to repeat such mini-lessons throughout the year. However, if your school has a consistent routine, children soon pick this up and begin to edit independently quite quickly. Finally, whilst we provide you with a printable checklist, it's much better if, at the beginning of the year, you get children to design their own.

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Ha! Gottcha!: How many edits have you got?

I have to be honest with you, children aren't particularly turned on by proof-reading; particularly when we have a mentality in our classrooms that errors are bad or are something we should be embarrassed about. Instead, if we can create an atmosphere where proof-reading is a positive thing which you can get praised for doing, and that it is the sign of a good conscientious writer, then editing can be a far more enjoyable and profitable experience for our apprentice writers. It's imperative that we celebrate the number of edits a child has made, rather than get upset by them.

What I like to do with this mini-lesson is count up the number of proof-reading corrections I've made in a piece of my own writing prior to publishing it. I count up all the red pen marks in front of them and proudly put the number in the corner of my manuscript. I make sure I look pretty pleased with myself too. 'Ha! Gotcha!' I will say - almost like I've been swatting as many flies as possible. I then challenge the children to beat my score and see how many edits they can make during that day's writing time...the more the better!

Tags: Clarity & accuracy; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Setting up publishing expectations

I have very high and strict expectations for publishing in my classes. So much so, they had to be renegotiated with my Year 5 class one year. I had an expectation that no errors should be allowed to go into a final published piece. Despite the fact that my class was focused and hard-working, this expectation simply wasn't always realistic. As a result, we wrote our own publishing expectations as a class. We came to an agreement:

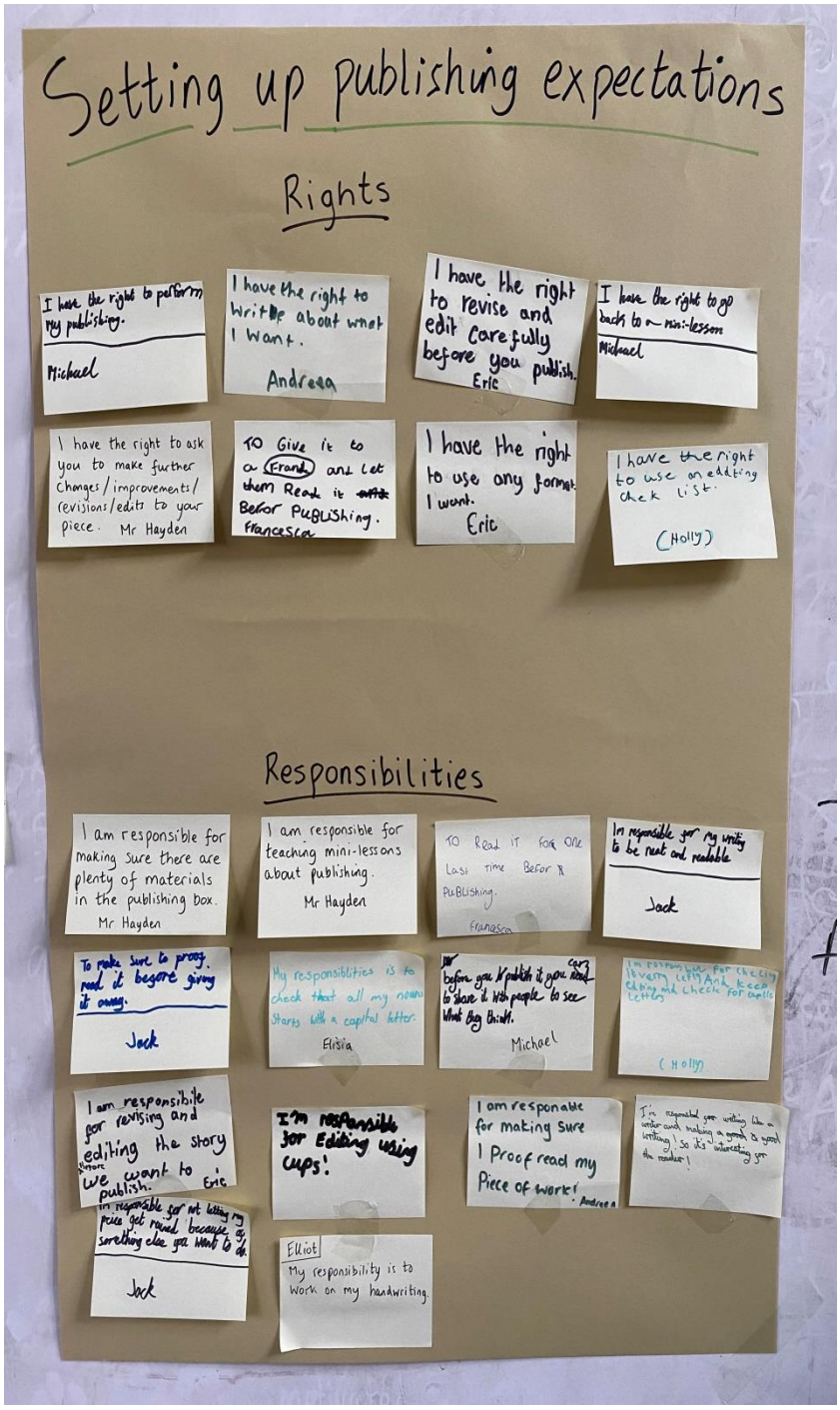
- The right to publish electronically and on paper.
- The right to publish our writing into the class library and beyond.
- The right to an audience beyond our teacher.
- The right to make a few mistakes when publishing.
    - Cross out our mistakes with a pencil and a ruler.
    - Focus on publishing in a neat and easily read handwriting style.
- The right to publish with or without illustrations.
- The right to think imaginatively about how our writing can be published or performed.
- The responsibility to make sure the publishing area is always well stocked with materials (papers, pens, pencils, card, washi tape etc.).
- The responsibility to teach/request mini-lessons about publishing.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

- The responsibility to proofread my piece to get it ‘reader ready’.
- The responsibility to share my piece with other writers to get their thoughts and opinions before beginning to publish.

It’s important that you think about what expectations are developmentally appropriate for your class as a whole. You also need to be sensitive to individual children who may not always be able to meet those expectations. The focus instead should be on their individual effort to publish with care and attention.

In Tobias Hayden’s class the children spent some time discussing what they thought their rights and responsibilities were in relation to publishing. Interestingly, among other things, the children decided that they had the right to be taught mini-lessons in publishing (with the teacher being responsible for teaching them too!) and also that it would be helpful if the publishing box was always well stocked with materials.



Tags: Clarity & accuracy; publishing; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Developing

It goes without saying that readers like lively and interesting texts which conjure up pictures in their minds as they read. This is true of writing in any of the major genres. A written piece's success in terms of the reader's enjoyment and understanding depends, among other things, on the information or detail that has been included. However it's not the amount of information that's important but its quality and effectiveness. Young writers need to know what kinds of detail are needed to bring the piece alive for their readers, and why and when to give it. These mini-lessons offer children general strategies which they can use in the long-term to revise their pieces and make considered decisions about how the writing could be developed and strengthened through the adding in, refinement, and sometimes the taking out of extra information.

Generating words from pictures

Some great ideas come to the children when they are drawing. This is especially true of young children - their pictures can help them tell so many stories, memoirs and things they know about. There is so much more in children's drawings than an adult can see. How can we help these young children write and develop these stories and ideas?

Sometimes when I am drawing, I know that my pictures are telling stories. I know this because I think of so many interesting ideas when I am drawing them. So when I want to share the ideas and stories they are telling, I write them down. I ask myself questions when I look at my drawings: what is happening? Who is here? Where is this?

Share one of your drawings or the children's drawings. Ask the questions above.. Show them how you can generate words from the drawings you have created.

Tags: Developing; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Add details to your pictures, add details to your writing!

This mini lesson can be a continuation from the lesson 'Generating words from pictures' or can be taught separately. In this lesson, children will lay the foundations for revising their work. The interesting thing is that it works with early writers as well as more confident writers in KS1. When children add details to their pictures, it makes it easier for them to add details to their writing too. I have started the lesson in a very simple way, but it can be adapted depending on the children you are teaching.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Yesterday, I shared my running story with you. Who can remember what happened to me? That's right- as you can see in my picture I was running and I stepped in mud. Today when I'm looking at my picture I'm remembering more things that happened that day (drawing my running watch). I remember that I looked at my watch and I thought I needed to continue running, I hadn't completed my run yet. Then, I noticed it was really hot (I drew the sun in the sky), and kept sweating, it was hard (I drew the sweat coming from my face). But, I didn't give up, I kept on going! I think I will add these details to my writing too, it will make my story more interesting. You might want to look at your pictures today and see if you can think of any more details, add them to your picture, then add them to your writing. Have a go if you want.

Tags: Developing; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Do my pictures match my words?

This lesson helps children to raise the awareness that they can use their pictures to help them with their writing and to understand how pictures work in connection with words in a picture book to tell a story, a narrative or to give information. The lesson can be linked with your *Reading for Pleasure* session, where children investigate pictures and words in picture books, then during writing time you briefly pick up the mini-lesson as the children continue to make/ write their books. Additionally, they can start looking at their own books and their peers' books and see how the pictures are matching the words or how they are telling their narrative or giving the information they want to communicate.

You can use the picture book that you are writing/ have written, or choose a book where the author is also the illustrator. It would be even better if the children are already familiar with the book before this lesson (read the book during your reading aloud session). *Lately, I have been thinking how my pictures help me to write my story, but I'm not sure how the words are matching the pictures in this book. I have learned that pictures help the writing to tell the story and the writing helps the pictures to tell a story too. So it is good when they match or connect somehow.*
Talk about how the pictures and words in the book you are using are matching, connecting/ or not matching or connecting, and what you could do to make them link up. Invite the children to check their book or a friend's book, asking the question: *Do my pictures match my words?*

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; independence, confidence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Touch your pictures to make them come alive!

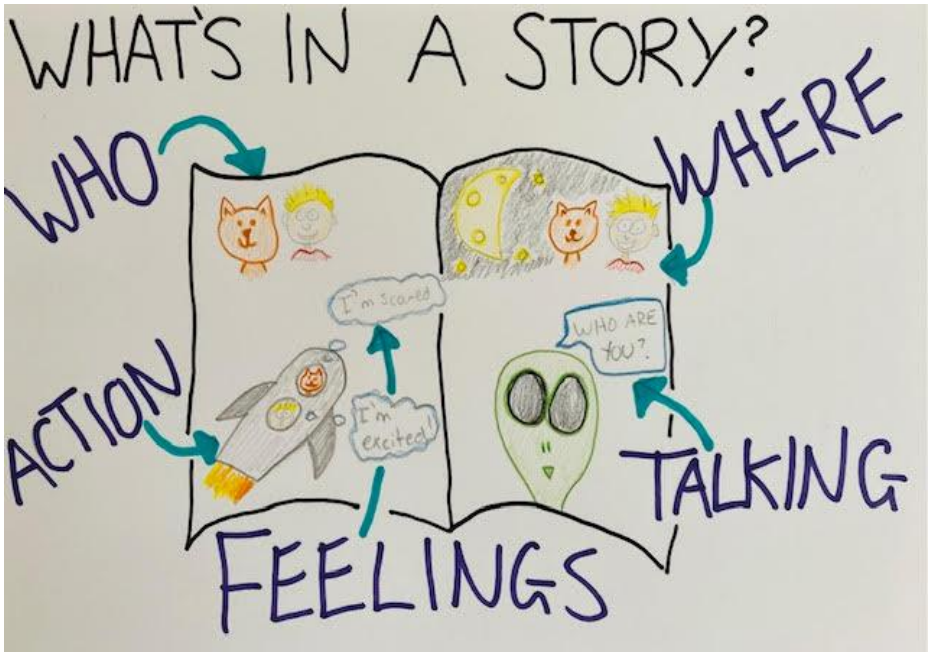
When children were younger, they may have been given books that had interactive buttons. They may also have read interactive e-books. When certain pictures are pressed, noises are made or some of the story is told. You also find this in some museums geared towards younger children. They can press on a picture and it will tell them more about the subject. Well, children can do this with their picture books too. Simply ask them to point on different parts of their pictures and to tell you what they are about. Alternatively, you can do the pointing. You'll notice that children will often tell you more than appears in their text. Over time, you can encourage children to add this information to their text by using captions or adding extra information to the bottom of their page.

For this mini-lesson, simply model it with your class. Ask a child to come up to the front and to point to different parts of your illustrations in your picture book. You should then look to tell them more about that part of the picture, do the character's voice or noise - or do some kind of retelling. Show children how you might add new text to your piece as a result. You can invite children to do this with their friends at their tables during book-making time

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; independence, confidence; EYFS, KS1

What's in a story?

This simple mini-lesson reminds the earliest of writers what's involved in writing a good story. They can include: WHO is there and WHERE they are, the ACTION, their FEELINGS about the action, and what the characters TALK about.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, show children a picture book you've made that includes all of the above. You can then ask them what the WHO, WHERE, ACTION, FEELINGS and TALKING was in your book. You can then invite them to make sure they have these things in their picture books during book-making time.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

It's OK - just add it on at the end

As well as amending their drawings, 'adding on' text is the first sign of children understanding that revision is possible. I've found with the most inexperienced writers that when you talk to them about their pieces they'll often tell you more than was originally in their text. Essentially, they have revised their text during the process of sharing. It often seems a waste for this to go unnoticed and it's a shame to miss out on sowing the seeds of early writing revision. And so, during these moments, it's a good idea to simply tell the child that they can add any extra information onto the end of their piece. As children get more experienced, they'll learn how to integrate these revisions into the correct place in their text. In the meantime though, this is a great place to start.

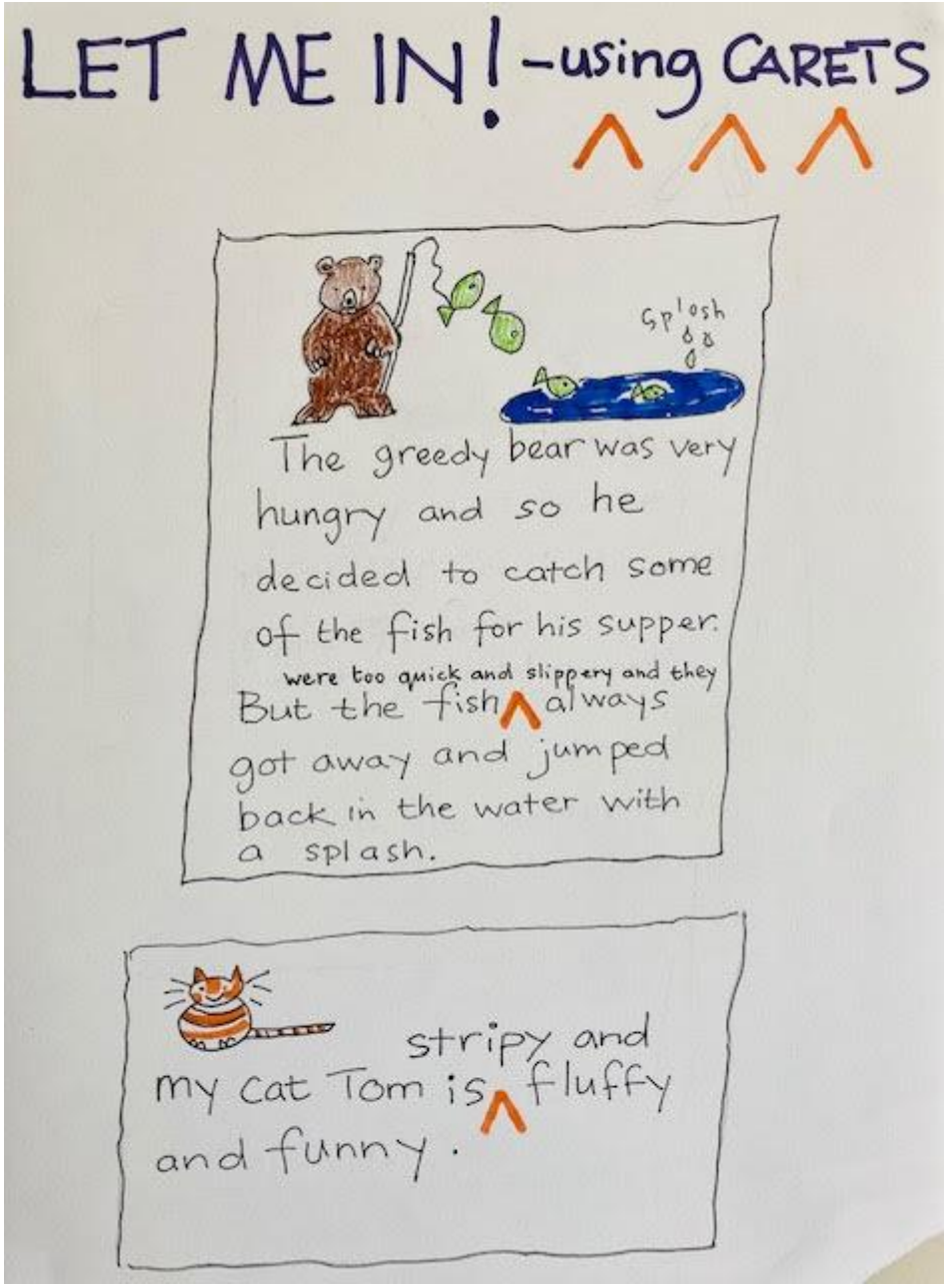
In this mini-lesson, share how sometimes children in previous years have wanted to say more in their writing after they thought it was finished. Explain how they would just add these extra thoughts to the end of their text. You can then invite them to try it during bookmaking time.

Tags: Developing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Let me in! Using carets

When we want to make an amendment to our text we usually use a caret to do it. We can teach this revision technique to children.



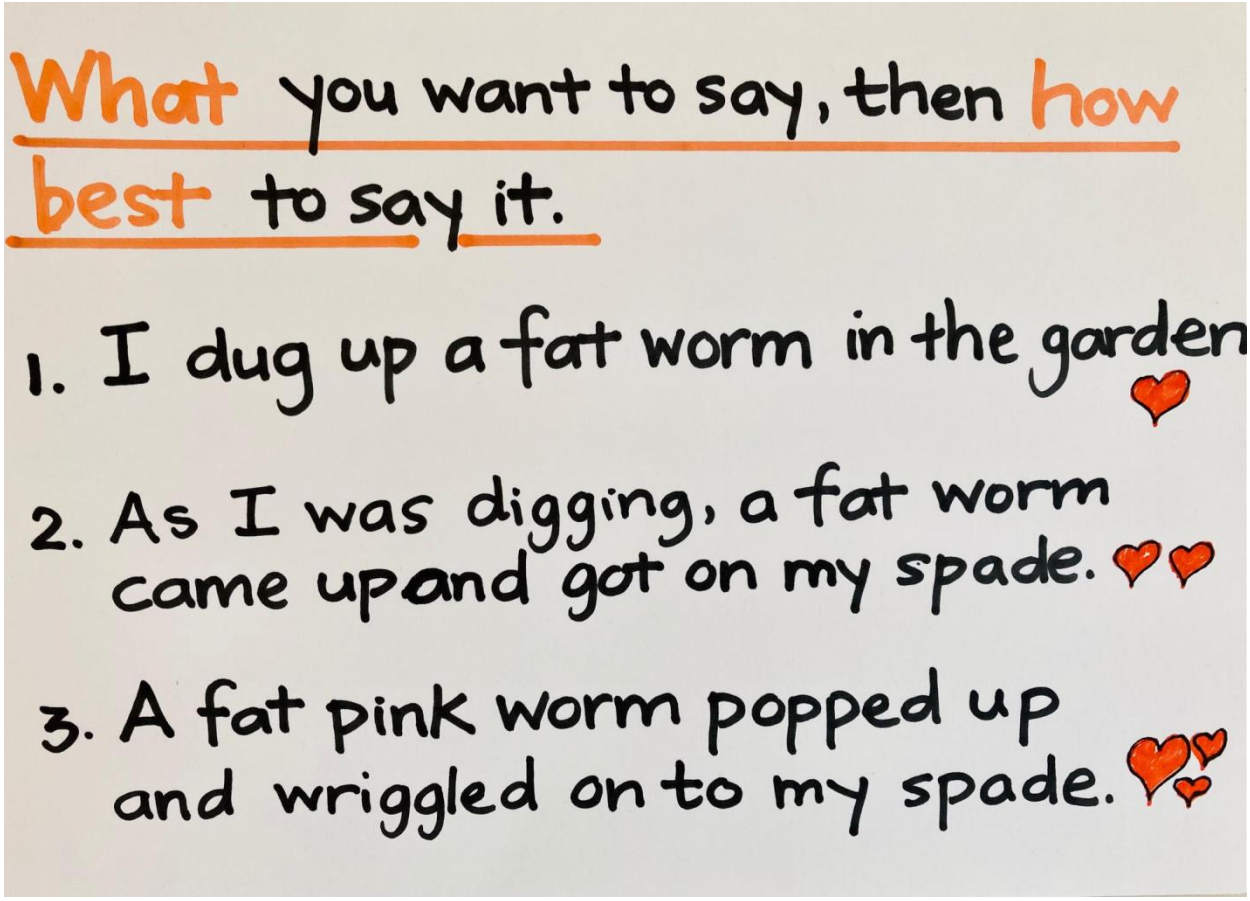
In this mini-lesson, explain how you use carets to sneak a little 'extra information' into your texts. You can then invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What you want to say, then *How best* to say it

Many adult writers first need to put down on paper *what* it is they want to say before they can think about *how best* to say it. This is something we can share with children.



In this mini-lesson, share how you will sometimes write down a sentence - just to see what it is you want to say before you read it back and think about how best to say it. You can then invite your class to give it a try during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Dabbling

This mini-lesson is based on an Example Of Practice I wrote for the Writing For Pleasure Centre website. You can read about it **here**.

After I've got an idea in mind but before I even begin thinking about a plan or draft, I will often dabble in my writer's notebook. This is where I meditate on my idea for a while. I learnt it from the children's author David Almond. I'll write down notes, lists, things that come to mind, possible great lines and things I know I'm going to want to write about. I will often draw pictures too. I will use all sorts of coloured pencils and pens. Eventually, I can almost feel a natural urge towards writing a discovery draft or

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

else set myself up with a more formal plan. Children are often very grateful to have an opportunity to dabble.

This is one of my very favourite mini-lessons. I always enjoy sharing the dabbles within my writer's notebook and children are always interested to ask thought-provoking questions about my process and to see the transition between these early doodles and a final piece. Share yours too and invite children to try it out for themselves.

The Fox & The Star by Coralie Bickford-Smith	**Children's responses:** ***Untitled*** *Once beyond time, there lived a fox, who lived in a star. Not on the fiery surface, but in the middle of it, where it was bathed in pure light. The fox, each night, would travel down from the star and give hope to the hopeless. He lived upon a wishing star, so each night he would wish hope on the star itself. He would chant 'oh star, oh star, give the hopeless hope!' And his wish was always granted. At day, he would peer down from the grand view of the star, searching for ones who needed hope.* *One day, he was looking down, far beyond where he used to, and he fell from the star. He was a star fox so he would not be hurt, but he was scared he wouldn't be able to get back. He was just about to try and fly back when suddenly he heard crying. It seemed to be coming from the south. The fox headed towards where the crying was coming from.*

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

STARS!

Look up, look up,
Beyond your ears
The stars are waiting
Shining brightly through the clouds
They make your eyes shine at night
It's like a happy light bobbling independently in a lake of ink
Shining brightly you might lose your eyesight
But the happy stars are here to guide you
Through the dark and gloomy night.

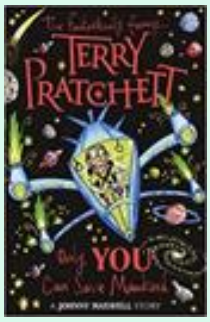
The Fox That Never Woke Up

'Wake up fox, wake up' said the whistling wind.
'Oh, how I've missed getting chased by you' said the squeaking voice of the Beetle.
Trees rustling in the distant wind. Then all was quiet.
The fox never woke up.
His cave dark and gloomy.
Everything. Stop.
The moving of the beetle. Stop.
The whistling wind. Stop.
The fox will never wake up.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Spirit by Sally Christie	***Untitled*** *Huddled in his cosy den, he watches the happy spirits floating in the cool bright breeze – whispering like a dream.* *He could hear the spirits singing to the cloud like the voices of children.*
Trouble At School by Chris Higgins	***Lina & Ivy: trouble at school*** *Once, there were two girls called Ivy and Lina. They loved school but not this day because it was Mr. Young! He was teaching the class about funny jokes. Funny jokes about… golf! *slaps face* We didn't mind Mr. Young – it's just his golf jokes are really rather terrible. We think he's a nice teacher and all but it's just getting a little too crazy.* *We have a class pet called Chedgy and she is a flying pig! We have lots of friends who are nice to us and one of them is called Oliver. Oliver and Mr. Young were the only ones who would laugh at his jokes.* ****Back to the story**** *So it was just another normal day at Swingboat Junior School but Lina and Ivy heard there was a new girl coming into school. Her name was Maria.*
Quick Let's Get Out Of Here by Michael Rosen	*-> Wrote this on my own. Published by me <-* *Time for bed, time for bed children, rush upstairs until you are fed up. Brush your teeth, brush your teeth until you've made them squeaky clean. Get PJs, get PJs – find them in the cupboard. Get them on until you are tired and sleepy. Into bed, into bed – when Mum comes up. Go to sleep, go to sleep. Night night my sleeping children.*

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Only You Can Save Mankind by Terry Pratchett 	***The Boy Who Got Sucked Into A Computer Game.*** *Oh no really – did I have to die?! Beep! Booop! Crack!* *Now I have lost all my coins (I got angry).* *'Joe, it's time for dinner,'* *'Coming Mum!'* *The dinner waiting for me is a pizza.* *Once I finish, I have ice-cream and chocolate sauce. Then I get back onto my game. Oh no!* *Oh no!* *Weeee* *I got sucked into the game. I saw PacMan (and his ghosts). It was quite amazing. I saw aliens. But I have to get out of here – to my family. So I walk on and fall down a hole and an alien called Zarg gave me a rather bizarre rubrics cube to solve. To solve it meant to go home.* *** *'I'm so pleased,' my mum said. 'Where have you been all these years? It's 2053'. 'I'm joking, you only went for a few minutes and I'm glad you're home'.*
Gorilla by Anthony Browne	***Untitled*** *Before the night of my birthday, something rather scary happened. I heard a clicking in my room and my door creaked open. My guinea pig was squeaking and it woke me right out of my bed. I went straight to my mum and dad's bedroom but they weren't there so I banked on legging it to the front door but when I got there it was locked. I felt then that I needed to find it before it found me! So I found my nerve guns and positioned myself behind the sofa. I was ready. 'Watch out pig,' I whispered. I shot it, got back to my bed and there I stayed. At the end of my bed was a parcel. In it was a gun and a letter and it said: beware there is a thing in the house. <u>Protect yourself Ollie.</u>*

Here are just a few examples of some dabbles taken from Ross' class.

Tags: Developing; generating ideas, planning; all genres, confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Authors ask questions

Writers are nosy people; we are endlessly curious: we ask questions.

- Ann Turner

Whilst they are planning and drafting, a good writer will always be asking questions. Their answers often become the story. A good planning strategy for narrative writing is to simply ask children to write down lots of questions related to their story idea. These questions will often become fruitful potential plot lines for their story. Alternatively, whilst they are drafting, they should write down questions that come to mind on their 'trying things out page' for safe keeping. These can sometimes come in handy. They can also write down the questions their readers ask when they share their developing piece with them.

The best way to teach this mini-lesson is to show your class how you've used this technique yourself. Show them your writer's notebook. You can also ask them what questions come to mind as they listen to a story you've been developing and you should write them down in your notebook. You can then invite the children to do the same with their peers during writing time.

Tags: Developing; generating ideas, planning; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Writing your title last

When I write, I'll often put a working title at the top of the page to get me going, but it's important to reconsider it when you're preparing your piece for publication. Encourage children to review their manuscript and write a whole host of potential titles. They can then ask their fellow writers which title they feel is the most engaging or thought provoking.

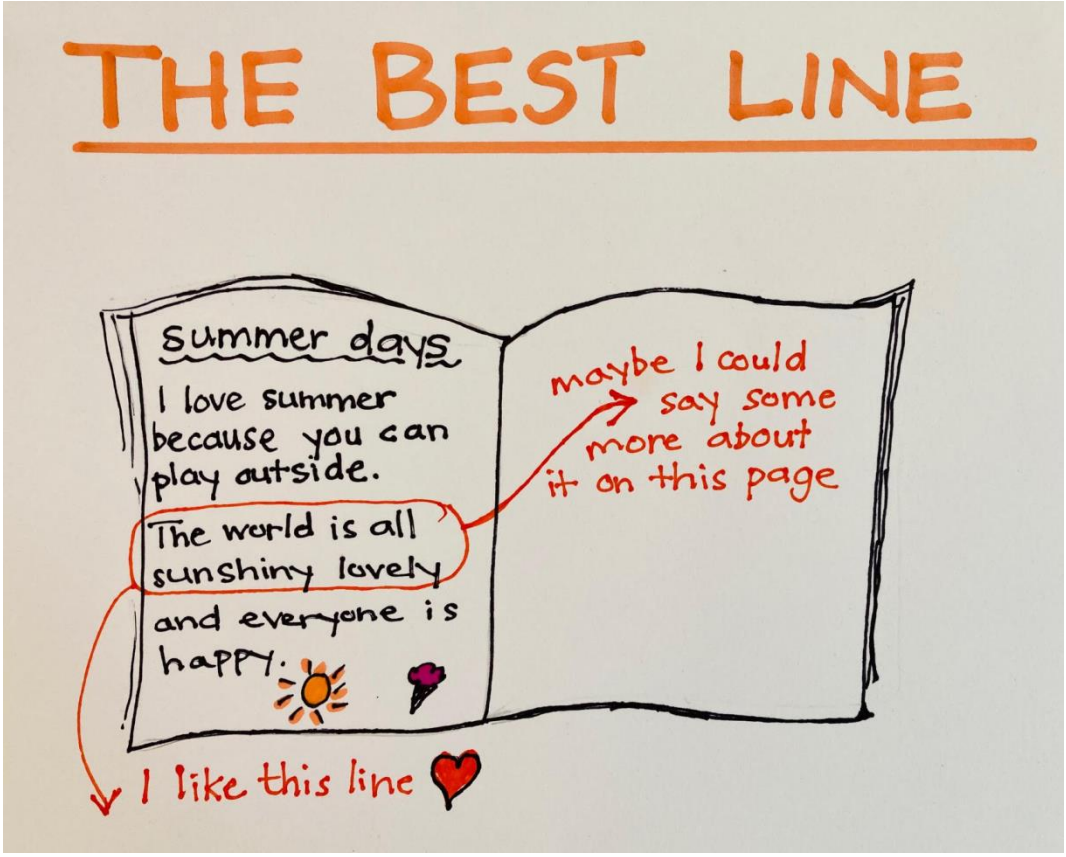
Share a piece of your own writing and discuss how you went about deciding on the title. Share with them the titles you rejected and your rationale for doing so. Be sure to invite their questions.

Tags: Developing; revising; all genres, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The best line

As a writer, it's important to be kind to yourself. We can often focus on the deficits in our writing. What's wrong with it rather than what's right with it. This mini-lesson helps teach children to give time and attention to what's going well.



Using an example of your own writing, read through your text with your class and underline which part you all consider to be the most promising line. Invite the children to express why they have chosen that particular sentence. During writing time, take that sentence and turn it into a paragraph to share with your class. Invite them to do the same on their 'revision and trying things out page'.

Tags: Developing; revising; all genres; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Use the senses

Writing using the senses is a great opportunity to paint with words. We can use the senses to bring our writing to life for our readers. As well as the five senses children already know about, I like to think there are two additional 'writer' senses: thoughts and feelings.

I highly recommend having a poster of these senses up in the classroom for you and the children to refer to during pupil-conferencing. For example, I had the following words displayed in my classroom with a relevant symbol or picture:

In addition, encourage children to look for excellent examples of painting with words using sensory detail during reading times (see our poetry Genre-Booklets for examples). These could be collected in a class magpie book. Children can also be encouraged to note down any excellent examples in their writer's notebook. Finally, always be willing to share how you have painted with words using sensory detail in your own writing before inviting the children to try it out for themselves during that day's writing time. Children certainly consider painting with words whilst drafting, but I've found that they find it particularly enjoyable to play around with words and sentences when they are revising.

As a final aside, I would beg you to let your class know that you can have too much of a good thing. We don't need all seven senses represented in our writing at one time nor do we want to overdo it! Some senses (for example taste) are not always appropriate for the subject we are writing about. We want quality over quantity.

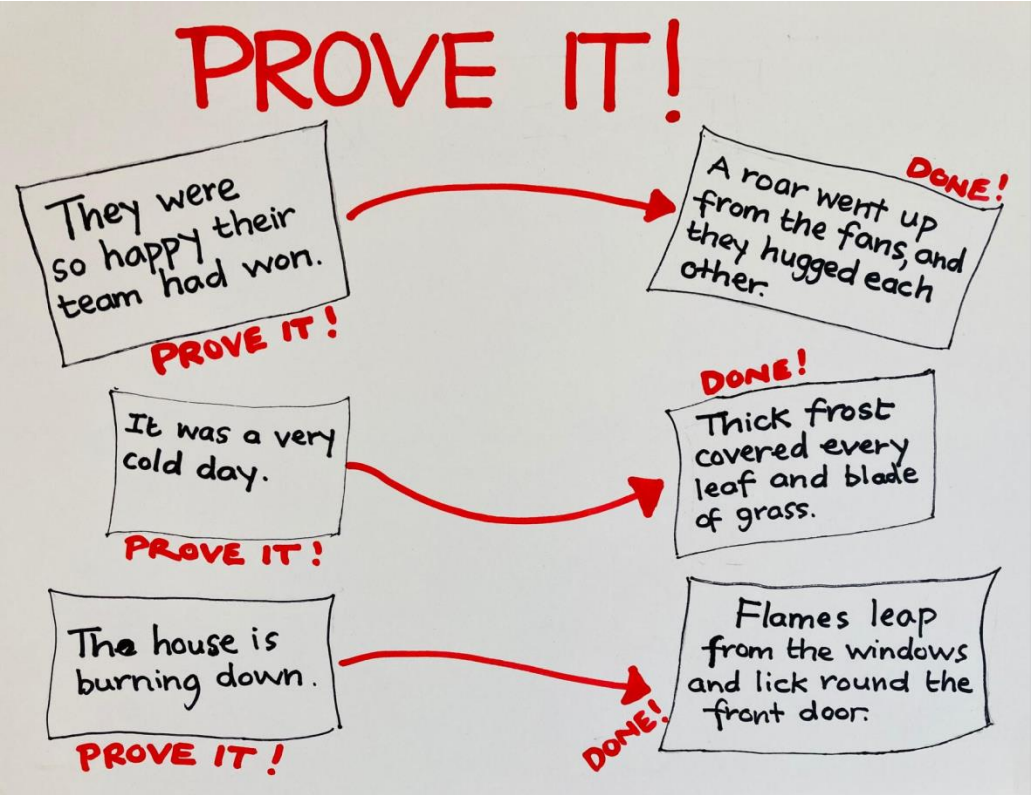
Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres, independence, confidence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Prove it!

Sometimes when we say it directly, we lose the intrigue and appeal of what it is we want to say. Anton Chekhov famously said: 'Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass'. The easiest way I've found to apply this technique to my own writing is to search for where I've used the words *is, was, are* and *were,* as these lead me to tell. By replacing them, I naturally begin to show. For example: *The boy is walking up the hill* instead becomes *The red-faced boy heaves, complains and puffs his way to the top of the hill.*

Another way to look at it is to read your writing back and shout out 'prove it!'. The boy was sad… Prove it!

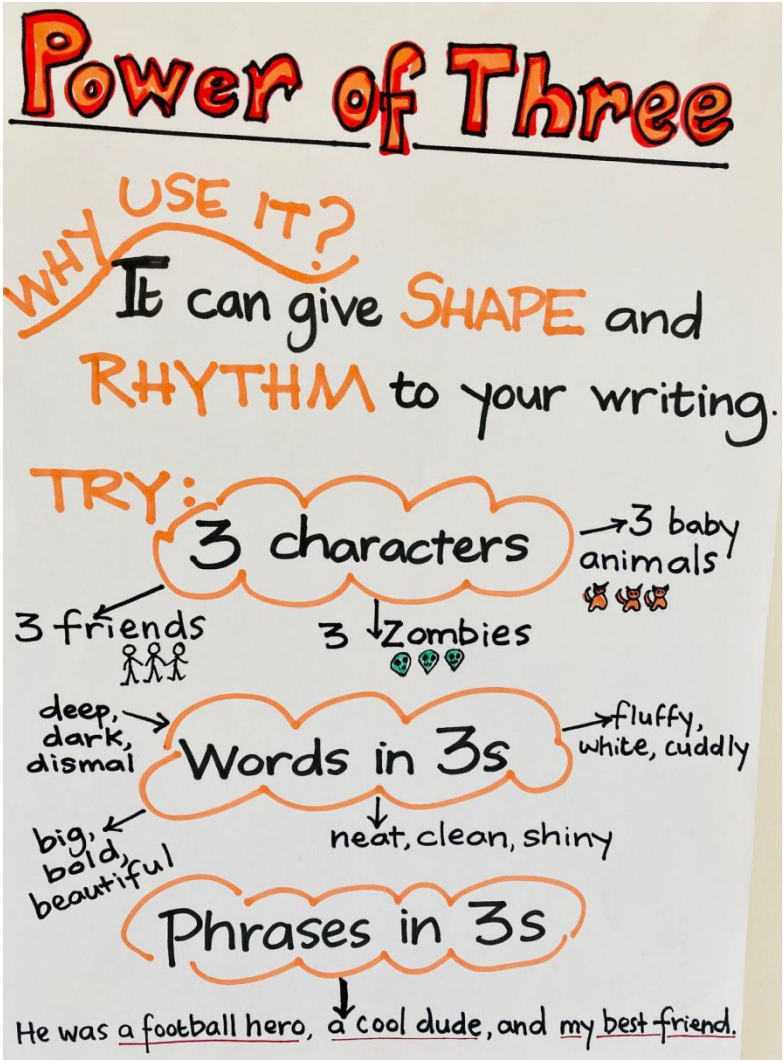


The best thing to do with this lesson is to show children how you have used this technique yourself in your writer's notebook. Explain how you went about it and answer any of the children's questions. You can then invite your young writers to have a go for themselves during writing time. In my experience, this mini-lesson is most effective when the majority of your class are revising their pieces.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The power of three



The number three is vaguely associated with having some kind of magical quality, but as far as I know there doesn't seem to be any definitive explanation for this belief, even though the number has significance across history, science, art and religion. It's very much in evidence as a powerful and inspirational linguistic or literary device: think of the Holy Trinity, The US Declaration of Independence, the slogan of the French Republic, Scrooge's three spirits, Shakespeare's three weird sisters, Churchill's 'blood sweat and tears', or Bill Haley's invitation to Shake, Rattle and Roll. And no story is complete without it. If you remember that tales were first told rather than written down and read, it makes sense that the power of three features so largely in them. Three of whatever has a brief and catchy rhythm about it, making it a memorable oral storytelling device and giving the tales a strong structure. I can assure you that you will all get a lot of fun out of thinking of or just inventing verbal threesomes as a kind of linguistic game!

In this mini-lesson, explain to the children that having a pattern of three things in their story could help them give it a strong shape. Get them to recall instances of the power of three in the fairytales they know, and list them on flipchart paper or make a poster for the working wall. Show them your own story. Did you include, for example, something similar to one of the following: three wishes, three tasks, three chances, three brothers or three princesses? Invite the children to write a power of three into their plan or draft during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; planning, drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Metaphor & Simile

Poet Robert Frost said that unless you are educated in metaphor, you are not safe to be let loose in the world. James Geary even wrote a whole book about metaphor. He says that metaphor lives a secret life all around us and claims that we utter about six metaphors a minute. Metaphorical thinking is essential to how we understand the world, ourselves and others. It has a profound effect on how we communicate, learn, discover and invent.

A metaphor is our ability to take one thing and turn it into something else (or, in the case of a simile, say it's *like* something else). It allows us to see something in a new light.

Metaphor & Simile

When good people are in love, it shines out of their faces **like** moonbeams.

The trees shook **like** cold children. And when the leaves' voices faded away it was as quiet **as** sleep.

You could make out his eyes glinting **like** a coal fire under all his hair.

Dark clouds raced across it **like** wild horses - Ezra Jack Keats

Everything that was once beautiful flickered **like** a flame in that last
moment, and then vanished.

The teacher was a witch. A sea of chaos. Drowning in her own tears.

She got so furious that her anger became a typhoon exploding thunder, lightning and rain that was like stones.

The lamps of Piccadilly, stringing away beside the trees of the park, were becoming pale and moth-like. - D.H Lawrence

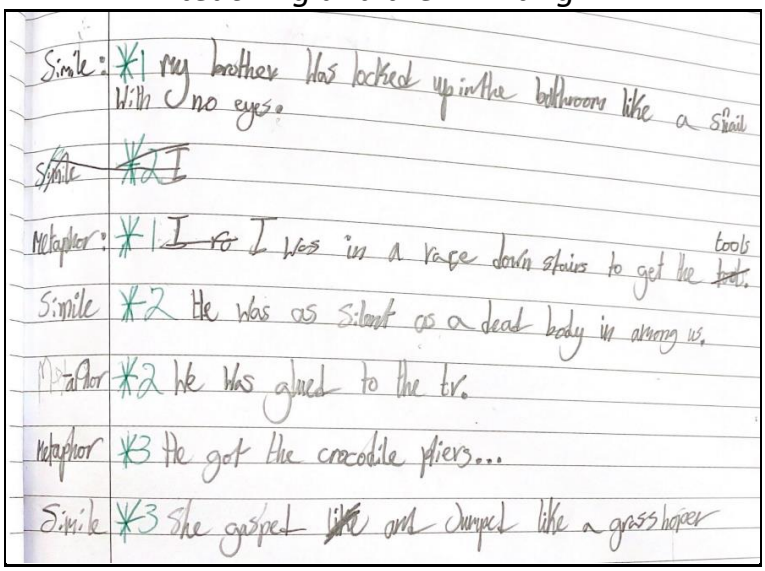
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What I like to do with any poetic technique lesson is ask the children to comb through books from the classroom library for examples that they particularly love. You'll see we've given some examples of what this can look like in the Genre-Booklet. Children can write some of their favourites into their writer's notebooks and you can have a discussion about why they like them so much. Afterwards, you can invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time - and try it for yourself too!

In those days there were no overhead projectors or digital whiteboards. If the teacher wanted to play you a video, they would have to wheel a TV and a video cassette player in on a trolley, and we would all squint like new-born puppies from the back of the class to make out what was going on.

Well on this day I could see that, because Aki had a look on his face like a monkey about to pinch a chip out of your hand, he planned to have a lot of fun. Looking back, the teacher we had was not that experienced and normally we handled her with kid gloves, but today we all joined in with the torment. Anyway, I can't quite remember what we were watching but it was probably a role play of a conversation of someone buying something in a shop, but in German obviously.

Here is an example of writer-teacher Tobias Hayden showing how he tried the technique out in his own memoir. Below is an example of a child from his class trying it out for themselves during that day's writing time. This is a perfect illustration of teaching and then inviting.


Simile: *1 my brother has locked up in the bathroom like a snail with no eyes.
~~Simile~~ ~~*2 I~~
Metaphor: *1 ~~I ra~~ I was in a rage down stairs to get the ~~tool~~ tools.
Simile *2 He was as silent as a dead body in among us.
Metaphor *2 he was glued to the tv.
Metaphor *3 He got the crocodile pliers...
Simile *3 She gasped ~~like~~ and jumped like a grasshopper

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Personification

If I were to use personification right now, I would have these words wake up from their slumber and leap out at you from the page. Personification is when we take things, animals, feelings, ideas and thoughts and have them behave and feel like humans do. Through personification, poets can find parts of themselves in things and non-fiction writers can describe complex things in such a way that we can begin to understand them.

Personification

She sat laughing as the fire flared and the sparks leapt.

I heard the bird softly threading itself through the clouds up above us.

The wind howled in the night.

The car complained as the key was roughly turned in its ignition.

My alarm clock yells at me to get out of bed every morning.

The avalanche devoured anything standing in its way.

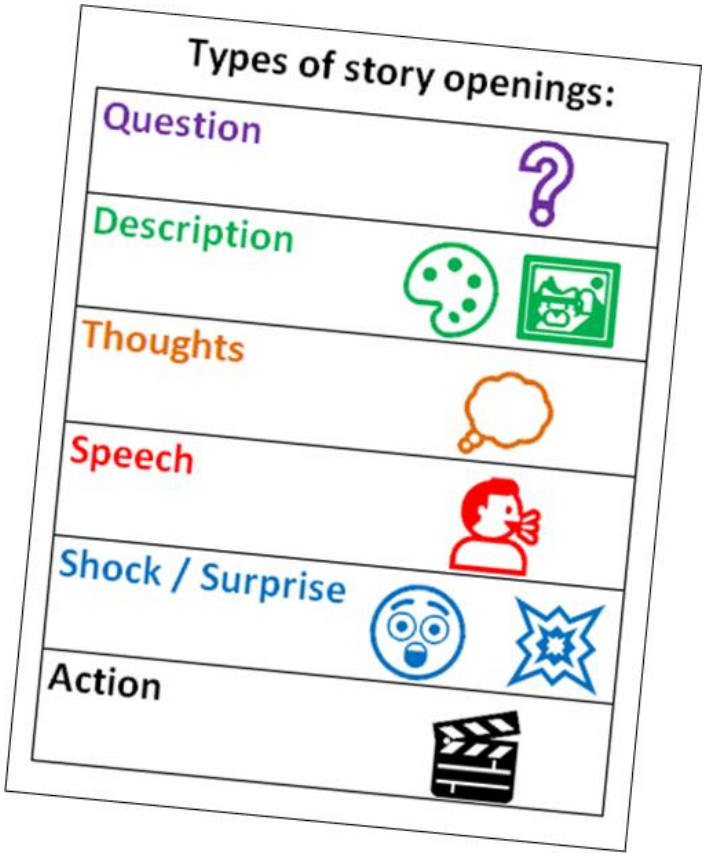
As the hours passed, the moon played hide and seek with the clouds.

What I like to do with any poetic technique lesson is ask the children to comb through books from the classroom library for examples that they particularly love. You'll see we've given some examples of what this can look like in the Genre-Booklet. Children can write some of their favourites into their writer's notebooks and you can have a discussion about why they like them so much. Afterwards, you can invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time – and try it for yourself too!

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Great story openings



It's said that people will often read the first ten pages of a book before deciding whether it's for them or not. Obviously, the children in your class aren't writing novels for this writing project, but the premise is the same. They must have a great opening. There are different types of narrative openings and these can be shared with children. They include:

I often ask children to try out writing a variety of openings using some of these different types before choosing a favourite. They can also discuss them with their colleagues at their tables too. The best place for this is on their 'revision and trying things out page'.

For this mini-lesson, the best place to turn to is the books you are all reading in class. Ask the children to get them out of their trays and look at what type of opening the author has used. Perhaps they find some that don't match my list above? That's great! You can add your own too. I've spent quite a lot of time on this mini-lesson and have returned to it many times in an academic year. I've always dedicated part of my working wall to making a poster where children provide me with examples they've found from their own reading.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Characters asking questions: Who…? What…? Where…? When…? Why…? How…?

Writers will have their characters ask each other questions through dialogue to help their stories along. It is useful for transitioning to a new plot point or else it helps you develop your character and reveal their feelings. Sharing the question openers below is a helpful resource children can use to nudge their thinking about dialogue during writing time.

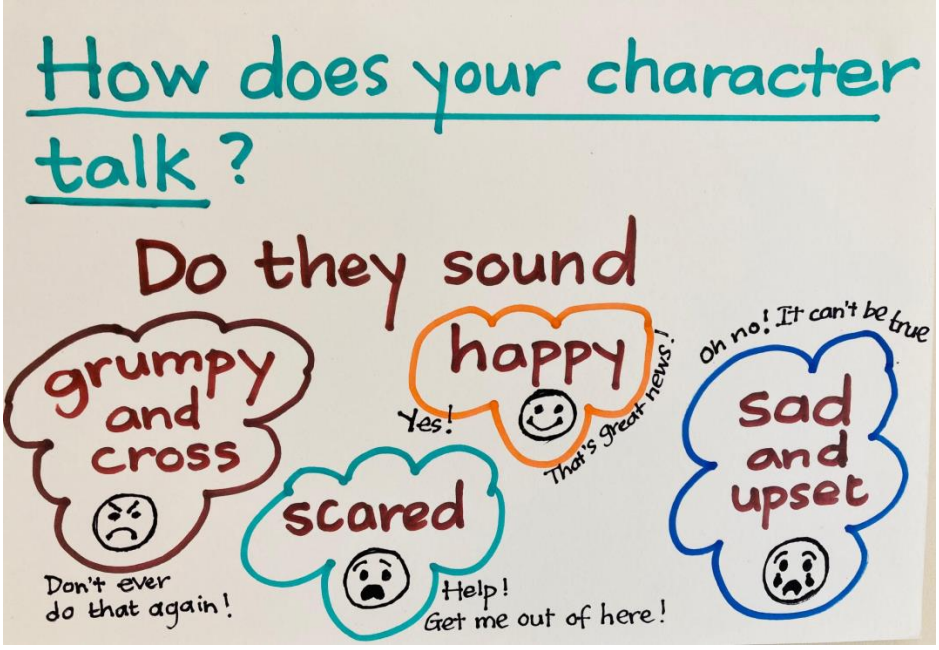
The best thing to do with this type of mini-lesson is to look inside the books you are all reading. Ask children to share some examples of where a character asks a question. Talk about why you've done it in some of your story writing too. Finally, you could put some examples up on the working wall before inviting children to consider using the technique in their own dialogue writing that day.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

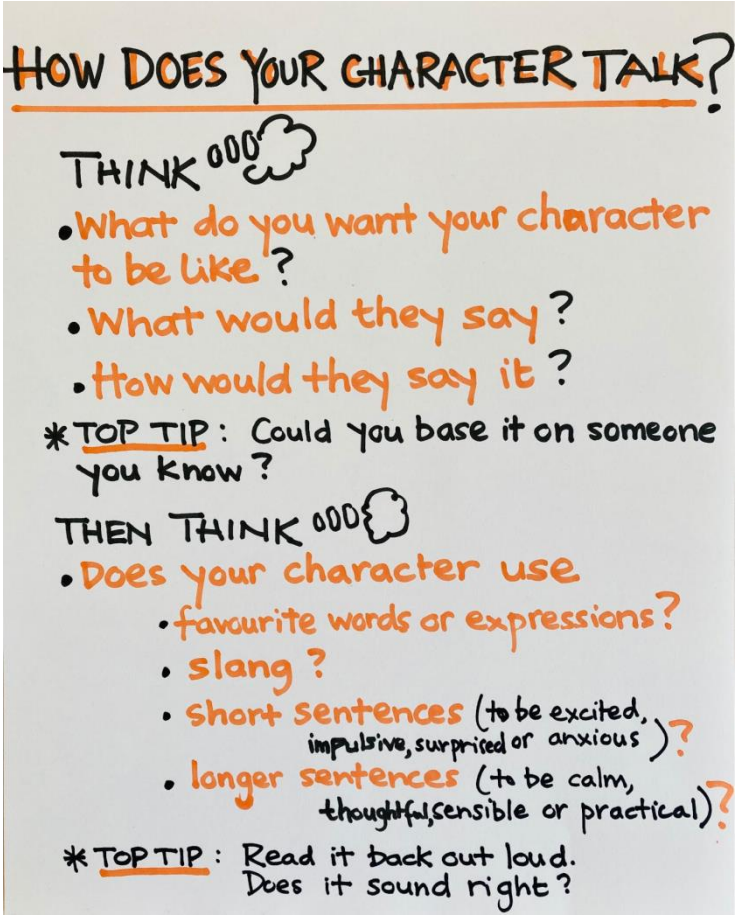
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How does your character talk?

Voices and the way people talk are a very important part of someone's character. They reveal a lot about someone. It's good to invite children to think about the people involved in their stories, and how they talk. Could how they talk give their character away?



A typical poster for KS1.



A typical poster for KS2.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

- What is their tone of voice?
- What do they sound like?
- Do they speak in long or short sentences?
- Do they have favourite words or phrases? Do they use slang?
- Can you reveal what they are like by how they talk? Are they happy, gloomy, a joker, stern, jolly, stressed, anxious?

The best thing to do with this type of mini-lesson is to look inside the books you are all reading. Ask children to share some examples of where they learn a little something about a character by the way they speak. You could put some examples up on the working wall before inviting children to consider it in their own writing that day.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

How is your character feeling?

A writer can never know about a character's feelings that is not somewhere mirrored in her own

- Katerine Paterson

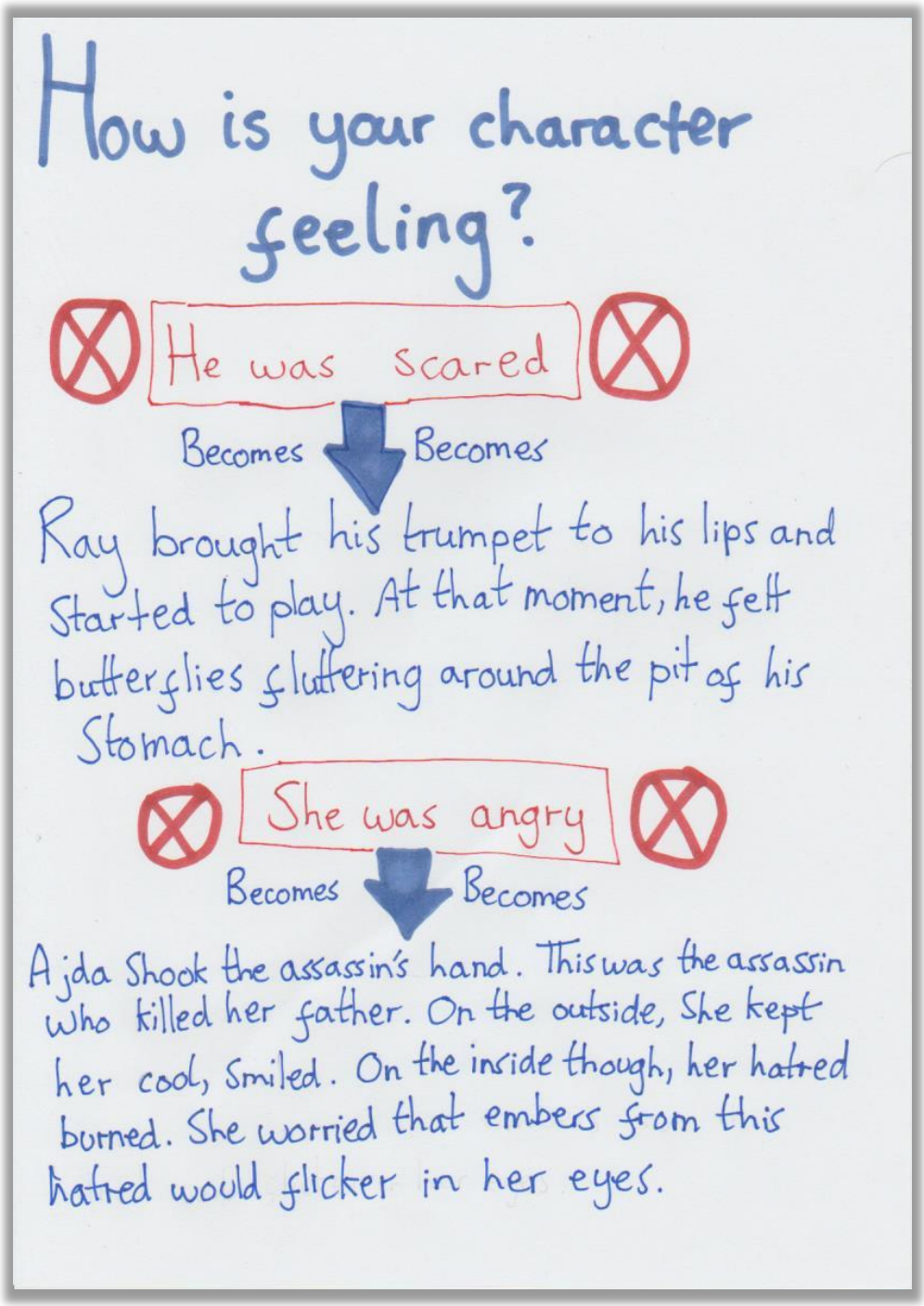
Inexperienced young writers are typically very good at telling you *what* their character is doing; they are not so good at telling *how* they are feeling about it. This example shows how an experienced writer might do it:

> Ray brought his trumpet up to his lips and started to play. At that moment, he felt butterflies fluttering around in the very pit of his stomach.

There are also times when a character's actions are hiding how they really feel. For example:

> Ajda shook the assassin's hand. This was the assassin who killed her father. On the outside, she kept her cool, smiled. On the inside though, her hatred burned. She worried that embers from this hatred would flicker in her eyes and so she quickly loosened her grip and pointed towards her car.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



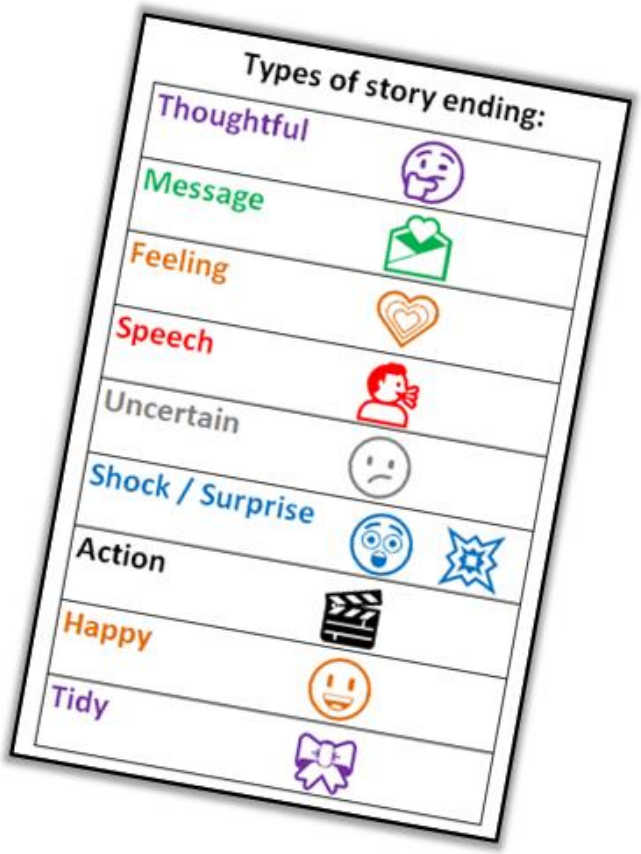
The best thing to do with this type of mini-lesson is to look inside the books you are all reading. Ask children to share some examples of where the author shows how their character is feeling. Ask them to keep an eye out for where feelings don't match the character's actions. Finally, invite the children to consider how they can share how their character is feeling during that day's writing time. This lesson works particularly well if used in conjunction with our 'use your trying things out page' lesson (see page 291).

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Strong endings (narrative)

You know when you've written a good ending if it gets a reaction from your reader. They might smirk, laugh out loud (if you've done really well), be thoughtful, or even tisk or roll their eyes. What's important is that you leave an impression on your reader. There are different types of narrative endings and these can be shared with children. They include:



I often ask children to try out writing a variety of endings using some of these different types before choosing a favourite. They can also discuss them with their colleagues at their tables too.

For this mini-lesson, the best place to turn is to the books in your class library. Ask the children to get them out of their trays and look at what type of endings the author has used. Perhaps they find some that don't match my list above? That's great! You can add your own too. I've spent quite a lot of time on this mini-lesson and have returned to it many times in an academic year. I've always dedicated part of my working wall to making a poster where children provide me with examples they've found from their own reading.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Rumbling reading tummy

Do you ever read something and feel dissatisfied or confused? This can happen when we feel we've been let down by the writer because they've gone too quickly or haven't given us enough detail or information. Our reading tummies begin to rumble. We are hungry to know more. This is something young writers often do. In their rush to get information down or to tell you all the action in their story, they can fail to insert the necessary detail. That's why reading their developing manuscripts to their friends can be so useful. This mini-lesson works for fiction and nonfiction texts.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

In this mini-lesson, we are going to learn one way to be a good writing partner. When someone reads their writing to us, we can let them know when we are confused or we feel like we would like to know more. When I write with the other teachers in our writing-group, we call this our 'rumbling reading tummy'. We let our friend know where they need to tell us more about what's going on. We are hungry for more information and detail. The writer usually puts a dot on their manuscript where the reader's tummy rumbled. Afterwards, they can start revising their piece and make it better. I would like us to give this a try during today's writing time.

Tags: Developing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Partner up for great description and detail

Making explicit to children what writers do implicitly is the key to great writing teaching. With this in mind, if you have children who struggle with description and detail, I suspect it's because they don't know what options there are available to them. Giving children options and inviting them to partner up different categories can be all they need to start painting with words. Here are some classic combinations:

Pick two flavours for great description and detail

Action and thinking (monologue)

The vase shattered into pieces. He knew at that moment his summer was going to be over.

Action and talking (dialogue)

He grabbed the sweets and ran for the door.
From down the street, I heard him shout, "Meet me at the back of the park in minutes."

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Talking (dialogue) and thinking (monologue)

"This dinner is delicious," he said to Mum. But really, when Mum goes upstairs to put us in the bath, he had a plan to scrape it all into the bin. It was disgusting! He'll put it under his newspaper he thought to himself. She'll never look there.

Painting with words and action

The shouting from the sidelines softened, almost as if he was underwater. The ball cushioned off the ground and levitated in the air. At that moment, everyone and everything melted away. All he could see was the goalkeeper and the two posts. He spanked the ball with his left foot and… a goal!

For this mini-lesson, show children examples from your own writing and from the published authors in the class library where there has been a partnering of two different categories of description and detail. You can then invite children to try writing some descriptive detail for their story during that day's writing time. This mini-lesson works particularly well in conjunction with 'use your trying things out page' (see page 291).

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, agency; KS2

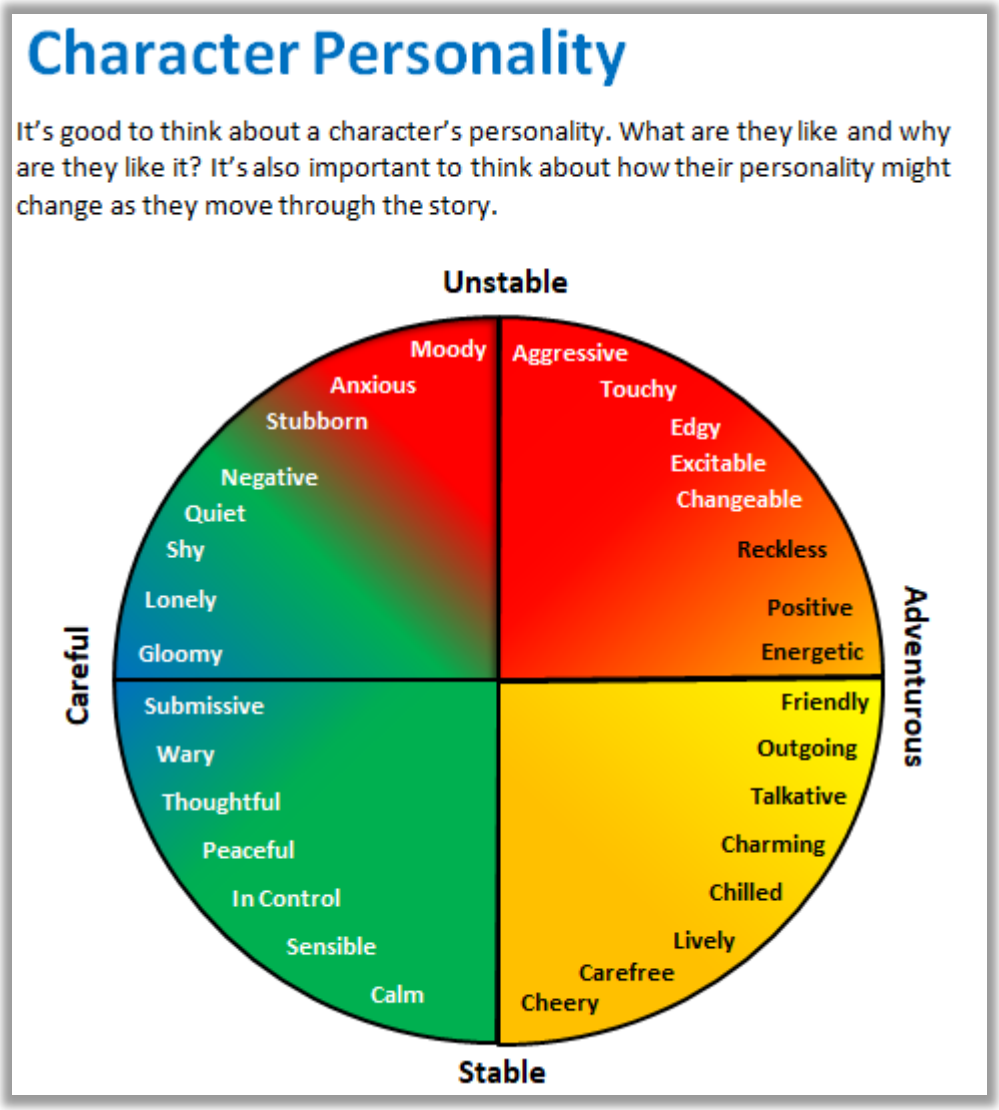
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Character personality

The journey, the story, the plot is the means by which your characters' strengths and weaknesses are unveiled, his or her lessons learned

- Barabara Shapiro

There is no good story without good character development. A character doesn't just have things done to her. Her personality will dictate her actions and reactions. This is why children find this resource (taken from our narrative class writing projects) so helpful whilst they generate ideas for their short stories.



Introduce this mini-lesson by discussing how you've used this resource to create your own short story. This resource can help writers in many ways. For example, it can:

- *Help you establish a character's motivation and goals.*
- *Give your character something internal or external to battle against.*
- *Define your character's strengths and flaws.*
- *Help you consider how your character's personality might go through a significant*

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

change as a result of what happens to them.

- *Show how a character's personality affects the world and the people around them.*
- *Help you consider why your character is the way they are – what's happened to them in their past.*
- *Your character's personality will affect:*
    - *how others perceive them*
    - *their physical appearance*
    - *their body language and mannerism*
    - *how they talk*

Tags: Developing; planning; narrative; confidence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Character personality into show don't tell

Let's face it, characters are the bedrock of your fiction. Plot is just a series of actions that happen in a sequence, and without someone to either perpetrate or suffer the consequences of those actions, you have no one for your reader to root for, or wish bad things on

- Icy Sedgwick

This mini-lesson is something I try to do in my own writing. I try to consider how I can develop my readers' understanding of a character by leaving clues through 'show don't tell (see page 271) or poetic description. Essentially, I'm not allowed to tell my reader what my character is like. I have to show them through sensory description (see page 250).

Character name	Personality	Show don't tell / Sensory description ideas
	☐ Shy ☐ Confident ☐ Aggressive ☐ Popular ☐ Fearful ☐ Sad ☐ Happy ☐ Paranoid ☐ Scared ☐ Brave ☐ Creative ☐ Intelligent ☐ Crazy ☐ Disliked ☐ Popular ☐ Funny ☐ Sensitive ☐ Bully ☐ Feared ☐ Loved	
	☐ Shy ☐ Confident ☐ Aggressive ☐ Popular ☐ Fearful ☐ Sad ☐ Happy ☐ Paranoid ☐ Scared ☐ Brave ☐ Creative ☐ Intelligent ☐ Crazy ☐ Disliked ☐ Popular ☐ Funny ☐ Sensitive ☐ Bully ☐ Feared ☐ Loved	

For this mini-lesson, show children how you filled out the above resource and added your ideas to your drafted piece. This mini-lesson is best taught when the majority of children are at the revision stage. Finally, as always, you should invite children to use the resource for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Characters based on real people

Character development is vital when writing a strong story. Weak characters make for weak stories

- Beem Weeks

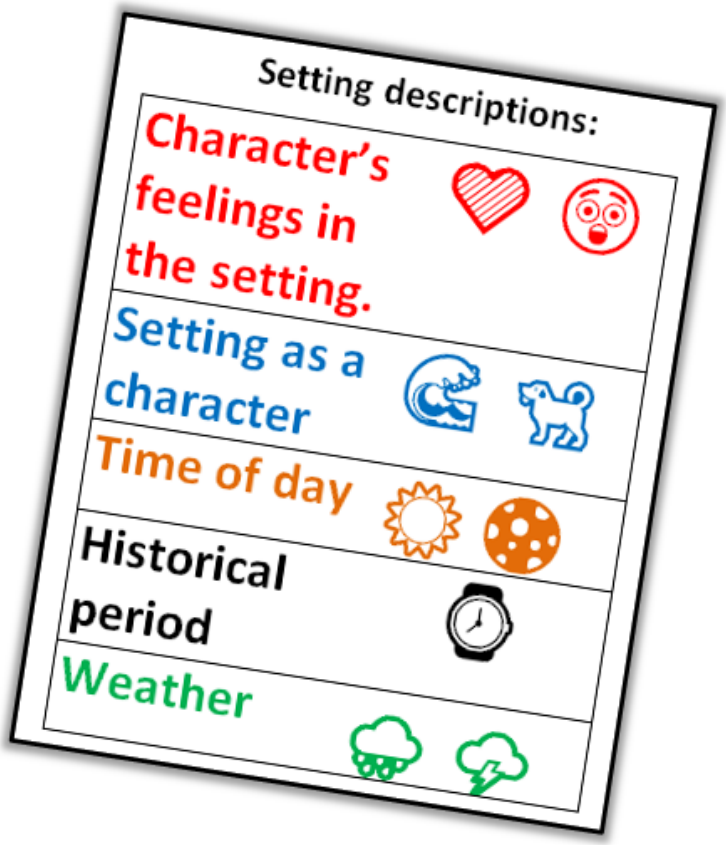
The best characters are the ones who are believable. The best way to write a believable character is to base them on people you know something about. This can include public figures, people in the community, and/or celebrities. When we use the characteristics, personalities and mannerisms of people we know, readers believe our characters to be real.

For this mini-lesson, share a story you've written and explain how you used what you have noticed about people you know to describe and develop your character. You can then invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; generating ideas, planning; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

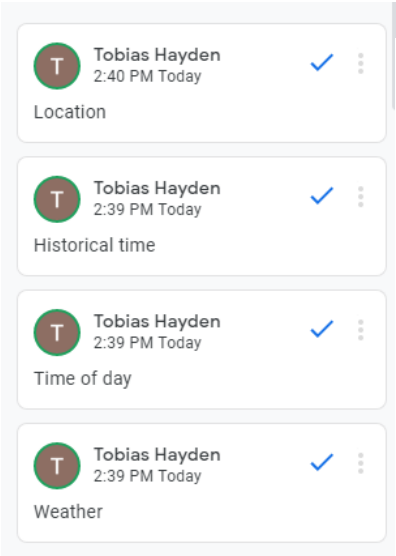
Setting descriptions

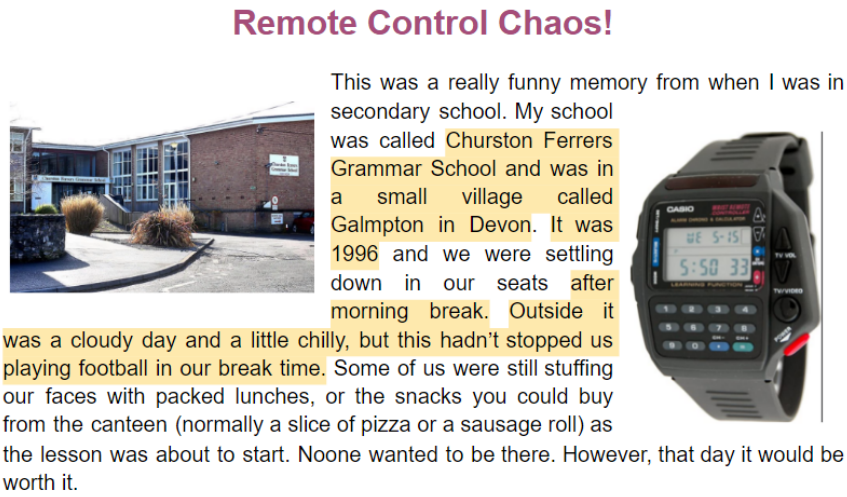
I've always found children enjoy describing the settings in their stories. With less experienced writers, it's sometimes the case that you have to let them write the story out first before you give them dedicated time for developing their description of the settings mentioned. But if you give children time to paint with words and craft rich setting descriptions, they usually enjoy it and can see how it enhances the quality of their stories. In our narrative Genre-Booklets, we share a variety of ways in which children can work to describe their settings.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, show children examples of rich setting descriptions which match the categories above. Alternatively, you can invite children to look in the books they are reading to see how the authors describe their settings and come up with your own categories. What's important is that children get to see examples of great setting development and description from published texts before being invited to try it out in their developing stories that day. This mini-lesson works particularly well in conjunction with 'use your trying things out page' (see page 291).





Remote Control Chaos!

This was a really funny memory from when I was in secondary school. My school was called Churston Ferrers Grammar School and was in a small village called Galmpton in Devon. It was 1996 and we were settling down in our seats after morning break. Outside it was a cloudy day and a little chilly, but this hadn't stopped us playing football in our break time. Some of us were still stuffing our faces with packed lunches, or the snacks you could buy from the canteen (normally a slice of pizza or a sausage roll) as the lesson was about to start. Noone wanted to be there. However, that day it would be worth it.

In this example, writer-teacher Tobias Hayden shows how he revised his memoir so that it included setting description.

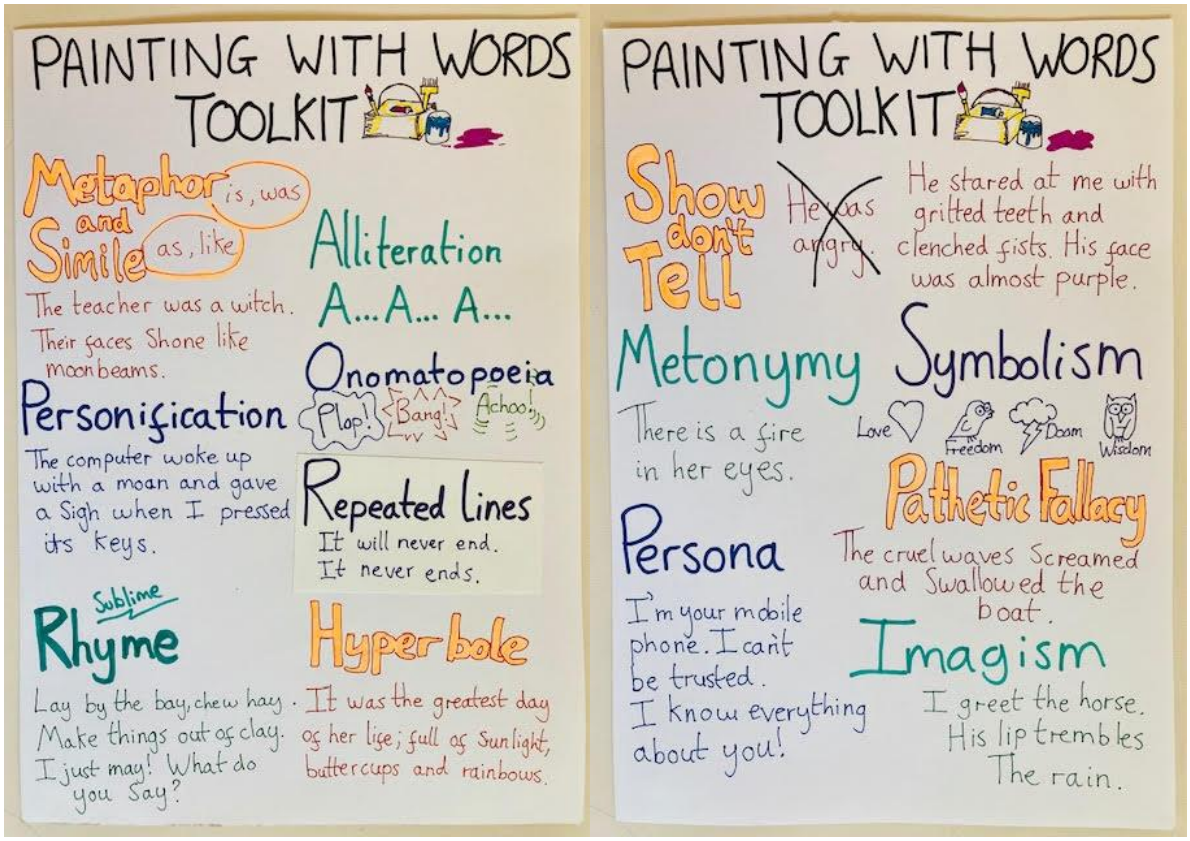
You might also want to see our mini-lessons: using the senses, prove it, show don't tell, the power of three, metaphor and simile, personification, see things like a poet, my setting is a character too! and pathetic fallacy.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Painting with words

Making what writers do implicitly explicit to children is the key to great writing teaching. With this in mind, if you have children who struggle to ‘paint with words’, add rich description or provide necessary detail, I suspect it’s because they don’t know what options are available to them. Giving children options and inviting them to use them in rich combinations can be all the support they need. For example, children can use the following techniques to paint with words:



- Pathetic fallacy (see page 276)
- Show don’t tell (see page 271)
- Metaphor & simile (see page 253)
- Personification (see page 255)
- Alliteration (see page 295)
- Repetition (see page 212)
- Metonymy (see page 296)

and

- Using the senses (see page 250)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, show children examples from your own writing and from the published authors in the class library where there has been some painting with words using some of the different techniques above. You can then invite children to try 'painting with words' during that day's writing time. Teaching this lesson near the start of the year and create a class poster of the different options available can be very helpful. This mini-lesson also works particularly well in conjunction with 'use your trying things out page' (see page 291).

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative, poetry; confidence, agency; KS2

My setting is a character too! Pathetic fallacy

Poet John Ruskin believed that nature and the weather are mirrors to the feelings and emotions we feel as people. We can describe and treat our settings in such a way that they become a living breathing character all by themselves.

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to share how and why you've used the technique in your own writing and ask the children to pass comment. Finally, you can invite children to play with the technique in their own writing during that day's writing time.

> Hours later, I was awake. Crying at first. I always cried after an anesthetic. I don't know why. After the tears dried up, I rested my head on the plump pillows supporting me and let my head fall to one side. Outside, what had been a bright blue sky before I went under had turned to a black mass of heavy clouds. Just then, the heavens opened. It was a deluge the kind of which I had never seen before. The hailstones crashed against the window panes like a swarm of angry wasps. The ward I was on seemed to be on its last legs; taking its final breaths. Looking around I realised I was alone. Where were mum and dad? They were normally here when I came round.

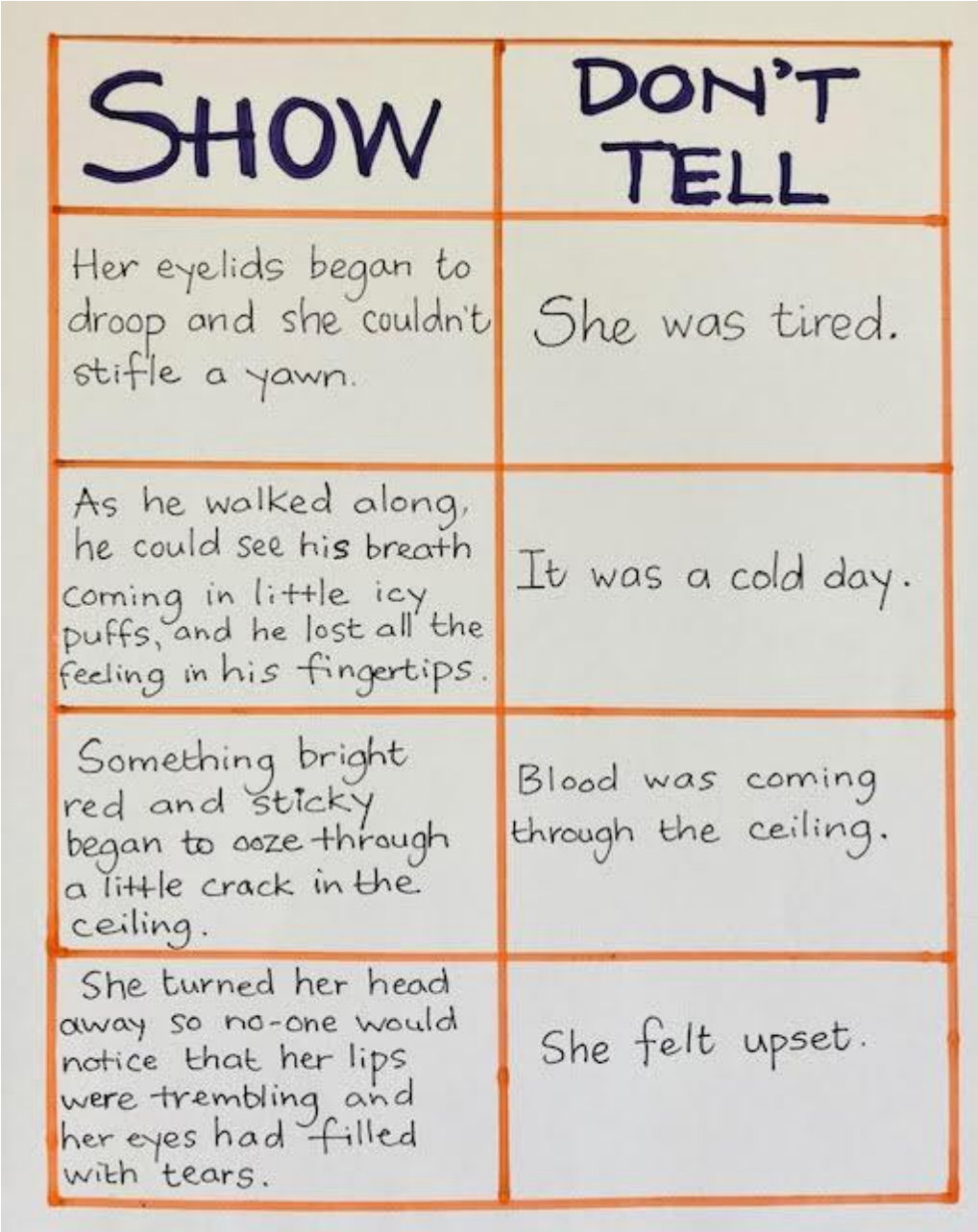
Here writer-teacher Tobias Hayden tries this technique out for himself in his tale, Wasp Going On?, about a boy who wakes up from an operation to find he is a wasp.

Tags: Developing; planning, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Show don't tell

Sometimes when we say it directly, we lose the intrigue and appeal of what it is we want to say. Anton Chekhov famously said: 'don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass'. The easiest way I've found to apply this technique to my own writing is to search for where I've used the words *is, was, are* and *were,* as these lead me to tell. By replacing them, I naturally begin to show. For example: *The boy is walking up the hill* instead becomes *The red-faced boy heaves, complains and puffs his way to the top of the hill.*



SHOW	DON'T TELL
Her eyelids began to droop and she couldn't stifle a yawn.	She was tired.
As he walked along, he could see his breath coming in little icy puffs, and he lost all the feeling in his fingertips.	It was a cold day.
Something bright red and sticky began to ooze through a little crack in the ceiling.	Blood was coming through the ceiling.
She turned her head away so no-one would notice that her lips were trembling and her eyes had filled with tears.	She felt upset.

Another way to look at it, with younger writers, is to read your writing back and shout out 'prove it!'. The boy was sad… Prove it! (see page 251)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The best thing to do with this lesson is to show children how you have used this technique yourself in your writer's notebook. You can explain how you went about it and answer any of the children's questions. You can then invite your young writers to have a go for themselves during writing time. In my experience, this mini-lesson is most effective when the majority of your class are revising their pieces.

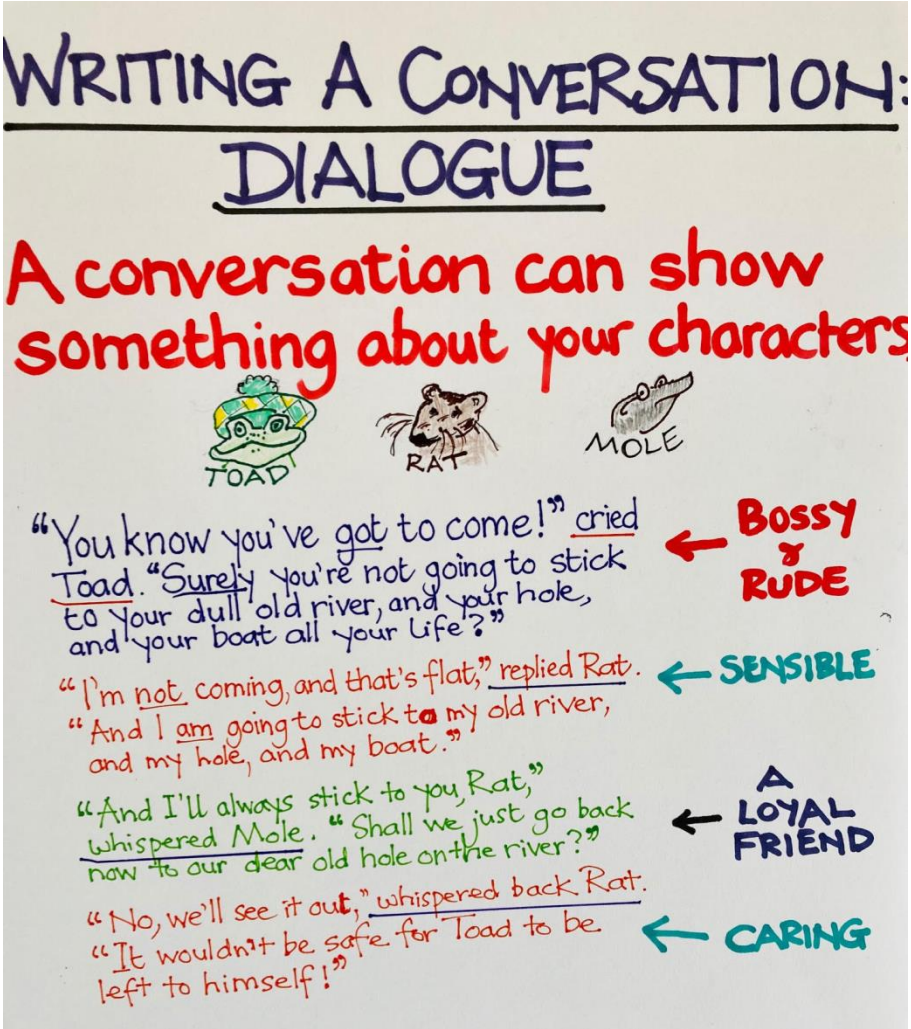
Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative, poetry; confidence; KS2

Writing a conversation: Dialogue

If you're using dialogue – say it aloud as you write it. Only then will it have the sound of speech

– John Steinbeck

Film-maker Quentin Tarantino is well-known for being one of the kings of character dialogue. According to Tarantino, good dialogue reveals something about the character you wouldn't have otherwise known. You gain a little insight into their history, psyche, motivation and morality. How characters talk to each other and what they choose as topics of conversation tells you a lot about them.



© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, ask the children to write a conversation between two or three characters for around ten minutes. This could be a fantasy conversation between fictional characters from a book, or ones they've made up.. Alternatively, it could be a reimagining of a real conversation they have had. Once they have finished writing, ask them to think about how they could turn these notes into some kind of short story with the dialogue as the central theme.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence; KS2

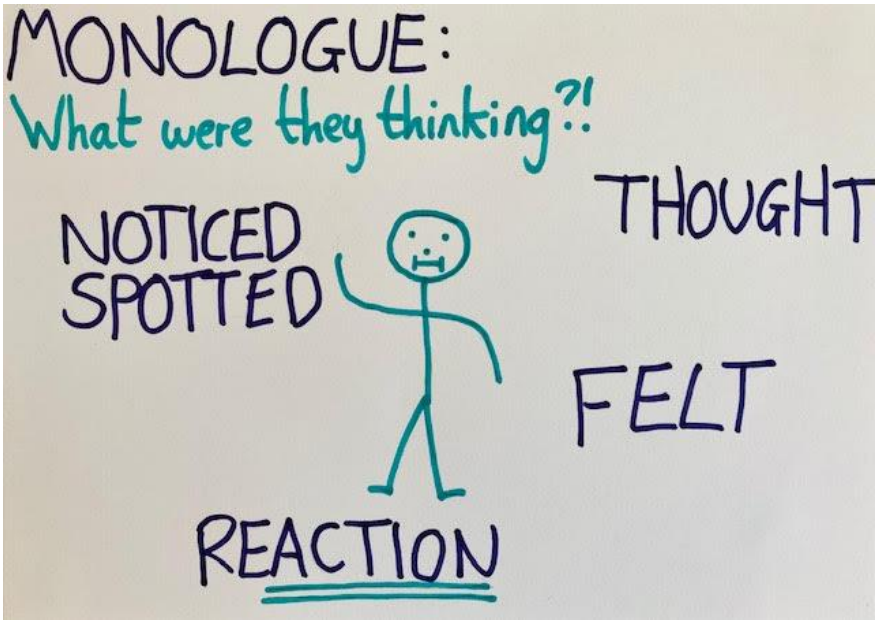
What were they thinking?!: Monologue

To be inside one's character, to register his or her every vagrant thought, emotion, and response - monologue grants us this privilege and immediacy

- Norman Lock

Monologue helps us bring out the internal story that's going on in a character's mind. It is also a valuable part of any personal narrative writing too. Monologue allows us to know:

What was noticed What was thought
What was felt What was the reaction



For this mini-lesson, ask children to look in the books they are reading for where the writer has their character notice, think or feel. Write up these examples on flipchart paper and discuss them. What value does monologue bring to a story or personal narrative? Share where you've tried to use it in some of your own writing. Finally, invite children to give it a try for themselves during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Using body language

Body language is how we communicate our thoughts, feelings, attitudes and reactions without saying a word. Readers can learn all kinds of things about the characters in stories just by being told about the way they sit or stand, what they do with their hands, how they move their eyes, how they smile, what gestures they make. Maybe a character clenches their fist to be deliberately aggressive; maybe they give themselves away with a little sly private smile.

Just like Kenneth, the bully, in *Where the World Ends* by Geraldine McCaughrean

'But Kenneth went on wearing that glinting smirk of his. Kenneth picked up secrets wherever he went.'

Or, the way Philip Pullman (in Northern Lights) repeatedly has his creation Mrs Coulter use the 'tender touch' of her hand on a child's hair to signal to the reader that she is not to be trusted and has no such tender feeling towards them.

This lesson is particularly useful when the majority of your class are revising their stories. Children could think about different parts of the body and list how each one might convey something about a character in general or on a particular occasion. Then they could look at the characters in the story they are writing that day and see where it might be possible to add in a gesture, a facial expression or a movement to tell the reader more about what the character is like, how they are feeling or what they are really thinking. Showcase anything you've written yourself where you have used this technique, and invite children to share how they've used it in class sharing time.

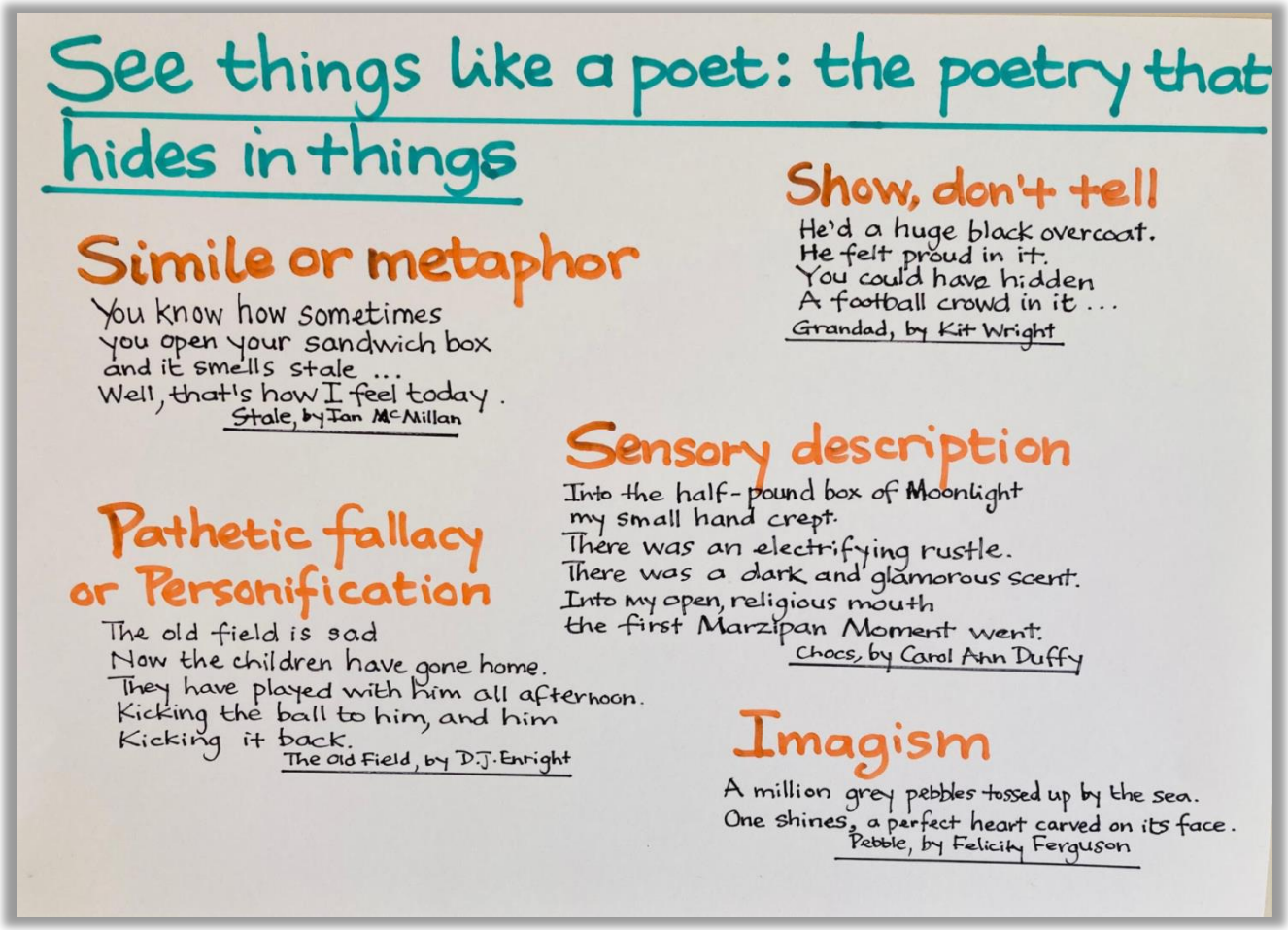
Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

See things like a poet: the poetry that hides in things

No ideas but in things
- William Carlos Williams

Within objects, we can find deeper meanings. By painting with words to describe objects, we can share with our readers what might otherwise be impossible. Objects can be used as a metaphor for more abstract, psychological or philosophical concepts within our stories. Through direct description of an object, we can reveal the poetry within it.



Children should already know that they can bring their poetry, fiction and non-fiction to life by 'painting with words'. Painting with words can include:

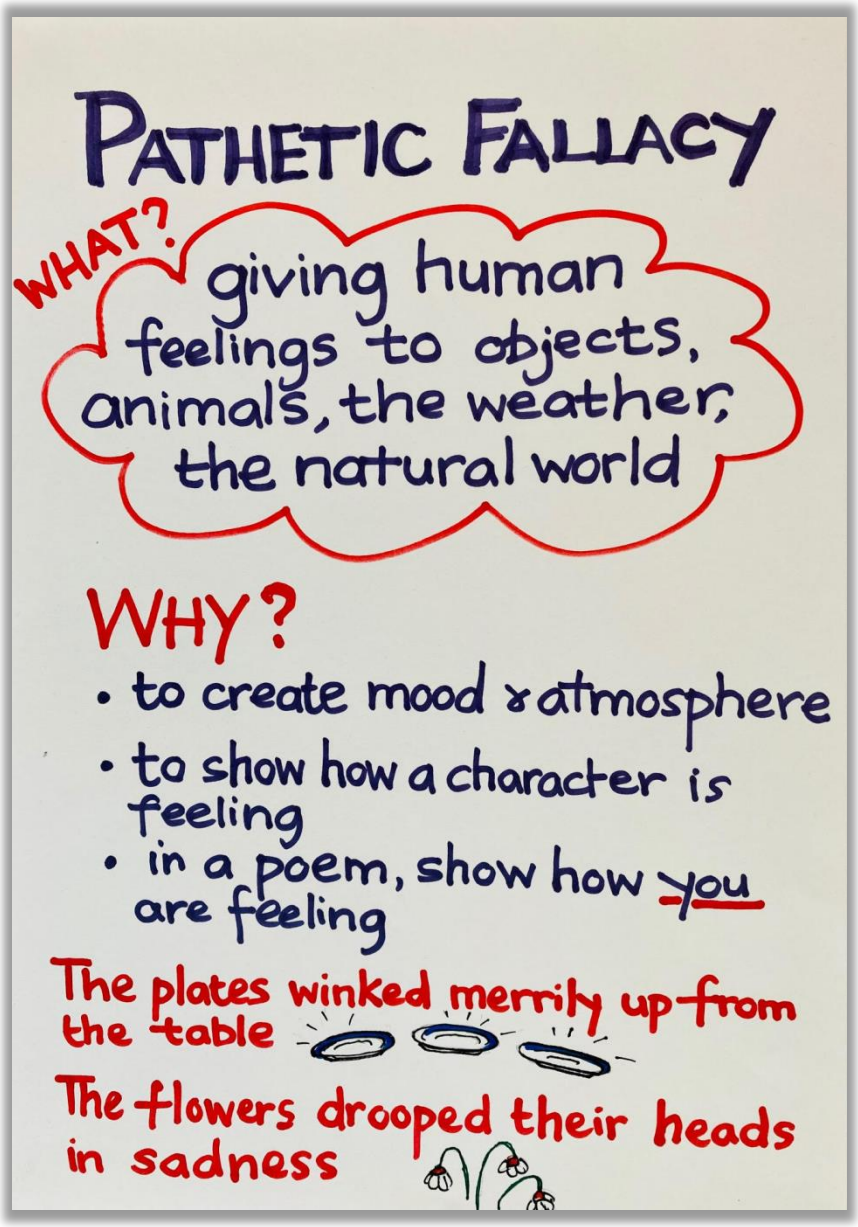
- Comparing something to something else (through simile and metaphor) (see page 253)
- Showing what someone or something does instead of simply telling them. (see page 271)
- Using the different senses to describe things in interesting ways. (see page 250)
- Giving nature or things human characteristics or emotions through personification or pathetic fallacy. (see page 255) (see page 276)
- Giving sharp, precise and objective description of objects through imagism. (see page 213)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

This is a mini-lesson that can be repeated many times. The best thing to do with it is to share how you use some of these techniques yourself in your own writing and for the class to take time looking in the books in the class library to see where other authors have done it. You can then end the mini-lesson by inviting children to try some of the techniques for themselves.

Tags: Developing; revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

Pathetic fallacy



Poet John Ruskin believed that nature and the weather are mirrors to the feelings and emotions we feel as people. This means that we can describe the natural world and the weather in our poetry and narratives so as to reflect a character's mood. Alternatively, we can personify our settings in such a way that they become a living breathing character all by themselves. The natural world and weather can behave and think as people do.

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to ask children to comb their books for examples of pathetic fallacy – they can then share these out loud and you can compile a list of examples for your working wall. It's also useful to share how and why you've used the technique in your own writing and ask the children to pass comment. Finally, you can invite children to play with the technique in their own writing during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; poetry, narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Giving clues

When we write, we can weave into our words and phrases hints and clues to a deeper meaning hidden beneath. There's what we are saying and then there is what we are really saying. Writers use all sorts of moves to achieve this – some of which we have explained in other mini-lessons. For example by using: metaphor (see page 253), symbolism (see page 172), metonymy (see page 296) and pathetic fallacy (see page 276).

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to share a piece of your own writing. Tell children straight off the bat what it was you were 'really' trying to say in your writing. You can then point to where you laid down clues in your text. You can then invite children to put clues into their own writing during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; poetry, narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

One word in the right place

I really like the idea that one word in the right place can change the whole direction of a story in a flash. It's neat, economical and effective. I'm thinking of words like *unfortunately, unhappily, luckily, unbelievably, incredibly, suddenly,* and of course *however* and *but.*

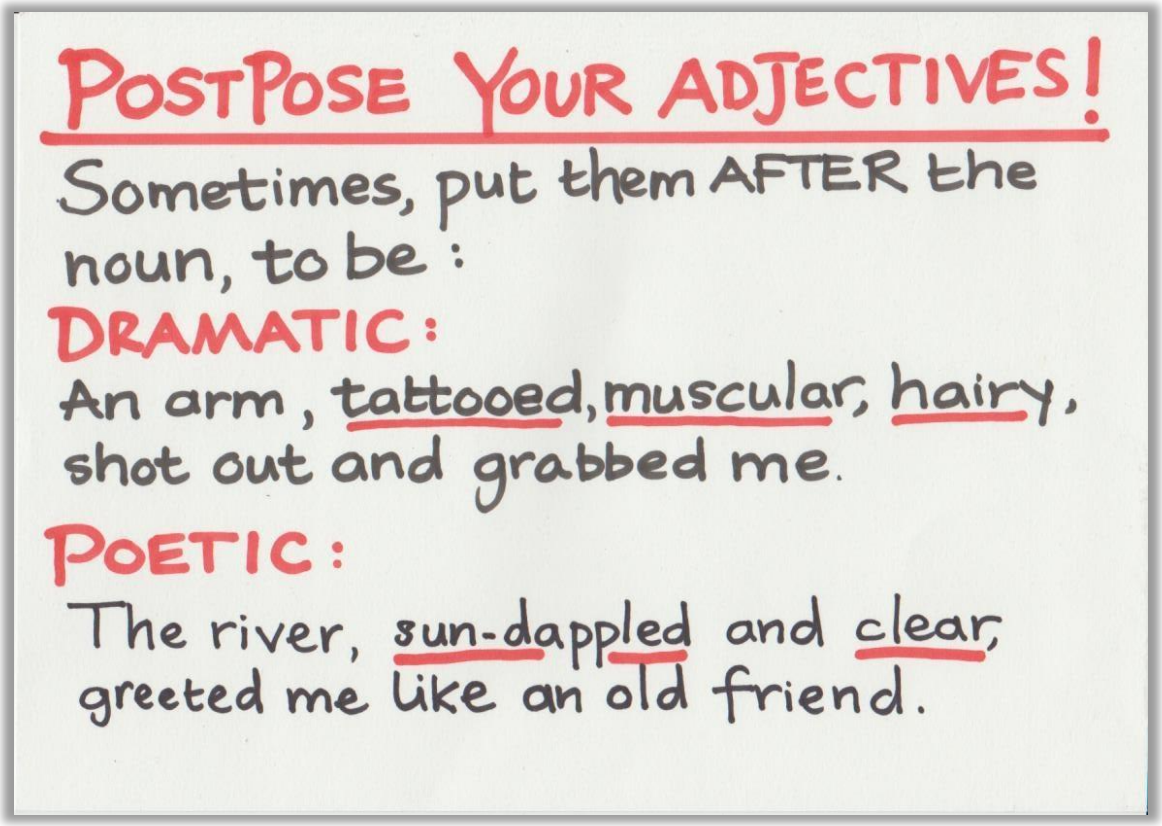
Show the children where you've changed the direction of a story in a piece of your own writing with just one word. There will also be lots of instances of it happening in the books they are reading, so you can ask them to be on the lookout for examples. Tell them that it can be a powerful technique if they want to give their reader a surprise, some reassurance, or a sharp shock, and invite them to try using it themselves in their writing today if they see the opportunity.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising, narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Postpose your adjectives!

Put your adjectives *after* the noun. Doing this can have quite a dramatic impact. How about: *A shark, gleaming, white, menacing, circled around our boat.* Or perhaps a poetic effect: *The Queen, red-haired, proud, stately, swept into the chamber.* It's a great opportunity to paint with words and create a richer description, and also to use the power of three to give the sentence some rhythm.



The *best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to show children an example in your notebook where you have done exactly this. You can then invite children to find a place in their writing where they can create a more dramatic or poetic effect by 'postposing' the adjectives till after the noun. They'll enjoy experimenting with the power of three on their 'trying things out' page, and looking out for and collecting instances of when the authors of their favourite books have done it too.*

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Teach me about it but also teach me about why you love it

Sometimes in non-fiction writing children choose a topic that they are truly passionate about but then struggle to share enough explicit information about it. However, invite them to teach you about why they love it so much - and suddenly you find yourself learning a whole lot about the topic!

I find myself teaching this mini-lesson more through my pupil-conferencing than I do as a mini-lesson for the whole class. That's not to say it wouldn't make a good mini-lesson though. It might be that you show children a really good example of an information text you or an ex-pupil has written which not only shares a little bit of information about a chosen subject but then goes on to contextualise that information by describing why they love the topic so much. You can then invite children to consider where they can share about their love for their topic during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; planning, drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, agency; KS1, KS2

Taking time out to tell a story

The best way to teach people is by telling a story
– Kenneth Blanchard

A great story can make what is otherwise a dry recitation of facts on a page into an utterly compelling and emotional text.

Reading non-fiction can be as gripping as reading a story. Discuss with children that, when they are writing a non-fiction piece, they will sometimes share stories or anecdotes to explain more about the people, place, animals or things they have chosen to share information about. These stories can be written as carefully as the stories they write for fiction.

For this mini-lesson, as a class, consider what it is you like about reading stories and think about how you can use these same techniques when writing non-fiction texts too.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; poetry, narrative; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Nonfiction: Intriguing introductions

Never think that non-fiction writing has to be a cold, hard, stodgy presentation of facts, and that you as the writer have to keep yourself hidden or well out of the writing. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, what makes a piece of non-fiction lively and interesting for the reader is when you mix in some more ingredients for extra flavour. Here are just a few options to choose from when writing non-fiction openings:

Of course it doesn't have to be your opening that does this. Let your personal presence pop up every now and then, and keep your reader engaged with you and with what you are saying.

One thing I like to do is ask children to write down on their 'trying things out page' several different ways of starting their piece of non-fiction; using the possibilities above. They can then talk to their friends about which one is best. This can set the tone for the rest of the writing too. And, as always, show them in your notebook where you have tried out different ways of opening your non-fiction piece.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Below Freddie shows us his favourite opening for his published explanation of how glass is made. But before that he had played around with different openings on his digital 'trying things out page'.

How is glass made?

When I was looking out of my bedroom window daydreaming the other day, I thought to myself, why was my window made from glass, and why couldn't it be made from a material like plastic, which is stronger and harder to break? Then this got me thinking more about how glass is made.

Anecdote

I thought to myself the other day when I was looking out of my bedroom window daydreaming. I wondered why my window was made from glass, why couldn't it be made of a material like plastic that is stronger!

Question

Have you ever wondered why glass is used as a material for certain products like a window? It seems very strange because they can easily be smashed or broken. I wonder if there is a reason behind this?

Poem

We use Sand, soda and lime
But It take a little time
To make the perfect glass
So your vase is proper class.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Nonfiction: Colossal conclusions

Just as we have different ways to end the stories we write (see our Fiction class writing projects), children can end their non-fiction pieces in a variety of ways. Your ending is your last opportunity to leave your reader with something to think about. You want them to still be thinking about your text after they've finished reading it. You want it to roll around in their mind. A good ending can do that. Here some examples of the types of endings you can choose from:

Of course it doesn't have to be your ending that does this. Let your personal presence pop up every now and then, and keep your reader engaged with you and with what you are saying.

One thing I like to do is ask children to write down on their 'trying things out page' several different ways of ending their piece of non-fiction using the possibilities above. They can then talk to their friends about which one is best. I find it's usually best to teach this mini-lesson when the majority of your class are revising. And, as always, show them in your notebook where you have tried out different ways of ending your non-fiction piece.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Below is Freddie's final choice for his ending. But again before that he had experimented with a few different types on his digital 'trying things out page'.

So, now you know how different glass is made. Why don't you sit back and watch a video on YouTube on someone making a piece of glass. You will be fascinated watching this, it is amazing. I really enjoyed watching it myself.

Here are a few pictures of the process of a vase being made.

Blowing into the long tube to form the shape of a vase.

Call to action

So know you know how different glass is made why don't you sit back watch a video on youtube on someone making a piece of glass, you will be extremely fascinated watching this, it's amazing.

Description

I have only seen a piece of glass being made a few times through videos, but it is definitely something that I will not forget as it amazes me by how much work is put into it when making something like a vase. The craftsman are so talented.

Joke (this was harder to think of something funny for this text)

Before you decide to throw something that is made out of glass in anger, or randomly want to break a window, don't be an idiot just think how long it must have taken to make, you have wasted someone's time and effort just to make you feel better.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Support the facts

How do opinion writers and critical thinkers support the facts they use within their texts? They have a variety of ways, including:

- using a definition
- giving a specific example
- sharing a personal anecdote
- using an analogy, metaphor or story

In this mini-lesson, children should be encouraged to say to themselves 'prove it!' as they read their drafted texts. For example 'footballers are not overpaid'- well, prove it (see page 251).

For example:
Footballer Marcus Rashford is reported to earn £250,000 a week. However, 50% of that is given to the government through taxation. Mr. Rashford also supports a number of charities including providing meals for school children. He has regularly discussed in interview how he uses the money he earns to support his wider family. A footballer's career is short and, through a bad injury, can come to an end at any time. Finally, their earnings often have to last them and their families for the rest of their lives. You have the unfortunate examples of Abou Diaby who had to retire from football at an early age, and Emmanuel Eboue who recently had to declare bankruptcy due to mismanagement of his finances. Many footballers earn their money at a very young age, when they are impulsive and vulnerable to exploitation by others.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Making information come alive

Harold Rosen once suggested that all writing is, in one way or another, telling the reader a story. Even non-fiction texts are set up to tell a narrative of the way things are. Take for example a science experiment. It tells the story of how an experiment was conducted, with the characters' actions and the setting described. You can also look at myths, which acted as metaphors to describe what couldn't otherwise be understood at the time.

Asking children to draw what it is they have decided to write about, and then to write a description of it is a good introduction to this particular mini-lesson. Explain that non-fiction writing can be enhanced by 'painting with words' – including using poetic techniques like personification and metaphor as a way to discuss phenomena. We can even integrate poetry into our non-fiction pieces. Show children how you have tried to do this yourself in some of your own non-fiction writing before inviting children to try it during that day's writing time. I find that this mini-lesson is best taught when the majority of your class are revising their pieces.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

Unlike

'Unlike' is a powerful word in discussion texts. It allows us to compare our subject with its opposite, or with someone or something that is very different. It allows our readers to understand our thesis better.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you have used 'unlike' in your own discussion text and ask them why they think it was useful. You can then invite them to use it in their own writing that day.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

If…, *then*… When…., *then*…

Some non-fiction writing requires the discussion of causes and effects on certain phenomena. For example, an explanation text about electric guitars might require me to explain that:

> If you leave your guitar out in the sun, the strings are likely to expand and the guitar will need returning as a result.
>
> When you're playing heavy metal late at night, consider shutting your windows. This will keep your neighbours happy!

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you have used 'If…, then… or when… then' in your own non-fiction text and ask them why they think it was useful. You can then invite them to use it in their own writing that day.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Use an anecdote to explain your point

In his book *The Elements Of Persuasion*, Robert Dickman explains that if your reader doesn't feel it, they won't remember it. This is what makes anecdote such a powerful technique within non-fiction writing.

We use anecdotes as a way of presenting evidence for something all the time. We can share anecdotes that are personal to us or else we can repeat anecdotes that we have heard from celebrities or experts. Explain to children that when we are making a point in a piece of non-fiction writing, we can share a personal anecdote to back up what it is we are discussing.

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; non-fiction; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Showing characters' point of view

One way writers like to make their readers want to find out more is to show different characters' points of view. The characters might be experiencing the same thing in a story but their point of view may be quite different, like a photograph showing different angles. This technique can make a narrative intriguing and very innovative. It makes the readers ask - who is telling the truth? Is there an unreliable narrator? Writers like Emily Bronte, William Faulkner and Clarice Lispector wrote like this with mastery.

Some writers like to make their stories innovative and interesting by telling the same story (or parts of a story) from different angles, from the point of view of different characters. This will make your readers engaged and want to find out more. Share one of your stories (preferably written in the first person, if it's possible a story known to the children), rewrite the same story or parts of the story from a point of view of a different character. Invite the children to do the same.

Tags: Developing; narrative; revising; confidence, agency; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Knowing your character inside out

This mini-lesson is based on the book *Inside The Villains* by Clotilde Perrin. In it, Perrin reveals the internal motivations and secrets of classic fairytale characters. I recommend showing your children this book prior to doing a mini-lesson about it. Ideally, you should share the book in read-aloud time.

For this mini-lesson show how you've taken inspiration from Clotide's book to look inside one of your own characters. Explain how you used this to help you generate ideas and plan for your story. You can then invite them to do the same thing during that day's writing time.

Tags: Developing; narrative; generating ideas, planning; confidence, independence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Zoom in, Zoom out!

Don't tell me the moon is shining, show me the glint of light on broken glass

- Anton Chekhov

This mini-lesson might be useful after you've taught children to show, not just tell. However, I do believe that for some pieces of writing there might be scope for telling, as long as you don't overdo it. Most children are used to the idea of making videos or taking photos with phones or tablets, so you can teach them that, just like we do with the camera, we can zoom in and out in our writing. What can you see if you zoom your camera out? What characters are present, if any? What is there in the surroundings? Now, if you zoom your camera in? What are the details that you can see? What can you show that might be important in your story?

I wanted to write about the time that I went to visit my family in Rio, and my daughter insisted on riding this horse that was a bit of a rebel, Espirito. So to help me, I looked at some pictures that we took on the day. The first picture was taken from quite far, but we can see what the surroundings are. Another picture was showing my daughter's happy face as she was trying to hold her hat on her head, which suggests that the horse was going faster than it should have been, perhaps. Another picture shows her dad and uncle helping to guide the horse and the wind blowing on the horse's mane. So when I was writing, first I did it as if I was zooming out on this scene and could see all the surroundings, the house, the trees and the other animals in there. However, I felt that I needed to add more details, so whoever was reading could really feel like they were there in this place. So I zoomed in and wrote about my daughter holding her hat, and the wind blowing on the horse's mane. Read your story to the children.

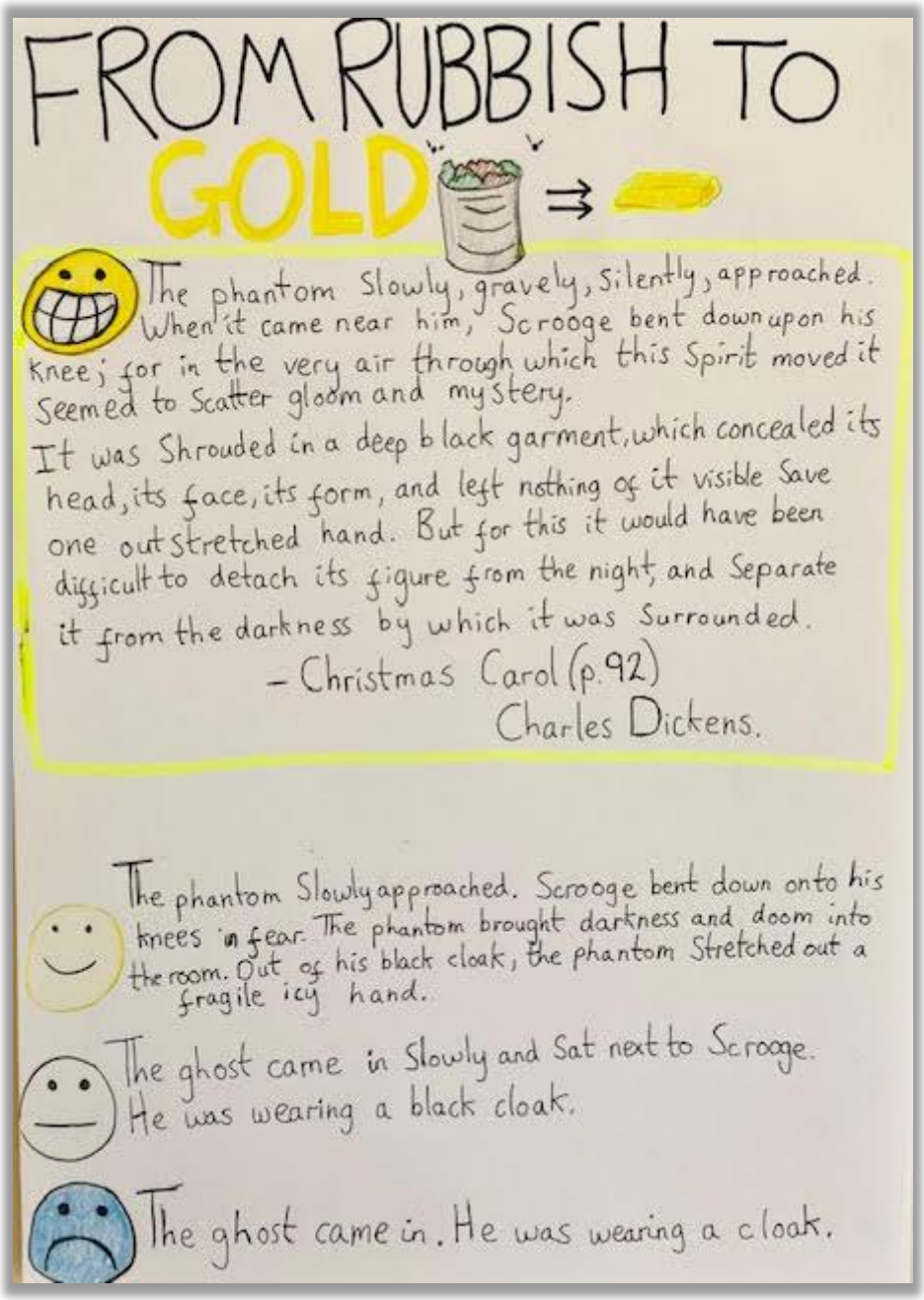
It would also be good if you could zoom in or out even more, working on the piece of writing you have just read to them. Invite the children to do the same and zoom in and out as they write. This can also work with non-fiction, both text and illustrations.

Tags: Developing; revising; all genres; independence, agency; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

From rubbish to gold

This is a versatile mini-lesson. It's about showing children what is possible. For that reason, this mini-lesson is best taught when the majority of your class are revising their pieces. It's a mini-lesson that works for poetry, fiction or non-fiction.



The concept is simple. You take a rubbish sentence (perhaps based on the sort of sentences you've been seeing during pupil-conferencing) and you show how it can be transformed (through revision) into gold. Next, transform a rubbish sentence from your own writing. You could do this live in front of the children. Finally, invite children to do the same with some of their 'rubbish' sentences during that day's writing time. This mini-lesson is best taught in conjunction with our 'trying things out page' mini-lesson (see page 291).

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising, all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

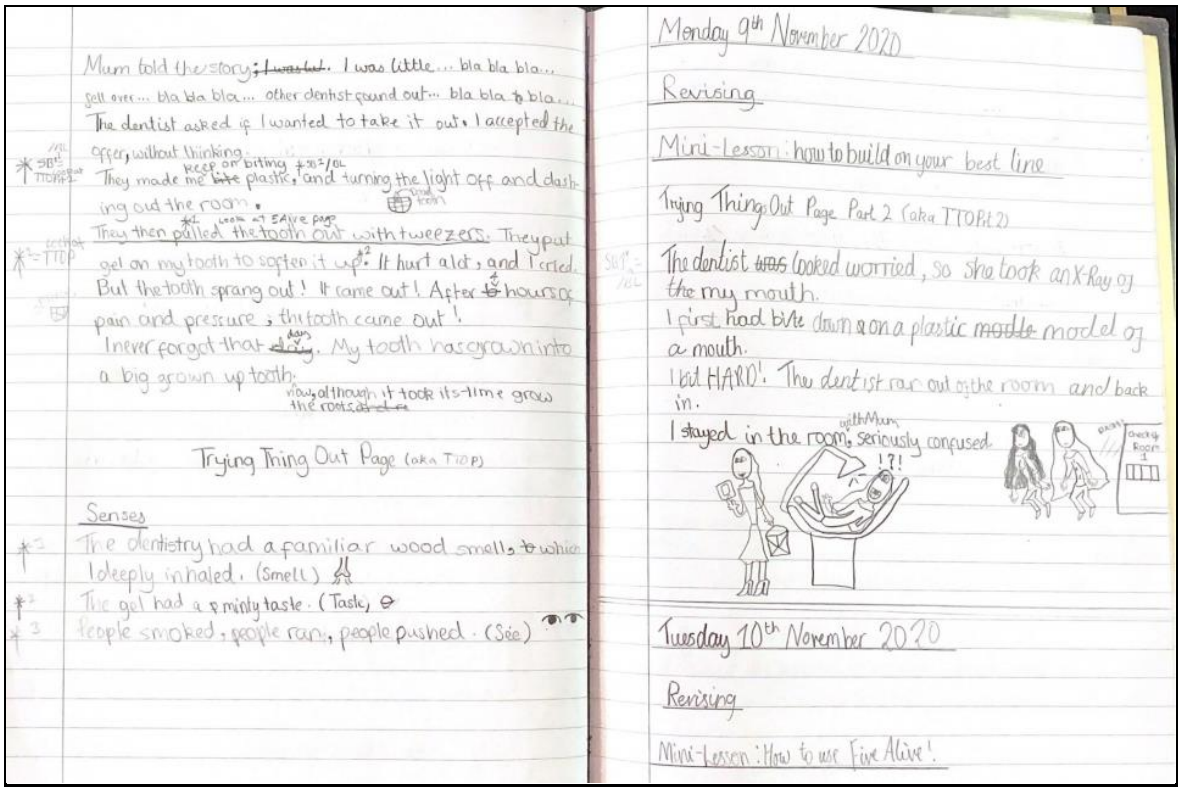
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Use your 'trying things out page'

As a writer, sometimes you just want to try something out before you decide whether to commit it to your draft or not. Alternatively, you want to try out a number of different options before choosing your favourite one. For example, story openings or ways of describing an object. For me, I like to concentrate my early drafts on *what* it is I want to write before trying things out to make that early draft actually 'good'. These are the same needs that child writers have in the classroom too.

The idea in my class was simple. You drafted your writing on the left-hand page and you left your right-hand page blank and called it your 'trying things out page'. On this page you could try things out and if you liked them you could either add them directly to your draft on the left-hand side or else use an asterisk to show where you wanted your new bit of craft to go into your draft.

For this mini-lesson, simply show children how you yourself have used a 'trying things out page'. You should model how you use the left-hand for crafting your draft and the right-hand side for trying things out to add or change about that draft. You may also need to explain how you used asterisks or numbers to show where content was to go when it came to writing out your final copy. Children love coming up with their own codes and systems for organising their revisions too. For instance, in the examples below, a child has abbreviated the words 'sticky bit' to SB, 'more detail' to MD and 'best line' to BL. She has also played around with images and visualisation as part of her process.


Mum told the story; ~~I was but~~. I was little... bla bla bla... fell over... bla bla bla... other dentist found out... bla bla bla... The dentist asked if I wanted to take it out. I accepted the offer, without thinking.
They made me ~~bite~~ keep on biting plastic, and turning the light off and dashing out the room.
They then pulled the tooth out with tweezers. They put gel on my tooth to soften it up. It hurt a lot, and I cried. But the tooth sprang out! It came out! After 4 hours of pain and pressure, the tooth came out!
I never forgot that ~~day~~ day. My tooth has grown into a big grown up tooth.
Now, although it took its time grow the roots ~~at the~~

Trying Thing Out Page (aka TTOP)

Senses
* 1 The dentistry had a familiar wood smell, to which I deeply inhaled. (Smell)
* 2 The gel had a minty taste. (Taste)
* 3 People smoked, people ran, people pushed. (Sight)

Monday 9th November 2020

Revising

Mini-Lesson: how to build on your best line

Trying Thing Out Page Part 2 (aka TTOPt2)

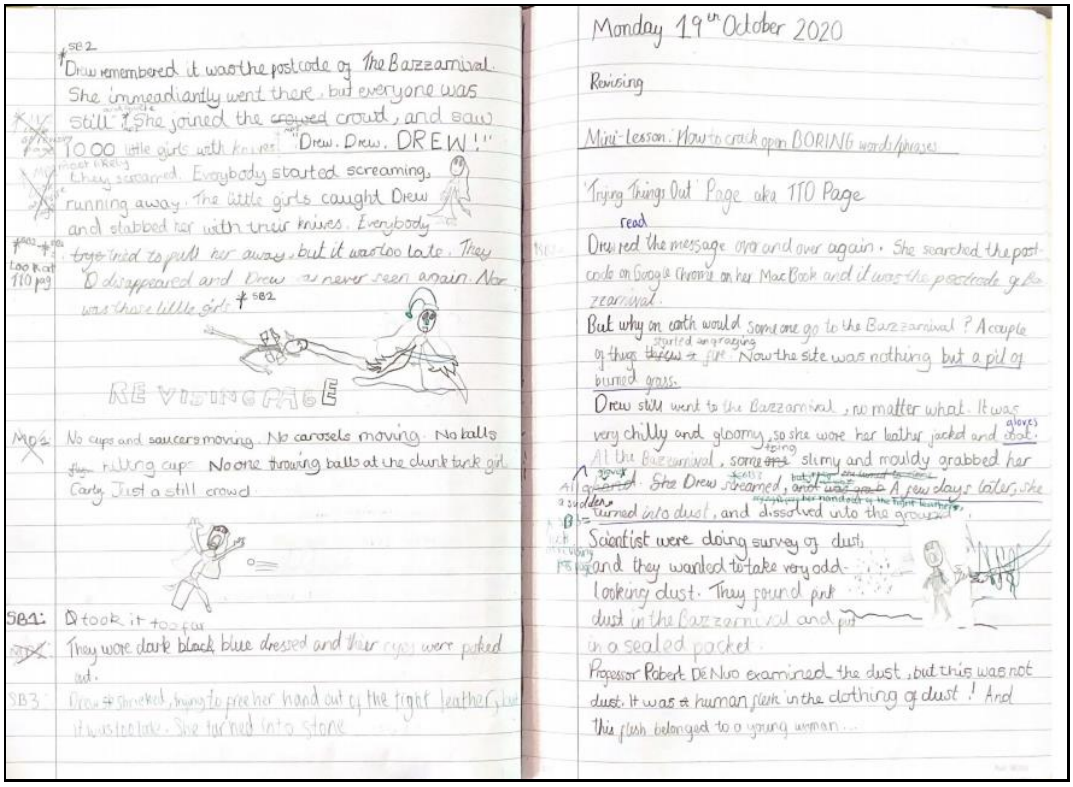
The dentist ~~was~~ looked worried, so she took an X-Ray of ~~the~~ my mouth.
I first had bite down on a plastic ~~mouth~~ model of a mouth.
I bit HARD! The dentist ran out of the room and back in.
I stayed in the room, with Mum seriously confused.
!?!

Tuesday 10th November 2020

Revising

Mini-Lesson: How to use Five Alive!

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.



SB2

Drew remembered it was the postcode of The Bazzarnival. She immediantly went there, but everyone was still. She joined the ~~crowed~~ crowd, and saw 10.00 little girls with knives. "Drew. Drew. DREW!" They screamed. Everybody started screaming, running away. The little girls caught Drew and stabbed her with their knives. Everybody tryed tried to pull her away, but it was too late. They D disappeared and Drew was never seen again. Nor was there little girls. SB2

RE VISING

MO: No cups and saucers moving. No carosels moving. No balls ~~flyn~~ filling cup. No one throwing balls at the drunk tank girl. Carty. Just a still crowd.

SB1: D took it too far

They were dark black blue dressed and their eyes were poked out.

SB3: Drew ~~s~~ shrieked, trying to free her hand out of the tight leather, like it was ice lake. She turned into stone

Monday 19th October 2020

Revising

Mini-Lesson: How to crack open BORING words/phrases

'Trying Things Out' Page aka TTO Page

Drew read the message over and over again. She searched the post-code on Google Chrome on her MacBook and it was the postcode of the zarnival.

But why on earth would some one go to the Bazzarnival? A couple of thugs started an groaging ~~threw a fire~~. Now the site was nothing but a pil of burned grass.

Drew still went to the Bazzarnival, no matter what. It was very chilly and gloomy, so she wore her leather jacket and gloves that. At the Bazzarnival, some being slimy and mouldy grabbed her ~~arm~~. She Drew screamed, ~~and was pulled~~ A few days later, she turned into dust, and dissolved into the ground.

Scientist were doing survey of dust and they wanted to take very odd looking dust. They found pink dust in the Bazzarnival and put in a sealed packet.

Professor Robert De Niro examined the dust, but this was not dust. It was a human flesh in the clothing of dust! And this flesh belonged to a young woman...

Tags: Developing; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

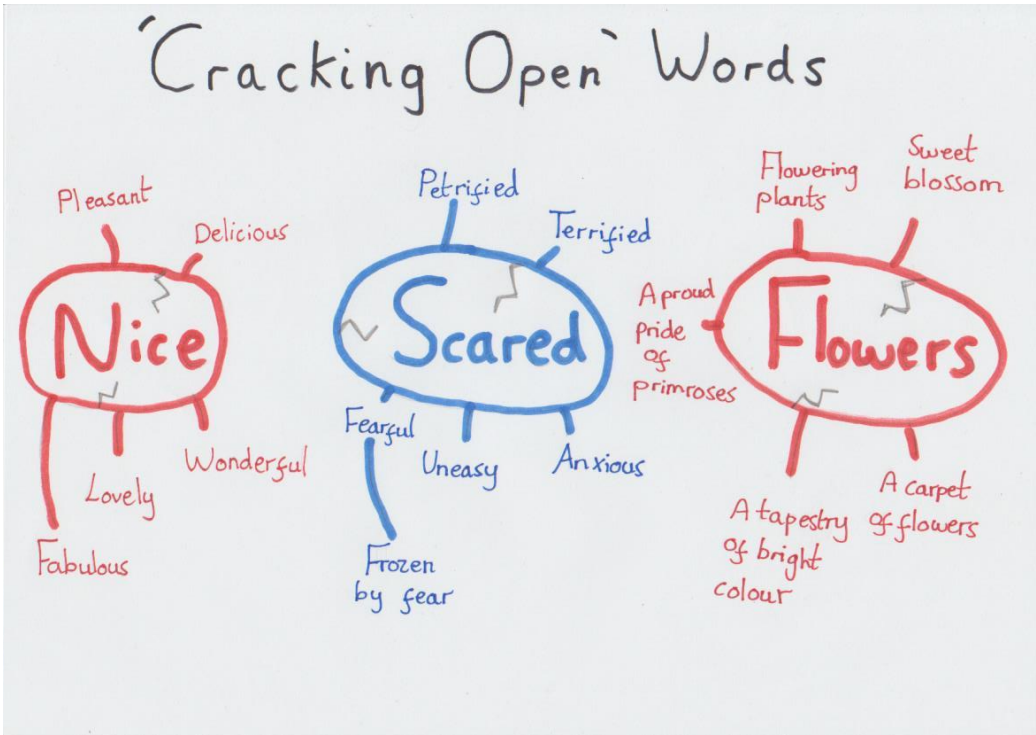
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Word Choices

Children are often asked when they are revising to reconsider and perhaps change their word choices. This is an important part of writing engagingly, clarifying meaning and keeping the reader interested, and these lessons give children strategies to help them do this. The maxim here is that young writers need to be able to justify to themselves the particular choices they have made, and to have the confidence to resist choosing words which may sound impressive but which actually don't enhance the effect or add to their meaning.

'Cracking open' boring words

We all do it. In our excitement to get our thoughts down, we will write the words that come to mind immediately. This is fine and a good way of drafting fluently. However, it is always worth revising your draft afterwards to notice just how often you may be using the same words. Sometimes I use my Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words & Phrases* to help me, but online thesauruses are excellent too. Otherwise, I will 'crack open' the word by drawing a circle around it and writing alternatives.



The best thing to do with this lesson is to show children how you have used this technique yourself in your writer's notebook. You can explain how you went about it and answer any of the children's questions. You can then invite your young writers to have a go for themselves in their own writing that day. This mini-lesson is most effective when the majority of your class are revising their pieces.

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres; independence, confidence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Let's not have a snore festival

I was once conferencing with a young writer when all of a sudden his friend turned round to us and said: 'No offence, but some of your words make it a bit of a snore fest'. We asked him what he meant and he explained: 'Well, you seem to use the same words over and over again. Maybe try using some different words' And so this mini-lesson was born.

The best thing to do with this lesson is to show your class a piece of writing you've drafted but haven't yet spent any time considering your word choices. Alternatively, show them a child's recently drafted piece. Ask them where you could consider using synonyms for repeated words or phrases. A classic from the youngest of writers are things like:

'I like…'
'I went…',
'And then…'

Ask the class for alternatives. You should then invite children to work with their friends at their tables and think about where they can make sure their writing isn't a 'snore fest'.

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres; independence, confidence; EYFS, KS1

Spells, incantations and the power of naming

Special words, rhymes, riddles and spells - no fairytale is complete without at least one of them. They can:

- Unlock secret places: *Open, sesame!*
- Make things happen: *Cook, little pot,cook!* and then stop things happening.
- Summon up magic spirits: *Alakazam!*
- Warn you of dangers: *Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman!*
- Hold you to your promises: *Open the door, my princess dear/ Open the door to thy true love here!/ And mind the words that thou and I said / By the fountain cool in the greenwood shade!*
- Defeat evil powers: *Can your name be Rumpel-stilt -skin?*
- Bring about great blessings: *'Omumbo-rombonga!' cried Tortoise, and down showered the fruit.*

In this mini-lesson, collect, share and discuss a few examples of how storytellers have shown the magic power of words in fairy or folk tales - children may well remember many from their experience of hearing them, reading them or watching Disney versions.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Even better is to show them where you have included a spell or a rhyme or perhaps an amusing name in a fairytale you have written. You can then invite the children to make up their own powerful words and put them in their writing that day. Remind them that these magic words and phrases are there because they actively do something in the story, and that they are often repeated at different points in the narrative - they tend not to appear just once.

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres; narrative, independence; KS1, KS2

Alliteration

Ah. Alliteration. An author's ability to artistically retrieve a reaction from their reader. Michael Rosen talks about poems having 'secret strings'. Alliteration, where the same letter is repeatedly used can be one of these secret strings.

What I like to do with any poetic technique lesson is ask the children to comb through books from the classroom library for examples that they particularly love. You'll see we've given some examples of what this can look like in the Genre Booklets. Children can write some of their favourites into their writer's notebook and you can have a discussion about why they like them so much. Afterwards, you can invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time – and have a go yourself!

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres, confidence; KS1, KS2

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a way of bringing sounds to the images you're painting with words. No longer is your reader in a silent movie – in their mind you have conjured up a sound you wanted them to hear – tick – tock - whether they read it out loud or not. Whether it's with a splish, splash or crash - the sound enters our mind.

What I like to do with any poetic technique lesson is ask the children to comb through books from the classroom library for examples that they particularly love. You'll see we've given some examples of what this can look like in the Genre Booklets. Children can write some of their favourites into their writer's notebook and you can have a discussion about why they like them so much. Afterwards, you can invite children to try out the technique for themselves during that day's writing time – and have a go yourself!

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres, confidence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Rhyme

From there to here, and here to there, rhymes can be found almost anywhere – apart from in an orange.

It's my experience that children love rhyme. They also love crafting rhyming poems, which are often fun to think about. Obviously it's good to share a variety of poems that rhyme but it's also useful to point out how rhyming is used in advertising too. You can get into rich discussion about the role rhyme has to play in the examples you explore. Finally, you can invite the children to consider rhyme as a literary device during that day's writing time.

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres, confidence; KS1, KS2

Metonymy

Metonymy in Latin means 'change of name'. We use metonymy all the time, and it's so interesting when you delve into it. Like metaphor, simile and symbolism, metonymy is a type of figurative language which implies meanings other than or beyond that of the literal. While metaphor compares two relatively unlike things with each other, metonymy replaces something with something else clearly associated with it. For example: 'heart' can stand for 'love', and in the famous saying 'the pen is mightier than the sword', 'pen' stands for the power of writing and 'sword' for aggression and warfare. We use metonymy in our speech all the time without really realising it. For example, 'give me a hand' means 'help'.

Similar to metonymy is the wonderfully-named synecdoche, which just means a part standing for a whole. For example, 'bums on seats', 'taking a head count' or 'we accept plastic,' (meaning using your bank card).

For this mini-lesson, you could show children how you used the following strategies to help develop your character.

- *For example, pick a name for a character which sums up the whole person, for example, 'Dreadlocks'. You will have given your reader a clue to the character's possible lifestyle and interests just from the name (metonym).*
- *Maybe you could focus on a piece of clothing or a body part which perhaps says all you need to say about what the person is like: for example, a teenager who wears boots with steel toe-caps could be a tough character, or a person whose eyes keep sliding away is maybe not to be trusted (synecdoche).*

Use your own writing as a resource, and show children where and why you have deliberately used metonymy and synecdoche yourself, before inviting them to give it a try during that day's writing time.

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence; KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Good, better, best!

This is a fun way to help your children to revise their word choices in their writing. First they need to read their work and choose some words that they are not quite happy with, are not specific, or are too vague. Then they play the game: good, better, best!

Yesterday, I was revising the story I am writing and I wasn't very happy with some of the words I had chosen. So I played the game: good, better, best! I selected some of the words that didn't really describe well what I wanted to say. For example: 'In front of the house, there were some ***plants.' '****Amelia enjoyed playing with her* ***pet.'*** *'She* ***ran*** *to meet Lily.' I thought I could be more specific than just writing 'plants, pet, and ran'! So I wrote:*

Good: plant Better: tree Best: oak tree	Good: pet Better: cat Best: Siamese cat	Good: ran Better: raced Best: dashed

Listen to this paragraph again, after I have revised my word choices. What do you think? Have a go at playing: good, better, best when you are not too sure about your word choices, if you want.

Tags: Word choices; revising; all genres; independence, confidence; KS1, KS2

Character names

Bob and Dave. Aside from their friends' names, these were the most popular character names I'd find in most of my class' narratives. My pupils weren't thinking carefully about what their character's names were likely to be or what a character's name can reveal about them as a person. There are a lot of things to think about when developing a good character name. For example:

- Does the name fit the story about them?
- Is it in keeping with the historical period?
- Is their name in keeping with their cultural heritage?
- Does their name match their personality?
- Have you looked up the name's meaning?
- Is the name easy to pronounce for the age-range you expect to read it?
- What were their parents likely to have named them and why?
- Does the character also have a nickname? What does it tell us about them?

The best thing to do with this type of mini-lesson is to show how and why you chose the names you used in the stories you wrote. You can also invite children to think about some of the questions shared above during that day's writing time.

Tags: Word choices; planning, revising; narrative; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Save it for later

Every now and then, while I'm writing, a word, a phrase, a great line or maybe a striking metaphor will leap into my mind, and I'll like how it sounds so much that I'll feel I must include it in my piece - that it's too good to be left out. But when I come to re-read or revise the writing, I'll realise that it doesn't quite seem to fit. Then I find I'll have a struggle with myself about leaving it out, just because I'm rather taken with it. But leaving it out is just what I need to do. However, there's a solution to this problem, which is to copy that great line or that arresting metaphor into my notebook, and save it for another time, when it will have an even better effect. As writer Edith Sitwell said: *All in the end is harvest.* I usually feel good when I've made myself do this. It shows I can sometimes be self-disciplined!

If you've taught your children the other mini-lessons about squirrelling good stuff away in their notebook (see page 57), they will understand how saving bits of their own great writing for later is a real writerly strategy they can use at any time, now and in the future. Explain to them that they could today write a 'Good stuff I've written' heading in their notebook, and show them where you've done this in yours. They could also revise their text with this strategy in mind today. Tell them too that being able to park something you're attached to and use it at a more appropriate time is a sign of a discriminating writer operating at greater depth.

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS2

Create rhythm!

When I write I always like to read my writing aloud to check if my word choices have created rhythm. I like to think about not only the meaning of the words but the sound created by words in a sentence, like music, the combination of sounds can create an appealing atmosphere for the reader. This works when writing for all ages, but especially well when writing for younger children. When you create a rhythm, all the senses will be involved and combined to tell a story or share information. Michael Rosen does this really well!

Ask children to read their writing aloud. What does it sound like? How did the sounds of words make you feel? Does it create rhythm?

Tags: Word choices; drafting, revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Spelling

Spelling is important. It's important because, when a text is published, the reader must be able to read it without the flow or the meaning being compromised. Because it has a public face, it must be worthy of respect. What these lessons don't do is teach children how to spell. Instead, they teach what most writers do - focus on maintaining fluency while drafting, and attending to spelling later with the help of technological and other kinds of spelling aids.

Use a temporary spelling

Any idiot can tell a genius they've spelt a word wrong
- Harold Rosen

If you don't know how to spell a word, and you're right in the middle of writing, I hope you don't go to the dictionary (even if you had one to hand). On occasion, you might look it up on Google or ask your mobile phone to spell it for you. However, more often than not, while you're in the midst of drafting, you'll simply write down a *temporary* spelling and look it up later. That's what makes it temporary. In a while, you'll get round to making sure it's conventionally spelt. This isn't about having low expectations for transcriptional accuracy. It's about being realistic and giving children a strategy while drafting that supports them and their fluency.

Other teachers call them 'approximate' spellings, 'sound' spellings or 'unsure' spellings (Young & Ferguson *in press)*. Whatever you decide to call them, the premise is the same. It's also a good idea to teach your children to get into the habit of circling their temporary spellings. They can look them up when they get round to proof-reading their final draft.

Drafting Advice	
Got a sticky or a yawny bit? - Put a line under the bit you are unsure about. - Carry on.	**Don't know how to spell a word?** - Invent the spelling. - Put a circle around it. - Carry on.
Don't know what to write next? - Read it to a partner. - Get your partner to ask you questions.	**Not sure of punctuation?** - Put a box where the punctuation might need to go. - Carry on.
Think you have finished? Start or continue with a personal writing project!	

(Taken from *Real-World Writers* Young & Ferguson 2020)

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

For this mini-lesson, the best thing to do is to model the use of temporary spellings yourself. Show children how you will write down an approximation (what you think the spelling could be), put a circle around it, and carry on writing. It's important that you also show them another example of where you went back and replaced your temporary spellings with the conventional spelling. Explain how you did this as part of your proof-reading.

Tags: Spelling; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1, KS2

I'm not scared of words!

When developing the youngest of writers, it's important that we help them to craft freely and happily. As teachers, our instruction comes at too high a price if children no longer want to participate in the things we are teaching. This is what makes the mini-lesson so important.

This mini-lesson has come about as a result of reading Already Ready by Katie Ray & Matt Glover. They explain how they created a poster where children could show off their attempts at spelling 'ambitious' words in the picture books they make. On the poster, a child's spelling would be put next to the conventional spelling and praise would be given by the class for the similarities the spellings had (as opposed to what made them different). The idea is that the child would stop being too scared to give spellings a go. This mini-lesson is usually best taught at the end of any writing time.

Tags: Spelling; all processes; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Stretch, say it slowly and listen

Teaching your children to be aware of sounds in words is an important part of teaching writing. Don't be afraid to bring attention to sounds and ask' What sounds can you hear in this word?' This mini-lesson will support your early writers, but other children can benefit from it too. It can be taught in a conference or combined with the two mini-lessons below in a whole-class teaching session, depending on the needs of your class.

I'm going to show you how you can write any word you want! I know how to spell this word because I'm a grown-up and I've been writing words for a very long time. But when I was around four or six, like you, I didn't know how to spell it, so this is what I did. I'd say the word slowly, listening to the sounds, and I would write them down. I'd especially listen to the sound at the beginning. I would also use my alphabet chart to help me look up what the sounds look like. This would help my reader to read my book when I wasn't there to tell it.

Tags: Spelling; editing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Say it and picture the word

Some children will find it really helpful to visualise the word they want to write, asking if it is a long or a short word? Does it have some chunks? Does it remind you of another word you already know?

Another way to help you to spell a word when you are not too sure is to picture it in your head. Is it a long or a short word? Does it have chunks? Does it have parts of other words you already know? Next time when you don't really know how to spell a word, have a go at imagining the word in your head!

Tags: Spelling; editing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

Stretch, count and look

Teaching your children to be aware of sounds in words is an important part of teaching writing. Don't be afraid to talk about sounds and to ask' What sounds can you hear in this word?' This mini-lesson will support your early writers, but other children can benefit from it too. It can be taught in a conference or combined with the two mini-lessons above in a whole- class teaching session, depending on the needs of your class.

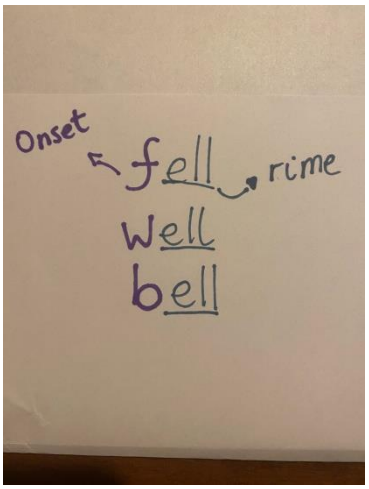
Some days you are writing and you are looking for the right word to use, and when you find the perfect word, it feels good! However, you might think that you cannot use that word because you don't know how to spell it. Don't worry, you can still use it! Listen carefully, count the sounds, and have a go! I will teach you a way that will help you to do just that.

First, stretch the word very carefully and slowly. What sounds can you hear? Can you use your fingers to count the sounds? How many sounds can you hear? If you are not sure, stretch the word again, and count the sounds once more. Once you know how many sounds there are, write each one down. If you are not too sure what the sounds look like, use a sound mat to help you. Demonstrate each step.

Tags: Spelling; editing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Onset and rime



Different to rhyme, rime is related to the grapheme and the pattern created by a string of letters. Teach the children to observe these patterns, especially the early writers. They will find remembering their spellings and reading back their work easier.

Conferencing with individual children might be the best time to teach this mini lesson – of course other children often end up listening in and start to observe the onset and rime in the words they want to write. This will benefit early writers and help the children to build up their confidence and fluency.

Tags: Spelling; editing; all genres; confidence, independence; EYFS, KS1

How to check for spelling mistakes and correct your unsure 'temporary' spellings

Rightly or wrongly, the fact is that all our hard work can be in vain if we allow spelling mistakes to reach publication. Readers can make adverse judgements about our writing if they see spelling mistakes. I have to say at this point that dictionaries are an awful place to go if you are looking for a spelling. You usually have to know how it's spelt to look it up. However, speech search using Google is excellent! Believe me! As are electronic spell checkers. Some children also appreciate ACE spelling dictionaries which are sorted by sound as opposed to alphabetically. Finally, children have always appreciated the 100 and 1000 word dictionaries I've made. They can usually flick through and 'see' the word they want to spell. I would also put common homophones and high-frequency 'tricky' words up on the working wall with corresponding illustrations (of the class' choice) to help them remember.

It's helpful to teach individual mini-lessons on how to use each of the resources I've listed above. It's also important that you model the use of unsure 'temporary' spellings in your own drafting. I've always had a policy of circling any temporary spellings I've used while drafting, knowing I will attend to them during the proof-reading.

It's important that you give praise to children for the number of changes they have made rather than reprimanding them for the number they've missed. 'Wow! You're kidding? You've made 25 edits?! Amazing' Children can often be quite motivated by the number of edits they've been able to make on their way to publication when it's seen as a positive.

Tags: Spelling; editing; all genres;, confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Spellings - come in come in - dot dot dash dash - the syllables

This is a follow up to the mini-lesson below. Once children have got the hang of tapping and listening for syllables in the words they want to spell they can begin to put either a dash or a dot in their books to indicate the numbers of sounds they need to write down to spell the word.

The best thing to do with this mini-lesson is to model it live to the children as you craft your own book. You can then invite children to do the same during that day's writing time.

Tags: Spelling; editing; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Tapping the syllables

I find spelling syllables as opposed to whole words a lot easier. Even if I don't get the spelling right, it's usually close enough so that I can look it up later. The same is true for children. Occasionally, you get a child whose 'temporary' spellings are so far away from the conventional spelling that it's difficult for them to remember what it is they tried to write. Asking them to tap the syllables with their fingers and then write them down can help combat this.

I've found the best place to teach this mini-lesson is during conferencing with individual children – of course other children often end up listening in and start to use the technique for themselves. Children are often grateful for this technique. Just remember to remind them to circle any temporary spellings, ready to correct when it's time for proof-reading.

Tags: Spelling; editing; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

Root words

Understanding and recognising root words helps not only with the spelling but with understanding the meaning of words too. Once they know the spelling and meaning of a root word they will understand and remember the meaning of a bank of words. In English there are many Greek and Latin root words, and knowing some of them will help the children to make their word choices. You want the children to learn this in a functional way. Your non-fiction projects might be the best time to teach about root words, because a lot of technical terminology has Greek and Latin root words. However, root words have other origins too.

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

*One day, I wanted to use the word 'dehydrated' but I couldn't remember the spelling. Soon after, I remembered the root word '**hydr'** that means 'water', and realised that I could spell and use so many different words in my writing that were related to my project such as **hydr**ant and **hydr**oplane. Just as the root word '**dict'(** meaning 'to say') helps you to spell and understand the meaning of words like **dict**ionary, **dict**ate, **dict**ator and ver**dict**.*

If you are working with KS1 or early writers you might want to call their attention to the root words they already know, and teach them that this will help them with their spellings and word choices. It is important to always present this to the children in a functional way, in the context of wanting to use the words in their writing. Such as **write, writ**er, **writ**ing**.**

Tags: Spelling; editing; revising; all genres; confidence, independence; KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Index

Navigate by process

Any Process					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
Setting up our own publishing house	32	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Doing what bookshops do	35	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Rights and responsibilities of a mini-lesson	37	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Rights and rules during book-making time	38	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1
Rights and rules during Author's Chair	39	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1
What can we learn about writing from this writing?	40	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What have you learnt about writing today?	42	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How to write in collaboration	42	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, Motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Tell it if you can't read it	43	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Hey! We could do that in our books!	45	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1
What to do when you don't know what to do	46	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
How to suggest a mini-lesson	48	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Adopt a writer	53	Being writers	All genres	Writer-identity	KS1, KS2
How to share your writing with a friend	54	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	KS1, KS2
How to respond to your friend's writing	56	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	KS1, KS2
Why do we set goals?	58	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Celebrating goals achieved	60	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What went well yesterday?	60	Being writers	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What do you need mini-lessons on?	61	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS2
Can I copy you?	62	Being writers	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What's your writing habit?	64	Being writers	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Percentage complete	66	Being writers	All genres	Motivation	KS2
Where's your finish line?	67	Being writers	All genres	Motivation	KS1-2
Using a writing calendar	68	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, agency	KS2
Our writers' rights and responsibilities	69	Being writers	All genres	Writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Writing rivers	71	Being writers	All genres	Writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Create a routine	72	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Knowing the writing processes	73	Being writers	All genres	Independence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How to use your Writing Station	79	Being writers	All genres	Agency, independence	EYFS, KS1
I get by with a little help from my friends: giving advice	80	Being writers	All genres	Independence, writer-identity	KS2
What do you notice about books?	151	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
When is a book finished?	152	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Let's use 'kid writing'	188	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Write the first sound then use kid writing	189	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Go from sounds to letters	190	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Talk to yourself	191	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Write it *in* the line if you can't write it *on* the line.	191	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Pencil microphone: Say it then write it	192	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Whisper your sentence, hold it and keep it!	192	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Think, say and write	193	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Make a page - share page	194	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Write a little - share a little	195	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
YES! I did it! EYFS checklists	233	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS
Use a temporary spelling	299	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS2, KS2
I'm not scared of words!	300	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Generating Ideas					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
Squirrelling away - how to organise a notebook	57	Being writers	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Collecting language - speech	58	Being writers	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Choose something delicious from the publishing menu	76	Being writers	All genres	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Why do writers write?	83	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Let's have an ideas party	87	Generating ideas	All genres	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Leapfrogging using another author's book.	88	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Leapfrogging yourself using a friend's idea	89	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Change something about a text you love	89	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Use your toy as a character	90	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Ideas heart	90	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
What do you know?	92	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How well do you know?	93	Generating ideas	Non-Fiction	Self-regulation, Independence	KS1, KS2
Read – draw – write	94	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Something I learnt: Warning stories and proverbs	95	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
When I was younger…	95	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency,	KS1, KS2
Favourite objects	97	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Favourite places	98	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Top fives and top tens	98	Generating ideas	Narrative, non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Spark line	100	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
What if...	101	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Imagine a day when...	102	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Imagine a moment when...	103	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Inspired by… poems	104	Generating ideas	Poetry	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Intertextuality: finding stories within stories (as a whole class)	105	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Idea webs	107	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Twenty words	108	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Write about topic lessons	109	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Think ‘faction’	110	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Fan fiction	111	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Memoirs with strong feelings	112	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Something different happened this time	113	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
What do you do when you’re not at school?	113	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I know how to...	114	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Let me tell you...	115	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Information is held in the objects we treasure	115	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I'm an expert in	116	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I want to learn more about...	117	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Conversations over photographs	118	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Take a seed of truth and grow a story	118	Generating ideas	Narrative	Agency, motivation	KS1, KS2
The history that hides in objects	119	Generating ideas	All genres	Agency, motivation	KS1, KS2
Collect one week - write the next	119	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Dreamcatcher to story catcher	120	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
What am I sorry about?	120	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Answering Michael Rosen's four questions	121	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Read a moment	122	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Comb your reading book	123	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Free-writing	123	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Free-writing on an idea	124	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
Free-writing across the curriculum	124	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
My life would be different if...	125	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, agency	KS2
If I were in charge of the world…?	126	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Hey world, how are you?	127	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
What makes you cross?	127	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
That's not fair!	128	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Poetry with strong feelings	128	Generating ideas	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Intertextuality: finding stories within stories	129	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Write about what you're most afraid of	130	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Playing on your audience's fears	130	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Conflict: stories about people	131	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Lost of gained? Positive or negative?	133	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Proverbs inspire narrative	134	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Idioms inspire narrative	135	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Themes for great stories	136	Generating ideas	Narrative	Independence, agency	KS2
Give a voice to those who can't be heard	137	Generating ideas	Poetry	Independence, agency	KS2
Have you ever wondered how to...	137	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Asking questions	138	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
What have I always wanted to find out about?	139	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Ask your audience...	139	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Use newspapers and magazines	140	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Independence, agency	KS2
What itch needs scratching?	141	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
What do you believe?	141	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Be outrageous	142	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Make a change!	143	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Personal issues to global issues	144	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
The ten most important things about me	144	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS2
Create character mini books	145	Generating ideas	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Write a list	146	Generating ideas	All genres	Independence, agency	EYFS, KS1
People watching	146	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Independence, agency	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Language popping like Pinter!	146	Generating ideas	Narrative, poetry	Independence, agency	KS2
Likes and dislikes	147	Generating ideas	Non-fiction	Confidence, writer identity	KS1, KS2
I know and it's important to me!	147	Generating ideas	All genres	Confidence, writer identity	KS1, KS2
Colour-noun-poem	148	Generating ideas	Poetry	Independence, writer identity	KS2
Let's rank	149	Generating ideas	All genres	Motivation; writer-identity	KS1, KS2
I've got more ideas than I know what to do with!	150	Generating ideas	All genres	Agency, independence	KS1, KS2
Free writing: Why I love...	155	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Star plan to shine	155	Organisation & structure	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Talk about your topic… Tell your story...	156	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Discovery drafts: write it in five minutes!	157	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Life mapping	159	Organisation & structure	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Draw a map	165	Organisation & structure	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Timeline	169	Organisation & structure	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Dabbling	243	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Characters based on real people	267	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Knowing your character inside out	288	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Planning					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
Give a mentor text a hug	63	Being writers	All genres	Confidence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How motivated are we?	65	Being writers	All genres	Motivation	KS1, KS2
Organise what you know	154	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Keep it simple: use story arcs	157	Organisation & structure	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Introducing your topic	160	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Webbing	161	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Classification diagrams: Make a topic tree then you'll see	162	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Five finger planner	163	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Plan it by post-it	163	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Draw then write	164	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Planning rivers	166	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Journey planning	167	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Planning grids	168	Organisation & structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Persona	172	Organisation & structure	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Symbolism	172	Organisation & structure	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Storyboarding	174	Organisation & structure	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Playing God? Choosing a narrator	176	Organisation & structure	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Writing in role: Teaching in role	178	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Question web	182	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Makes notes	182	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Read some text - shrink the text	183	Organisation & structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Finding your diamond moment	204	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Finding your theme by looking inside yourself	205	Clarity and accuracy	Narrative	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Roar of the waterfall	206	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
General to specific	207	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Authors ask questions	248	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
The power of three	252	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Character personality	264	Developing	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
My setting is a character too! Pathetic fallacy	270	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Teach me about it but also teach me about why you love it	279	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Character names	297	Word choices	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Drafting					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
Let’s make a to-do list	49	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Keeping a writing register	51	Being writers	All genres	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
New thing? New page!	153	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction, narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Using labels to help the reader when you’re not there	153	Organisation and structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Thinking in paragraphs	170	Organisation and structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Pilcrows: Marking paragraphs	171	Organisation and structure	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Is your last line really necessary?	173	Organisation and structure	Poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
Storyboarding	174	Organisation and structure	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Begin by setting the scene	178	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
The power of using 'you'	179	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Lead your reader to the instructions	180	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Would I robot be able to follow my instructions?	181	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Add a glossary	181	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Not enough facts? Paint with words	185	Organisation and structure	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Leave space for your readers!	186	Organisation and structure	Narrative	Self-regulation, confidence	KS2
Using our drafting advice	196	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
State the obvious	197	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Well, what do you want to say next?	198	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Pause at a special place	199	Fluency	All genres	Confidence, Independence	KS1, KS2
Go back and wake your writing up!	200	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Independence	EYFS, KS1
Look again: Going back to yesterday's writing	202	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Tell it to a friend	203	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1
Use your finger spaces	204	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Indepence, confidence	EYFS, KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Traffic-light sentences	210	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Fixing your 'sticky bits'	211	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Repeated lines	212	Clarity and accuracy	Poetry	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Hyperbole	212	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Imagism	213	Clarity and accuracy	Poetry	Confidence, independence	KS2
The actions reveal!	214	Clarity and accuracy	Narrative	Agency, confidence	KS1, KS2
Moving quickly and slowly in a story	215	Clarity and accuracy	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
Time-travelling markers	217	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Teleporting location markers	218	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Ed… sentences	219	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Ing… sentences	220	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
If… then… sentences	221	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
What is the cause?	222	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
What is the condition?	222	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
What does it compare to?	223	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Giving examples and bringing in the experts	223	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
By…what means does it happen?	224	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Order-of-mention	224	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

The gang of three	225	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Beware of 'it'	225	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Pack a punch and share the detail	226	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Switching it up	226	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Sentences as daisy chains	228	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Borrow from what you've read: Referencing	230	Clarity and accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Save it for later	231	Clarity and accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Generating words from pictures	238	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Add to your pictures, add to your writing!	238	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Do my pictures match my writing?	239	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Touch your pictures to make them come alive!	240	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
What's in a story?	240	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
What you want to say then How best to say it	243	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Using the senses	243	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Prove it!	251	Developing	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Metaphor & simile	253	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Personification	255	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Great story openings	256	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Characters asking questions: Who…? What…? Where…? When…? Why…? How…?	257	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

How does your character talk?	258	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How is your character feeling?	259	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Strong endings (narrative)	261	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Partner up for great description and detail	262	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Setting descriptions	267	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Painting with words	269	Developing	Narrative, poetry	Confidence, agency	KS2
My setting is a character too! Pathetic fallacy	270	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Show don't tell	271	Developing	Narrative, poetry	Confidence	KS2
Writing a conversation: Dialogue	272	Developing	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
What were they thinking?!: Monologue	273	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Using body language	274	Developing	Narrative	Confidence	KS2
Pathetic fallacy	276	Developing	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Giving clues	277	Developing	Poetry, narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
One word in the right place	277	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Postpose your adjectives!	278	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
Taking time out to tell a story	279	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Nonfiction: Intriguing introductions	280	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Nonfiction: colossal conclusions	282	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Support the facts	284	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Making information come alive	285	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Unlike	285	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
If..,.then… When…, then...	286	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Use an anecdote to make a point	286	Developing	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Showing characters' point of view	287	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, agency	KS2
Zoom in, Zoom out!	289	Developing	All genres	Agency, independence	KS1, KS2
From rubbish to gold	290	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Use your 'trying things out page'	291	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Spells, incantations and the power of naming	294	Word choices	Narrative	Independence	KS1, KS2
Alliteration	295	Word choices	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Onomatopoeia	295	Word choices	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Metonymy	296	Word choices	All genres	Confidence	KS2
Save it for later	298	Word choices	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
Create rhythm	298	Word choices	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Stretch, say it slowly and listen	300	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Say it and picture the word	301	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
Stretch, count and look	301	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Revising					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
Revisit your book	78	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Design your own product goals!	80	Being writers	All genres	Independence, agency	KS2
How do writers evaluate their writing?	84	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	KS1, KS2
Five alive!	207	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Change the word order	209	Clarity & accuracy	Narrative	Independence	KS1, KS2
Cutting the string: Avoiding stringy bits	211	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Would an alien understand what I'm writing about?	216	Clarity & accuracy	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
If in doubt, cut it out: Getting rid of 'yawny bits'	232	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS2
How to use a revision checklist	234	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
It's OK - just add it on at the end	241	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Let me in! Using carets	242	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Writing your title last	248	Developing	All genres	Confidence	KS1, KS2
The best line	249	Developing	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Rumbling reading tummy	261	Developing	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Character personality into show don't tell	266	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
See things like a poet: the poetry that hides in things	275	Developing	Narrative	Confidence, independence	KS2
'Cracking open' boring words	293	Word choices	All genres	Independence	KS1, KS2
Good, better, best!	297	Word choices	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Let's not have a snore festival	294	Word choices	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Editing					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
How do you know you're finished?	46	Being writers	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Getting it 'reader ready': How to use an editing checklist	235	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Ha! Gottcha!: How many edits have you got?	236	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Onset and rime	302	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1
How to check for spelling mistakes and correct your unsure 'temporary' spellings	302	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Spellings - come in come in - dot dot dash dash - the syllables	303	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Tapping the syllables	303	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Root words	303	Spelling	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Publishing & Performing					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Craft Area**	**Genre**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
How should we celebrate?	65	Being writers	All genres	Motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Why are we doing this project?	66	Being writers	All genres	Motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Perform	74	Being writers	Narrative, Poetry	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1
Muting Michael Rosen	75	Being writers	Poetry	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Book making	77	Being writers	All genres	Motivation, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Give your writing a tickle	201	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Setting up publishing expectations	236	Clarity & accuracy	All genres	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Navigate by genre

Poetry					
Mini-Lesson	**Page**	**Process**	**Craft Area**	**Affective Needs**	**Age**
Muting Michael Rosen	75	Publishing	Being writers	Confidence, writer-identity	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Inspired by… poems	104	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
If I were in charge of the world…?	126	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
What makes you cross?	127	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
That's not fair!	128	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Poetry with strong feelings	128	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Give a voice to those who can't be heard	137	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Colour-noun-poem	148	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, writer identity	KS2
Is your last line really necessary?	173	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, agency	KS2
Repeated lines	212	Drafting, revising	Clarity & accuracy	Confidence	KS1, KS2
Imagism	213	Drafting, revising	Clarity & accuracy	Confidence, independence	KS2
Poetry & Narrative					
Perform	74	Publishing	Being writers	Confidence, motivation	EYFS, KS1
Favourite places	98	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Spark line	100	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS1, KS2
Memoirs with strong feelings	112	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Something different happened this time	113	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
People watching	46	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Language popping like Pinter!	146	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Life mapping	59	Generating ideas, planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Draw a map	165	Generating ideas, planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Timeline	169	Generating ideas, planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, agency	KS2
Painting with words	269	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, agency	KS2
Show don't tell	271	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence	KS2
Pathetic fallacy	276	Drafting, revising,	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Giving clues	277	Drafting, revising,	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Narrative					
Change something about a text you love	89	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Use your toy as a character	90	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Something I learnt: Warning stories and proverbs	95	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
When I was younger…	95	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency,	KS1, KS2
Imagine a moment when...	103	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Intertextuality: finding stories within stories (as a whole class)	105	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Idea webs	107	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Twenty words	108	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Write about topic lessons	109	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Think 'faction'	110	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Fan fiction	111	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Take a seed of truth and grow a story	118	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Agency, motivation	KS1, KS2
Dreamcatcher to story catcher	120	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
What am I sorry about?	120	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Intertextuality: finding stories within stories	129	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Write about what you're most afraid of	130	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Playing on your audience's fears	130	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Conflict: stories about people	131	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Lost of gained? Positive or negative?	133	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Proverbs inspire narrative	134	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Idioms inspire narrative	135	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Themes for great stories	136	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
Create character mini books	145	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Star plan to shine	155	Generating ideas, planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Keep it simple: use story arcs	157	Planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Storyboarding	174	Planning, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Playing God? Choosing a narrator	176	Planning, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, agency	KS2
Leave space for your readers!	186	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Self-regulation, confidence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Finding your theme by looking inside yourself	205	Planning	Clarity & accuracy	Confidence, motivation	KS1, KS2
Change the word order	209	Revising	Clarity & accuracy	Independence	KS1, KS2
The actions reveal!	214	Drafting	Clarity & accuracy	Agency, confidence	KS1, KS2
Moving quickly and slowly in a story	215	Drafting, revising	Clarity & accuracy	Confidence	KS2
Authors ask questions	248	Planning, drafting	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
The power of three	252	Planning, drafting,	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Great story openings	256	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Characters asking questions: Who…? What…? Where…? When…? Why…? How…?	257	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
How does your character talk?	258	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
How is your character feeling?	259	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Strong endings (narrative)	261	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Partner up for great description and detail	262	Drafting, Revising	Developing	Confidence, agency	KS2
Character personality	264	Planning	Developing	Confidence	KS2
Character personality into show don't tell	266	Revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Characters based on real people	267	Generating ideas, planning,	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Setting descriptions	267	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
My setting is a character too! Pathetic fallacy	270	Planning, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Writing a conversation:	272	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Dialogue					
What were they thinking?!: Monologue	273	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Using body language	274	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence	KS2
See things like a poet: the poetry that hides in things	275	Revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
One word in the right place	277	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Postpose your adjectives!	278	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Showing characters' point of view	287	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, agency	KS2
Knowing your character inside out	288	Generating ideas, planning	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Character names	297	Planning, revising	Word choices	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Non-Fiction					
What do you know?	92	Generating Ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
How well do you know?	93	Generating Ideas	Generating ideas	Self-regulation, Independence	KS1, KS2
Top fives and top tens	98	Generating	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
What do you do when you're not at school?	113	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I know how to...	114	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	EYFS, KS1
Let me tell you...	115	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Information is held in the objects we treasure	115	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I'm an expert in	116	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
I want to learn more	117	Generating ideas	Generating	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

about...			ideas		
Dear world, how are you?	127	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Agency, motivation	EYFS, KS1, KS2
Have you ever wondered about…?	137	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Asking questions	138	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
What have I always wanted to find out about?	139	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Ask your audience...	139	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Use newspapers and magazines	140	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Independence, agency	KS2
What itch needs scratching?	141	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
What do you believe?	141	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Be outrageous	142	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Make a change!	143	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Personal issues to global issues	144	Generating ideas, planning	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
The ten most important things about me	144	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, agency	KS2
Likes and dislikes	147	Generating ideas	Generating ideas	Confidence, writer identity	KS1, KS2
New thing? New page!	153	Drafting	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	EYFS, KS1
Organise what you know	154	Planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Free writing: Why I love...	155	Generating ideas, planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Introducing your topic	160	Planning, drafting	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Webbing	161	Planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Writing in role: Teaching in role	178	Planning, drafting	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Begin by setting the scene	178	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
The power of using 'you'	179	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Lead your reader to the instructions	180	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Would I robot be able to follow my instructions?	181	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Add a glossary	181	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Question web	182	Planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Makes notes	182	Planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Read some text - shrink the text	183	Planning	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Not enough facts? Paint with words	185	Drafting, revising	Organisation & structure	Confidence, independence	KS2
Would an alien understand what I'm writing about?	216	Revising	Clarity & organisation	Confidence, independence	KS2
What is the cause?	222	Drafting, revising	Clarity & organisation	Confidence, independence	KS2
What is the condition?	222	Drafting, revising	Clarity & organisation	Confidence, independence	KS2
What does it compare to?	223	Drafting, revising	Clarity & organisation	Confidence, independence	KS2
Giving examples and bringing in the experts	223	Drafting, revising	Clarity & organisation	Confidence, independence	KS2
By…what means does it happen?	224	Drafting, revising	Clarity & organisation	Confidence, independence	KS2
Pack a punch and share the detail	226	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Switching it up	226	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Borrow from what you've read: Referencing	230	Drafting, revising	Non-fiction	Confidence, independence	KS2
Teach me about it but also teach me about why you love it	279	Planning, drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, agency	KS1, KS2
Taking time out to tell a story	279	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Nonfiction: Intriguing introductions	280	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Nonfiction: colossal conclusions	282	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Support the facts	284	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Making information come alive	285	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
Unlike	285	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2
If..,.then… When…, then...	286	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS1, KS2
Use an anecdote to make a point	286	Drafting, revising	Developing	Confidence, independence	KS2

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Appendix

Responsive Planning Sheet
Date:_____

Name(s):	What are they struggling with?	Possible mini-lesson to teach?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

Assessment & Responsive Planning Sheet
Date:_____

Name(s)	Achievements	What are they struggling with?	Possible mini-lesson to teach?

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

What do you need mini-lessons on? Resource

Using the options below, how **useful** did you find today's mini-lesson?			
Not at all useful	**Only a little bit useful**	**Quite useful**	**Very useful**
In a sentence, please explain your answer:			
What mini-lesson do you think you need next?			

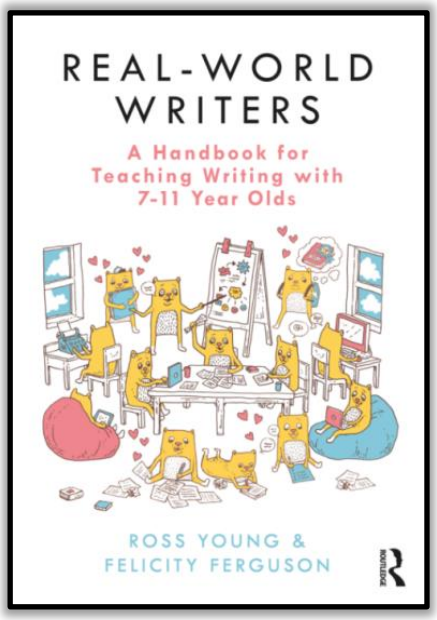
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

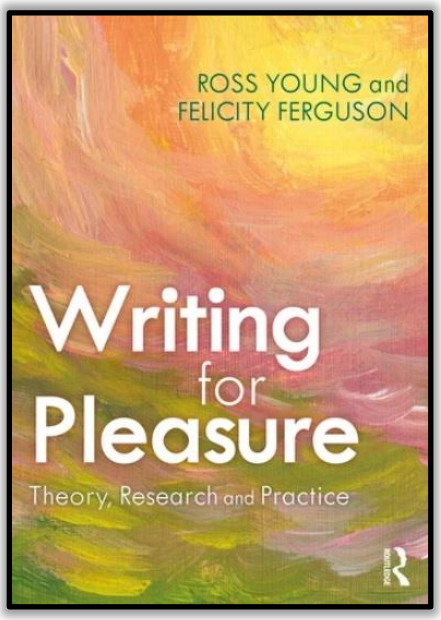
How do writers evaluate their writing? Resource

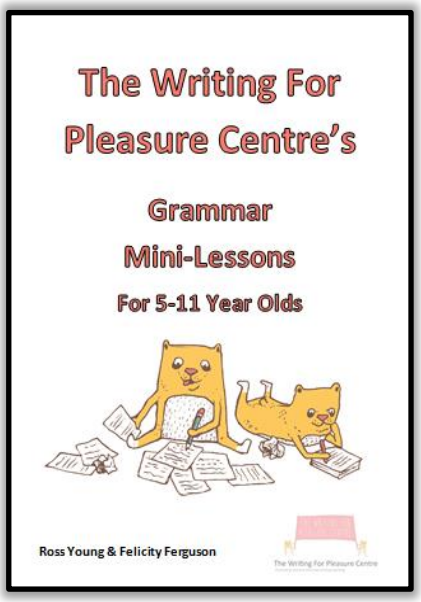
KS2	
Being writers Did you enjoy making this writing? Why? Are you happy with what you crafted? Why? What did you learn about writing? What did you learn about yourself as a writer?	
Generating ideas Did you write something you really wanted to? Do you think you're going to get a good reaction from your readers? What have people's reactions been so far?	
Organisation Are you happy with how your writing is organised on the page or screen? Does it look good?	
Fluency Did you enjoy crafting this writing? Was it easy or hard? What made it easy or hard?	
Developing Did you write with interesting little details? Did you 'paint with words'? Did you explain important stuff? Did you describe important stuff?	
Word Choices Did you make any great word choices? Did you use any words for the first time?	
Clarity & Accuracy Do you think people will be able to read your text easily? Did you have any trouble with any punctuation or grammar conventions?	
Spellings What did you learn about the spelling of some 'unsure' words?	

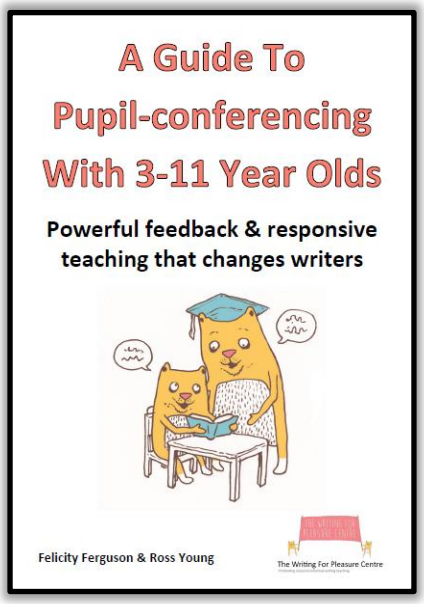
© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

More from The Writing For Pleasure Centre







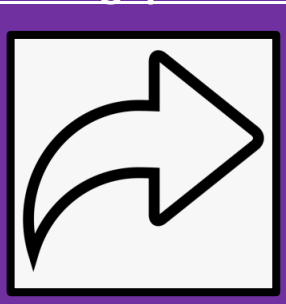


© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.

And finally…

- We are always looking to add extra exemplars to our Genre-Booklets. Please share your own writing with us or any good examples written by the children in your class. You can send any pieces to www.writing4pleasure.com/contact

- If this writing project or one of the mini-lessons has gone really well, please consider writing it up as an example of practice. You can find out more by visiting www.writing4pleasure.com/get-involved



- If you're interested in developing your writing teaching further, we offer a wide-range of evidence-informed CPD including our popular school residency programme, teacher workshops and multi-day institutes. Find out more at www.writing4pleasure.com/training

Join us

Connect with other fantastic writer-teachers who use our approach on Facebook search 'Writing For Pleasure in schools' or on Twitter @WritingRocks_17

© The Writing For Pleasure Centre (2022) This material is for the purchasing institution only.
This material is not copyright free.