

Growing a whole school of extraordinary writers: teaching writing effectively

This residency provides a consistent whole-school approach to teaching writing.

Research has shown that traditional CPD fails to change or embed effective practices within schools (CUREE 2011). Our school residencies are different. We want to provide sustainable and evidence-based CPD. Therefore, our residency involves working with your school for a whole academic year to support your entire staff and writing curriculum in the long-term.

There will be excellent practice taking place in every classroom in the school and it needs to be listened to and shared. Therefore, before we arrive, teachers are asked to fill out our audit of writing practice. This helps us and them to identify their teaching strengths and areas for potential.

At the beginning of the residency we will hold a twilight staff meeting and show how the school can put a consistent routine in place so that children learn something useful and get to write every day. By creating classrooms which are a rich mixture of writing workshop and professional publishing house, children become apprentice writers and learn to work as professional authors do. We show teachers that by planning purposeful and motivating class writing projects, children can work through the stages of their writing process, receive high-quality feedback from their teacher and peers, and publish highly-accomplished and successful written products.

We explain how teachers should provide direct instruction through planned daily mini-lessons. During these mini-lessons, teachers describe a strategy or technique writers use and invite children to try it for themselves in their own writing. Children are then given daily writing time where they use all their skills to develop meaningful, successful and accurate compositions. We demonstrate how, whilst children are writing, teachers can be giving individual instruction and high-quality feedback through powerful pupil conferences and how these interactions push children's writing forward.

We advise and provide materials for setting up valid and useful assessment systems which can be used across the whole school. This includes our writer development scales for the most popular written genres. These show teachers how to identify where individual pupils are in their writing development and give advice and suggested interventions which can move children's development on.

As the residency progresses, we work to observe every teacher at least twice. We treat teachers as co-researchers, observing what they do during their writing lessons, how their pupils are progressing as writers and then provide them with their own individual report on the things they are doing really well and how they might want to develop their writing teaching further. We meet with every teacher to discuss their report.

As part of the residency, we can teach classes while teachers observe. We find this helps teachers see for themselves how they can put into practice the effective writing teaching we've described in the twilight meeting.

The residency includes:

- How to create a cohesive whole-school approach to the teaching of writing.
- Advice on creating purposeful and motivating class writing projects.
- Modelling how to teach an effective writing lesson.
- Modelling how to deliver mini-lessons and the components of effective pupil-conferences.
- How to provide responsive teaching based on quick assessments of children's writing and how to make teaching decisions based on sound assessment.
- How teachers can write their own exemplar texts.
- Provide reports for participating teachers on how they can develop their writing teaching further.
- Provide a whole school report for school improvement plans.
- Our CPD continues long after we leave your school. We provide free follow-up, consolidation and support for the whole academic year. This includes access to our 'office hours' initiative, examples-of-practice action research scheme and membership to our school affiliate programme.



The Writing For Pleasure Centre

- Promoting research informed writing teaching

Towards the end of our residency, we will meet with the senior leadership team and your identified 'internal specialist' or writing coordinator and present our whole school report detailing the school's strengths in terms of their writing teaching and areas where we see opportunity for potential growth. We will also meet individually with the internal specialist about providing further support and guidance after the residency.

We like to learn alongside our schools, refining and pushing our own thinking too. After the residency is over, teachers are required to undertake three action research projects across the year and hand them in as examples of practice. They also share their projects with the rest of the staff. Teachers will receive a certificate of professional participation for their records. To help support the school after we are gone, teachers have access to our 'after hours' initiative where they can join a monthly webinar chat to discuss their progress, seek further advice and network with other schools in the programme. Teachers are also invited to contact us by email to share their successes as well as their questions at any time over the course of the year.



Ross Young & Felicity Ferguson: We are the founders of The Writing For Pleasure Centre. We are also the national writing representatives for The UKLA (United Kingdom Literacy Association) and the conveners of their international Teaching Writing SIG. In addition, we are content providers for The National Literacy Trust. Between us we have over 50 years' experience of teaching in the classroom.

We were the series creators of *Power English: Writing*, a research-based approach to teaching writing effectively across primary school for Pearson Education.

We are also authors of two books: *Real-World Writing: A handbook for teaching writing effectively with 7-11 year olds* and *A Writing For Pleasure pedagogy: from theory to practice* (Routledge 2020, 2021).

Finally, Ross was the lead researcher for the *What is it 'Writing For Pleasure' teachers do that makes the difference?* study for The Goldsmiths' Company and The University Of Sussex.