

Reviewing the EEF's writing practice review. Understanding current practice and research priorities in teaching writing



The Writing For Pleasure Centre

- Promoting research-informed writing teaching

Original report: [LINK](#)

The EEF's review discusses how schools approach the teaching of writing and the challenges they face. To support teachers in addressing these challenges, we have provided links to a host of evidence-based training, resources, articles and publications which we know can help.

- Primary schools often use approaches that aren't always explicitly focused on the teaching of writing. Instead, they try to integrate writing across multiple subjects. Due to its complexity, this is an instructional mistake. If this is a concern for your school, you may benefit from reading our book: *The Science Of Teaching Primary Writing* ([LINK](#)).
- Schools often decide to change their writing approach due to reasons such as low performance in assessments, an increase in students with English as an additional language (EAL) or because of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These factors typically prompt schools to adopt more structured approaches. If your school is suffering from low performance in assessments, you may benefit from reading [this article](#). It details 14 evidence-based practices that could improve the quality of the writing teaching in your school. For advice on supporting your EAL pupils, see our book: *A Teacher's Guide To Writing With Multilingual Children* ([LINK](#)).
- There is no consistent evidence base used by schools to decide on writing interventions. Rather worryingly, most schools do not have formal, structured interventions specifically for writing. Many teachers express a desire to develop writing interventions but lack the knowledge or resources to do so. To combat this, schools may wish to purchase our book: *Supporting Children With SEND To Be Great Writers* ([LINK](#)).
- Despite the current attainment crisis ([LINK](#)), teachers receive minimal professional development specifically focused on teaching writing. There is a strong desire among teachers for more training, especially in areas like handwriting ([LINK](#)) and spelling ([LINK](#)). We have provided links to resources which can support teachers in these areas.
- Schools face challenges such as motivating students to write and ensuring a consistent evidence-based approach is used across the whole school. With this in mind, you may wish to read our *Motivating Writing Teaching* publication ([LINK](#)) and our book *How To Teach Writing* ([LINK](#)).
- Many teachers lack confidence in teaching pupils how to revise and edit their writing. Explicitly teaching writing conventions is also seen as challenging, especially for struggling writers who have difficulty adhering to conventions. If this sounds like you or your school, you may benefit from reading our book: *No More: 'My Pupils Can't Edit!' A Whole-School Approach To Developing Proof-Readers* ([LINK](#)).

The EEF's review also discusses how schools have aligned their writing programmes to promising evidence-based practices:

- Teachers provide structured guidance on writing in different genres ([LINK](#) for more).
- Schools balance writing and reading by integrating *reading as writers* sessions into their writing units ([LINK](#) for more).
- Schools develop children's understanding of writing conventions by explicitly teaching grammar and punctuation in the context of class writing projects ([LINK](#) and [LINK](#)).

Evidence-based practices which aren't being utilised as much as they probably should be are:

- Teachers modelling the writing strategies or *craft moves* they want children to use in their own writing that day ([LINK](#) for more).
- Students giving feedback on each other's drafts ([LINK](#) for more).

Overall, while many primary schools are adopting some effective writing strategies, they face challenges in areas like peer assessment and the teaching of writing conventions. Engaging students through [reading as writers](#) activities is also seen as key in improving children's writing proficiency.

This year, we will be focusing on providing training in all the areas outlined in this review. If you think you or your school would benefit from such training, you can contact us at: **hello@writing4pleasure.com**