

Writing at Dulwich Wood

What is the point of writing?

To be a fully functioning member of society, you need to be able to write. Few of us will become poets or authors but we all need to be able to organise our ideas and express them coherently on screen or in handwriting.

To compete on an even playing field in life and in the jobs market you can't afford to be making spelling errors, have misplaced punctuation or be unable to state your case clearly.

What should pupils be writing about?

Writing topics are set out in the Literacy Sections of the Curriculum Map. They are based on the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) units from the Renewed Framework. Teachers in a given year group or phase, rearrange the order that the units are taught in to fit in with the Creative Curriculum topic for the year. For instance, it makes sense to line up a NLS unit on myths and legends with a Creative Curriculum topic on Ancient Greece as this gives opportunities for the topic to be brought into the writing lessons and for the writing tasks to be based on the topic so there is a purpose to learning about the genre.

What particular writing skills do I need to teach?

These are set out at the start of each NLS unit. Each Unit is assigned to a year group so by putting the skills together you get an outline scheme of work.

However, the new English curriculum (2014) brings in new skills / content (particularly in the areas of grammar and spelling) which will affect the suitability of the NLS units.

A brief overview of the NLS unit content is contained in the folder 'NLS Unit Outline Plans'

An overview of spelling and grammar schemes of work are contained in the folders 'Spelling - Scheme of work' and 'Grammar - Scheme of work'.

Prior Learning Checks (PLCs)

Two weeks before starting a new unit, teachers carry out an unsupported Prior learning Check (PLC) in the form of a piece of writing that will test the key concepts to be taught in the next unit.

Children's performance in the PLC is logged on a PLC grid which then allows the class to be grouped according to the gaps in their knowledge. These are kept in the PLC file held in each class. Planning for the unit / topic to be taught is then adapted to take into account what the PLC has revealed.

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When should I be teaching writing?

In English / Literacy lessons and during the Creative Curriculum.

Where should the writing be written?

All extended writing should be done in the 'Writing Book' which each pupil has regardless of what subject you are writing in / about.

English books may be used during the preceding lessons to practise skills and edit short pieces of writing but the final extended piece must be in the 'Writing Book'.

The importance of modelling writing

- Well modelled writing leads to high quality work.
- It is important to constantly use the language of writing as you model.
- It is important to physically model the writing on your interactive whiteboard.
- It is important to use your visualiser to model and improve pupil's writing.

What is the structure for teaching a NLS Unit?

Any NLS unit breaks down into the following stages:

Introduction of the genre

- Show them the diary / legend / recount etc

Imitation

- Orally through retelling / using drama
- Mapping the structure
- Identifying key features
- In writing by retelling the piece in their own words
- Doing short pieces of writing eg. Character descriptions / key events summaries

Innovation

- Using the learned structure and features to create own version that is similar but different
- eg. Adding a new chapter / new ending / new start / a different view point

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What is the structure for a week of English?

| Y1 to Y6 | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| Writing | Introduction Skills | Skills Short writing | Skills Short writing | Extended writing | Response to marking |
| Phonics (if doing phonics) | Spelling rule Spelling list (5W) | Phonics | Phonics | Phonics | Spelling test * Phonics |
| Spelling / Grammar | Spelling rule Spelling list (10W) | Hand writing | Grammar | Grammar | Spelling test * Spelling activities Compile own list |
| Reading Y1 to Y2 | Guided reading | Guided reading | Guided reading | Guided reading | Guided reading |
| Reading Y3 to Y6 | Guided reading | Guided reading | Guided reading | Guided reading | Guided reading |
| Reading Y3 to Y4 | One reading comprehension session (30 mins) per week in the PM in addition to AM literacy | | | | |
| Reading Y5 to Y6 | Two reading comprehension sessions (30 mins each) per week in the PM in addition to AM literacy | | | | |

* In the spelling tests you **should not simply test the words issued** on a Monday but **include other words** that follow the same rule and words from previous weeks.

How much writing should my class be producing?

Often, too much time is being spent on teaching / analysing skills / concepts and not enough time on actually doing any writing.

All classes from Y1 to Y6 must produce at least one piece of extended writing each Thursday. Extended' means a minimum of one full page of the 'Writing Book'. This writing should follow on from the teaching sequence earlier in the week.

This is then marked and used as the basis for Friday's lesson when children respond to the detailed marking, and improve a section of it as well as compiling their own spelling list from the mistakes identified.

Marking writing

The piece of extended writing must be marked in detail in preparation for the Friday lesson when the pupils will respond to your editing. It is your responsibility to correct misspelled high frequency words as per the Marking Policy. For shorter pieces, peer marking and self review may be appropriate.

How do I teach spelling?

- Spelling is the key to decoding reading but it is also the key to encoding writing.
- Spelling is initially taught through phonics in YR and in Y1.
- In Y1 spelling lists of High Frequency (HF) 'tricky words' start to be given out and tested.

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- There are now set lists of commonly misspelt words that have to be learned in each phase. These are in Appendix 1 of the new curriculum but are also available as a word document on the staffshare drive under 'DEVELOPING WRITING / Spelling - Scheme of work'.
- The words to be learnt and their associated spelling rules for Y1 to Y6 are in the same folder.
- Teachers in KS2 will need to use the Y1, Y2 and Y3-6 lists to fill in any gaps in learning in the first year (2013-14)
- Lists can be cut and pasted onto a 'Look Cover Say Write Check' template available in 'ALL TEMPLATES' on the staffshare or you may get your pupils to write them by hand them as part of the Monday lesson.

Where does the grammar come in?

There are now set lists of grammar and punctuation that have to be learned in each phase.

These are in Appendix 2 of the new curriculum but are also available as a word document on the staffshare drive under 'DEVELOPING WRITING / Grammar - Schemes of work'.

The grammar should be aligned with the NLS units which are themselves aligned with the Creative Curriculum topics.