



English Writing Newsletter

Term 5 - May 2022

Since September 2021 one of the subjects that we have been focussing on, as part of our School Development Plan, is English writing.

Our work on this links with our continuing development on reading in the school and is an area of the curriculum that I, the English Writing Subject Leader, am very passionate about.

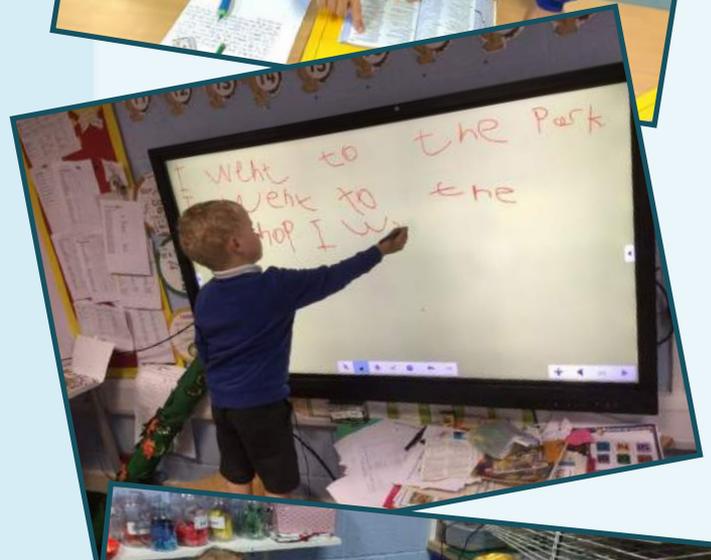
As part of the work on English writing, the staff team have been working with Vicky Gordon, who is our School Improvement Advisor. Vicky works for Wiltshire School Effectiveness team and has worked with many schools to further develop and improve their writing curriculum.

As with reading, we want our children to enjoy the act of writing, not just to do this because we ask them to or they have to do it. We know that it is essential that children see a purpose in their writing and can build skills that they are learning so that they can use them again and again.

This newsletter will give you an insight into how we plan English writing, how it links to our guided class reading books, how early writing is developed in Wrens class and how it is developed across the year groups.

Kind regards

Mrs Russell

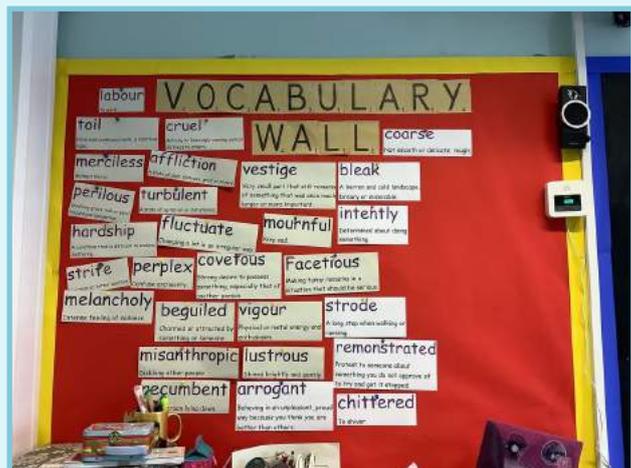


Planning English Writing

This year we have adapted our planning and teaching in English. All teachers plan 3 week blocks for their classes. These will either be a fiction, non-fiction or poetry unit, and may be linked to the afternoon topic work - although they aren't always!

The class teacher begins planning a block by choosing a book or text. These are often high quality picture books, even for the oldest of our children, as they are easy to edit and develop into new stories. Books that we have used include Freedom Bird by Jerdine Noten, The Night Gardener by Terry Fan, The Rain Player by David Wisniewski, Escape from Pompeii by Christina Balit and The Mousehole Cat by Antonia Barber.

In the three week blocks children will begin by looking at the text. This will be the basis for their writing. Classes will draw story maps or story grids so that children understand how the story is sequenced and will look at the vocabulary in the book. High level, exciting vocabulary is collected and investigated to ensure that children begin to understand the meaning of these words.



They will look, in detail, at three grammar skills in the block as well. For these grammar sessions, teachers will demonstrate how to use the skills, then the class practise using them together. Then on the following day, children will use their knowledge to use the grammar independently. We say that this is "I do, we do, you do".

At the end of the block of work, the children will have several days to plan and write their own version of the story. Depending on their year group, the children may adapt the story in one simple way or in many ways. They then edit their work to improve it.



Throughout each block, work and resources are collected, and then are added to the class's working wall. This allows children to easily access help and support that they might need during the longer writing sessions.

All staff feel that this new block planning has enabled our children to develop their writing skills further, and that the quality of work has increased. Most importantly the confidence of children when writing is improving too.



Writing in the Early Years

Our reception and year one children have loads of opportunities to write every day at school, as part of the continuous provision that is run in the classroom. The reception children do not have writing books at the start of the year, but have a folder to collect their work in. Mrs McQue and Mrs Alexander have designed their room so that children can access a wide range of tools and

resources to use. These are spread about around the room, so that they can use them whenever they wish to. Children are actively encouraged to write throughout the day and this becomes a natural thing to do.

As you will expect, there are several stages to children learning how to write and children are supported so that they are able to go from mark making to write single letters, then a string of letters to writing whole words. They will then go on to being able to write a string of words to make a sentence.

