

Teaching Writing & The New Ofsted Framework



The Writing For Pleasure Centre

– promoting research-informed writing teaching

Ross Young & Phil Ferguson

Introduction

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 through curriculum development, conducting and publishing research, and by working with children, teachers, school leaders, teacher-trainers and charities.

We have developed our 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.

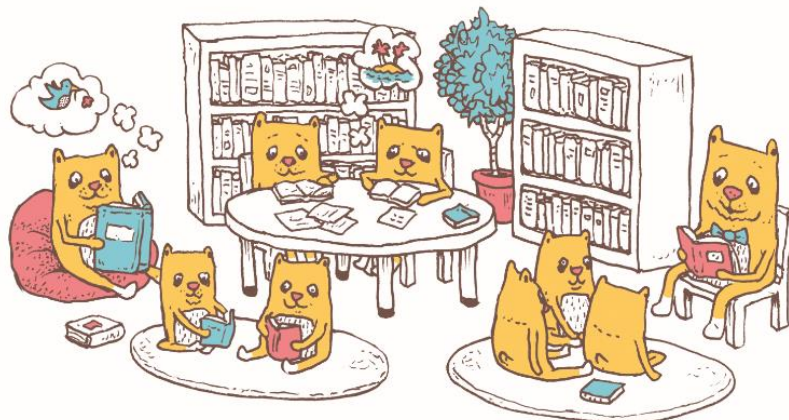
The Research Base

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 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 about it [here](#).

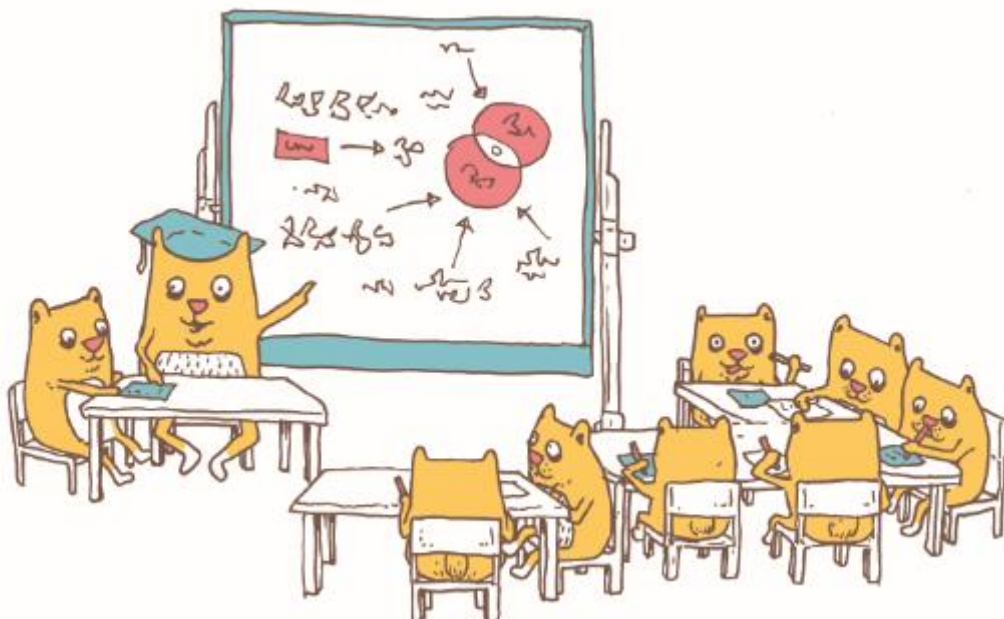
The Writing For Pleasure Centre functions both as a think tank and as an action research community. The result is that we are continually engaged in sharing effective practices, case studies and research findings.



The New Ofsted Framework

With the new Ofsted framework coming out recently, we wanted to look at where effective writing teaching fits.

In this document is our careful and considered response to the different aspects of the framework including: intentions, implementation, impact, progression of skills, acquisition of knowledge, tackling social disadvantage, providing cultural capital, honouring the local community, children’s personal development, child engagement, supporting children with SEND, challenging advanced writers and, finally, teachers’ subject and pedagogical knowledge.

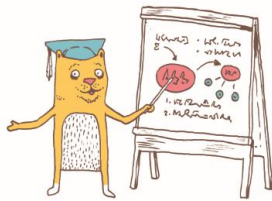


Intentions

How children's knowledge of writing and of being a writer progresses.

Children become knowledgeable about the different reasons in which writers are *moved* to write: **to teach, persuade or influence, entertain, paint with words, reflect and to make a record**. Over time, they become increasingly knowledgeable about the different ways in which these reasons can be realised, including through rich interconnection and subversion.

Teach



Teach others by sharing their experience and knowledge, or to teach themselves by writing to learn.

Persuade Or Influence



Persuade or influence others by sharing their thoughts and opinions.

Entertain



Entertain themselves or others by sharing stories - both real and imagined.

Paint With Words



Paint with words to show their artistry and their ability to see things differently, or to simply play around and have fun.

Reflect



Reflect in order to better understand themselves, their place in the world or their response to a new subject.

Make A Record



Make A Record of something to look back on that they don't want to forget.

Children become increasingly knowledgeable about:

- The variety of ways in which writers can reach and leave an impression on a variety of audiences through writing.
- The writing processes writers use and, over time, are given the agency to develop their own preferred writing process so they can write from a position of strength.
- The strategies and techniques writers use to realise their writing intentions.
- How grammar functions within the craft of writing. Through authentic use, children become knowledgeable about grammatical and linguistic terms.

- The importance writers place on word choice and on increasing their vocabulary. This includes seeking synonyms for words when it feels appropriate.
- How writers use punctuation and other conventions to aid their audience's ability to read their writing easily and as they intended.
- How writers proofread their writing effectively and so correct unsure spellings before a piece of writing goes to publication.
- Automaticity and legibility in handwriting and its importance in relation to future readers accessing their texts.
- The need for a writer's writing products to be visually stimulating, accurate and of the highest quality.
- Children learn typical spelling patterns and how words are constructed. They also become knowledgeable about different techniques for learning spellings.



How our children's writing skills progress.

- Over time, children learn how to work within, and contribute to, a community of writers.
- Children become increasingly skilful in keeping a writer's notebook and living the writer's life at home and at school.
- As their knowledge surrounding the purposes of writing increases, so does their skill in combining, manipulating and subverting them.
- Children become more self-regulating, skilful and adaptable in their use of the different writing processes, including how they plan, draft, revise, edit, publish and perform their writing intentions.
- Children are able to apply more writerly techniques and become skilful in discerning which will be most appropriately applied.
- Children's ability and skill to proofread, use a dictionary, and use other spell checking devices increases over time. This means fewer errors find their way through to publication.
- Children's ability to use a thesaurus skilfully increases over time.
- Children's ability to use a variety of writing materials and word processing technology increases over time.

How we are preparing children for life after school and how we are trying to tackle social disadvantage.

- Children learn about the different ways in which we are *moved* to write and by developing as writers, they can fully engage with society in a variety of ways.
- They learn how to share their knowledge, opinion, imaginative creativity and artistry. They also learn how to influence and to be persuasive, because you either learn to write your own thoughts or opinions, or else are subjected to someone else's.
- By developing independent writers we ensure children can discuss, debate, independently research and explore their own ideas, develop their own writing projects and have an independent response, through writing, to material and subjects taught. They are also able to entertain a variety of audiences through stories and personal anecdote.
- Children are keen and utterly able to write in personal response to what they are reading. They learn how to ensure their writing is technically accurate before it reaches publication. This ensures their writing makes the best impression and is taken seriously.
- We decrease the risk of school failure which results from a pupil's inability to share their knowledge and to 'write to learn'.
- We appreciate that business leaders, the job market and academic disciplines require strong writers and so we develop them.

How our writing teaching reflects and honours our local community.

- Children undertake class writing projects which encourage them to be spirited citizens and to play an active role in the public life of their local community and beyond.
- By learning to write together on a variety of subjects which are important to them, children learn about each other's thoughts, cultures, values, knowledge and feelings and have a respect for each other's individual liberty and tolerance of alternative points of view. As developing writers, they also learn about the vast amount they have in common.
- By building class publishing houses and a community of writers within their class each year, children create an inclusive environment which supports the development of unique writing voices.

How learning to be writers gives our children cultural capital.

- We argue that, by teaching children to become life-long independent motivated writers, we are providing them with the most powerful cultural capital you can have – an ability to turn your voice (your thoughts, knowledge, opinions, artistry) into powerful writing.
- By writing within a community of writers, children find that they can learn from others' cultural capital.
- We teach children how writing can be a powerful tool for understanding new knowledge and how you can reorganise it and have a personal response to it.



Implementation

How our teaching of writing supports children's learning of the writing curriculum.

Our teaching of writing supports children's learning of the writing curriculum because we have carefully considered the research which informed the construction of the writing curriculum (DfE, 2012). For example, we teach children about:

- How to be part of a community of writers.
- The different reasons writers are *moved* to write.
- The writing processes.
- Setting distant, process and product writing goals.
- Having inquiry skills.
- The importance of writing momentum and practising the craft of writing every day.
- How grammar functions within the craft of writing.

How we ensure children understand what and why they are writing.

We ensure that children know *what* and *why* they are writing by:

- Making explicit the purpose and future audience for the class writing project and where their writing will end up.
- Allowing children to choose what they want to write about within the class writing project.
- Teaching them about why certain genres exist before inviting them to use the genres for themselves in class writing projects.
- Teaching children that writing is a craft which is developed through repeated practice.

How we encourage children to engage in developing as writers.

- By ensuring teachers get to know the children in their class. This is achieved by allowing children to write about their own lives, thoughts, opinions, knowledge and imaginative ideas.
- By focusing on the affective domains of effective practice, namely: self-efficacy, agency, motivation, volition, writer-identity, self-regulation and writing for enjoyment, satisfaction and pleasure.



How does developing as a writer impact positively on children's personal development?

- To truly develop a child's writer-identity is to develop their whole identity and therefore contributes to their personal development in the most profound way.
- We ensure children leave our school with a craft which can help promote positive well-being and self-esteem.
- Because children learn to develop their own writing process, they develop a writer-identity. This gives them confidence and knowledge of themselves as writers.
- Because our class writing projects are purposeful, involve a future audience, and children have agency over the subject for their writing, children have motivation for wanting their writing to do well.
- Because children build a community of writers through our writing workshop approach, they learn how to reflect wisely, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently with their fellow writers.
- Because children are encouraged to write in personal response to subjects and to use their knowledge, opinions, thoughts and own imaginings in their writing, they learn how being a writer gives them an ability to reflect and to represent their thoughts and ideas creatively.
- As the children develop as writers, they are given more control over their writing process and setting their own deadlines for completing class writing projects. As a result, children learn how to be responsible for themselves.
- Because children are given ample time in which to pursue their personal writing projects, they are actively encouraged to develop themselves through writing by definition. They learn that writing can be a pleasurable and recreational activity and a life-long pursuit. They are encouraged to bring their writing to and from home and school.
- They learn how writing can show their artistry, ability to see things differently, and about the enjoyment in playing and having fun with words.

How is children's development as writers connected to other parts of the curriculum?

- Because children become increasingly knowledgeable about the ways in which writers are *moved* to write, they are able to write in personal response to what they learn in other areas of the curriculum and to share this with other members of the class. This helps them and their peers have a deeper understanding of other parts of the curriculum as a result.
- Children learn some of the discipline-specific genres involved in other parts of the curriculum. For example, writing people's history, historical recounts and accounts, biography and scientific reports.

How are children with SEND supported in developing as writers?

Children with SEND are supported in the following ways:

- They start with a simplified writing process of planning, drafting and publishing. Publishing is undertaken by an adult helper on the child's behalf.
- They are encouraged to plan using storytelling, drawing and talk.
- Over time, they are moved towards conventional planning, dabbling, revising and basic editing.
- They regularly write alongside an adult who is also writing.
- They have personal project books and they are encouraged to take these to and from school.
- They set themselves regular personal writing targets. These are then added to their 'can do' list.

How are your advanced and highly experienced writers supported?

Advanced writers are supported in the following ways:

- They are encouraged to write and learn from one another.
- They are encouraged to have personal project books and to work on their compositions both at home and at school.
- They have freedom over their writing process and the strategies they employ.
- They are encouraged to actively hybridise or subversively manipulate class writing projects in new and creative ways.
- They are encouraged to collect words, sentences / poetic moments, themes, try out types of openings and types of endings, metaphors, characters as metaphors, collect / discuss psychological / philosophical ideas as plots / characters / settings for narrative writing.
- Read for pleasure a wide variety of texts including those which present a challenge.
- To develop their narrative writing beyond the norm and take on advanced writerly techniques.



This is what we believe our teachers need expert subject knowledge in.

Teachers must have expert knowledge in the following:

- The reasons writers are *moved* to write.
- The typical genres used by writers to realise this need to write.
- The typical content, topics, attention to audience, ways of presenting, and linguistic, literary and grammatical features employed in these genres.
- That genres are subject to change, are often interconnected and often realise more than one purpose.
- That there is not a single agreed writing process. That the writing processes are recursive and that writers develop their own preferred process over time. Teachers should also be knowledgeable of their own writing process. They should know the many strategies and techniques employed at different stages of the writing process and teach them explicitly.
- They should be able to expertly identify certain grammatical, linguistic and literary features employed by children in their compositions.

This is our school's pedagogical knowledge for teaching apprentice writers.

Our pedagogical knowledge is based on 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 school action research and the wisdom of professional writers. We therefore understand that the effective teaching of writing involves the application of [the following principles](#):

1. Creating a community of writers.
2. Ensuring every child identifies as a writer.
3. Reading, sharing and talking about writing.
4. Planning purposeful and authentic class writing projects.
5. Explicitly teaching the writing processes
6. Setting distant, process and product writing goals
7. Reassuring consistency. This involves teaching through the *Writing Workshop* approach and following a regular routine of mini-lesson, writing time and class sharing.
8. Time for personal writing projects.
9. Balancing the teaching of composition and transcription.
10. Teaching self-regulation strategies.
11. Being writer-teachers.
12. Giving high-quality feedback through pupil conferencing and through responsive mini-lessons.
13. Promoting literacy for pleasure through building reading/writing connections.

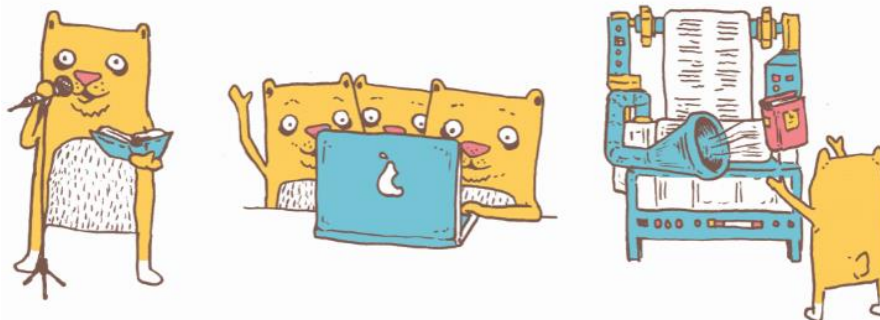
This is how teachers check pupils' understanding and set future writing goals with them.

Teachers check pupils' understanding and set future writing goals by:

- Ensuring children know what the distant goal for the class writing project is, namely, what the purpose and future audience for the project is.
- Arranging systematic pupil-conferencing in their classrooms and collaboratively setting future writing goals with the children.
- Teaching responsive mini-lessons which reflect what the class needs more instruction in.
- Ensuring that the writing processes are on display and that children are setting themselves process goals during writing time.
- Assessing children's developing writing portfolios and making decisions about what needs to be taught next.

This is how we ensure key knowledge and skills about being a writer become part of children's long-term memory.

Because of our commitment to a reassuringly consistent writing approach, children repeatedly practise the craft of writing, are repeatedly moved to write in a variety of common genres, and because these genres are repeated and built upon throughout the years, children begin to place this knowledge into their long-term memory. Children become experts in the writing processes as they move through the school and once experienced enough, are encouraged to develop their own preferred writing process. Because children work through the writing processes repeatedly, and are taught self-regulated writing strategies, they undertake their writing effectively, efficiently and largely independently.



Impact

What the children can show for themselves at the end of their time with us.

- Children will have a wealth of writing, both in their writing portfolios and their personal notebooks, from their whole time in the school.
- Children will have their own established writing process, strategies and routines for producing successful, meaningful and accurate writing.
- They will have strong identities as writers and so should continue writing as a lifelong craft and pursuit.
- They will have artefacts and memories of the impact their published and performed writing has had on the local community and beyond.
- It's also our conviction that our intentions and subsequent implementations of research-informed writing practices will ensure our children achieve very well on national assessments.



Conclusion

We offer a wide variety of high-quality and research-rich CPD nationally and internationally. This includes our school residencies, specialist teacher institutes or our single or multi-day school-based teacher workshops. We value our long-term and close affiliations with schools and other stakeholders. This means that we, like the schools we work with, share a longstanding commitment to embedded school CPD and providing pleasurable, satisfying and effective writing teaching. For more information on becoming one of our school affiliates, please email us at literacyforpleasure@gmail.com

School Residencies

When we do residencies in schools, we will visit for several days to work with senior-leadership, teachers and children. Over the course of the week, we provide after-school teacher workshops, teacher mentoring and will teach exemplar lessons for teachers to observe. We spend a lot of time observing and mentoring teachers in their classrooms and provide each teacher with their own summary report. Once the residency is over, we encourage schools to engage in action-research and to work on their own examples of practice. We ensure we maintain contact with our school affiliates over the long-term and continue to make ourselves available to staff who need us without extra cost. We see this as embedded CPD and is based on what research tells us is the most effective type of teacher development.

- [Download our school residency brochure](#)

Spring, Summer & Autumn Institutes

- [April – Writing Across The Curriculum](#)

We have created our out of term-time institutes so that teachers can come together and enjoy a ‘working holiday’ learning about different aspects of teaching writing and can network and enjoy the company of like-minded colleagues. We have found that these ‘working holidays’ can be particularly attractive to schools who are committed to improving children’s writing experiences and outcomes but may have limited budgets. We have found that senior leadership teams are very willing to pay or heavily subsidise teachers’ participation in these institutes.

Teacher Workshops

In terms of workshops, we can do half, whole-day or multi-day workshops on one or more of the topics listed below. Throughout these fast-paced sessions, we draw upon our own research, case-studies of the best performing teachers and our own classroom experiences as teachers and staff developers to create genuinely enjoyable but also utterly useful and practical experiences for teachers. Our participants always leave with new understandings about the teaching of writing and have a host of strategies and techniques they can implement in their classrooms the next day and beyond. Again, once these workshops are over, teachers are offered the opportunity to become teacher affiliates and so access our continued support to schools and teachers remotely without extra cost.