



High Lane Primary School

Approach to Writing

What is important to us in our English curriculum?

At High Lane we want to develop the craft of writing through children's immersion in engaging stimulus which enables our young writers to be creative and demonstrate their writing skills independently. We strongly believe that enthusiastic, curious readers develop the tools to become creative, accomplished writers. We think it is essential to show children how to 'build up' their writing from words to sentence, sentences to paragraphs and paragraphs to a complete structure of a text. We want to develop the craft of writing to enable our older children to be able to make choices as writers about the style in which they write. To do this, they need to be skilled in writing for a variety of purposes. We foster this by developing children's understanding of purpose within genres and learning about why the text and language features within these genres are needed.

What does the writing process look like at High Lane?

Teachers carefully choose an engaging, age appropriate, high quality stimulus/hook at the beginning of English units that will provide opportunities for children to be creative and demonstrate their writing ability. This could be a full text, an extract, a picture book, a video, a picture, a song or sound clip.

Teachers consider the possible genres that could be focused on through this stimulus, thinking carefully about previous genres covered and future topics in which the skills can be applied. Once a focus is selected, teachers carefully choose the language and grammatical components, best suited to the genre, which will be introduced or reinforced through the chosen stimulus. At High Lane, we use selected aspects of the Jane Considine approach to support teachers and engage children in this. The components needed for children to become great writers are the FANTASTICS, the vocabulary choices a writer uses to engage a reader (ideas); the GRAMMARISTICS, the grammar needed to ensure a reader understands how to read the text (tools); and the BOOMTASTICS, the stylistic devices to help writers create images for the reader (techniques). We believe that all these components need referring to and revisited throughout a unit of work in context to ensure children's understanding of these components is embedded.

Our writing process is taught in three phases, with a fourth phase that provides children to apply previously learned skills:

Phase 1: Stimulus, Vocabulary, Sequencing

Children are immersed in an engaging, age appropriate, high quality stimulus/hook through varied writing experiences which build children's writing skills linked to grammatical and structural features. Lessons will involve active or spoken language experiences that support children in their writing ideas.

Phase 2: High Quality Text, Decomposition, Exploration

Children explore examples of text type. This may be a text specifically for unit phase or examples taken from previous units or shared reading texts. Through these examples, children explore the PURPOSE of the writing and discuss whether the text type contains more than one genre/style of writing. Children learn about the text and language components of the text, exploring the purpose or function of these in the example text, referring to the FANTASTICS (ideas), GRAMMARISTICS (tools) and BOOMTASTICS (techniques). They begin to apply their understanding of these components through a variety of writing experiences linked to the stimulus.

Phase 3: Modelling, Sentence Play, Editing

Teachers model and build a text, or part of a text, based on chosen purpose or genre. This begins with modelling the planning of a text structure and, where appropriate, will include links to the FANTASTICS (ideas), GRAMMARISTICS (tools) and BOOMTASTICS (techniques). Teachers then build a text through a variety of strategies based on the age and needs of the learners in a class. These include: shared writing as a whole class or in small groups; sentence stacking, modelling a sentence then the class writing a sentence before the teacher writes the next sentence; and paragraph stacking, modelling a paragraph then the class writing a paragraph before the teacher writes the next paragraph. Through this structured modelling, teachers make reference to, and model, the three components needed for great writing: the FANTASTICS, GRAMMARISTICS, BOOMTASTICS. There is also a strong focus on editing after each sentence/paragraph through the use of an editing/marking page or editing flaps. Teachers also plan for focused editing sessions using modelled, whole class examples which demonstrate the use of an editing/marking page or editing flaps to support children in the redrafting of their own stacked sentences or paragraphs. Within phase 3, teachers may also plan for experience lessons which engage children in active or spoken language experiences that support children in their writing ideas.

*Phase 4: Application, Consolidation

This stage provides an opportunity for children to apply the writing skills from a previously learned genre/purpose through same stimulus without a scaffold. This enables teachers to accurately assess children on their ability to use their writing skills independently and for children to address their targets from previous units of work.

(*It may not always be appropriate to include Phase 4 as children have the opportunity to apply their writing skills during Phase 3.)

How is our writing process monitored?

Each teacher records the stimuli they use across the year to ensure subject leaders can monitor the quality and variety of stimuli. Teachers also record the genres/purposes covered and the planned revisiting of genres/purpose to enable subject leaders to monitor the purposes children have to opportunity to write for. Subject leaders monitor teacher's planning and children's books across the curriculum to ensure children are accessing the four phases and the language of the three components (FANTASTICS, GRAMMARISTICS and BOOMTASTICS) is being used consistently across the school. English working walls will include the FANTASTICS, GRAMMARISTICS and BOOMTASTICS posters alongside children's examples.

How is writing assessed?

Teachers use the writing progress plans, linked to the National Curriculum, from the Jane Considine book to assess children's writing. This is then used to make a judgement of entering, developing, secure or greater depth termly. Moderation of writing is completed half termly in key stages and is part of termly progress meetings. The writing progress plans are given to teachers as part of the transition process with the children's current English book as evidence.