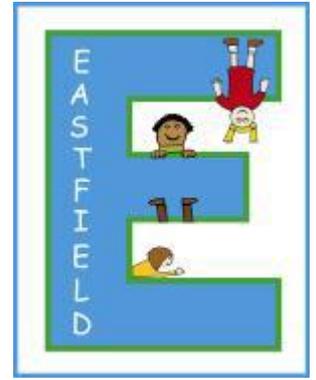


Writing at Eastfield Primary School



In **English** our aim is to develop a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop a love of books through widespread reading for enjoyment. We do this through units of work built around high quality texts, books and stories that build children's skills through a range of activities. Children will be taught fiction, non-fiction and poetry and the structure and language features of particular text types through guided, group or independent activities and whole class sessions. A range of teaching strategies will be used for these activities including: Talk for Writing, Big Write, Boxing Clever, weekly spelling tests, phonics (letters and sounds), handwriting and SPaG sessions.

All classes learn how to write using quality texts as a starting point linked to their termly theme and/or the unit of work being studied.

Strategies used at Eastfield:

Shared Reading

Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs when children join in or share the reading of a book or other text while being guided and supported by a teacher. The teacher explicitly models the skills of proficient readers, including reading with fluency and expression. The shared reading model often uses oversized books (referred to as big books) or shared texts on the SMART board or multiple copies of the same book.

Modelled Writing (writing for children)

'Modelled Writing' is a specific strategy which allows the teacher to explicitly demonstrate the process of writing by 'thinking aloud' as she records her thoughts, for example, planning what she intends to write, talking about directionality, choice of words or how to spell or locate words. Children participate by listening and observing the expert at work, rather than by contributing ideas and pursuing points through discussion. The teacher talks through the process step-by-step to show the learner how things are done. The result of this can be a WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like)

Shared Writing (writing with children)

The teacher shows how to write a particular sort of text or in a particular style, giving a running commentary on what he or she is doing, and why. The teacher:

- * rehearses each sentence orally before writing, discussing choices about vocabulary, word order, and so on - demonstrating that composition requires reflection
- * writes the sentence, drawing attention to features such as punctuation and how they contribute to the effect
- * reads back what he or she has written to check how it sounds - and perhaps amends the piece as it progresses.

The teacher involves the pupils in word choices and composition. Each pair of pupils has a whiteboard and pen. The teacher throws responsibility for a sentence to the class. In pairs, the children rehearse-write-reread, then hold up the whiteboard for the teacher to see. The teacher scribes their suggestions, and shares the running commentary with them. The teacher can then decide how much more shared work is necessary. Once pupils have been given a thorough grounding in how to write through the shared writing lesson, they are ready to move on to independent writing.

Guided Writing (writing with/by children)

Guided writing is an essential component of a balanced writing curriculum, providing an additional supported step towards independent writing. Guided writing occurs when a teacher sits with a small group of children and works with them on a specific aspect of writing they all need to master. In this way, it allows teachers to adjust their planning and meet the learning needs of specific groups of children. Through guided writing, children are supported during the different stages of the writing process. As an activity, it should be carefully targeted towards groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs. Within the teaching sequence, guided writing would normally follow on from shared writing, though not necessarily during the same session. Teachers should consider carefully the purpose of the guided session and select the children accordingly. The aim is to provide support that is going to help children to improve their writing and to work with increasing independence. It is also to extend and challenge more-able groups of children.

Independent Writing (writing by children)

Children write, applying what they have been taught, giving the children the opportunity to put what they have learned into practice as soon as possible.

Scaffolds / Writing Frames

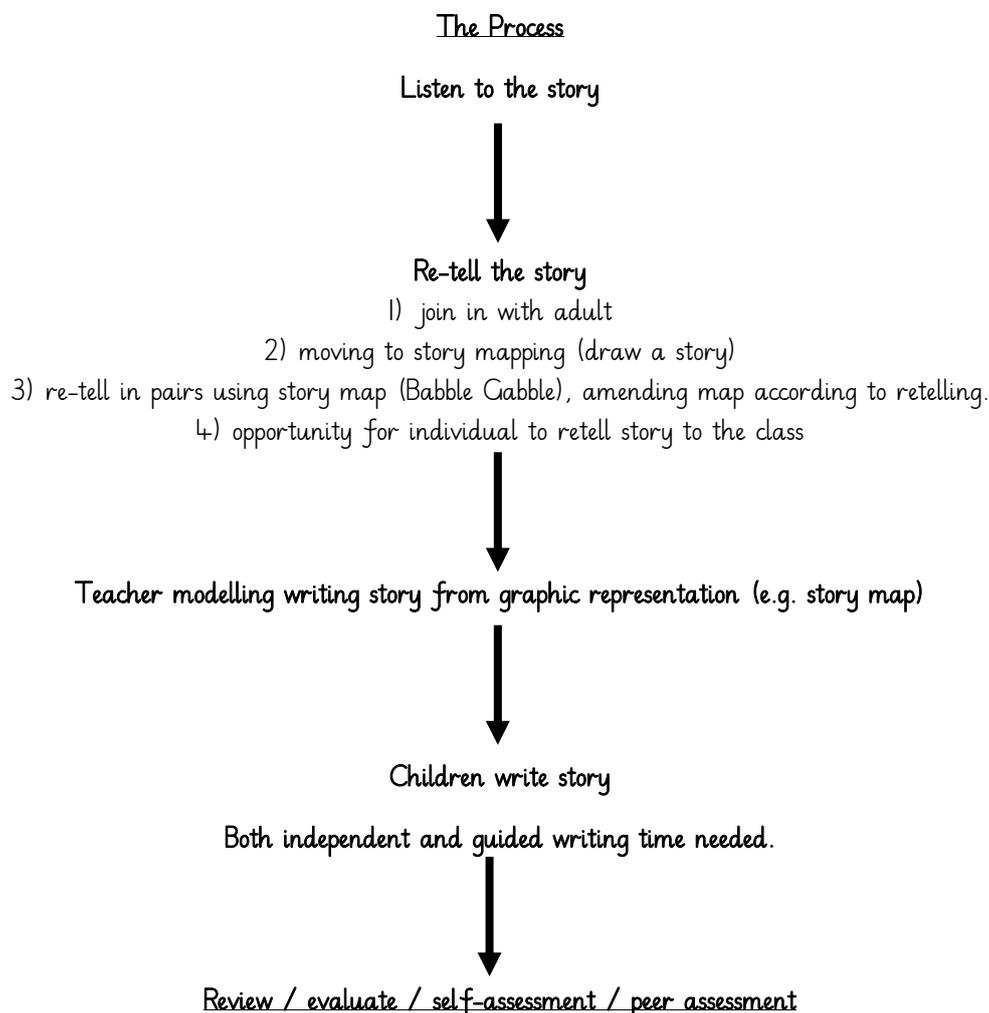
Scaffolding allows the teacher to help children with transition from assisted tasks to independent writing. It is a step-by-step process that provides the learner with sufficient guidance until the process is learned, and then gradually removes the supports in order to transfer the responsibility for completing the task to the child. A writing frame consists of a skeleton outline to scaffold children's writing. The skeleton framework consists of different key words or phrases, according to the particular generic form. The template of starters, connectives and sentence modifiers which constitute a writing frame gives children a structure within which they can concentrate on communicating what they want to say, rather than getting lost in the form. There are Interactive Skeleton Books (by Sue Palmer) available for: discussion, explanation, instruction, persuasion, recounts and reports.

Working Walls

Working walls are used for all children across the school, which are developed over the course of each genre. Staff add to the working wall on a daily basis during introductions and whole class teaching so that children can refer to them while working independently. Working walls include; genre, purpose, features, shared text, vocabulary, conjunctions, punctuation, WAGOLL, shared writing, modelled writing and grammar focus.

Talk for Writing

Throughout school children learn to internalise texts through a strategy called Talk for Writing (T+W). The intention is that by learning texts off by heart, the children learn the components of stories or other text types and can then draw upon these when having to invent a new story or other genre. Thus, the act of story-making or writing is made easier, as the writer knows exactly where the story /text is going. All they have to do then is focus on the quality of what they are putting into the story /text to make it come alive.



Big Write

Big Write incorporates everyday activities, games and strategies that focus on VCOP (within the context of a genre of writing or a particular writing purpose) and culminates in a Big Write time where children bring together the skills learned and practised during the unit.

Daily strategies and activities incorporated into each day during the unit include;

- o The stealing and oral use of 'wow' words
- o Upgrading sentences and short paragraphs
- o Games using VCOP (vocabulary, Connectives, Openers, Punctuation)
- o Other games e.g. openers tennis, just a minute, sentence challenges (shorten, drop in) etc

The Big Write time requires 15 minutes to introduce the stimulus/text type/context for the Big Write. Big Write provides an opportunity to revisit and consolidate learning in a genre previously taught. It may link to the English unit of work being taught through using;

- o the content/context of the unit e.g. the unit focus may be recounts using the context of the history topic so the Big Write may be a narrative based in the same historical context
- o the stimulus of a shared text in the unit e.g. an explanation text about caring for your teeth may be shared for the unit of work focusing on that genre and the Big Write may be a letter of complaint the dentist of the big bad wolf
- o the shared text for the unit could be responded to in a variety of ways, one of which could be the stimulus for Big Write e.g. a story used for a narrative unit may lead to a Big Write that is a diary entry of one of the stories characters or a persuasive letter about an event in the story or a newspaper report about the story content
- o the drama that may have been used in the unit e.g. drama was used to support a narrative unit, the Big Write may be a description of a setting linked to the drama, a leaflet advertising the setting of the drama etc.

Big Write may be linked to the English unit by;

- o being a 'have a go' write at the end of the first or second week of a unit
- o being the end of unit write

Big Write may not link to the English unit but the stimulus may come from;

- o an event in school
- o a world or local event
- o a trip or visit
- o a cross curricular stimulus e.g. you have visited a museum and Big Write may be a narrative imagining you are trapped in the museum overnight.
- o A film clip
- o A story or picture book
- o A painting or photograph

Experiential Writing

Experiential writing focuses on using real and virtual experiences as the stimulus for writing. Experiences could include:

- Out-of-school visits e.g. class trips, the sea-side, Black Country Museum, Leicester Space Centre, walk around the local area

- In-school visitors e.g. local fire brigade, theatre group, portals from the past
- In-school events e.g. the discovery of a giant egg, receiving a letter from the giant in Jack and the Beanstalk, a 'meteor' landing on the school field, items left in the classroom by a mystery visitor, a tableaux, a crime scene appears on the school field
 - Using 'interesting' items e.g. soldier's bag, an old key, old photographs, a map, a 'lost' suitcase, fossils, picture books, a painting, a piece of music, old letters, old coins, stamps, luggage labels
 - Using visual stimulus e.g. film clips

Checklists

Within each English unit of work / genre focus, children are taught the purpose, key features and structure of different text types. At the end of a piece of writing teachers then use ready-made checklists with children in order to self-evaluate their writing and to gauge how successful they were. The simple format provides a space for the teacher to give their feedback and prompts for improvement.

Writing- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' grammar, punctuation and vocabulary arise naturally within reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Editing and Improving

Learning how to revise a piece of written work is an important skill for primary school children, and one that it's never too soon to help them master. Children are often conditioned to think that their work has to be perfect at the first attempt. This is something to actively discourage when it comes to creative writing: editing as you write is hard work and disrupts the flow of thoughts and ideas. Editing can be daunting. If a child is asked to go through three pages of their own work, they're likely to give up almost as soon as they've started. To get them into the habit of self-editing, start small with a paragraph. One of the most valuable ways to self-edit is to read out loud.

Handwriting (Transcription)

All children are taught to hold their pencil correctly from a very early age, which is instilled as they move through school. In Years 4-6, Nelson handwriting scheme is used, the cursive style is available on the computer network and interactive whiteboards. In Reception and Year 1-3 children follow the Kinetic letters scheme. Children are encouraged to make their bodies stronger for writing by holding different animal positions to develop core strength and complete simple finger strengthening exercises. 'Finger Funk' can be used as a warm-up alongside high quality teacher modelling and demonstration. Lessons are based on the letter family groups from kinetic letters handwriting scheme. All teachers have high expectations in the presentation of work in all areas of the curriculum. Handwriting plays an important part and is taught through the carousel or as stand-alone lessons, during early morning work or as an on-going process. When children have reached a good standard of handwriting in all areas of their work, they receive a handwriting licence and pen during merit assembly.

Spelling (Transcription)

Spelling will be taught within the daily English lesson, following the new National Curriculum and practised during the morning carousel or Support for Spelling time using the Look, Cover, Write and Check method. Spellings are given out weekly and tested weekly. In KS1 children are given 10 spellings to learn, depending on their ability. In KS2 children are given 12-20 spellings to learn, depending on their age/ability. In Foundation, the children will be introduced to spellings and spelling tests during the second half of the summer term. They will be given 5 spellings to learn as an aid to transition into Year 1. All the spellings are based on the New English Curriculum and letters and sounds phases in KS1. Teachers will also seek to encourage independent spelling with children when they are producing written work i.e. using a dictionary and / or thesaurus.