

Big Writing In KS2



Big Writing is the brain child of Ros Wilson and a proven method of teaching writing which will improve children's understanding and writing, not just results!!

Through Big Writing we focus on four features of writing that can be applied to all genres of writing—these are:

Vocabulary

Connectives

Openings

Punctuation

We have a timetabled 'Big Writing' session each week

This takes the format of :

45 mins of VCOP skills .(lots of oral work, work on whiteboards, no formal writing. Look at examples of texts and up-level them) - Break - 45 mins writing.

Big Writing is the development of the 'writing voice' through fast, fun, lively and predominantly oral activities.

We all have a 'writing voice and a speaking voice - we say "traffic's bad" (L1), not "having battled through the traffic, I finally reached my destination" (L5)

Speaking is integral to Big Writing!

This applies throughout the school . We can extend children's vocab through talk (little & often) e.g. I was late...

"Could you add in a 'because' ?"

"I was late because mom didn't wake us up"

"Why?"

Vocabulary

Our work on vocabulary encourages children to search for ambitious and imaginative vocabulary (ambitious means a word not usually used by a child at this age or stage of development). We may refer to these words as WOW words!

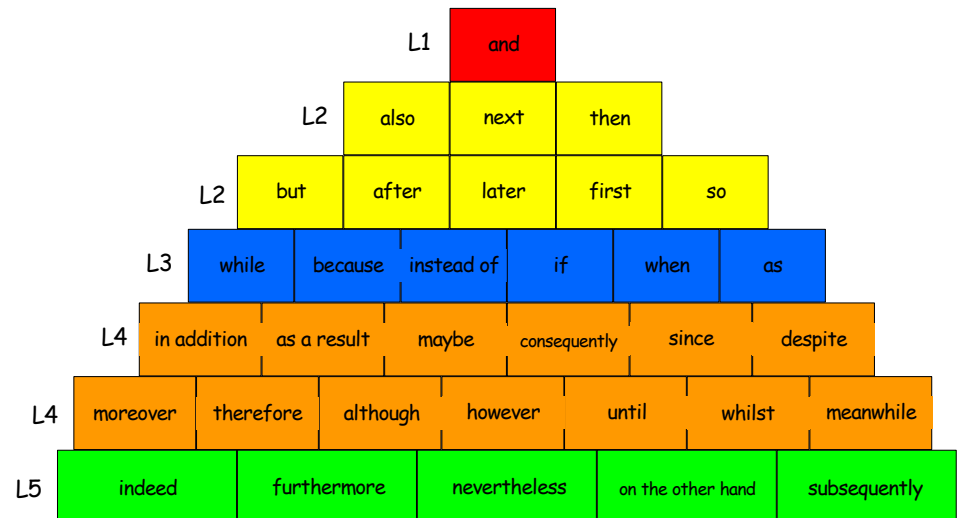
We spot WOW words in all lessons and all subjects. We may 'steal' words from texts, ask children which word they would steal and why.

•We have WOW word walls on our displays. Children can copy WOW words onto the Post-Its and add them to the wall. Children can then 'pinch' these words and use them in their own work. If your child spots a WOW word at home, please encourage them to bring it in to school to be displayed

•WOW words are like batteries - once you use them you drain the power so don't use a word more than once in a piece of writing.

Connectives

Our work on connectives encourages children to join sentences and ideas using a variety of different connectives (joining words). Once again, the children become familiar with which connectives are appropriate to their level of writing. Children are of course, encouraged to use higher level connectives if they wish to.



Openings

We focus on encouraging children to start their sentences in different ways in order to make their writing more varied and interesting.

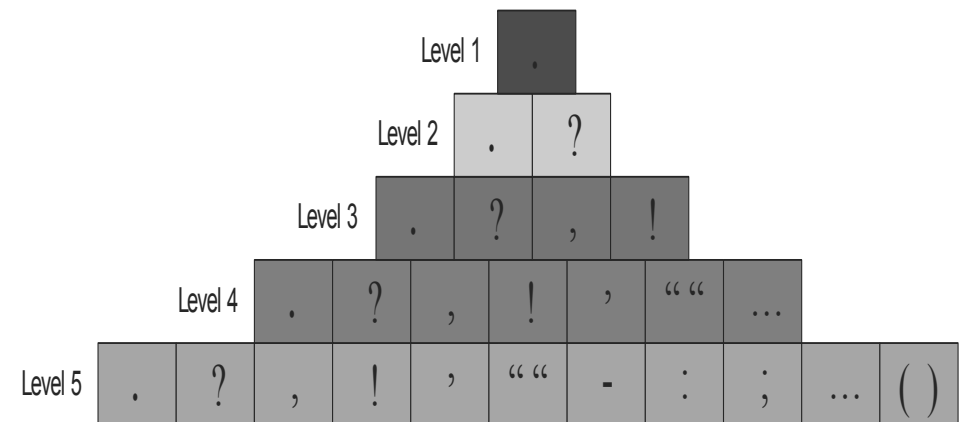


We work towards encouraging children to use the three different types of **POWER OPENERS**:

- 'ing' words e.g. Walking down the road, I saw a butterfly.
- 'ly' words e.g. Quickly I ran to the door.
- Connectives e.g. Because the alarm clock didn't go off, I was late.

Punctuation

During Big Writing, we familiarise the children with the punctuation pyramid. This clearly sets out which pieces of punctuation we expect the children to use for their level of writing.



•Speaking affects writing more than reading! - reading is someone else's language from someone else's brain. We can only write what's in our brain - if we can't speak it then we can't write it. We therefore spend a lot of time developing oral activities

Here are some fun games which will help to develop children's speaking voices.

- **Word Association**

How many different words can you think of associated with an object or a word?

- **'Posh Voice'**

We need to encourage a 'posh voice' for writing so practise 'talking posh' - play 'Upstairs, Downstairs' where one person speaks incorrectly and the other person is the 'speech police' who shout out the corrections. Try this once a week - have a 'posh' 1/2 hour.

- **Wacky Whispers**

Make up a sentence that character x might say to character y.

- **Who Am I ?**

Person A thinks of a person. Person B has to ask questions to work out who it is e.g. 'Is it a man?'

- **Snappy Synonyms**

Think of a word—how many synonyms can you think of e.g. happy—glad, joyous etc

- **Alphabet Zoo**

Think of an animal/food etc for each letter of the Alphabet (a good 'in the car' game)

We can encourage our children to write experimenting with different genres for different purposes e.g.

- **Diary**

Children could write a diary entry about a visit to a particular place or a favourite day in the holidays. The style can be informal and chatty whilst still focusing on VCOP.

- **Report**

Children could write a report about a place they have visited. They may like to write report about a football match they have watched or taken part in. Children may like to write a 'Newsround' report and present it as a news report.

- **Instructions**

A recipe or instructions for how to play/do something can be written in clear steps sequenced in time order, using imperative verbs (commands e.g. Cut..).

- **Persuasion**

This is probably done quite a lot verbally!! Encourage children to persuade you why they should e.g. be allowed to watch a TV programme—encourage them to give reasons.

Please don't feel pressured to 'force' your child to write. We can still develop VCOP orally -

- **Sentence Openers**

. "Give me a sentence opening with clearly", "Can you open a sentence with prowling?"

- **Punctuation Aerobics/Karate**

Say a sentence and get children to call out the appropriate punctuation and draw it in the air.