



Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Cavendish Community Primary School

Composition

Children are given opportunities to articulate ideas and structure them in speech, before writing. The focus in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) is on oral composition.

Build a talker – oral composition

In Nursery, there is a sequence of learning to teach explicitly how to ... eg ask a relevant question (interrogative) and make a declaration (declarative).

In Reception (during the first term), this moves to a sequence of learning to teach explicitly how to give an instruction, make a request, issue a command (imperative) and how to convey a strong emotion (exclamatory).

Example of a session structure:

1. Adult directed
2. Guided talk group
3. Transfer to provision

1. Adult directed
 - Visuals – picture cards or tangible fruit
 - Model a thought process of deciding which fruit you want – naming and thinking about it
 - Make a decision and explain why
 - Ask the question, “Could I have an apple please?”
 - Receive and say thank you
 - How did you know I wanted the apple? What were the clues? Eg social phrase, intonation (use monotone to make difference clear)
2. Guided talk

- Reiterate how we know it's a question
- Give chance to practise with each other
- Check understanding of key words – apple, please

3. Transfer to provision

- Make snack area into an area with choices and put child in charge
- Talk challenge for that week would be to ask for snack using key words and intonation
- Adult to observe chn in provision and listen for incidental use of questioning
- Praise and use as teaching point

This is a focussed session, accessed by each child once per week and practised throughout the week.

Hold a sentence

During daily literacy lessons in nursery, and as needed at the start of reception, children are explicitly taught to 'hold a sentence'.

1. Teacher says a planned sentence. They then use TTYT and MTYT and the children have several opportunities to say the sentence.
2. Children are taught and reminded to use their fingers to count the words in the sentence. Teachers model using one finger for each word and asking children to do the same. They practise saying it repeatedly until they know it well.
3. Teacher then distracts the children with a song, counting or movement for example. Once finished, the teacher then asks the children to say the sentence aloud again.
4. The teacher then models writing the sentence with input from children. (What is the first word, next... let us sound out the word together c..a..t)

Transcription

Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting). We teach spelling through our phonics lesson (SFA) and letter formation through handwriting (Both SFA and Penpals).

Spelling

Children work through the programme and the common exception words are planned according to the programme (see Phonics Long Term Plan for details).

Lesson 1i – 4i s a t p

Lesson 5i – 8i i n m d

Step 1 - g, o, c, k

Step 2 - ck e u r

Step 4 - h b f ff

Teach CEW – the, I.

New writing skill introduced - Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

Step 5 - l ll ss

Teach CEW – he, she, is

Step 6 - j v w

Teach CEW – to, go, of, as

Step 7 - x y z

Teach CEW – we, are, you, into

Step 9 - zz qu ch

Teach CEW – be, me, his.

New writing skill introduced - Spell words by identifying phonemes in them and representing them with graphemes

Step 10 - sh th ng

Teach CEW – no, so, has

Steps 13 to 19 - ai ee igh oa oo oo ar Teach CEW – be, me, his, no, so, has, do, her, my, by, our, says, they, said, was, were, put, all, there, like

New writing skill introduced - Spell words by identifying phonemes in them and representing them with graphemes

Steps 21 to 25 - or ur ow oi ear

Teach CEW – here, where, today, when,

what, come, some, push, pull, friend, school, out

New writing skill introduced - Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others

Steps 27 to 29 - air ure er
full, little

Teach CEW – one, once, your, love, house,

In the first term, children are expected to spell words dictated by the teacher containing previous and new sounds taught, and are phonetically plausible. In the second term, children are expected to write words with the new grapheme and write familiar words dictated by the teacher, including attempting some common exception words. In term three, children are expected to write from memory words and sentences dictated and modelled by the teacher, including attempting common exception words learned so far.

Handwriting

All children are assessed on their pencil grip (stage 1, 2, 3, 4) children who are ready start the handwriting programme (Penpals).

Children start with pre-writing patterns (12 units altogether):

Dots, straight lines and crosses, circles, waves, loops and bridges, joined straight lines, angled patterns, eights, spirals, left to right orientation. They then move onto letter families (24 units altogether)

Handwriting session structure

- Penpals gym – Gross motor movement then a fine motor movement
- Introduce letter shape or pattern
- Teach – skywriting/palm writing the animated patterns to warm up and familiarise themselves with patterns and letters.
- Practice – go to tables
- Children have a go independently

Children who are not ready for handwriting do fine and gross motor activities such as Dough Disco, Funky Finger, balance bikes and Write Dance, for example.

Dictation

Dictation is not used as a test or assessment tool, but a teaching opportunity to model writing behaviours and is used as part of writing development whilst reducing cognitive load.

Applying Transcription Skills Through Dictated Sentences

During daily literacy lessons, daily phonics sessions and weekly focus groups, children apply their transcription skills through writing dictated sentences. Children write from memory a word/caption/phrase/sentence, dictated and modelled by the teacher that includes words using the GPCs and common exception words taught so far.

1. Ensure sentence (or word or phrase) is within the children's phonic knowledge.
2. Teacher says the sentence. The children practise saying it several times until they know it well.
3. Teacher then encourages children to use fingers to count the words in the sentence (once applicable). "Now say the sentence again and touch your fingers for each word before you write. Remember capital letter, finger spaces and a full stop."
4. The teacher then models writing it, and covers it up afterwards.
5. Children transcribe the sentence (or phrase or word)
6. Once the children have finished writing the sentence (or phrase or word), they are encouraged to read their writing back themselves and check that it makes sense.

Dictation is used as one of a range of writing activities — including opportunities for composing, mark-making, talk, and independent writing, as children progress.