

## Strategies to Support Writing



Use these ideas with struggling writers to work within the proximal zone of learning and support their progression. Each strategy can easily be simplified or made harder according to the child's ability.







### Getting Started...

1. Provide a suitable place for children to write. A quiet corner is best, the child's own place, if possible. If not, any flat surface with elbow room, a comfortable chair, and a good light will do.
2. Give the child, and encourage others to give, the gifts associated with writing:
  - pens of several kinds
  - pencils of appropriate size and hardness
  - pads of paper, stationery, envelopes -- even stamps
  - an alphabet arc and dictionary appropriate to the child's age and needs. Most dictionary use is for checking spelling, but a good dictionary contains fascinating information on word origins, synonyms, pronunciation, and so forth.

## Strategies to support Writing

The following ideas can be used with struggling writers to support their progression. Each strategy can easily be simplified or made harder according to the child's ability. The principle behind each strategy is to take away the blank page for the child and give them a starting point for writing.

Strategy	What does it aim to do?	How can it be adapted?
Use a writing frame	Takes away a blank page – gives visual prompts and key words to help improve word choice and structure writing	Insert appropriate pictures/words to support writing Add/take away lines, insert boxes so the child knows where to start. Enlarge to A3 and place behind the child's work book to be used regularly.
Cloze procedure	<p>Helps the pupil to focus on word choice. Useful when trying to extend vocabulary e.g., 'bossy' verbs, exciting adjective, inserting clauses, use of connectives.</p> <p>Helps children to sustain meaning in a longer passage.</p>	<p>Leave a gap, depending on focus. Include words at the bottom of the passage for children to choose from or let the pupil make one up. Give two alternatives to choose from e.g. Sam ____ on the bike. (got/climbed) Use a picture cue</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Sam wears a ____ cap.</p>
Sentence Strips	Helps pupils to think about the importance of word order in a sentence. Allows discussion around word choice, sentence improvement etc	See example sheet

Tops and Tails	<p>Helps pupils to select appropriate endings.          'Tops' can be useful sentence starters.          Allows children to extend their writing further, whilst retaining the meaning</p>	<p>Reduce/increase the amount of sentences to choose from          Colour code the beginning and end          Discuss choices with an adult.          Use picture cues to guide the child's choice          e.g.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Lisa wanted to ....          (bake some gingerbread men/do cooking).</p>
Sequencing	<p>Looks at the importance of story order</p>	<p>Use picture prompts to support sentences.          Reduce /increase the amount of pictures/sentences to order.</p>
Co-constructed writing	<p>Supports the child to create sentences around a topic</p>	<p>Once the pupil is confident creating one sentence, progress to two, move focus to sentence level .</p>

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Writing mat


- Common words
- this
  - because
  - there
  - were
  - was
  - out
  - found



River Nile



Ancient Egypt

tomb

pyramids



Tutankhamun  
Pharoah

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Writing mat


Topic words

Common words

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I can use capital letters for names of people, places, day of the week, months of the year and personal pronoun I  
I can join two sentences using 'and'

I can use expanded noun phrases

					
<b>and</b>					
<b>ADJECTIVES</b>					

### The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe.

**Word Bank:**

Key words scribed with/by adult about the picture. E.g. coat, bag etc...



**Word Bank:**

children

it's

there

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## Cloze Procedure

### With key words....

One \_\_\_\_\_ morning

A \_\_\_\_\_ lollipop lady stood

in the \_\_\_\_\_ road

KEY WORDS:

sunny

friendly

busy



### Without key words....

One \_\_\_\_\_ day, a \_\_\_\_\_ boy, went to the \_\_\_\_\_  
bowling alley with his friends. He picked up a \_\_\_\_\_ ball. This  
should bring me \_\_\_\_\_ he hoped.



## Using sentence strips to support early writing and reading.

1. Have lots of thin strips of paper readily available in the classroom.
2. The child forms the sentence orally with the adult giving appropriate support ('Does that sound right?' 'Can you think of a better word?' etc)
3. The adult writes the sentence on the strip of paper:

The children went to play football outside.

(Discussion can be had around capital letters and full stops if appropriate to the child's level eg. 'I'm starting my sentence, what do I need?' 'How do I know my sentence is finished?')

Carefully read the sentence with the child.

4. The strip is then cut into each individual word:

The children went to play football outside.

5. The strip is then jumbled up, and the child asked to sort it out to put it back together again:

went children The play to outside. football

(When mixing the sentence up you might only swap one or two words as appropriate for the child.)

6. The child then copy-writes the re-formed sentence into his/her book.
7. A further step could be to ask the child to improve the sentence by thinking of a 'wow' word (adjective, adverb). Write the word on an additional strip and ask the child where to put it. Can words be swapped around?

e.g.

raced

The children **raced** outside to play football.

The children **raced** outside to play football.

8. Adding connectives.<sup>1</sup>  
Repeat steps 1 to 7 to create a second sentence.

They all wanted to score a goal.

<sup>1</sup> Only to be covered when the pupil is secure with all the previous steps and has lots of opportunities to secure simple sentence writing.

9. Place the two completed sentences next to each other

The children raced outside to play football. They all wanted to score a goal.

10. Show the child a selection of pre-prepared connectives

Choose a connective and talk through the choice so that the child can hear it, say it his/herself to see if it sounds right.

and

so

as

11. The children raced outside to play football  They all wanted to score a goal.

Discuss the use of capital letters, remove and write the correct sentence:

**The children raced outside to play football because they all wanted to score a goal.**

# Tops and tails

One morning Lisa woke

about what to do.

'Oh no!' she thought. 'Today we

that she was too ill  
for school?

Lisa lay in bed, thinking

painted some bright red  
spots on her face.

Should she pretend that

have a horrible maths  
test!

Suddenly she had

an idea.

She leapt out of bed and

up at the sound of the  
alarm clock.

## Sequencing

Should she pretend that she was too ill for school?  
Suddenly she had an idea.

'Oh, no!' she thought. Today we have a horrible maths test!

Then she quickly ran back into bed and waited for her mum to find her.

Lisa lay in bed, thinking about what to do.

She leapt out of bed and painted some bright red spots on her face.

One morning Lisa woke up at the sound of the alarm clock.

## Co-constructed Writing

### Aims:

- To promote independent writing skills
- To enable the child to practice phonic skills, whole word recognition, and sentence construction

### Getting ready to write:

- Child provides oral sentence using a stimulus e.g. reading book or topic work
- Adult may need to rephrase to make sentence concise
- If child unable to provide sentence adult gives choice of two for child to choose. E.g. “ on this page dad is cooking, we are going to write about that, shall we write ..... Jelly is on the mat or A cat sits on the mat?
- Once sentence decided the child orally rehearses [ child says, adult says, child says, adult says..... ]

### Writing

- Child records first word, then reads the word, then records the second word, then re-reads the first and second word, then records the third word and re-reads the first, second, third word. Continue re-reading sentence from the beginning each time a word is recorded.

### Support strategies

- Child records on a page with section for practicing

<u>Practice section</u>	<u>Child records perfect copy</u>
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- Allow child to have a go at recording the word. Where errors are made the adult praises as appropriate e.g. this word does begin/end with.... But some letters are incorrect. The adult then covers the incorrect word with a white sticky label. The error is then practiced on the practice page.
- Encourage segmenting to spell as recording.
- If child unsure the adult draws a phoneme frame on the practice section and the child records the word there, then transfers into sentence.
- Encourage whole word recall as a spelling strategy or use of mnemonics.
- If child unsure the child practices on practice page.
- If letter formation, use of capital letters etc.. incorrect, child practice on practice page.

The practice page provides evidence of the working process whilst the child's sentence is recorded with no evidence of errors – a quality experience for the child which is easily re-read as no crossing out in evidence.

It may also be useful to also have available an alphabet strip to use as prompt for letter formation / upper lower case letters.