

English

Intent

Our aim at Astbury is for children to develop a genuine love of writing, promoting positive attitudes. We have listened to our children and have created a curriculum that engages them and caters for all abilities. We want our children to be able to write clearly, imaginatively, accurately and be able to adapt their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. We want children to acquire a wide ranging and useful vocabulary. Most importantly, we want happy children who are enthusiastic and excited about writing.

Implementation

What is Talk for Writing?

Talk for Writing is the main tool used to teach writing at Astbury and is used from Early Years up to Year 6. It was developed by the author Pie Corbett and is based on the premise that children cannot create writing out of nothing. It enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally, before reading and analysing it, and then writing their own version. Children work with one key text, supported by other high quality texts or extracts, and engage with the text first as a reader and then as a writer.

Talk for Writing sits alongside high-quality teaching of reading, phonics and spelling across the school.

How does it work?

There are 3 main phases, known as the 3 I's: Imitation, Innovation and Independent Application. Every unit starts with a 'have a go' piece where the children are asked to write a story or text with no prior teaching on the text type. This is then read and marked by the teacher and used to inform teaching over the next few weeks.

Stage 1 - Imitation

The teachers choose a text from both fiction or non-fiction containing sentence structures and ambitious language which the teacher feels will inspire children. This is normally no longer than 300 words and, particularly in the earlier years, contains repetitive words and phrases which are easy to learn. The unit begins with a lesson called 'the hook', this engages children and introduces them to an element of the new text. The children learn this text by heart using actions which are supported by a text map. They spend some time as a class reading the text and unpicking it thus developing their comprehension skills. During this stage, teachers also target teach where children will be taught the specific skills and objectives linked to the text.

The class will then create a class toolkit of features to use when they write the text themselves.

Stage 2 - Innovation

In this stage, children work with the original text and 'innovate' it – this stage is done as a class to begin with. Children in Year 1 may just switch the names of characters, change or add adjectives, whereas in Year 6, children might write the text from a different character's perspective or expand on one part of the text. A new text is then modelled by the teacher with the children adding their own ideas.

Stage 3 - Independent Application

Children apply what they have learnt in a piece of independent writing which we call 'show what you know'. This might be in an English session or in a piece of writing in another curriculum subject. The teachers then mark this against the targets set after the 'have a go' piece and progress is measured.

Why do we use Talk for Writing?

It aligns with the school's aim to provide children with the powerful knowledge they need to succeed. It has a proven track record, with other schools experiencing high levels of success. Talk for Writing gives children the confidence they need to write independently and at length as it removes barriers for those who struggle with creating their own ideas. It also allows children to learn higher level vocabulary and more challenging grammatical concepts in context. It improves children's speech and language and story-telling skills by allowing opportunity to internalise the text. Talk for Writing has provided more opportunities for children to practise regularly by writing at length. 'Giving pupils a reason to write—and someone to write for—can support effective writing and provide opportunities to teach pupils how to adapt their writing for different audiences and purposes.' EEF 2021

The grid attached on the Curriculum webpage illustrates how Barak Rosenshine's 10 principles have, coincidentally, long been embodied within the Talk for Writing process.

Principal's Sabbatical Report: Christopher Fox explains that data from schools in the UK provides strong evidence that the Talk for Writing approach impacts upon raising writing achievement for all children regardless of gender, ethnic background, first language preferences and ability. The report also tells us that many UK schools have found that daily Talk for Writing can have a dramatic influence on progress in language acquisition and composition/writing.

For further evidence based rationale please see the [Talk for Writing website](#).

Invent writes

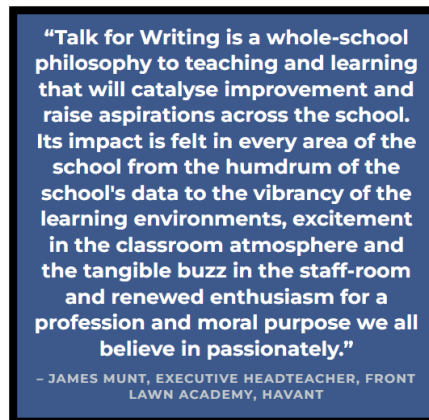
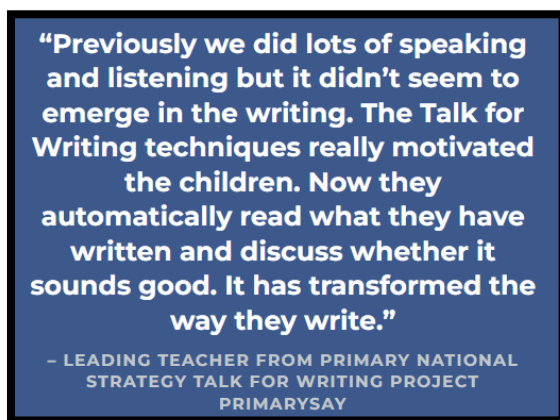
Each term, children take part in an 'invent' write. This is when something different / exciting has happened at school! Children observe the event and then go back to class and write about it, children can write absolutely anything they wish to. We then share our writing with the school and celebrate our creative ideas.

Impact

Through discussion and feedback, children will be able talk confidently about their own writing and be more confident writers. By Key Stage 2, children will be able to discuss a range of texts, with most genres of writing being familiar to them. Children will make links between different genres and be able to communicate which genres they enjoy the most and why.

At the end of the year, we expect children to have achieved Age Related Expectations. Some children will have progressed further and achieved greater depth. All children will have made considerable progress from their starting points in EYFS and will have a love of writing.

Children will use their English knowledge and skills, in all curriculum areas, to enable them to know more, remember more and understand more.



What do children at Astbury St. Mary's have to say about Talk for Writing?

KS1

"It's interesting because you don't know which story map is coming next!"

"The story maps help because you can look at it and see where you're going."

"The actions help us to remember."

"I like English the best!"

KS2

"I enjoy learning the actions to help me retell the story."

"Hook lessons make me feel excited!"

"I like that you can get involved and that it's not just talking."

“It’s good to brainstorm and discuss ideas before writing the story.”

“Talk for Writing helps us with our English.”

“Have a go and show what you know – it gives you an idea of how far you’ve come and what you’ve learnt.”

What do staff at Astbury St. Mary’s have to say about Talk for Writing?

“Talk for Writing within the Primary School setting is amazing as all the children can be involved regardless of their abilities, it allows the creativity of each individual to flow. This teaching method has also helped to implement some of our Makaton signs within the text of the story helping us all to build up our skills. The process helps children to remember and recount the story and to be able to retell the story back using words, pictures and signs. Plus it’s good fun too.”

“Internalising the model text has really helped those children who need support to compose sentences for writing.”

“The children love learning and performing the model texts.”

“Talk for Writing gives a clear framework for outlining the different features of a variety of styles of writing.”

“The repetition of the Talk4writing cycle means children are aware of what is coming next.”

“There is a clear focus on learning and applying new vocabulary.”