



School Writing Policy

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Regional Director		Principal			Vice Principal		
Head of Foundation Stage		Head of Primary			Head of Secondary		

A. Aim and objectives

Our overarching aim for English and Arabic at Newlands School, is to promote high standards of literacy across the curriculum by equipping students with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. We recognise the responsibility to send every student to secondary school (Phase 3) having mastered at least the basic elements of reading and with the ability to participate confidently in society.

At Newlands, we aim to enable our children to:

- Enjoy quality experiences that will enhance their knowledge, skills and understanding
- Be enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction
- Become lifelong learners as readers and writers through Talk for Writing.
- Explore global issues through writing (for example, persuasive writing and spoken language)
- Write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- Write a range of text types (fiction and non-fiction) and in a range of genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and form appropriate to the situation
- Increase their ability to use planning and drafting to improve their work
- Use a variety of mediums to express their written ideas, e.g. ICT and Drama.

The aim of this policy is to set out the process in which writing is taught at Newlands School as well as the expectations for the writing process, frequency of evidence in books and how writing is assessed, both through formative and summative assessment methods.

B. Talk for Writing

Talk for Writing was developed by the author Pie Corbett and is a fun, creative yet also rigorous approach to develop writers. At Newlands School Dubai, we use Talk for Writing to support our text-based approach to the English curriculum. Teachers use high-quality modelled writing examples to inspire and challenge our students to reach their potential, whilst inspiring students to be life-long writers who understand and enjoy the process of writing.

The Values of Talk for Writing

Good writers:

- enjoy writing and find the process creative, enriching and fulfilling;
- read widely, recognise good writing and understand what makes it good;
- are aware of the key features of different genres and text types;
- learn about the skills of writing from their reading and draw (consciously or unconsciously) upon its models in their own work;
- have 'something to say' (a purpose and audience);
- know how to develop their ideas;

- know how to plan and prepare for writing;
- make informed choices about what they are writing, as they write (for example, about vocabulary, grammar, text structure, etc.);
- understand how to reflect upon, refine and improve their own work;
- can respond to the constructive criticism of others.

For knowledgeable writers, many of these methods are internal and automatic. For example, they can hold an internal dialogue with themselves about the language choices available and reflect on how effective a particular word or phrase will be or how well it sounds within a particular piece of writing.

However, for emerging writers it is very helpful for these processes to be explored through talk in a supportive learning context. This involves externalising and sharing the thinking involved in the writing process so that ultimately it can be internalised and personalised again. It is this developmental exploration, through talk, of the thinking and creative processes involved in being a writer that encapsulates Talk for Writing.

Teaching and learning in KS1 and KS2

Writing lessons are planned and delivered through the Talk for Writing (T4W) scheme and follow the structure below. Talk for Writing allows children to internalize a text's language and structure across a range of genres. Talk for Writing is taught from FS to Year 6 and follows a similar pattern, tailored to each year group and the National Curriculum.

To be productive, Talk for Writing needs to be extensively embedded in every phase of this teaching sequence, that is:

- During reading: When familiarising with the genre/text type and its key features; when responding to, exploring and drawing on models.
- Before writing: When generating ideas, preparing for and planning writing.
- During all stages of writing (teacher's demonstration and scribing, and children's supported, guided and independent writing): When making the choices involved in creating, developing and improving texts.
- After writing: When reflecting on and learning from a writing experience.

In this, it is structured at the following three levels:

- Teacher talk: The verbalisation of the reader's or writer's thought processes as the teacher is demonstrating, modelling and discussing.
- Supported pupil talk: Structured and scaffolded opportunities for children to develop and practice Talk for Writing through class and group conversations and activities.
- Independent pupil talk: Opportunities for children to develop and practice Talk for Writing in pairs and small groups, independent of the teacher.

All of this is applied in whole-class learning and teaching, and in guided writing. The Talk for Writing approach consists of three key stages from imitation through innovation onto independent application (invent). The first task for any unit will be the choice of a model text, ensuring it is pitched correctly, according to the Writing Progression of Skills document and the National Curriculum. Teachers will adapt and write their own model texts to match specific topics.

The Talk for Writing Process

The key phases of the Talk for Writing process, as outlined below, enable children to imitate orally the language they need for a particular topic, before reading and analysing it, and then writing their own version.

1. Baseline assessment and planning – the ‘cold’ task

Teaching is focused by initial assessment. Teachers begin each writing unit with what is known as a ‘cold’ task or a ‘have a go’ task. An interesting and rich starting point provides the stimulus and content but there is no initial teaching. The aim of this is to see what the children can do independently at the start of a unit, drawing on their prior learning. Assessment of their writing helps the teacher work out what to teach the whole class, different groups and adapt the model text and plan. Targets can then be set for individuals.

2. The imitation stage

The teaching of each writing unit begins with a creative ‘hook’ which engages the pupils, often with a sense of enjoyment, audience and purpose. Writing challenges, such as informing Dr Who about how the Tardis works or producing leaflets for younger children about healthy eating, provide a sense of purpose. The model text is pitched well above the pupils’ level and has built into it the underlying, transferable structures and language patterns that students will need when they are writing. This is learned using a ‘text map’ and actions to strengthen memory and help students internalise the text. Activities such as drama are used to deepen understanding of the text.

Once students can ‘talk like the text’, the model, and other examples, are then read for vocabulary and comprehension, before being analysed for the basic text (boxing up) and language patterns, as well as writing techniques or toolkits. All of this first phase is underpinned by rehearsing key spellings and grammatical patterns. Short-burst writing is used to practice key focuses such as description, persuasion or scientific explanation.

3. The innovation stage

Once students are familiar with the model text, then the teacher leads them into creating their own versions. A new subject is presented and the teacher leads students through planning. With younger pupils, this is based on changing the basic map and retelling new versions. Older students use boxed-up planners and the teacher demonstrates how to create simple plans and orally develop ideas prior to writing. Ideas may need to be generated and organised or information researched and added to a planner. Shared and guided writing is then used to stage writing over a number of days so that students are writing texts bit by bit, concentrating on bringing all the elements together, and writing effectively and accurately.

4. Independent application and invention – the ‘hot’ task

Finally, students move on to the third phase, which is when they apply independently what has been taught and practiced. Students are guided through planning, drafting and revising their work independently. It is essential to provide a rich starting point that taps into what students know and what matters so that their writing is purposeful. Writing may be staged over a number of days and there may be time for several independent pieces to be written. With non-fiction, students should apply what they have been taught across the curriculum. The final piece is used as the ‘hot’ task, which clearly shows progress across the unit.

It is important that at the innovation and independent application stages, the writing becomes increasingly independent of the original model rather than a pale copy. Whilst four-year-olds may only make a few simple changes, older students should be adding, embellishing, altering and manipulating the original structure. From Key Stage 2 onwards, almost all children will be using the text structure and writing tools to write, drawing on the model, their wider reading and experience so that they are writing independently at a high level. This has to be modelled in shared writing.

C. Marking

Throughout the Talk for Writing process of each writing unit, teachers at Newlands follow the agreed marking policy (see marking and feedback policy.) Each ‘hot task’ is marked in-depth, with feedback linked to the success criteria for that text type. Teacher feedback, along with self and peer-assessment will help guide students when editing and re-drafting their writing.

D. Book Expectations

During the writing process, it is expected that the following be present as evidence in copybooks:

- Cold task
- Text type ‘text map’
- Text analysis of model text
- Grammar and punctuation activities linked to the SC of the writing unit
- Innovation of model text (students creating their own based on the model text)

E. Self-Assessment: Redrafting and publishing

In KS2, students are encouraged to progressively take growing responsibility for their writing by engaging in self-assessment and peer assessment of their hot tasks. Students assess their writing against given success criteria that reflect the teaching and learning of the writing unit. Along with in-depth teacher marking, students will use their self and peer assessments to re-draft their hot task in their ‘Big Write’ books, before submitting to ‘Pobble’ for publishing.

F. Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing throughout every lesson to inform planning, lesson activities, targeted pupil support, and enable appropriate challenges to all children. Children are given feedback and the next steps to respond to in order to personalise learning and provide the children with opportunities to edit and improve their own writing. Paradigm objectives, based on the National Curriculum objectives is used to inform teachers and leaders of the skills and knowledge the pupils have achieved or need to improve further through each writing unit. Subject leaders closely monitor books and Pupil Progress Meetings take place termly with to assess every individual child's learning needs and progress.

Talk for Writing process

Planning	• Baseline assessment – 'Have a go' task • Refine language focus & adapt model text • Test model: box-it-up, analyse it, plan toolkit
1. Imitation 	• Creative Hook & context • Warm up words, phrases, sentences • Internalise model text – text map • Deepen understanding, e.g. drama • Read as a reader – vocab + comprehension • Read as a writer: box-up, analyse & co-construct toolkit
2. Innovation 	• Box-up new version & Talk the text • Shared writing – innovate on model • Students write own version: peer assess • Teacher assesses work – plans next steps • Feedback & improvement
3. Independent application	• Next steps based on assessment • Students write independently (hot task)
Final assessment	Compare cold/hot : assess progress © Julia Strong & Pie Corbett - www.talk4writing.com