

# Big Write Parent Factsheet

## What is BIG Writing?

- It is a philosophy about writing which was originally devised by Ros Wilson. (A former teacher and Ofsted Inspector).
- We have taken it and adapted it to suit our school and our children.
- It is based on the premise that to write well children need to feel confident and motivated.

## Children are encouraged to...

- **Talk** about their writing
- **Find exciting words and use these in their writing.**
- **'Borrow'** exciting words and phrases from other authors. **'WOW'** words.
- **Have a go at using interesting examples of punctuation.**
- **Once a week in their classrooms write for an extended period of time.**
- **Re-read** their own writing and find ways to make it better.
- **Understand** what they need to do next to improve.

## When does it take place?

- Once a week, using all the skills the children have learnt.
- The lighting is sometimes changed and music is played softly in the background.
- Children are encouraged to write at length without interruption.
- They are building their writing stamina.

## How long do we write for each week?

- Foundation Stage 'talk' about their writing and start putting down words.
- Year 1 write for 20 mins.
- Year 2 write for 30 minutes.
- Year 3 to Year 6 write for 45 minutes +

## What do they learn?

The children write on special paper, which is stuck into their Big Write book. This has the assessment criteria alongside.

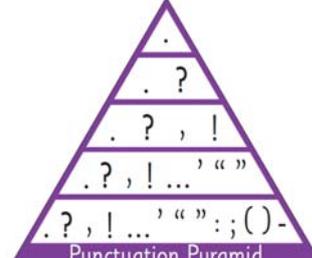
- When the children have written their work the teachers mark it and give them detailed 'small steps' targets for improvement
- We want every child in school to know what they need to do to improve to reach their next level.

## So how does Big Writing work?

It is a way of teaching children to write, through focusing on four main aspects of writing:

Vocabulary  
Connectives  
Openers  
Punctuation

These are displayed in every class.

<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Connectives</b>	<b>Openers</b>	<b>Punctuation</b>
<p>Every class has a 'Wow Words' board where new and impressive words that the children have used throughout the week and have found in good quality texts, are shared with everyone. The children are encouraged to use these words where appropriate in their writing.</p>	<p>Every class displays examples of powerful connectives. The children are encouraged to use these in their writing to join sentences and paragraphs, therefore improving the organisation of their writing</p>	<p>Every class displays and discusses good sentence 'openers' (sentence starters) that the children can use in their writing to make their sentences and overall texts more interesting. Teach ways of improving a basic sentence by changing how it begins.</p>	<p>The teaching of punctuation is based on the 'Punctuation Pyramid.' Children start by using full stops and capital letters, then question marks followed by commas and an exclamation mark.</p>
 <p>A pyramid diagram filled with various adjectives and nouns, categorized into different levels of sophistication. The title 'Ambitious Vocabulary' is at the base.</p>	 <p>A pyramid diagram listing various connectives such as 'and', 'but', 'because', 'although', 'nevertheless', etc., organized into levels. The title 'Cool Connectives' is at the base.</p>	 <p>A pyramid diagram listing various sentence starters like 'The...', 'My...', 'First...', 'Next...', etc., organized into levels. The title 'Sentence Openers' is at the base.</p>	 <p>A pyramid diagram showing the progression of punctuation marks from simple (full stop, capital) to complex (question mark, exclamation mark, comma, apostrophe, quotation marks, semicolon, parentheses). The title 'Punctuation Pyramid' is at the base.</p>

**Progression – how writing improves according to National Curriculum levels**

**Level 1** The dog is big. The dog likes a bone. The dog can bark. I like the dog.

**Level 2B** My dog is big and brown and very scruffy. He likes to eat bones but he likes sausages best. My dog can bark loudly and he can run very fast. I like my cat and my dog but I like my dog best.

**Level 3B** I have two pets, a dog, and a cat. I like them both but I like my dog best! He is large, rusty brown and very scruffy. Have you seen him? He looks very funny. My dog likes eating bones and biscuits, but best of all he likes eating sausages. When my dog barks it is so loud that I cover my ears. Also my dog runs very fast.

**Level 4B** People often ask me about my pets and although I have two, I have to say I like my dog best. That large, rusty brown ragamuffin looks so very amusing that he makes me laugh. Have you seen him? He mainly dines on biscuits and bones, however he prefers meat and he enjoys sausages most of all. When my scruffy, old friend barks it is as loud as Concorde, crashing through the sound barrier. We all have to cover our ears for protection.

**What can you do to help your child?**

- **Talk!** Ask them to describe everything and anything.
- Take it in turns to tell a story. One person starts it; the other says what happens next etc...
- Look at a picture or photo together. Use it to tell a story. Think of a title for your story. What would the opening 10 words be?
- Encourage your children to spot WOW words and perhaps write them down in a book at home or on a piece of paper.
- Encourage your children to borrow words or phrases which they like from books, magazines, television programmes.

**WRITE and make it real!**

Encourage them to:

- write letters
- write a diary
- take notes about a walk, a trip etc...
- make lists – to do lists, shopping lists, lists of
- favourite music, games, characters, books etc...
- Use games to help develop vocabulary such as puzzles, crosswords, word games, anagrams etc...