



A Guide to Supporting Literacy

‘Reading, writing, vocabulary, speaking, listening, debate...the complex tapestry of great teaching, enacted in every lesson, in every phase and subject domain, by every teacher’. (Alex Quigley)

Closing The Writing Gap

There are different ways of modelling writing for pupils, however, the most important aspect is to initially establish what pupils already know. There are many variations when it comes to modelling writing, from sentence starters, paragraph structures and help sheets, however, following the ‘I do’ ‘We do’ ‘You do’ technique is the most effective way of monitoring and supporting pupil progress.

The modelling process should always conclude with a removal of the scaffolding and with pupils taking control and showing us what they can do from the process.

Modelling Writing

I Do – 100% teacher modelling. Live modelling by the teacher with no direct pupil input. This typically includes a teacher to think aloud where they verbalise the thinking behind their writing moves and their effect.

We Do – Whole class shared modelling. Teacher led modelling of writing to the class, with pupils contributing ideas and making suggested edits.

You Do – This will depend on the ability of students, therefore can be broken up into partial modelling and independent work. Partial, modelling is an interactive approach led by a teacher who indicates a writing structure, sentence starters or writing frames to support pupils in the task.

Supporting Pupils with Transcription

When circulating during lessons, we challenge pupils’ handwriting based on the granular detail outlined below. We point out the misconception/ error and offer pupils advice on how to correct it; good practice is to ask the pupil to rewrite a small section of the work based on your advice. (e.g. “Please rewrite this sentence and make sure your letter size is consistent, like this”).

Letter Spacing: Letters that touch each other are difficult to read. We must remind pupils to “use consistent letter spacing”.

Word Spacing: Too little space between words can make reading difficult. We should remind pupils to “leave a clear space between words”.

Letter Formation: When letters are not fully formed, this has a significant impact on the legibility of writing. We should challenge this by reminding pupils to “take care to form letters properly”.

Alignment (Horizontal): Work may not be aligned with the margin. Often, work may slant gently away from the margin.

Alignment (Vertical): Words may not sit neatly on the line. We should remind pupils to “make sure your words sit neatly on the line”.

Letter Size: Letter size may be uneven. Please remind pupils to “make sure your letter size is consistent”.

Word Size: Words may be written too small or too large. We should remind pupils to “aim to fit around 7 words per line”.

Pace: When pupils try to write too quickly, this can result in poor letter formation, spacing or alignment issues. We should ask pupils to “slow down your writing and focus on formation”.

Crossing Out: Repeated crossing out or going over letters makes work difficult to read. Please circle the error ask pupils to “think carefully before you write”.

Reading Canon

The books that make up the prescribed Canon come from a range of cultures, timelines and genres, with the intention of promoting inclusivity and diversity, allowing our pupils to become citizens of the world with a clear understanding of the 9 Protected Characteristics: **age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex.**

- *Why do you think the school chose your current READING CANON book?*
- *Who is your favourite character and why – what has just happened?*
- *What is the best/worst bit in your book so far?*

After the pupil has read a few pages, stop them and ask them what has happened and to summarise the important events that have arisen in the plot or in character development. **Please use your professional discretion around these questions and develop where required.*

Reading Fluency

Reading fluency mediates the whole curriculum and therefore, a crucial aim at St Aidan’s is to develop this life skill in our pupils. Reading fluently and reading aloud is a gateway to comprehension; fluency underpins the entire curriculum and beyond. To support our pupils on their reading journeys, every teacher should create regular opportunities for pupils to become confident and proficient in fluency sessions by ‘controlling the game’.

We should focus on:

Keeping durations unpredictable: ‘pick up please, X’ is far better than ‘Read the next paragraph for me, X’. Benefits: stronger incentive to follow carefully if unpredictable. You can address the issue of a primary reader who struggles with a long paragraph risking losing the engagement and concentration of peers – and possibly narrative thread.

Keeping the identity of next reader unpredictable: by moving quickly from one primary reader to another pupils will focus more closely on following along. Benefits: a teacher who announces that they will go around the class in a predictable fashion gives away this part of the engagement. Pupils can tune out until their turn is near. Holding on to your ability to choose the next reader also allows you to match pupils to passages more effectively.

Keeping durations short: reading for short segments maximises the concentration of the primary reader. Benefits: allows primary reader to invest expressive energy and focus intently on sustaining fluency. Keeps the pace lively and lesson engaging. Maintains your leverage as all pupils know they will soon get a chance to read, and this keeps them from tuning out.

Reducing transaction costs: a transition or transaction from one primary reader to the next needs to be completed quickly and with a minimum of words. ‘X pick up’ is much better than ‘Thank you X. Nicely read. Y will you begin reading please’. Benefits: keeps the narrative thread vibrant and alive in pupils’ minds since it’s less subject to interruption.

Using bridging to maintain continuity: In bridging, a teacher reads a short segment of text – a bridge – between primary pupils readers. Benefits: Moves the story along quickly and keeps the narrative thread alive, while interspersing teacher-quality expressive reading, which maximises comprehension. Another opportunity to model.

Oral Cloze: In oral cloze, a teacher leaves a word out at the end of a sentence ‘Napoleon had the ...’ By snapping quietly on the word ‘the’ alerts the pupils that they should fill in the blank. ‘Oh. Some in the class weren’t quite with us. Let’s try that again. Napoleon had the...’ Benefits: allows the teacher to quickly and simply assess engagement/leverage. Who is listening and who is not.

Relying on the placeholder: the best reading teachers move between reading and questioning pupils about what they read, they use quick and reliable prompts to ensure that pupils recognise transition and react promptly – they ensure that pupils retain their place in the text so that they can quickly and immediately transition back to reading after discussion. ‘Hold your place. Track me...’ Pupils hold placemaker on the correct line and track teacher to show they are ready to discuss. After a brief discussion: ‘Pick up reading please, X...’ Benefits: pupils transition back into reading seamlessly with little transaction cost.

SPAG Codes: SPAG marking must be carried out in all **note books** and **assessments**. It is essential that pupils are given time to respond to marking during lessons for them to make the appropriate amendments and evaluate their mistakes.

Code:	Response:
(C) = Capital letter needed	Write why a capital is needed
(P) = Punctuation error	Fix the error
(Sp) = Spelling error	Fix the error and repeat correct spelling x3
(Ww) = Wrong word	Fix the error.

Code:	Response:
(Gr) = Grammatical error	Fix the error
(//) = New paragraph	Write down why a new paragraph
(Exp) = Expand & explain	Expand on, or explain your point
(H) = Handwriting	Re-write a small section following the granular-level advice given.

Connect 4

Begin Scholarly Reading with Connect 4. During the lesson planning process, the teacher should identify four high value (Tier 3) words from the Scholarly Reading text which will unlock the content and concepts for pupils. The teacher should then select/display the 4 words connected to the concept to be studied on the board using the Academy PowerPoint (i). Pupils are to independently seek out and note down as many elaborate connections as possible between the words*; they should also attempt to relate the words to a bigger concept. The teacher should then clarify any misconceptions and guide pupils to the overriding concept. When the class move in to the subsequent reading, this should have the added impact of encouraging pupils to read strategically finding the powerful words within the text.

*This task not only unlocks and unpacks unfamiliar texts for pupils, but also encourages pupils to think hard, to explain why they have made connections. It also allows the teacher an opportunity to formatively assess the range of individual pupil’s schemas.

Procedure for Extended Writing assessment:

Concept driven extended writing opportunities are built cohesively into SOLs, encouraging pupils to refer back to their Scholarly Reading and other pre-reading they have encountered in their learning journeys. The ‘Extended Writing’ template should be given to pupils at the beginning of each assessment so that they are aware of how they are being assessed. Extended Writing assessments must be moderated and standardised in department forums to ensure a common approach to judgements using the subject template.

Before the lesson: Pupils must complete their brain dump and A-map.

Lesson 1 : Extended Writing assessment:

Completion of a Formative Extended Writing assessment.

After the lesson: Teachers read all Extended Writing assessment responses and highlight achieved objectives on proforma. To emphasise the importance of literacy and communication, the ‘composition and effect’ element of the template is a limiting element when awarding S/D/T. Record misconceptions and learning gaps for the class on live logs. Discussions with pupils must focus on their knowledge learning gaps. Record pupil progress in live logs under the headings of surface, deep or transfer knowledge. Progress is also recorded on Arbor.

Lesson 2 - Visualiser Lesson: - Teacher to use the visualiser to review a medium response and a good response. Pupils to annotate their own work after taking part in the teacher-led process.

After the lesson: Writing gaps must be addressed. Notebooks should be reviewed to ensure learning gaps have improved. Pupils requiring further intervention should be identified.

Homework: Homework following a formative assessment must consolidate gap lesson learning.