



Shared writing enables you to show the thought processes of a writer. Shared writing of spine poems is a great way in to help children refine the key writing techniques that will enable them to hook their reader and make their writing effective. Build on this in shared writing of all genre for fiction and non-fiction. Begin in reception and keep building so children automatically know how to use and adapt a wide range of techniques effectively.

Plan your shared writing

- Plan so that your shared writing has a very specific focus and illustrates all the features you want the class to develop
- Make it act as a scaffold
- Integrate grammar meaningfully

Create the right ethos

- All ideas are accepted and valued – no wrong answers
- Encourage having a go
- Generate creative excitement – catalyst
- Help them enjoy creative language
- Be enthusiastic: if you love it, they'll love it; if you're fussy, they're fussy

Make it interactive:

- Develop a range of techniques to involve the children:
 - "In your pairs quickly ..."
 - "On your mini white boards, ..."
 - Get everyone to join in
 - Give a range of choices for them to select from and make them explain their choices

Train children to generate ideas and vocabulary

- First thought not always the best – push, push, push for the most effective word or phrase. Scaffold learning clearly.
- Don't write low level examples
- Experiment – try new combinations
- If you've heard it before, it's a cliché
- it – add striking detail
- Never dodge a good word ... use dotted line
- Discuss impact of choices – model thinking aloud as a writer
- Activate dormant language and introduce new words - act them out to demonstrate them
- Avoid empty terminology like "wow words"; rather name relevant grammar terms and integrate the grammar

Progressively model all the key writing techniques

- Eg illustrate how to show not tell
- Manipulate sentences so they see the possibilities: *the moon is like a claw – the moon is a claw – the clawed moon*
- Model the changes to see the process
- Use features (eg alliteration) to push for a new combination : "Let's see if ..."
- Give a weak example and then say it won't work well to promote better alternatives

Train children to judge

- Model how a writer checks to see if their sentences work
- Keep re-reading to test if it works
- Oral rehearsal – say it aloud so can hear what works best
- Ask: "Why does it work?"
- Beware of 'overwriting' – reread for impact – demonstrate that less is often best
- Train them to magpie ideas from lessons and reading
- Jot down ideas – magpie from others

Make it visual

- Magpie ideas; bank ideas & learning points on washing line – use a save-it box/writers' notebooks to scaffold learning

Keep it pacy

- But slow down for key moments – vary pace – pause for thought

Build confidence and enthusiasm

- Create the text together
- If you do shared writing well, the children will think they did it. It acts as a catalyst for their version.

Remember, the quality of the children's writing reflects the quality of your teaching.

To improve your shared writing skills, get someone to film you; reflect on pace and process.