

BIG Writing – Talking Homework

Talking Homework – is just that! A chance for your child to talk about what they are going to write in *BIG Writing* lessons.

It is also a chance for you to help your child improve their writing. So how can you help?

- Think through and discuss your child's initial ideas.
- Suggest your own ideas to help develop your child's thinking. There's nothing wrong with 'stealing' ideas.
- Help them get their writing ideas clear in their heads by discussing the order of what they want to write. If they wish, your child can write this down.

If they can't discuss and verbalise their ideas, how can we expect them to write them down?

BIG Writing - the writing

During *BIG Writing* lessons children are given the opportunity to write both fiction and non-fiction texts.

BIG Writing of fiction will cover types of imaginative stories such as:

- Humorous
- Scary
- Adventure
- Sci-fi
- Historical
- Crime

BIG Writing of non-fiction will cover types of factual writing such as:

- Recipes
- Instructions
- Explanations
- Persuasive texts
- Recounts
- Reports
- Leaflets

Reading these types of texts with your child will also help improve their writing as they will see good examples of 'wow' words, correct sentence structure, spelling and grammar.

BIG Writing

Information for parents and carers



This leaflet has been prepared to give you information about BIG Writing and how you can best support your child with their writing.



What is *BIG Writing*?

BIG Writing is a teaching method which is designed to improve children's writing. It focuses on four key aspects. These are:

1. the use of VCOP (Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation)
2. securing the basic skills (Grammar, Handwriting, Spelling and Sentence structure)
3. *BIG Writing* – once a week, every week
4. regular assessment so children recognise what they need to do next to improve their writing.

Both VCOP and the basic skills are taught every day, through a range of lively, high impact activities. *BIG Writing* takes place every Friday and is the highlight of the week. To help the children focus on their writing, the lights are softened, soft music is played and an aroma candle is lit.

BIG Writing – VCOP

Children are taught to think about their writing in four particular ways – Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation. For younger children more 'friendly' terms are used.

Vocabulary: Or 'Wow' words. Children are encouraged to use new and impressive words to widen their use of language and make their writing richer.

Connectives: Or joining words. These are really important for joining ideas, phrases and sentences. Used well connectives can make writing both cohesive and interesting.

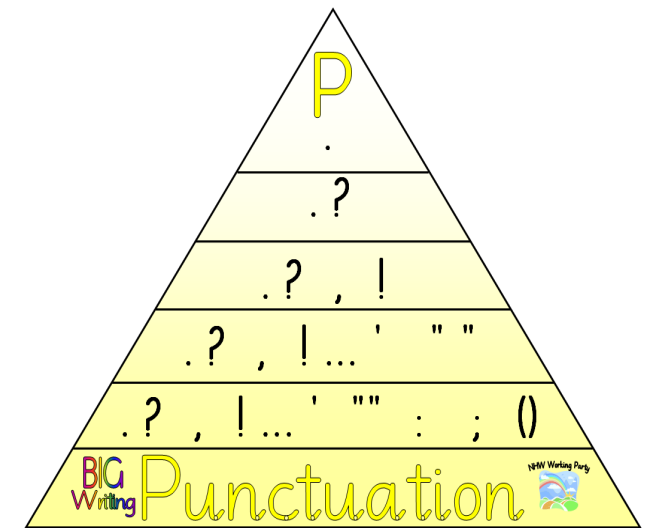
Openers: Or sentence starters. By varying the way sentences open, writing can become more engaging to read. Children are encouraged to use both '-ly' and '-ing' words at the start of their sentences.

Punctuation: Children are encouraged to use appropriate punctuation e.g. capital letters at the start of sentences, full stops, exclamation or question marks at the end, and commas to add extra information.

BIG Writing – VCOP Pyramids

VCOP Pyramids play a key role in *BIG Writing*. Displayed in every classroom they act as a visual reminder for children of the key elements they should be including in their writing.

Below is an example of the VCOP Punctuation Pyramid.



Divided into levels, the lower down the pyramid a child goes the higher the level they will be working at.