

Why Talk for Writing?

We want to help all our children develop into thoughtful readers and creative writers and it is through the **Talk for Writing** approach that we believe we can achieve this. Through its multi-sensory and interactive teaching it enables children of all ages and abilities to learn to write a wide range of story/text types using various methods including:

- listening to and learning texts and stories;
- taking part in drama and role-play;
- drawing and story mapping;
- collecting words and language strategies
- building their working knowledge of grammar.

At St Joseph's we are all very enthusiastic about this approach as it brings out the best in the children and the teachers! (who have to write model texts for the children to use as the basis of their own writing) - we are all writers together! Writing becomes a joint adventure and the results are exciting!

What exactly is it?

Talk for Writing is an innovative approach to teaching writing developed by the literacy specialist and writer Pie Corbett. It uses high quality model texts to introduce the children to different story/text types which they then learn off by heart and scrutinise with a writer's critical eye. You can find out more about Talk4Writing [here](#).

Children learn the underlying structures and the process of planning using story maps. They also learn about the key strategies for creating interesting characters and settings and how to use a range of sentence types to create different effects including suspense or adventure.

Process

Talk for Writing has three key phases which work together to develop knowledge, confidence and independence in writing:

1. Imitation

We usually like to start our **Talk for Writing** units with a 'wow' starter which fires up the creativity and imagination of the children before they immerse themselves in the model text.

During this phase the children learn a model text using actions and story maps. The key to success for the children is that they internalise the text type through repetition and rehearsal. They explore the structure of the narrative and investigate the different characters, settings and events. They also begin to look closely at the language used and the effect this has on the reader. We call this process 'read as a writer'. The classroom becomes a dynamic, interactive resource filled with word ideas, sentence types and language tools collected by the children to use in their stories later.

2. Innovation

During this phase the teacher and the children begin to change aspects of the model text using their own ideas. They explore the text using different characters, settings or events and new ideas for descriptive language whilst sticking closely to the underlying structure.

It is during this phase that the children work using their *toolkits*. The toolkits, based on the features and ingredients of the model text, remind children of the different strategies they could use in their stories and helps them to see the progress they are making.

3. Invention

During the invent sessions the children plan and write their own story based on the text type they have been learning. They experiment with the ideas and begin to explore their own style of writing using sentence types from the model text.