

Three Strands of Writing

Writing can be compared to driving a car. The more automatically the skills can be used, the more one can concentrate on the road ahead.

Writing is a complex, multi-task activity comprising the following elements:

- thinking of ideas
- keeping the ideas in mind
- expressing these ideas in words
- sequencing and structuring the ideas
- keeping the learning objective/focus of the writing task in mind
- spelling
- punctuation
- handwriting

Difficulties need to be treated as 'work in progress; acknowledge writing is a complex process and encourage pupils to believe in their ability to improve.

It may be helpful to think of the writing process in terms of the following 3 strands:

Secretarial/transcriptional skills (handwriting, spelling, and punctuation)

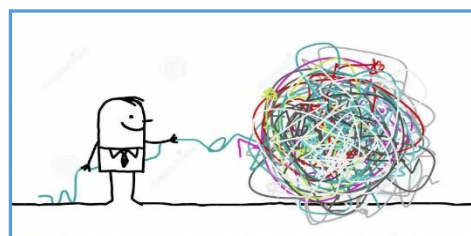
Helpful strategies/approaches include:

- SEND Service spelling strategy sheet
- Spelling intervention programmes such as Cued Spelling; Precision Spelling; (both available as traded training)
- Fine motor skills development e.g. 'Fizzy' and 'Clever Hands' (Kent NHS), see also Cambridgeshire Occupational Therapy website for further advice: www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/cambridgeshire-children's-occupational-therapy
- Explicit handwriting instruction e.g., Penpals; Teodorescu 'Write from the Start' programme; see also www.teachhandwriting.co.uk
- Punctuation prompt card attached to exercise book
- Use of assistive technology e.g., Clicker – see also 'Top Ten Accessibility Tips' sheet or the 'CALL Scotland Supporting Writing Difficulties' sheet

Language skills (vocabulary, grammar, composition, structure)

Helpful strategies/approaches include:

- ELKLAN materials for vocabulary development
- Graphic organisers e.g., story planners, mindmaps
- Prompt cards
- Clicker (see SEND Service Clicker sheets)
- Speech and Language training packages
- 'Talk for Writing' strategies



Working memory

Helpful strategies/approaches include:

- 'Understanding Working Memory: A Classroom Guide' available at: <https://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/WM-classroom-guide.pdf>
- SEND Service working memory sheets
- Working Memory Rating Scale (screening tool available at www.pearson-uk.com)
- Clicker mindmaps, talking tins, recording devices, and task planners.

SEND SERVICES GUIDES

This questionnaire can be used with a pupil as a starting point to identify any specific areas of difficulty.

Pupil Name:
Completed with:

Year Group:
Role:

Which of the following aspects of writing do you find difficult? It may be helpful to score them on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'impossible' and 10 is 'easy peasy'! Once you have scored each aspect, choose an area in which you would like to improve and think about what will help you. Return to this form in a few weeks to see if things have got better. You could then choose another area to work on.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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	Baseline Date:	Review Date:
1. Thinking of ideas.		
2. Remembering my ideas.		
3. Remember the style of writing I am using (recount, persuasive etc.).		
4. Deciding which words to use.		
5. Thinking of the order of events.		
6. Knowing how to spell words.		
7. Knowing where to put capital letters, commas, and full stops.		
8. Remember how to form letters.		
9. Being able to write quickly.		
10. Being able to write neatly so other people can read it.		

What would you like to get better at?

What will help you?

Review: In what ways has your writing improved?