

Level 1A Writer Grid

This grid is designed to support you in reviewing where a child is with their writing and to help you to plan what you might do in order to move the child's writing forward. Some common features of writing at this level are identified to support you in reviewing the child's writing. The teaching approaches will support you in identifying the next steps you may wish to take during one-to-one tutoring sessions in order to impact on key aspects of writing. One-to-one tuition exemplar plans provide more specific guidance on the structure and content of individual sessions.

The following documents can be accessed by going to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and searching for the references provided.

Features of writing	Examples of common misconceptions	Key teaching approaches/strategies to support the writer	Pupil writing targets	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing pieces are short and often unfinished. The writer can be reluctant to write. The writer finds it difficult to write without support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writer requires scaffolding towards independence. Writer lacks confidence in writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the writer's confidence through praise and rewards. Identify the writer's interests; explore these through talk, reading and practical exploration before writing (e.g. explore websites, read comics, watch extracts of DVDs, listen to podcasts encouraging the child to discuss aspects of their hobby or interest). Over time, create a climate where the child feels confident to write. Use shared writing and discussion, write collaboratively. Identify targets which can be achieved and support the child in identifying when they are achieved. Develop success criteria for each task together. Make sure they are achievable and review teacher/collaborative and pupil writing using the agreed success criteria. Create clear purpose for writing by linking all work to the child's interests or class work (e.g. read and share wrestling information – magazines, websites, DVDs or games. Link writing to this theme, create a new wrestler, write a character profile for them, an advert, etc.). Allow pupils to make choices about their writing – choosing which form they would like to write in, writing equipment they use and topic area they write about. Give time for 'free writing' where pupils can write about anything they choose. Create a real audience for writing (e.g. a page for a wrestling magazine which will be kept in the class book corner with the wrestling magazines). Introduce independence in graduated steps and make this part of the success criteria. Write alongside the child. Make writing tasks short and manageable so that the child finishes. 		<p>Boys' Writing Fliers (ref code: 1170-2005G)</p> <p>SEAL (ref code: 1378-2005 G)</p> <p>Talk for Writing (00467-2008DVD-EN; available online Spring 2009)</p>

Features of writing	Examples of common misconceptions	Key teaching approaches/strategies to support the writer	Pupil writing targets	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writer lacks understanding of the audience and purpose of the writing. The child finds it difficult to generate ideas even when supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writer requires scaffolding in order to include ideas which engage the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the child to generate ideas for the content of their writing through discussion, role-play and practical activities (e.g. ordering photos of a school trip on a time line to support oral and written recounts). Use drama activities to make writing more engaging for the reader and show the child how to use the ideas generated when writing, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple role-play: act out events in narrative, sequence simple actions for procedural texts; hot seating: have child work in role as a character so that actions and feelings can be explored and used to improve writing; secret box: produce an interesting item from the box and use this to stimulate ideas for writing (e.g. photograph, old doll, painting); writing bags: gather together a small number of items linked to a subject or topic to generate ideas for storytelling (e.g. ration book, postcard, whistle or a rucksack with a part-eaten packed lunch, torch, one glove and rope) and ask questions: 'Who might these belong to? Why was the postcard written? Why might the whistle be needed? What would it be like to have rationed food? How could these objects be related?' small world play to develop and generate ideas for writing (e.g. a school-themed box for a familiar setting story with objects that might be found in school or belong to children). Use images to collect ideas for writing (e.g. on sticky notes jot down words that describe a character at a certain point in a story – return to these when writing). Use artefacts (e.g. a Japanese mask, computer game) and in a short period of time try to come up with adjectives to describe it. Identify the most unusual, favourite and why. Keep these words for writing. Introduce and collect new words to increase the child's vocabulary choices through use of visual texts (e.g. picture books, photographs, comics, ICT texts, paintings). Talk about images and jot down effective vocabulary for use in writing. 	<p>Level 1a <i>Make language choices appropriate to different text types. Consider and select from alternative choices.</i> (Strand 9: Creating and shaping texts) AF1 AF7</p> <p>Level 2c <i>Choose words for effect, making writing interesting for the reader.</i> (Strand 9: Creating and shaping texts) AF1 AF7</p>	<p>Speaking, Listening and Learning: at Key Stage 1 and 2 (ref code: 163-2004)</p> <p>Boys' Writing Fliers (ref code: 1170-2005G)</p> <p>Talk for Writing (00467-2008DVD-EN; available online Spring 2009)</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the child to capture and use new words for writing by using film sequences. Talk about events, setting and characters and make note of the child's ideas for writing. Help the child to capture ideas and vocabulary for writing through participating in practical experiences and linking writing to these (e.g. a description of an animal or minibeast found together in the wild area, collected and explored under a microscope). Demonstrate how to say sentences aloud before writing so that the child understands what they are being encouraged to do. Before writing, always encourage the child to rehearse what they want to write aloud so that they are not trying to make it up as they go along. Encourage and model the process: think it, say it, like it, write it, read it. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing shows some evidence of a basic structure (e.g. it may have a beginning) but more open-ended writing structures are difficult to control. Section breaks are not evident when writing is not scaffolded. Writing is often a series of ideas linked using repeated pronouns or nouns (e.g. <i>we came to Conkers we came off the bus we went inside to play</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in organising content of writing particularly in open-ended structures such as narrative. Writing lacks logical sequencing of ideas. Coherence of text can be found through overuse of noun or pronoun. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read various simple texts and talk about how they are organised. Talk about how content is organised into sections. Using texts that the child is familiar with, break down the sections into topics which summarise what each section is about (e.g. an article on fitness and young people: statistics, excuses, school sports, how much exercise is needed). Use visual planning techniques (e.g. a flow chart for an explanation, a drawn story map for narratives). Use the visual plans to aid oral retellings. Teacher demonstrates how to organise writing when planning by thinking aloud, e.g. 'We're composing a recount from our school website. We have photographs, quotes from children, information about each part of the day. I want to think about how this information might be presented to the reader. We are going to use sticky stuff and sticky notes to organise the material that we have into a recount. Because we are recounting the day we need to retell it in the correct order so that our reader does not become confused. Let's try to order the different information that we have...' Use practical activities that allow children to physically order texts into appropriate sections (e.g. use images, sticky notes and cut out sentences that have been composed together or scribed to organise content under different headings). 	<p>Level 1a <i>Write sentences in the order that they have been planned.</i> (Strand 10: text structure and organisation) AF3</p> <p>Level 2c <i>Writing shows characteristics of chosen form based on structure of known texts.</i> (Strand 10: text structure and organisation) AF3</p>	<p>Grammar for Writing (ref code: 0107-2000)</p> <p>Developing Early Writing (ref code: 0055-2001)</p> <p>Talk for Writing (00467-2008DVD-EN; available online Spring 2009)</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to spell words are sometimes phonetically plausible. Writing demonstrates difficulties with vowel digraphs (<i>house – hose, floating – floting, clean – clen, goes – gos</i>). Common words are often spelt incorrectly (<i>went – wet, say – sey</i>). Writing has several spelling errors. Inflected endings are often missed off words (<i>hearing – hare, played – plad</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing fluency is interrupted by poor spelling. Poor phonemic knowledge affects flow and accuracy of writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children are secure in Phases 5 and 6 of Letters and Sounds, if not reteach and continue with regular phonics sessions. Use the teaching sequence from Letters and Sounds (revisit and review, teach, practise and apply). Use direct teaching to explicitly teach spelling patterns which are causing difficulty (e.g. words containing different spellings for phonemes such as igh/ ie/ y/ i-e or adding common inflections to words, e.g. plurals, ful, ing). Hold quick-write activities: use words orally in context so that children have a clear understanding of the vocabulary they are learning (e.g. when learning verb endings the children need to have a clear understanding of tense). Hold short, lively and focused spelling sessions. Apply spellings learnt to writing contexts. Use words taught in short dictations. Allow the child the opportunity to dictate sentences for the teacher to apply the spelling in context and check together. Before writing, remind the child of words they are working on or are used often, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Remember you are really trying to spell the word <i>came</i> correctly and you now know how to spell it, let’s have a go at trying it out before we start writing.’ ‘In this piece of writing I will definitely be using the word <i>beast</i>, can we write it here to help us?’ Keep a spelling journal of words which are used regularly. Model how to use this during shared/collaborative and independent writing. Teach key spelling rules (e.g. making nouns plural). Use NS materials to support. Ensure that high-frequency words are returned to regularly and make links with class work. Model how to revisit and correct writing by demonstrating how to check work for errors. Focus the child’s attention on a few key spellings that they have been working on. Show the child how to apply spelling strategies, e.g. multisyllabic words: ‘think about the word <i>forward</i>, we can break that word down into syllables, <i>for – ward</i>. You can easily spell the first syllable. Let’s write it. What about <i>ward</i>...’ 		<p>Letters and Sounds (ref code: 00281-2007)</p> <p>Spelling Bank (ref code: 0086/2001)</p> <p>Support for Spelling (00171-2009DOM-EN; available online Spring 2009)</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before writing remind the child of appropriate vocabulary choices that have been discussed and noted in the spelling journal (e.g. <i>recycling, important, protected</i>). Use look copy, cover, write, check mnemonics or other spelling strategies to support the child in learning to correct errors and model these strategies with them often so that they are looking closely at words. Play correct/incorrect? Write a short list of ways to spell high-frequency words. Ask the child to look carefully and select which is the correct way and write it on a mini whiteboard. Play a speed writing game: give the child a word that they find difficult and discuss ways to remember how to spell it. Then give the child 30 seconds to write the word as many times as they can correctly. Play this regularly and encourage joined writing. 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is often a series of simple sentences joined together without punctuation (e.g. <i>i am writing to you can we have cooking lessons some children can't cook we would like to hear you say children need to have fun</i>). Limited use of compound sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of different sentence structure is very limited (e.g. overuse of short simple sentences, any longer sentences are usually joined by and/but (e.g. <i>he has a long beard and he holds a wooden stick</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before writing sentences practise them by saying them aloud. Talk about how to make the sentence better, and teacher scribe the child's oral sentence. Mark changes in different colours to see the improvements made. Through reading and talking, provide different sentences to explore together, look at how sentences are made up. Break sentences down to look at how they make meaning clear and explore what makes them better or more interesting. Play sentence games: start off with a word or image (linked to the child's experience/interests/topic work) and challenge the child to think of and say a sentence quickly with this word in it. Scribe the child's sentence. Punctuate it. When the child is used to this work independently to write a quick, correctly-punctuated sentence. Link to interest/class work by using technical vocabulary/sentence starters (e.g. <i>we have been discussing...</i>, <i>endangered</i> or <i>The Saturdays</i>). Take a quick sentence composed by the child and play with it. Explore word classes, alter the sentence type. (E.g. <i>On Red Nose day a teacher shaved his beard off</i> might eventually become: <i>On Red Nose Day Mr Bishop nervously shaved his treasured beard off but it looked much better afterwards</i>). Talk about how changes improve the quick sentence. Identify sentences from the child's writing to be improved. Talk about how they might be improved to make the meaning clear, amend them together verbally and in writing. Take simple sentences from the child's writing and explore how they can be made into more detailed sentences. Using examples taken from the child's writing use mini whiteboards to improve sentences, e.g. <i>the money was found on the doorstep and no one was around</i>. Redraft with the child to explore how by adding conjunctions it might be improved: <i>the money was found on the doorstep but no one was around</i>. <i>The money was found on the doorstep however no one was around</i>. Talk about word classes and further improve the sentence: by thinking about using particular nouns: <i>Nadia</i> looked around and saw she was inside the <i>Wii</i>, improving verbs: <i>Nadia searched around and noticed she was inside the Wii</i> and adjectives where 	<p>Level 2c <i>Use conjunctions to join compound sentences</i> (Strand 11: sentence structure and punctuation) AF5</p>	<p>Grammar for Writing (ref code: 0107-2000)</p> <p>Developing Early Writing (ref code: 0055-2001)</p> <p>Talk for Writing (00467-2008DVD-EN; available online Spring 2009)</p>

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		<p>appropriate. Talk to the child about how these changes improve the sentence for the reader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play sentence games (e.g. action verbs: suggest an action and ask the child to find different ways of performing it and describe the action such as talking, got, touching, etc.). Use Grammar for Writing to help. 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few sentences are marked with capital letters or full stops. Capital letters are often used in the middle of sentences. Few other forms of punctuation are attempted (question marks, exclamation marks). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing demonstrates inconsistent use of basic punctuation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When writing alongside the child show them by thinking aloud how to how to use simple punctuation to support meaning and mark sentences, e.g. <i>'I am writing to you to ask if we can have <u>cooking lessons</u>. That is my first sentence so I must remember to start the first word with a capital letter so I write...'</i> Play practical punctuation games, e.g. use sticky notes with a large full stop and capital letter or punctuation fans and ask the child to show these when they feel it should be used in an oral sentence. Then add to a familiar, short piece of writing to show where sentences start and end. Use actions when practising sentences verbally to physically show that the sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. Use ICT to compose or edit sentences paying attention to punctuation by using different colours. Play quick-write sentence games as above. Use games adapted from Grammar for Writing. Identify suitable sentences from the child's writing to be improved. Talk about how punctuation could be added or changed to make the meaning clear, amend them verbally and in writing (e.g. by adding full stops). Support the child to reread their work aloud and check that it makes sense. Talk about where punctuation might be added or changed so that the writing is clear. 	<p>Level 1a <i>Consolidate the sense of a sentence, write simple sentences independently. Use capital letters and full stops to punctuate a sentence.</i> (Strand 11: sentence structure and punctuation) AF5 AF6</p>	<p>Grammar for Writing (ref code: 0107-2000)</p> <p>Developing Early Writing (ref code: 0055-2001)</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer uses the same words in their writing because they have a limited vocabulary. Writing demonstrates use of speech like vocabulary. Some words are missed out which makes understanding writing more difficult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer has a limited vocabulary which restricts choices for writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When reading with the child, talk about words which are effective and why, e.g. 'The author has used the words <i>scamper</i> and <i>rustle</i> to describe how the character moved through the woods in the evening. I really like the use of these words because if I close my eyes I can see her moving quickly with small steps. I can hear the leaves and branches rustling under her feet on the wood floor. I think she is making noises and is in a hurry because it is almost dark so she wants to be gone.' When reading with the child talk about who the writing is for and why it was written (audience and purpose). Talk about how words are used to help to achieve the writer's intended impact on the reader, e.g. 'She is nervous, how do we know that she is nervous? What words has the writer used to show this?' Play games (e.g. from Grammar for Writing) focusing on improving word choices to make better sentences by changing words (nouns, adjectives, verbs), adding words in, adding words on at the beginning, at the end, e.g. <i>she could see a lighthouse in the sand</i> may become <i>Little Jody stared at the tall lighthouse which stood sparkling on the beach.</i> Support the child to create a 'magpie' list of exciting and interesting words that they encounter while talking, watching or reading. When writing alongside the child show them how to choose interesting words and make choices about words in their writing by thinking aloud while you write, e.g. 'Angus has found places that are frightening and dark. I want to show the reader this without saying Angus was scared so I want to make my description frightening. My sentence will start with <i>Angus stared in horror from the safe train.</i> I want to show the reader that Angus is warm and safe but what he sees is scary. Now I want to describe what he sees. <i>The land was bare and grey.</i> No, I think we have collected some much better adjectives to describe this place: <i>lifeless</i>, yes I think I will use this word. <i>The land was bare and lifeless.</i> I think this begins to show how different the world outside the train is, how scary and dark it is...' Use the magpie lists that have been developed with the child to support the child's range of vocabulary use in writing (e.g. alternative words for <i>went</i>, <i>got</i>, etc.). 	<p>Level 2b <i>Demonstrate use of adventurous word choices and detail to engage the reader</i> (Strand 9: creating and shaping texts) AF1 AF7</p>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the child to complete pieces of writing and support them to maintain voice for the piece of writing through shared writing and jointly editing short parts of the text (not always the beginning) together, improving word choices and returning to the task in hand, e.g. 'Your diary entry shows that Angus is puzzled and upset by what he has seen and the driver's behaviour. You are writing as Angus and you tell the reader about your day and how you feel but look at this sentence. Is this how Angus would be feeling? What might he say to his diary? I can pretend I am him...' Reread work with the child to identify missing words. Deliberately miss out words in your writing. Ask the child to mark where they are and correct. Use different coloured pens or stickers to mark where words are omitted. When writing has been improved, compare the sentences and talk to the child about the effect of the changed vocabulary on the reader, e.g. 'Your new sentence says, <i>the ragged woman fell on the ground and cried</i>. I really like your use of the verb <i>fell</i>; I can tell that she is weak and hungry. Your adjective <i>ragged</i> shows me how poor she is and so you have helped me to see her in my head...' Work with the child to recognise poor word choices (e.g. adding adjectives to describe nouns, use of particular nouns in non-fiction writing). 		