

Rationale:

Mastering the craft of writing is complex and challenging for children with it becoming more technical and abstract as pupils move through the school. As writing becomes more complex and children are faced with harder writing tasks, it becomes much more difficult for pupils to manage their ideas and communicate them fluently. *Alex Quigley – Closing the Writing Gap*

Whereas reading can be reduced into two main strands – word reading and language comprehension – writing is much more complex to construct. Children learning to write must learn the act of physically shaping letters, which draws on fine motor skills. They must also develop skill in spelling, punctuation, grammar, generating ideas and understanding the best way to communicate these ideas, as well as drawing on vocabulary knowledge. Managing all this places incredible cognitive demands on young learners. And, unlike with reading, these demands do not reduce as writers gain more experience.

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

DfE – English National Curriculum, 2014

YEAR 3

WRITING

Name: _____

Working towards the expected standard (WTS)

The pupil can after discussion with the teacher:	Evidence (including date and text type)						Criteria Met
write simple coherent narratives							
demarcate sentences with capital letters and full stops consistently							
begin to use exclamation marks, question marks and commas to separate items in a list							
spell some of the Year 3 word list							
develop a legible style with consistent letter formation, using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters							

Year 3/4 National Curriculum Expectations:

Transcription	Composition
Writing - spelling Pupils should be taught to: • use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them - see English Appendix 1 • spell further homophones • spell words that are often misspelt - see English Appendix 1 • place the possessive apostrophe accurately in words with regular plurals [for example, girls', boys'] and in words with irregular plurals [for example, children's] • use the first 2 or 3 letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary • write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far Handwriting Pupils should be taught to: • use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]	Writing - composition Pupils should be taught to: • plan their writing by: • discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar • discussing and recording ideas • draft and write by: • composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures English appendix 2 • organising paragraphs around a theme • in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot • in non-narrative material, using simple organisational devices [for example, headings and sub-headings] • evaluate and edit by: • assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements • proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences • proofread for spelling and punctuation errors • read their own writing aloud to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear

Transcription	Composition
	Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation Pupils should be taught to: • develop their understanding of the concepts set out in English Appendix 2 by: • extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including: when, if, because, although • using the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense • choosing nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition • using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause • using fronted adverbials • learning the grammar for years 3 and 4 in [English appendix 2]) Indicate grammatical and other features by: • using commas after fronted adverbials • indicating possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns • using and punctuating direct speech Use and understand the grammatical terminology in English Appendix 2 accurately and appropriately when discussing their writing and reading. <i>Available to download from: DfE – English National Curriculum, 2014</i>

Year 3 Progression – Medium Term Plan

	I can compose and rehearse sentences orally composing progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary. I can discuss writing similar to that which I am planning to write to understand and learn from its structure and grammar. I can use familiar punctuation (capital letters, full stops, commas in a list, question marks, exclamation marks) correctly. I can write sentences choosing the correct tense (simple present / past – including irregular verbs). I can proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors. I can read aloud their own writing, to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear.		
Autumn Term	<u>Expanded noun phrases (2 weeks)/ Tense</u> I can use a comma to list the two adjectives to describe the noun (expanded noun phrase e.g. the pretty, pink dress.) I can write sentences choosing the correct tense (simple present / past – including irregular verbs). Introduction of using the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense (when secure)	<u>Co-ordination/Subordination</u> I can extend the range of sentences with more than one clause by using (1) co-ordinating and/or (2) subordinating conjunctions to express time and cause.	<u>Paragraphs</u> I can extend the range of sentences with more than one clause by using (1) co-ordinating and/or (2) subordinating conjunctions to express time and cause. I can begin to choose nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition I can begin to combine sentences, grouped around related material, into a paragraph. (Settings and character in fiction)
Spring Term			
Summer Term			
Terminology	Preposition, conjunction, clause, subordinate clause, main clause, direct speech word family, prefix, consonant letter, vowel letter, inverted commas		

Year 3 Handwriting Expectations



These are the four main joins and these are the order in which they should be taught:

Diagonal join, no ascender	Diagonal joins to ascender	Horizontal join, no ascender	Horizontal join, to ascender
Examples: ai, ar, un, am, ear, aw, ir, hu, ti, ki, du, up, ag, fe, fu.			

Autumn 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
Revision of letter formation of lower-case letters (taught as letter families), capital letters and digits. Further develop consistency in letter size, shape, and orientation (relative spacing and sizing). Ensure ascenders reach the top line and descenders fall below the line.		
Autumn 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
Consolidate consistency in size, proportion, fluency and spacing between letters and words. Build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice. Continue with diagonal joins without ascenders.		Consolidate consistency in size, proportion, fluency and spacing between letters and words. Build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice. Diagonal join from letters with descenders (e.g. qu, pu, pa, pe, pi, pl, po, pr,ps)

Handwriting Curriculum Expectations:



Handwriting

National Curriculum – notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Year 1

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.

Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

Year 2

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Year 3/4

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Year 5/6

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an un-joined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Available to download from: [DfE – English National Curriculum, 2014](#)



SAMPLE

Daily Dictation (5 minutes):

A sentence will be dictated to pupils following the handwriting input. Before writing, children should rehearse the sentence, so they have the cognitive space for focusing on transcription skills. The sentence should be carefully constructed and may include previously taught grammatical features, providing opportunities to reinforce and apply recent learning in context. It may also incorporate gaps or common misconceptions identified through marking.

Year 3 Spelling Expectations

Most children need systematic teaching, with opportunities to practise and reinforce their spelling knowledge. As with handwriting, spelling teaching should be explicit, cumulative and engaging. It should be regular and consistent, taught in small steps, with lots of opportunity for practice. [*DfE – The Writing Framework, July 2025*](#)

The National Curriculum sets out the spelling rules to be taught in Year 3/4, and these should be taught explicitly. This document provides a suggested review of those spelling rules, with opportunities to contextualise them within the teaching sequence outlined in this handbook.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2		Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
NC Objective	Year 2 Revision: -ed and -ing to a root word Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	The suffix –ly			More prefixes: il-, im- and ir-		Words ending with the /g/ sound spelt –gue and the /k/ sound spelt –que (French in origin) I can spell words with the /ei/ sound spelt ei, eigh or ey.
Word lists	forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, prefer, preferred gardening, gardener, limiting, limited, limitation				illegal, illegible immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible	young, touch, double, trouble, country myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery	
Statutory Words	circle, build, arrive, guide, fruit, special, therefore, quarter, Earth, February	address, breathe, certain, difficult, heart, favourite, notice, perhaps, recent, through					

Year 3 Weekly Timetable:

Week 1:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)
Quality Text Input Reading as a Reader (15 minutes)	Quality Text Input Reading as a Reader (15 minutes)	Quality Text Input Reading as a Reader (15 minutes)	Quality Text Input Reading as a Reader (15 minutes)	Quality Text Input Reading as a Reader (15 minutes)
				Create the paragraph <i>Cohesion</i> (30 minutes)

Part 2:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)	Handwriting and Dictation (10-15 minutes)
Planning <i>Generating ideas, setting goals, gathering information</i> (35 minutes)	Drafting <i>Writing down key ideas, setting out a structure for writing</i> (35 minutes)			

Year 3 Example Text Overview:



Autumn Term:

Term 1			Term 2		
Writing to entertain		Writing to entertain	Writing to inform		
The Twits and Matilda		You Choose Fairy Tales/The Diary of a Big Bad Wolf/Beware of the Bears/The True Story of the Three Little Pigs/Jack and the Baked Beanstalk	The Boy Who Grew Dragons and Pet Dragon		
<i>Suggested text type:</i> Character description		<i>Suggested text type:</i> Narrative – a new traditional tale, a sequel, a parody	<i>Suggested text type:</i> Instructions		

Spring Term:

Term 3			Term 4		
	Writing to entertain		Writing to persuade		
	Ice Trap and still/moving images of polar regions		The Great Kapok Tree A Rang Tan in my Bedroom (picture book and film)		
	<i>Suggested text type:</i> Setting description		<i>Suggested text type:</i> Persuasion		

Summer Term:

Term 5			Term 6		
Writing to inform			Writing to entertain		
Tilly and the Time Machine and/or Stone Age Boy			Narnia film and The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe		
<i>Suggested text type:</i> Recount from a character's viewpoint			<i>Suggested text type:</i> Setting description (Lucy walks through the wardrobe into Narnia)		

Purpose and Audience:



Purpose and Audience

For successful writing, it is important to establish a clear purpose from the beginning. Pupils should be guided to articulate their ideas and consider their audience. The national curriculum for key stage 2 requires pupils to write for a range of contexts, purposes, and audiences, but it doesn't specify the types of texts to be taught. The purpose and audience should guide the choice of writing form, whether it is a narrative, explanation or description.

Teachers should plan a balanced mix of narrative and non-narrative texts throughout the curriculum, emphasising the structure and organisation of non-narrative writing. Additionally, pupils also need to understand a subject or topic thoroughly before they can write effectively about it. Much of this content knowledge is likely to come from other curriculum areas, class reading books or personal interest. [*DfE – The Writing Framework, July 2025*](#)

Children need opportunities to see a model text based on the suggested genre for writing. These model texts should be used to develop pupils' awareness of written structures (including structural and linguistic features) and authorial techniques. Grammatical structures should be contextualised, enabling children to understand their purpose and use within writing.

Create the Paragraph:



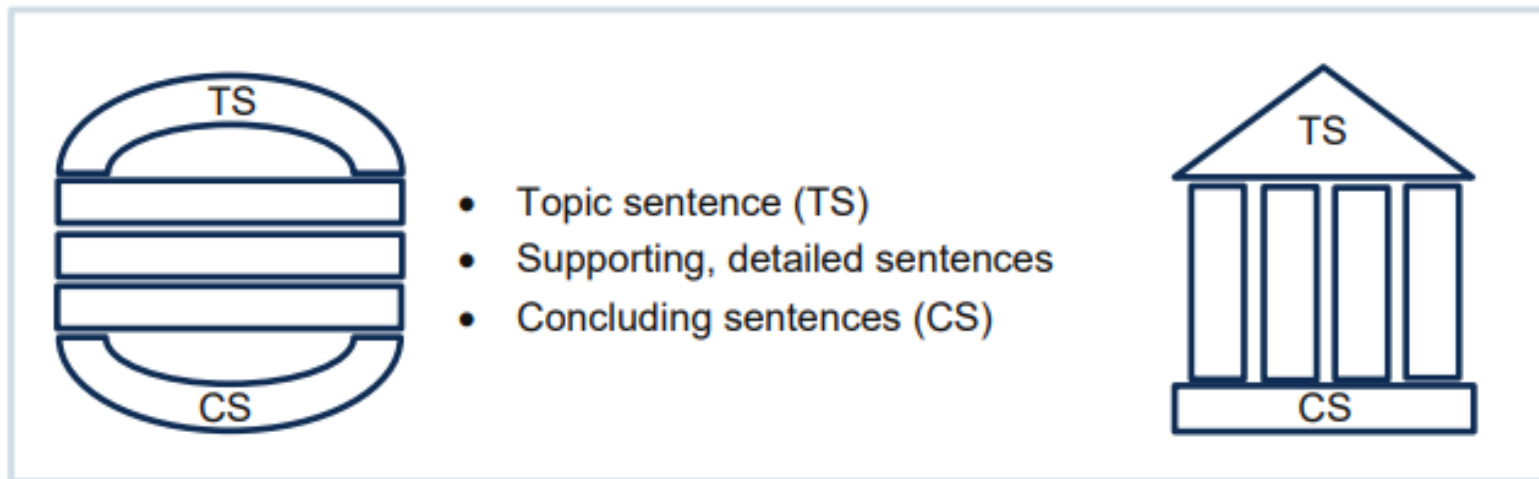
Create the Paragraph

Create the Paragraph is an activity used to help children build a set of ideas into a complete paragraph. Once children have a good understanding of how to write a sentence, paragraphs can be composed with much greater ease. Teachers should introduce paragraphs at lower key stage 2 as a way for pupils to group related material. A school-wide outline for paragraph structure and consistent teaching will help pupils understand how to construct paragraphs. [*DfE – The Writing Framework, July 2025*](#)

The purpose of this activity is to ensure children:

- form letters correctly.
- space and position letters correctly.
- spell words – including Y3/4 statutory words,
- demarcate punctuation,
- group related material.

Joan Sedita suggests that the 'burger' or 'temple' models are visuals that can be used as a scaffold to help pupils to remember paragraph parts.



Teachers can use colour coding to help pupils grow their knowledge of paragraph structure. This strategy uses different colours to highlight paragraphs parts. For example, teachers highlight or underline topic sentences in green, supporting sentences in yellow and concluding sentences in red.

Pupils should not be rushed to produce lengthy texts but encouraged (and given time) to draft well-honed paragraphs that convey single ideas, avoiding combining and confusing unrelated points.

Before writing a paragraph, planning using agreed paragraph structures should help to avoid repetition, ensure essential information is included, and support sequencing and coherence. Planning each paragraph also offers opportunities for the teacher to provide feedback before pupils start drafting. Paragraphs require planning before writing just as much as whole texts do.

To embed understanding of how paragraphs are constructed, teachers may also give pupils a model paragraph for the text type they are writing. With the teacher, pupils could read, analyse and deconstruct it before they plan their structure. [*DfE – The Writing Framework, July 2025*](#)

Burger Model:

- **Topic sentence:** This sentence tells the reader the main idea, or what the paragraph will be about.
- **Supporting sentence one:** This sentence gives specific details relating to the main idea.
- **Supporting sentence two:** This sentence gives another specific detail relating to the main idea.
- **Supporting sentence three:** This sentence gives more specific details relating to the main idea.
- **Concluding sentence:** This sentence refers to the topic sentence and sums up the main idea of the paragraph.

Example:

Year 3 (expanded noun phrases, simple and compound sentences, using 'and', 'but' and 'so')

I love trying to catch butterflies on warm sunny days. I have so much fun running around in my back garden and I am chasing after the pretty butterflies that go zooming by. Sometimes I catch one but I never keep it for very long. Butterflies belong in their natural habitat. I cannot wait until next summer so that I can grab my net to catch butterflies again.

Year 4 (expanded noun phrases, simple, compound sentences and complex sentences, whilst revisit a fronted adverbial)

On warm summer days, I love trying to catch butterflies. I have so much fun running around in my back garden, chasing after the pretty butterflies that go zooming by. If I am lucky enough to catch one, I never keep it for very long. After all, butterflies belong in their natural habitat. I cannot wait until next summer so that I can grab my net to catch butterflies again.

Example Planning:

Autumn Term 1 Unit 1, Week 1:

Day 1



Year 3: Handwriting:

'ai' (use the first week to assess control of sizing, with no ascenders or descenders).

Dictation:

'Mr Twit is a brainy and unfair man.' (This will also introduce the grammar objective of coordinating conjunctions.) Keep this section short today, as the main focus is on *Remember the Sentence*.

Quality Text:

Quick introduction to Roald Dahl – show some covers from Roald Dahl books – do the children know any Roald Dahl stories? Can we remember anything about them. Introduce facts about this author using pages from 'The Glorimptious Worlds of Roald Dahl', the opening pages of the 'The Twits' which introduce Roald Dahl and Quentin Blake and/or appropriate clips from You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61kmzBeap0M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZroxWZ7aJqo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHHARlkj9DI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcOj8PsRx60>

Can the children identify any themes in the Roald Dahl books they know – being on 'the side' of children, themes of friendship and love? (This could also be the focus for discussion in a reading lesson)

Read and discuss the character of Mr Twit from the first three chapters: 'Hairy Faces', 'Mr Twit' and 'Dirty Beards' – read as a reader – what do we know about the man – where is our evidence? As a class, highlight and annotate a section of text that gives us information about the character.

Remember the Sentence (Dictation):

Mr Twit is a nasty man with a big, hairy beard. He never washes it so bits of old food get stuck in it. He is mean to animals and he plays cruel tricks on his wife. Mr Twit loves to eat bird pie, therefore he tries to catch birds by putting glue on a tree! He is one of the most horrible characters you could ever meet.

References:



For more information

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