

Language Development Strand

Unit 4: Oral and Written Language

Module 4.2 Writing as a Process



Student Support Material

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Date: November 2002



Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
GRM International

Papua New Guinea-Australia Development Cooperation Program

Unit outline

Unit	#	Modules
Unit 4 Oral and Written Language	4.1	Oral Language Development (Core)
	4.2	Writing as a Process (Core)
	4.3	Genres and Text Types (Core)

Icons



Read or research



Write or summarise



Activity or discussion

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Module 4.2: Writing as a Process

This module will provide you with a range of strategies, techniques and activities which will help you to facilitate children's development of writing skills for different purposes in vernacular and English.

Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain and demonstrate the learning cycle to create vernacular and English written texts
- Demonstrate the application of the process writing approach in their personal work
- Plan learning activities for children to write texts in a range of genres and forms for different purposes and audiences
- Demonstrate written text conventions of page layout, grammar use, vocabulary choice, punctuation and spelling

Concepts and skills

- Writing objectives in the primary language syllabuses
- Types of writing (genres): recount, narrative, procedure, description, discussion, argument, explanation.
- The learning cycle: building children's knowledge of the field (topic), modelling of the target written text, joint construction of the text, guided practice of the written text and independent construction of the text.
- Do-Talk-Record
- Process writing approach: talk –making plans, write – first draft, read/talk – conference/editing, rewrite – second draft, read/talk – second conference/editing, rewrite – third draft – continue process to finished published work) and publish.
- Forms of writing: labels, signs, personal and business letters, advertisements, greeting cards, posters, news report, songs, jokes, completing forms, cartoons, play scripts, poems and stories.
- Conventions of writing: page layout, grammar use, punctuation, spelling, handwriting.
- Grammar: structure and language features of whole texts (genre), register, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, parts of speech, direct and indirect speech.
- Vocabulary: word building, suffixes, prefixes, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, consonants, vowels, phonics, dictionary use.

Section 1: Writing objectives in the primary syllabuses

Writing is a process. The process begins by having a reason for writing and having something to write about. Objectives of writing in both vernacular and English are set out in primary school syllabuses.

What type of writing is the focus of each of the following objectives?

- Devise an advertisement for real or imaginary products
- Fill in forms
- Label classroom objects in both languages
- Make posters, classroom displays and signs across the curriculum
- Write a script for a group or class drama
- Write and respond to invitations and greetings
- Write dictated spelling words
- Write instructions for games
- Write sentences of one or more clauses
- Express and support in writing a personal action or opinion
- Introduce cursive writing
- Make a vernacular to English dictionary
- Write a poem with a couple of verses as part of a group
- Write a short account on family activities
- Write descriptions of familiar people and places
- Write in a variety of genres
- Write personal letters
- Write stories about real or imaginary experiences

4.2 Activity 1

Scan the writing objectives in the lower primary syllabus. In small groups talk about the different types of writing activities. List ten different types of writing activities. Repeat the activity using the upper primary syllabus.

Section 2: Some types of written texts

The word 'text' is used to refer to a passage of speech or writing which conveys a message. Let us think about three types of written text: graphic, non-extended and extended.

(a) Graphic texts are picture texts. There are no words but the picture tells the message.

4.2 Activity 2

Take a moment to draw picture signs for doors to male and female toilets. Talk about other picture signs you have seen e.g. on rubbish bins or road signs. What messages are they giving?

(b) Non-extended texts are short pieces of writing which generally do not use sentences. These are writing activities such as labels, signs, addresses on envelopes, messages on T-shirts, spelling, forms to fill in, advertisements, posters, maps or word meanings.

4.2 Activity 3

Address an envelope. Talk about correct layout and punctuation. Discuss how you would teach this activity in a meaningful way with primary school children.

(c) Extended texts are longer pieces of writing. The word 'genre' is sometimes used to refer to types of text which have special patterns to match their functions or purposes.

Purpose	Text type
to retell	recounts, narratives
to describe	description and information reports
to instruct	procedures, directions
to argue	argue a point of view, discuss giving two opposite points of view
to explain	explaining the processes of how or why a phenomenon occurs, eg how frogs reproduce, why it rains.

4.2 Activity 4

Find examples of graphic, non-extended and extended texts in your college, community or nearest town. Explain to a friend the difference between these written texts.

As people use language for different purposes, they automatically create texts with particular patterns. While purposes for using language may be similar in different languages, the patterns of texts will differ. It is helpful if teachers make explicit to children the pattern of different types of extended texts. The pattern of a text includes its structure (or shape) and its language features. Following are descriptions of some English text types.

1. Recount

Purpose

To retell a past experience.

Structure

- An orientation (who, when, what, where)
- Events in order of happening
- A final comment

Language features

- Individual people, places or things
- Use of past tense verbs

Captain John Moresby was the son of Admiral Sir Fairfax Moresby. He was in the British navy. In 1873, he sailed to Papua New Guinea to make maps of the area. He entered a harbour. He named the places Fairfax Harbour and Port Moresby in honour of his father.

4.2 Activity 5

- a) *Underline the past tense verbs in the text about Captain John Moresby.*
 - b) *Write a short biography about someone you know or have read about.*
-
-

2. Narrative (story)

Narratives are a special kind of recount and may be in prose, poetry or drama form.

Purpose

The purpose of the stories are not only to amuse, but more importantly, for their messages to help us think about how we should live our lives and the values we have.

Structure

- An orientation (who, when, what, where)
- Events in which one or more problems occur
- A resolution or satisfying ending

Language features

- Characters
- Dialogue or speech
- Description

Listen to your parents

A long time ago a little girl did not obey her parents. If her parents said, 'Please don't do that because it's dangerous,' the girl would want to do it more. She loved to swim in rough seas.

One day the sea was so rough that it carried her away and she was never seen again. Her parents were so sad that they turned into two large hills beside the village.

Those large hills are there still to remind all the children to obey their parents.

4.2 Activity 6

a) *What was the problem and resolution in the story?*

b) *Think of a familiar story you know and identify its problem and resolution.*

3. Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of a procedure is to instruct, or to tell how to make or do something.

Structure

- A goal (often implied in the title)
- List of things (optional)
- Instructions or steps in the order needed to achieve the goal

Language features

- Command sentences
- Numbers or words to show the order

Coconut Cream

1. Split a coconut and collect water in a bowl.
2. Scrape the flesh from the coconut into the water.
3. Use hands to squeeze the milk from the coconut.
4. Strain to separate the coconut cream from the squeezed flesh.

4.2 Activity 7

- a) Explain what a command sentence is. *Underline the verb which starts each sentence.*
- b) Write a procedure text giving instructions for doing something e.g. making a garden.
-
-

4. Description and information reports

Purpose

The purpose of a description is to describe. The text gives information about the way things are.

Structure

- An opening statement, classification or definition
- Descriptive information organised in some kind of order e.g. parts, qualities, uses.

Language features

- Usually simple present tense
- Technical words to do with the topic
- Labelled diagrams
- Subheadings in longer texts

The PNG Flag

Papua New Guinea has a colourful flag. The flag is rectangular in shape. It is divided diagonally. The upper triangle is red with a yellow bird of paradise. The lower triangle is black with the white stars of the Southern Cross. The flag was designed by Susan Karike. It became the national flag of this country in 1971.

4.2 Activity 8

- a) What sub-headings (stated or unstated) could be used in a description of a flag?
- b) Write a description of your home community. What sub-headings could be used?
-
-

5. Argument

Purpose

The purpose of an argument is to convince others of the value of an idea or point of view.

Structure

- Statement of the point of view
- Reasons and evidence to support the idea
- Restatement of opinion or a recommendation

Language features

- Present tense to express opinion
- Persuasive or emotive words e.g. must, should.

Do not drop rubbish

Rubbish should not be dropped on the ground. It makes the place look dirty and untidy. It attracts flies, rats and dogs. It allows germs to spread. People like to live in clean attractive places where there is no rubbish on the ground. For these reasons, all of us must care for our environment and not drop rubbish on the ground.

4.2 Activity 9

- How many reasons were given for not dropping rubbish on the ground?*
- Write an argument text to support a school rule e.g. bring lunch to school each day.*

6. Discussion

Purpose

The purpose of a discussion is to give two different points of view on the same subject.

Structure

- One point of view with supporting reasons or evidence
- An opposite point of view with supporting reasons

Language features

- General use of present tense
- Contrasting words e.g. on one hand, on the other hand, however

Wearing shoes

On the one hand, wearing shoes is good. Shoes protect our feet from being hurt by sharp objects or stony ground.

On the other hand, wearing shoes is not good. Shoes cost money, make our feet hot and may be uncomfortable.

4.2 Activity 10

- a) *Can you think of other reasons for and against wearing shoes?*
- b) *Write a discussion text for and against the chewing of betel nut.*
-
-

7. Explanation

Purpose

The purpose of an explanation is to explain scientifically how or why something came to be. It explains the processes involved in the evolution of a phenomenon.

Structure

- A general statement to position the reader
- A description of the steps in the process to explain how or why something is like it is

Language features

- Present tense
- Technical words to do with the topic
- A focus on sequence and process showing cause and effect
- Diagrams

Sweat

Our bodies become hot in hot weather or when we work or play. Then the brain sends a message to the sweat glands in the skin. The glands push a watery liquid onto the skin's surface. As the sweat flows over the skin or is evaporated, the body cools. In this way, the body temperature is kept at a normal level.

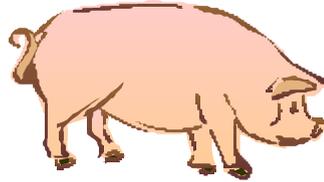
4.2 Activity 11

- a) *Identify the parts and language features of the sample explanation text.*
- b) *Write an explanation of a frog's reproduction process.*
-
-

For further information, read about genres in the '*Lower Primary Language Resource Book*' pages 83 to 93, published by the Department of Education in 1998.

4.2 Activity 13

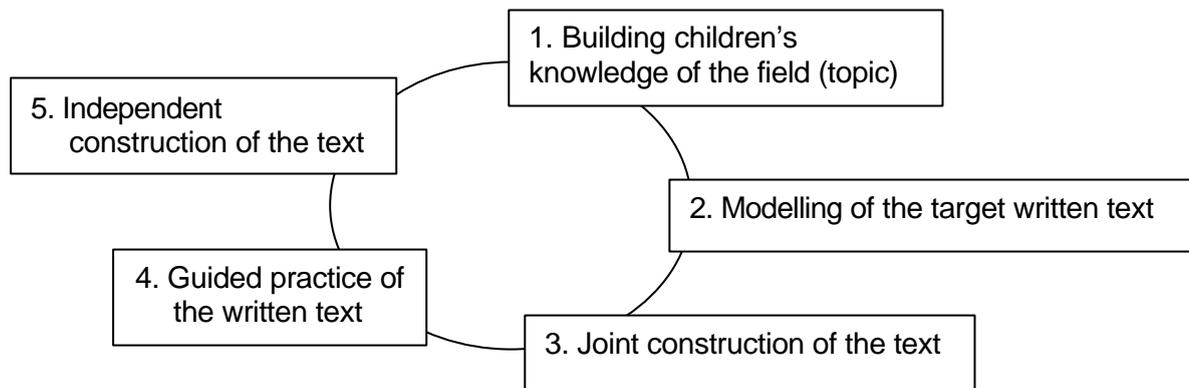
Form into seven groups. Each group chooses one of the following topics to write about. When you have finished, show your text to others and use it to explain the features of the text type.



1. *Retell an experience you have had with a pig.* (recount)
 2. *Retell the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'.* (narrative)
 3. *Write a recipe for cooking a pig or one which uses pork.* (procedure)
 4. *Write a descriptive text about 'Pigs'.* (description)
 5. *Give reasons for and against keeping pigs in fenced areas.* (discussion)
 6. *Argue a case for promoting a pig industry in Papua New Guinea.* (argument)
 7. *Explain the reproductive process of pigs.* (explanation)
-

Section 3: The learning cycle

The cycle is designed to support how children learn to write. It has five stages: building children's knowledge of the field (topic), modelling of the target written text, joint construction of the text, guided practice of the written text and independent construction of the text.



1. Building children's knowledge of the field (topic)

Begin with a shared experience. The teacher and children develop shared knowledge of a topic. The teacher and children do something together. Children hear vocabulary in a meaningful context. Children learn and practice the language to be used. Vernacular can be used to develop understandings. Introduce English once concepts are understood.

- Go on an excursion or field trip.
- Make and do things together.
- Talk about a picture or a sequence of pictures.
- Read or tell a story.
- Listen to a visitor and ask questions.

2. Modelling of the target written text

Show an example of the type of text to be created and written.

- Discuss and label a text to work out
- Why it was written (its purpose)
- What's been written and in what order (structure or pattern)
- The way it's been written (language features).
- Cut it up into parts (deconstruct) and put it back together (reconstruct).
- Cut up sentences and put them back together.
- Do cloze exercises to practice particular sentence structures.

3. Joint construction

The next step is when the teacher with the help of the children writes a text related to the shared experience in the first step. Children learn about the writing process as the teacher searches for appropriate words, correct spelling, sentence structures or order of information. They learn about the drafting, editing and conferencing processes.

- Teachers asks questions, listens, writes, reads and explains.
- Children listen, recall, answer and watch.

4. Guided practice

This step is where children practice writing with the help or guidance of their peers and the teacher.

- Brainstorm ideas, useful words and phrases.
- Use an information matrix, flow charts, time lines, word webs, pictures or other visual strategies to prepare for and support writing.
- In small groups, pairs or individually to plan, read, talk and write.
- Teacher observes, helps and assesses children's learning.

5. Independent construction

Independent construction is when children write by themselves. Not all objectives will result in independent writing of a text. Writing a short account on family activities or a personal letter is suitable for independent writing. Writing descriptions of familiar people and places might be more suited to a group effort.

 **4.2 Activity 14**

The Grade 3 'Environmental Studies' syllabus (p. 15) has a topic on Animals – common features, types, where they live, what they eat, behaviour, dangerous animals, friendly animals. Plan how you could use the learning cycle to help children write about a different animal.

Building the field

Plan at least two activities for the teacher and the children to develop shared knowledge of the topic – i.e. brainstorming.

Modelling

Choose two activities and describe how to use them to model an information report. What types of information would be included in a text about a type of animal.

Joint construction

Explain the way in which you would jointly construct a text to describe a particular animal.

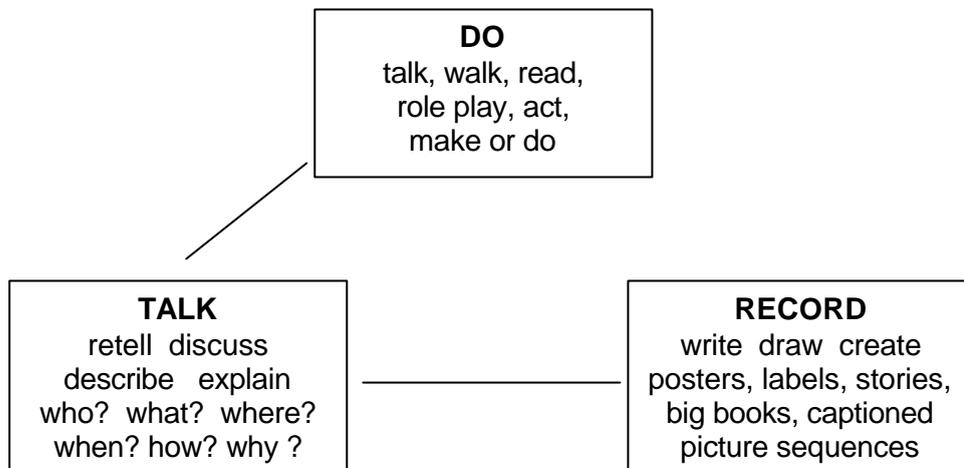
Guided practice

Select and describe two activities to do related to helping children prepare to write about an animal.

Independent writing

Look back over your steps. Do you feel children should now be able to write independently about an animal? What support will you give the children.

Section 4: Do-Talk-Record



The ‘Do-Talk-Record’ model is another way of thinking about the learning process. First identify your theme or topic and know the objectives you aim to achieve. Tell the children what they will be learning. The ‘do’ and ‘talk’ steps are concerned with ‘building the field’ before thinking about the actual writing.

DO an activity together

- Go on a walk, listen to a speaker, collect samples, sequence pictures, read a book, have a picture talk, role play, play a game, do a craft activity, etc. The purpose is for children to learn from real life experiences.
- Talk about what is going on. Use vernacular to develop understanding of concepts. Introduce English once concepts are understood.

TALK after the activity

- Have children recall the experience
- Ask questions, e.g. what, when, where, who, how, why
- Ask what do you think, how do you feel
- Teach any new words e.g. teach English words using the vernacular to explain the concept
- Have children learn and practice the language needed for recording the experience

RECORD what was learnt

- Discuss ways to record what was learnt e.g. mural, poster, poem, song, type of text (recount, description, procedure etc), labelled pictures, picture sequence, big book
- Joint negotiate, in small groups, pairs or independently, make a record of what was learnt

 **4.2 Activity 15**

In the Lower Primary Community Living syllabus there are objectives to learn about the helpful work of groups of people in the community. Discuss how you could use the Do Talk Record process to achieve this objective.

Section 5: Process writing approach

Usually a writer does many drafts to produce a good quality finished piece of writing which can be shared, displayed or 'published'. This is known as the process writing approach.

Talk before writing

Talk, discuss and plan what to write.

Write first draft

The aim of the first draft is to get ideas down on paper without worrying too much about details like spelling, punctuation, layout etc.

Read/talk, conference/edit

Children read and talk about their writing with a friend or the teacher.

The friend or teacher retells what has been written and talks about the good points.

The friend or teacher encourages the writer to think of other ideas and ways to improve the writing.

Re-write – second draft

From the discussion, children add to their writing.

The writer makes corrections that were found in the first conference.

Read/talk, second conference/edit

Writer reads the text again to self and then to another person.

Encourage the writer by saying what is understood from the writing.

Ask the writer if they are satisfied with the writing and are ready to do the final piece of writing for publishing.

If satisfied with the expression of ideas, help them find changes that need to be made in details like spelling, punctuation, layout etc.

Rewrite – final piece and publish

Writer rewrites and illustrates the text including suggestions from second conference.

Have writers share their finished work with others.

Display or put in a 'reading corner'.

 **4.2 Activity 16**

- a) *Your task is to retell a traditional or Bible story in vernacular or English. Use the process writing approach until you produce a good quality finished product.*
- b) *Discuss and then list the advantages of the process writing approach.*
-

Section 6: Forms of writing

Encourage children to publish their writing in different forms.

Discuss the best way to publish a text for a chosen situation.

Display a variety of forms of writing in the classroom.

advertisements	books	cartoons
charts	diagrams	directions
forms to complete	greeting cards	instructions
jokes	labels	letters business
letters personal	lists	maps
messages	news report	newsletters
notices	picture sequence and text	poems
posters	riddles	scripts for plays
signs	songs	stories

4.2 Activity 17

- a) *Begin a writing folio for yourself. Keep examples of different forms of writing.*
 - b) *Discuss the advantages of getting children to write different forms of writing.*
-

Section 7: Conventions of writing

Writers need to know:

- That writing goes from left to right, top to bottom
- That writing is usually arranged on lines
- The meaning of letters and words and understand the importance of spaces
- That a word is always written with the same letters in the same order (spelling)
- That the shape and direction of letters are always the same (handwriting, printing)
- That there are lower and UPPER case letters, small letters and capitals
- The idea of a sentence as a unit of meaning (grammar)
- The meaning of punctuation marks
- How writing is laid out on a page, e.g. for letters, on envelopes, on notices..

Section 8: Grammar

Grammar may be defined as the way a language works. Every language has its own grammar. Knowledge of grammar helps students to gain control and power over the way they write.

Understanding grammar means knowing about

- Genre
- Register
- Paragraphs
- Syntax
- Punctuation
- Spelling
- Handwriting

1. Genre

Genre refers to grammar at a whole text level. The genre of a text describes the way in which first language users use language for different purposes. There are both oral and written genres. Each genre has its own pattern. The pattern includes its structure and language features. These would be different for vernacular, pidgin and English. Examples of written genres are:

- Short texts – lists, labels, titles, captions, messages, notes, notices
- Longer texts – recount, procedure, information reports, discussion, argument, explanation

4.2 Activity 16

- a) *Display and label texts of different genres.*
 - b) *Deconstruct and reconstruct texts in different genres.*
 - c) *Watch and listen as someone writes texts in different genres. Write some by yourself.*
-

2. Register

Register describes the language people choose for a particular situation. The language that is chosen is affected by what is being written about (field), who the reader will be and the relationship between the writer and the reader (tenor) and the form of the written text (mode).

Field (what)	subject	people, animals, community, money
Tenor (who)	relationship of writer to reader	friend, boss, stranger, child, politician
Mode (how)	form of the written text	letter, advertisement, list, story, report

4.2 Activity 17

In your own words explain the concept of the 'register' of a text.

Discuss how your choice of language would differ if you were writing:

- *About people or about vehicles*
 - *Asking for money from a friend or a business company*
 - *A list or a story.*
-
-

3. Paragraphs

Paragraphs are a way of breaking up a long text so that it is easier to read and understand. A paragraph is a way of grouping together a number of sentences about the same idea.

The information in a paragraph should all belong together and be about one topic or idea. Often a paragraph begins with a topic sentence which states the main idea. The rest of the paragraph gives more details or information about it. Sometimes the last sentence restates or summarises this.

Each new paragraph begins on a new line. In some kinds of texts, writers also use subheadings at the beginning of new paragraphs to show what the paragraph will be about.

Paragraphs help writers to organize their information and make their meaning clear.

What paragraphs could you write if you were writing a report on a type of animal?

Classification	What type of animal is it?
Location	Where are they found?
Appearance	What do they look like
Food habits	What do they eat?
Behaviour	How do they move or act?
Reproduction	How they reproduce?

4.2 Activity 18

List subheadings for paragraphs if you were writing about 'Papua New Guinea'. Form the class into groups and have each group write one paragraph and then put all the paragraphs together. Talk about the order of the information. Identify topic sentences in each paragraph. If the subheadings were removed, would the whole text flow smoothly?

4. Syntax

Syntax is about how writing is structured to make sense. This includes knowing about sentences, clauses, phrases and words.

Sentences

A sentence is a sequence of words which:

- Makes a statement We lost the game.
- Makes an exclamation Oh, not again!
- Asks a question What was the score?
- Gives a command. Do better next time.

A sentence must have a verb. Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. Sentences can be

- Simple Susan goes to school.
- Compound Susan goes to school and she is in grade four.
- Complex Susan was sick so she went to the health centre.

Clauses

A clause is a group of words that contains a verb and its subject. There are principal clauses and subordinate clauses.

The principal clause makes sense by itself and can be a simple sentence. A compound sentence is made up of two simple sentences or principal clauses joined by conjunctions like 'and' or 'but'.

- Susan goes to school.
- She is in grade four.
- Susan goes to school and she is in grade four.

A complex sentence is made up of a principal clause and a subordinate clause that depends on it.

- She did not go to school because she was sick.
- I will catch a PMV which comes past the school.

Phrases

A phrase is a group of words that has no verb and adds meaning to nouns or verbs.

- The boy with the blue short is my brother.
- She hit the ball over the fence.

Words

Writers also need to know what kinds of words can be put together to make sense. In English, word order is important to show the meaning of who is doing what to whom.

The car hit the child

has a different meaning to

The child hit the car.

Languages of Papua New Guinea have rules for word order which are different from English

Yu laik lukim husat?

Who are you looking for?

Talking and composing oral texts are important ways in which children can prepare and rehearse what they want to write. They need time to talk about their ideas and practice the best way to organize their words.

4.2 Activity 19

Model changing a spoken phrase into a written sentence.

Build up sentences from a selection of words.

Discuss ways to teach sentence construction, e.g.

- *Use modelled writing to teach word order*
 - *Use children's own writing for scrambled sentences*
 - *Teach about word order when redrafting and editing with children*
 - *Plan time for talking before writing.*
-

Word functions

Nouns or naming words

A noun is the name of any person, animal place or thing e.g. Julie, pig, Wabag, tree, love, class. Nouns have number which tell whether there is one or more than one thing, e.g. man (singular), men (plural), frog (singular), frogs (plural).

Pronouns

A pronoun stands in place of a noun that has already been mentioned e.g. I have a brother Bill. He is sick. Pronouns are: I, me, my, mine, she, he, her, him, hers, his, it (singular), our, us, we, they, their, them (plural).

Verbs or doing and being words

A verb tells what someone is doing, being or having, e.g. draw, jump, is, were, have. Verbs have tense which tells the time an action is happening e.g. She plays volleyball (present tense), She played volleyball (past tense), She will play volleyball (future tense).

Adjectives or describing words

An adjective tells us more about a noun by describing it e.g. a big pig, a tall tree, a fast river, a blue shirt, a rainy day.

Adverbs

An adverb tells us more about a verb or adjective e.g. to walk slowly, to go outside now, a very big pig. They may tell how, when, where or why something is happening.

Prepositions

A preposition comes in front of a phrase with a noun and shows how it relates to other words in the sentence e.g. walk to school, go into the room, put your things on the desk.

Conjunctions

A conjunction joins or links words or parts of sentences e.g. William and Margaret, fish or chicken, I like school because it is interesting.

Articles

There are only three articles – a, an, the.

‘A’ is used before words beginning with a consonant e.g. a book, a cup, a dog.

‘An’ is used before words beginning with a vowel e.g. an axe, an egg, an umbrella. ‘

The’ is used to refer to one particular person or thing e.g. the sun, the clock on the wall.

Contractions

A contraction is when two words are joined together and shortened by leaving out one or more letters e.g. do not = don’t, I will = I’ll, you are = you’re. The apostrophe shows where the sound and letters have been left out.

Synonyms, Antonyms and Homonyms

Synonyms are words of similar meaning e.g. quick, fast, rapid, speedily.

Antonyms are words of opposite meaning e.g. hot-cold; narrow-wide; tall-short.

Homonyms are words which sound the same but have different meanings e.g. flour-flower; too-too-two; hire-higher.

4.2 Activity 20

Prepare a cloze exercise which focuses on a particular word function.

Discuss different ways in which children can learn about word functions to improve their writing.

Plan exercises for developing children's knowledge of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.

5. Punctuation

Punctuation are marks used in writing which help to make meaning clear.

full stops	commas,
question marks?	exclamation marks!
apostrophes'	'inverted commas'
(brackets)	hyphen -

Punctuation should be taught in the context of whole texts during activities such as shared reading, modelled writing, joint negotiated writing, conferencing and editing.

Direct and indirect speech

Direct speech is when the actual words that were spoken are recorded. Direct speech is a language feature of narrative texts. Inverted commas or quotation marks are placed around the words actually said. A new line is started for each new speaker.

Direct speech

The little red hen said, 'Who will help me plant the seeds?'

'I'm busy,' said the pig.

'I have to go to town,' said the dog.

Indirect speech

The little red hen asked others to help her plant the seed. However, the pig and the dog replied that they had other things to do.

 **4.2 Activity 21**

Prepare a punctuation exercise suitable for a primary school class.

Make a chart showing punctuation marks.

Discuss different ways in which children can learn about punctuation to improve their writing.

6. Spelling

Spelling is writing the correct letters for a word in the correct order. When words are spelled correctly, the reader can concentrate on the message without having to struggle to understand the spelling. People often judge a piece of writing on its spelling. If the spelling is poor, the writing will be criticized. It is an aim for students to be able to spell a lot of words automatically. If they can do this, it means they can concentrate on expressing their ideas.

The English spelling system is complicated. English spelling is based on meaning as well as sound-letter relationships. When they are writing, good spellers think about

- Word meanings – base word and word building
- Grapho-phonics – the sounds represented by single letters or groups of letters
- Rules and patterns – spelling rules, common patterns and letters which go together

Word meanings

Often one word forms the base for a family of words which are linked in meaning. Knowing the spelling of one base word can help a writer to spell lots of words related in meaning.

happy unhappy happiness unhappiness happily unhappily

Some English words such as airport, football or classroom are made by joining two words together. These are called compound words. Knowing how to spell the two parts, means that a writer can also spell the compound word.

 **4.2 Activity 20**

Make and display lists of words – theme words, word families, difficult words, everyday words.

Use word games such as Hangman and crossword puzzles.

Demonstrate and talk about strategies you would use as a speller during class writing activities.

Grapho-phonics

The relationship between letters and sounds is called grapho-phonics. Writers need to know the sounds represented by individual letters or groups of letters so that they can use this information to help them spell words. However, not all words are written as they sound, so sounding out a word is just one strategy which writers can use.

The English alphabet has 26 letters. Five are vowels a,e,i,o,u' and the rest are consonants.

Following is a suggestion for levels of word building activities.

Level one

Recognise, name, sound and write the lower and upper case letters of the alphabet.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Level two

Recognise and build three letter word families with a consonant, vowel and consonant, e.g. sat, cat, fat. bat, hat, mat, pat, rat, sat.

ab, ad, ag, am, an, ap, at

ed, eg, en, et

ib, id, ig, im, in, ip, it, ix

ob, ud, ug, um, un, up, us, ut

Level three

Stage one: Recognise and build word families beginning with two letter consonant blends e.g. blue, black, blood, blanket, blow, bleach, blind, blade.

bl, br, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gl, gr, pl, pr, sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, tr, tw

Stage two: Recognise and build word families ending with two letter consonant blends e.g. soft, lift, left, gift, sift, raft, shaft.

ft, ld, lk, lp, lt, mp, nd, ng, nk, nt, py, ry, sk, sp, st, ty

Stage three: Recognise and build word families beginning with three letter consonant blends e.g. scrap, screw, screen, scratch, scream, scrub, scribble.

scr, spl, spr, str, squ

Level four

Diagraphs are two or more letters which make a single sound when they are said.

Stage one:

ar, er, or, ee, th, sh, ch, qu

Stage two:

oo, ay, all, oa, aw, a-e, ou, i-e, oy, wh, ck, and 'y' as a vowel e.g. sky, try, my, happy

Stage three:

ow, ea, ai, u-e, ir, ace, ice, oi, o-e

Stage four:

(t)ie, (t)oe, (b)ur(n), (n)ew, (h)igh, (m)ight, (c)age, (c)ould, (f)air, (c)ure, (w)eight, (t)alk, (t)ough, (b)ought, (c)aught, (fr)ui(t), (l)ough, (monk)ey, (p)oor, (he)dge, (tele)ph one

Silent letters

In the spelling of English words, some consonants have no sound. For example 'w' is silent in write and 'k' is silent in knife.

Level five

Recognise syllables in words, prefixes and suffixes.

- Syllables – com-mun-it-y, ed-u-ca-tion
- Prefixes – **un**happy, **dis**like
- Suffixes – election, happi**ness**

Teaching strategies

See – Hear – Say – Write

Look – Cover – Write

- 'See-hear-say-write' and 'look-cover-write' are two approaches for children to learn to spell.
- Children should also know how to check spelling in a dictionary.
- Use shared reading to talk about spelling rules and patterns.
- During modelled writing, explore different ways of spelling a word. Show children how you decide which one to use.
- During modelled writing draw children's attention to letter clusters which go together.
- During negotiated writing, ask children to work out how to spell words.
- Look for spelling mistakes in children's own writing to work out what type of errors are common. Use this information to plan spelling lessons for the class.
- Use conferencing and editing time to teach rules and patterns of spelling to individuals.
- Chanting the spelling of words helps children learn to spell words automatically.

Some rules

- When the sound is 'ee', 'i' comes before 'e' except after 'c', e.g. thief, piece.
- The letter 'q' is followed by 'u', e.g. quick, quiet.
- Every English word must have a vowel or 'y'.

- Words like community or family which end in a consonant and y in the singular, change the 'y' to 'i' and add 'es' in the plural – communities, families.

4.2 Activity 20

Make up some tongue twisters to help children practice saying difficult sounds.

Demonstrate and talk about using grapho-phonetic spelling strategies during modelled or joint negotiated writing.

Make up rhymes or tunes to teach the names of the letters of the alphabet.

Model the correct way to say sounds using the correct tongue and lip positions.

Discuss strategies you use to spell words correctly.

6. Handwriting

Writers need to be able to write clearly, quickly and smoothly. This is so that they can concentrate on what they want to say and for ease of understanding by readers. Handwriting takes time to learn. Children learn by:

- Watching good writers use handwriting
- Being taught how to form letters correctly
- Having lots of opportunities to practice handwriting
- Having teachers who expect them to write neat, well-formed letters

The following sentence uses every letter of the alphabet.

A quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

Writing rhythm patterns helps children bridge from print to cursive. Cursive writing is introduced in grade three. Print script continues to be used for labelling diagrams. The three basic shapes of all cursive writing are ovals, sloping straight lines and curves. Design patterns using these shapes which children can practice.

Before writing, patterns should be traced in the air. Pencil grip and posture need to be taught explicitly and checked during the lesson.

Beating a rhythm, counting or clapping will help children understand the speed at which they should write. The speed should be slower for early exercises and become quicker as children progress.

In the beginning children should write on unlined paper. Later children can use lined paper. To demonstrate the teacher needs to have lines marked on the board with crayon, marking pen or chalk. In this way children can see clearly where parts of letters are in relation to the base line.

 **4.2 Activity 21**

Make a chart showing the correct formation for lower and upper case letters in print and cursive writing.

Demonstrate and explain to another person how to hold a pencil, position writing paper on a surface and good writing posture.
