

# INSPIRING WRITING IN RECEPTION

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## BUILDING THE FIRM FOUNDATIONS FOR YEAR 1

*Rebecca Underwood*



# Writers of the future...



Writing has the potential to unlock so many doors. It's a vehicle for communication, collaboration, connection and creativity and needs to be present in every nook and cranny of the curriculum.

Children need to become confident writers in order to succeed in every walk of life; not only throughout their education. Even in this technological age, writing remains an essential life skill.

With writing flowing through them, children can develop critical thinking skills, express themselves in a myriad of ways and also possess the power to share their thoughts and inspirations with whoever they wish.

## There really is a writer in all of us...

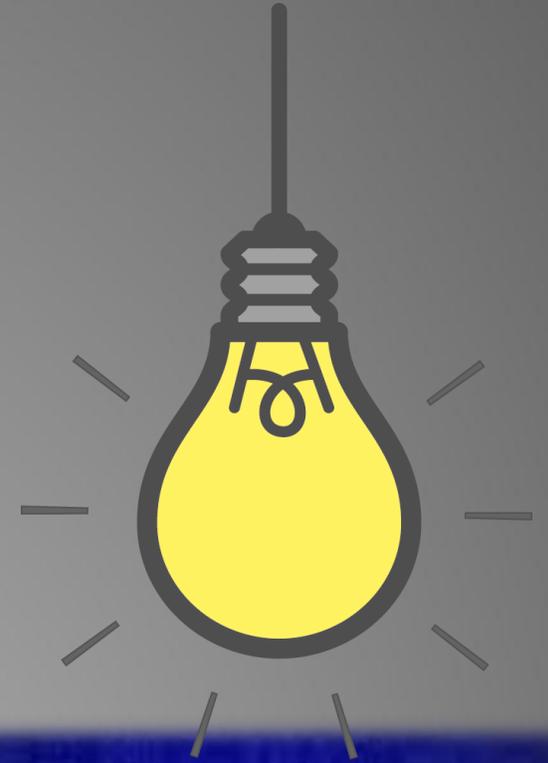


# Let them write...

I aim to explore how we can create authentic and engaging writing experiences with children while simultaneously embedding key strategies in order to develop accuracy and allow progress through each stage – or WHEN individual children are ready.

We need to place great emphasis on modelling 'good' writing whilst also allowing children time to practise, consolidate & improve their writing development at every opportunity.

[French And Saunders - Mothers and Kids - video Dailymotion](#)



"The secret of becoming a writer is to write, write and keep on writing."

Ken MacLeod

# Writing **MUST** be...

Purposeful

A choice

Desirable

Irresistible

Inevitable

Exciting

Meaningful

Engaging

Accessible

Everywhere

Fun



# Communicate

"Writing floats on a sea of talk" – James Britton



There is language in all children – we need to cultivate this and build up on what they already know. Teach new words, model how to recount, ask questions about language every day...



Expressing yourself through writing is a skill and a gift. Children are primed to play with words and language.



# Think aloud / Shared Writing

Talk through the process. ACT it out.

Where does the next letter go?

Where do I go for help?

What could I add here?

Oh I wish I knew another word for BIG?

Where can I find a spelling?

When you write – you explain decisions you are making in your head.

Be a learner  
alongside them

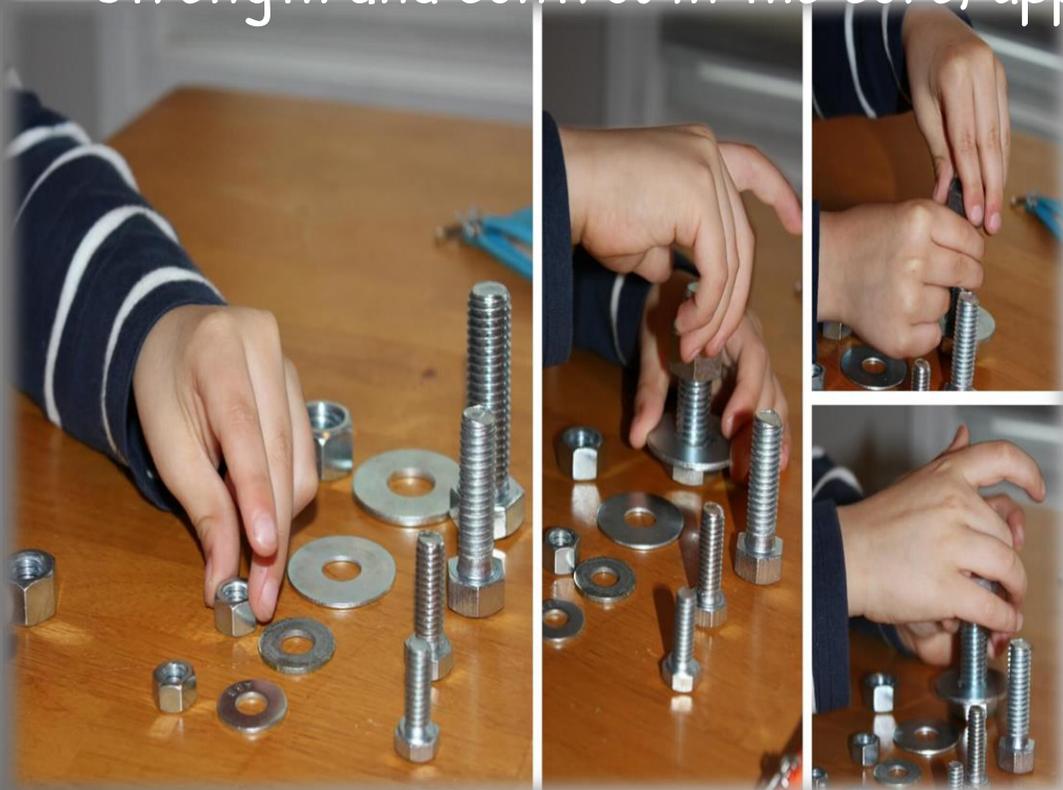
Model the  
thought process

The children soon begin to develop independence. Ideas and support becomes internal – inner voice.



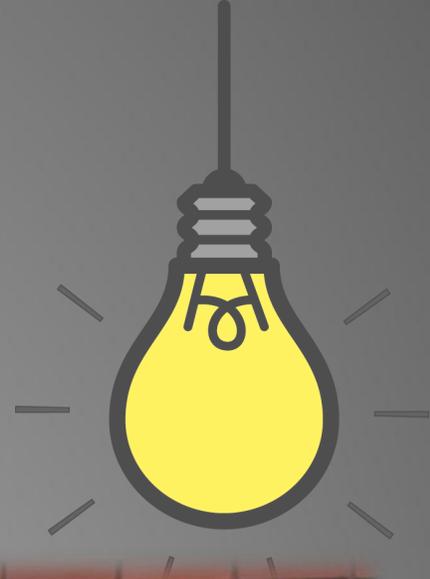
# Fine Motor Skills

When children using tweezers, squishing playdough or threading pasta onto string, they are strengthening their hand muscles in order to correctly hold their pencil. Young children need opportunities to build their physical strength and control in the core, upper body, hands and fingers.



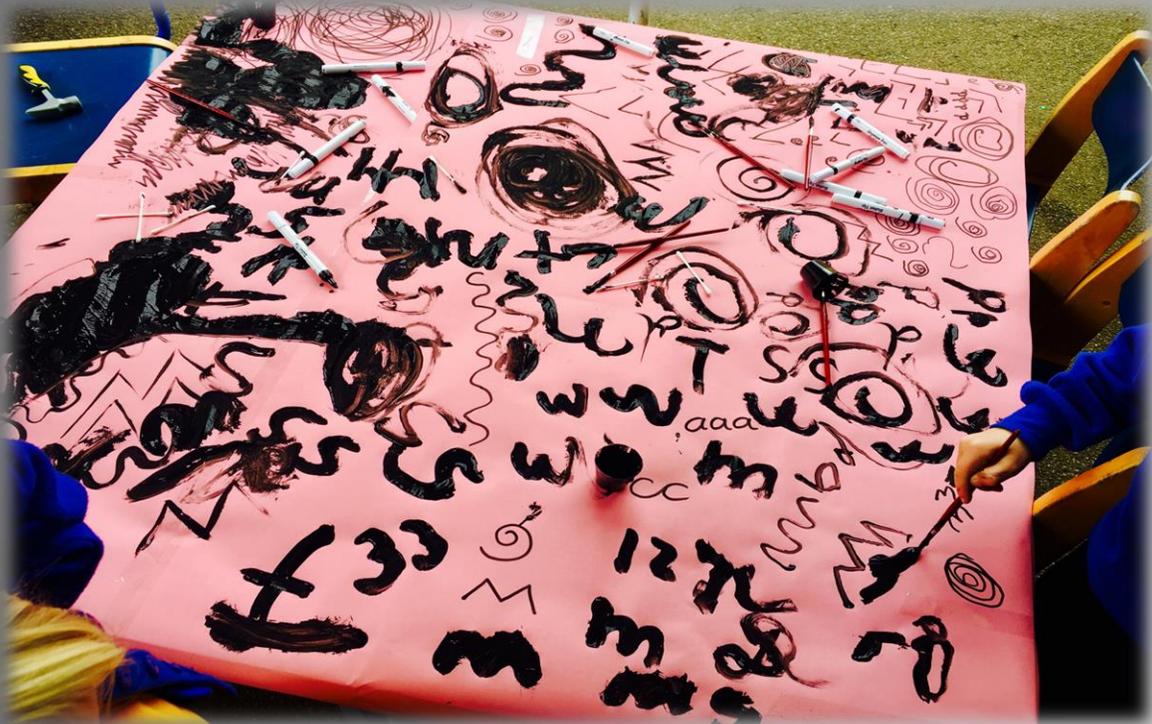
# Gross Motor Skills

When children are swinging from ropes, jumping over boxes or climbing up the climbing frame, they are building up their shoulder strength needed to become writers.



# Mark Making

When children are painting, chalking, spraying and printing, they are experimenting with mark making, creating symbols and conveying their own messages and ideas.



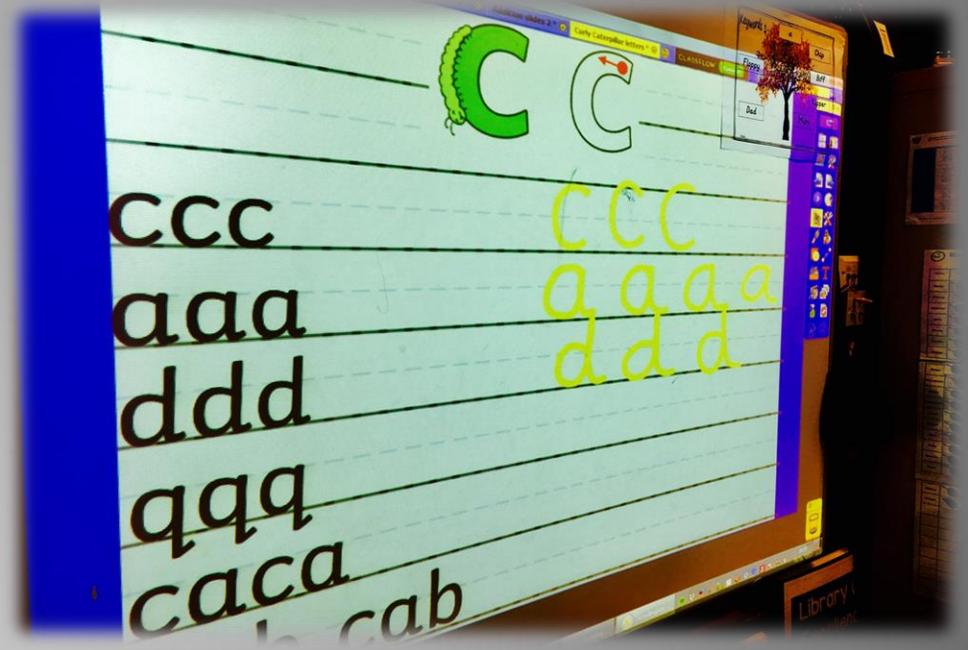
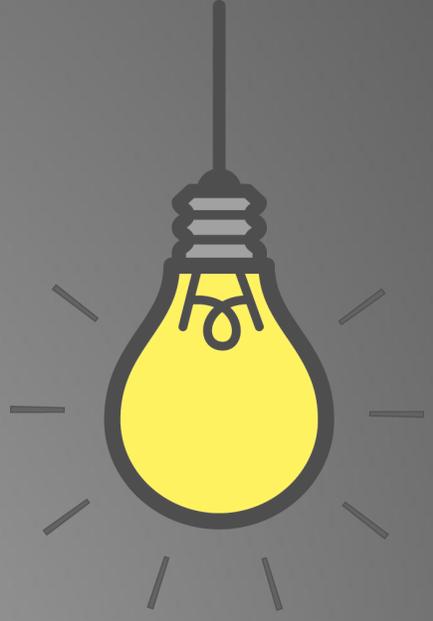
# Letter Formation



# Letter Formation



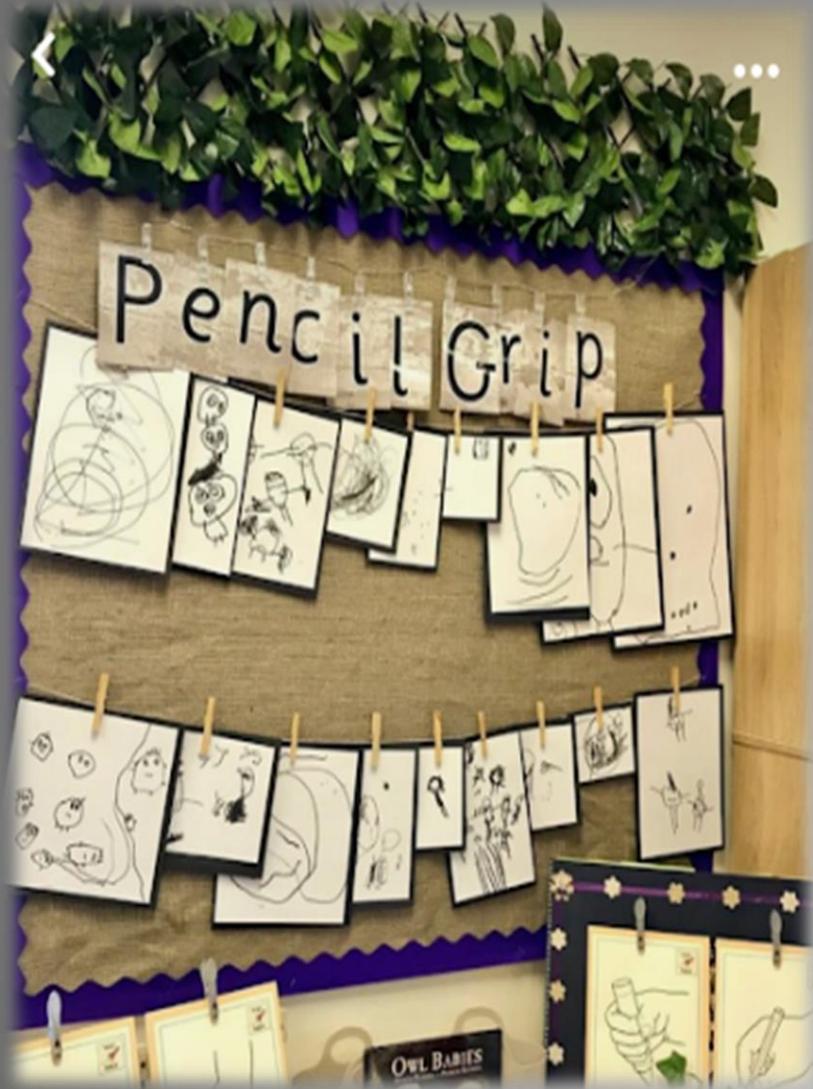
# Letter Formation



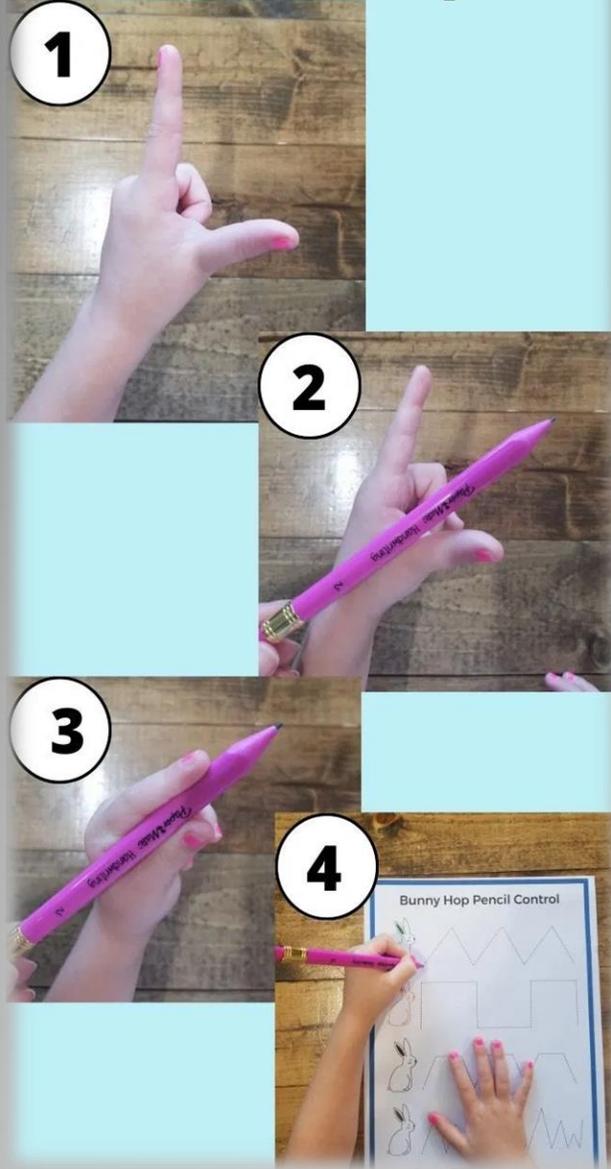
# Letter Formation



# Pencil Grip

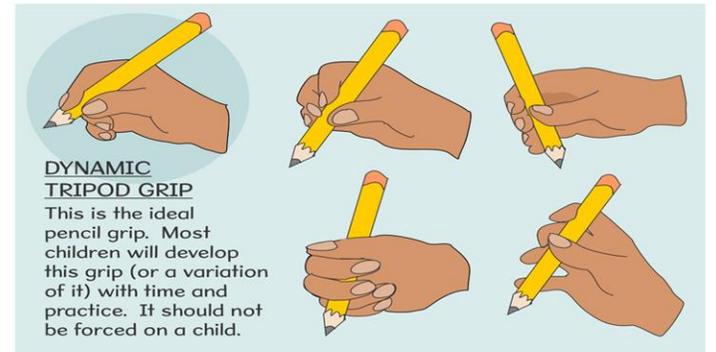


## Teaching Proper Pencil Grip



ALL OTHER PENCIL GRIPS ARE OKAY FOR BEGINNERS.

While the "tripod grip" is the "ideal" grip for handwriting, there are many variations such as:



All the above pencil grips are suitable for handwriting instruction, assuming that a child is at least 5 or 6 years old.

So, rather than stressing "proper pencil grip," focus instead on lots of practice and "air writing" (see the handwriting lessons and worksheets) to develop shoulder and arm strength. A child's pencil grip usually improves as he/she gets stronger and more adept.

# Progression Model



## Start

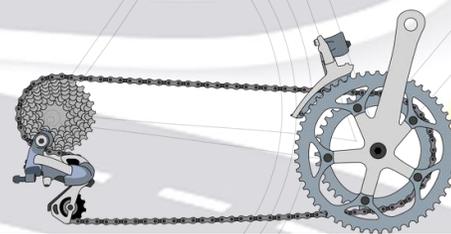
## End Goal



The vast majority will access the learning and 'have a go'.

For others, give support, let them practise, revisit and give them time in order to develop confidence & let them master a task.

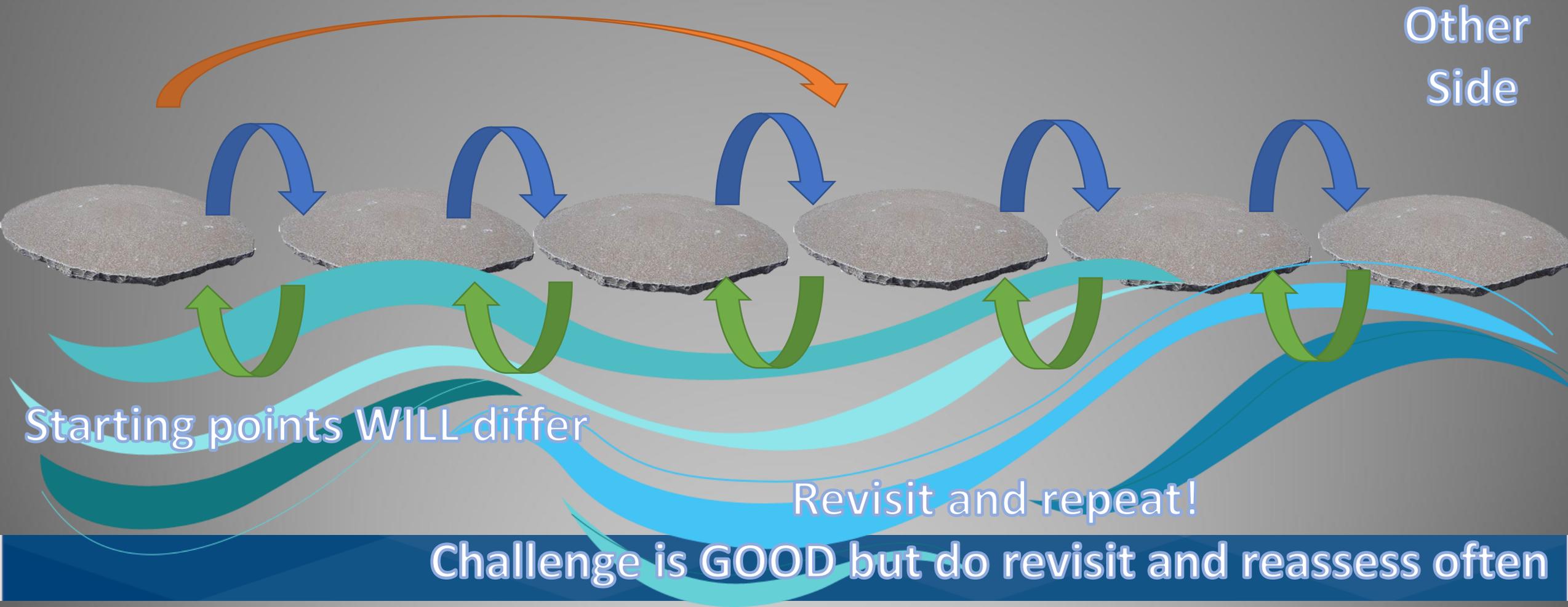
Think - Where do they need to go next - Watch! We can see who has got it and making good progress. We can see who is hesitant and needs more help or needs to have alone time to consolidate and revisit.



**HOW**  
How to engage  
and support!

# Curriculum

What has your EYFS TEAM decided that YOUR children in YOUR setting need to learn and the sequence that they need to learn it in? Don't run before you can walk! Build those firm foundations! Your own baseline will have given you the information that you need...take it from there.



Other Side

Starting points WILL differ

Revisit and repeat!

Challenge is GOOD but do revisit and reassess often

# Sequence

Children who are not yet ready to write need support with their physical and communication skills. As an EYFS, you know what these next steps are to individual success. Sequence is key here.

Happiness;  
Feel settled,  
confident, able to  
express feelings....

Fine motor skills –  
strengthen the  
body! Prepare the  
muscles!

Make random  
marks in paint,  
shaving foam, pens  
etc... Enjoy these  
opportunities to  
express themselves

Engages in mark  
making in their  
play / free time

Mark making  
shows variation in  
shape and form

Engages in creating  
marks for a purpose /  
to communicate  
Recognises and  
writes familiar letters  
and numbers – in  
their name

Ascribes meaning  
from the marks  
they make

Uses groups of  
letter-like shapes  
when writing

Writes for a range  
of different  
purposes in all  
areas of the  
provision /  
Represents  
phonemes when  
they write

Segments CVC  
words and uses  
appropriate  
phonemes to write  
words / matching  
spoken sounds

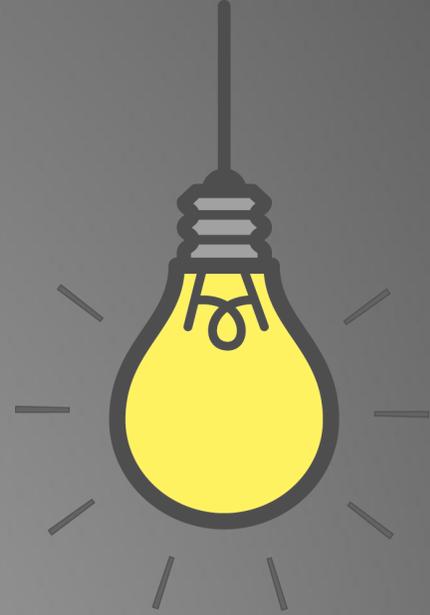
Writes simple  
sentences that can  
be read by  
themselves and  
others- some  
words are spelt  
correctly

Uses key features  
of narrative when  
they write. Spells  
phonetically  
regular words:  
writes own stories,  
cards conveying  
their own ideas.

# Your Role

To inspire others to write, you MUST be inspired yourself. Inspiration is infectious. The writing 'ideas' and inspiration that you and your staff team give to children is central to their rising confidence and independence.

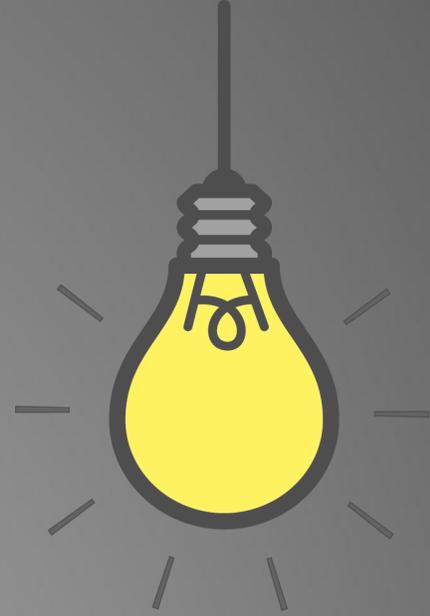
Being a learner alongside children allows them to see that we can all get better at something if we try our best, that we shouldn't give up when something is difficult and also that others around us (alongside quality resources) can inspire us to succeed. They will need time and freedom to consolidate learning and to enjoy practising something that's new to them.



# Your Role

Adults should be **interacting** when the time is right, in natural ways: listening, conversing and modelling rich vocabulary. Those children who haven't had the same life/educational experiences as others will need more instruction than others. Children should be guided in the areas where they need support and YOU as the professional knows HOW and WHEN to do this.

When children are watching you write and model writing naturally (with joy) each day, they are realising that there are numerous occasions in our lives when we NEED to write – it's a very useful skill! The importance and 'coolness' of language needs to be evident.



# Read, read, read, read

When children are listening to stories, adapting plots and talking about events and characters, they are making connections in their own minds and linking real life and imaginative ideas. This will inspire them to create their own stories and explore new words with curiosity. When you read to children, you show that print carries meaning.

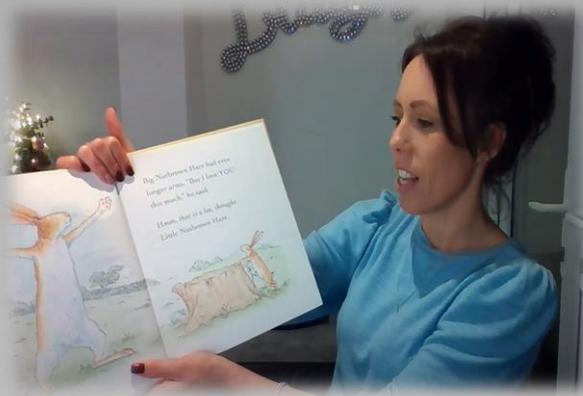
## Literacy Quote of the Week

"Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty.

It should be offered to them as a precious gift"

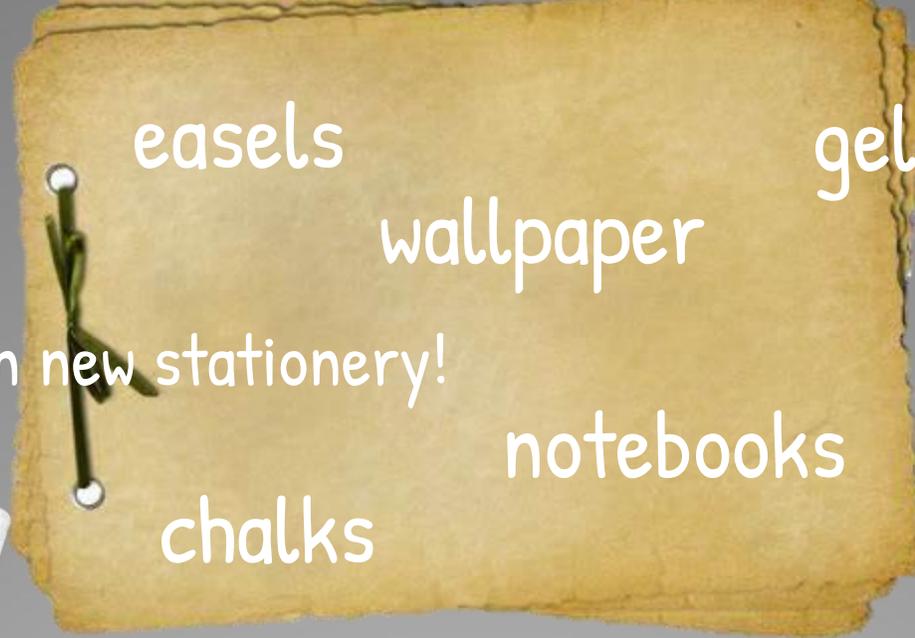
— Kate DiCamillo

USBORNE  
BOOKS & MORE



# Stationery

What's more exciting than new stationery!



easels

wallpaper

gel pens

notebooks

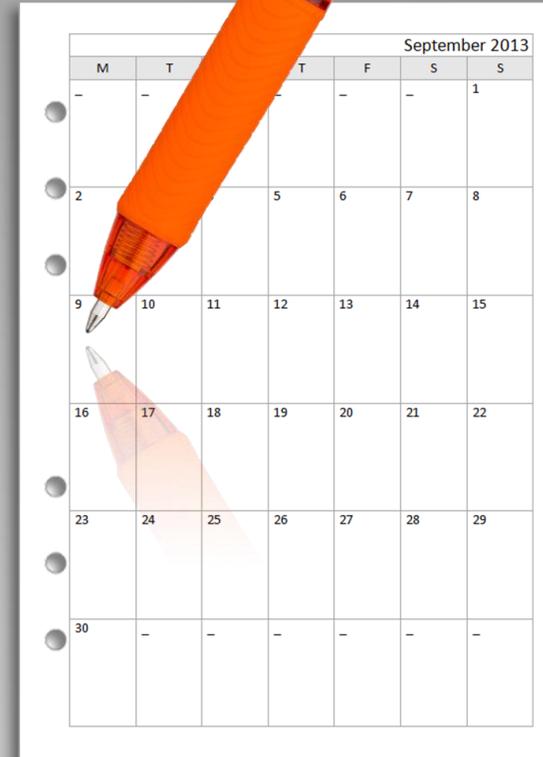
chalks



highlighters



crayons



felt tips

writing paper

# The Environment

The classroom setting must provide opportunities for purposeful writing each and every day and in every location.

When children have access to a wide range of quality resources, different surfaces to write on, different implements to make marks with, alongside wonderful ideas and variety of words that are in their head... they will write.

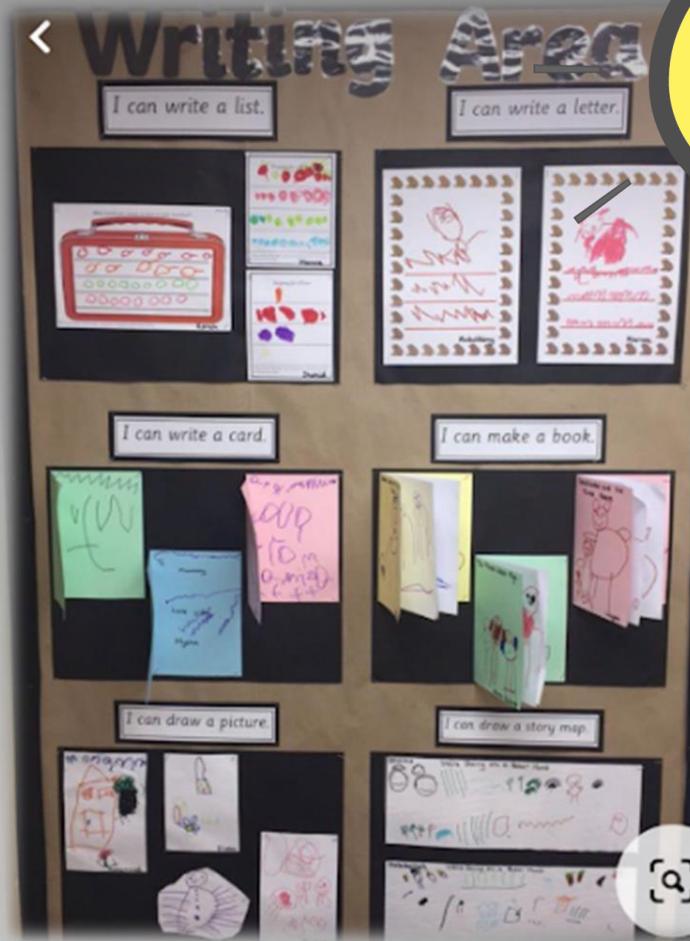
Children must possess the drive and confidence to write within all areas of the curriculum because this has been modelled and encouraged at every stage.

Children are writing in the moment because they WANT to and their efforts are acknowledged and celebrated.



# Pride of Place

Children's height, children own it... A place to publish!



# Clipboard Challenges

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT  
WHERE CHILDREN LOVE THEIR  
LEARNING IS PRIORITY #1

MRS UNDERWOOD





# Start with a spark

We must reignite this spark at every opportunity through celebration, new experiences, praise, publishing, sharing, inventing and learning together.

All children WILL become writers. It is up to us what that journey looks like in Reception – we are the lucky ones who pave the way and set those firm foundations.



# Create Ambience

- ✓ Create the scenario, set the mood for the writing lesson!
- ✓ Add props, sound effects and visuals along the way and make the children become immersed in the moment!
- ✓ Add mystical music; spooky music for a haunted house theme, magical upbeat music for a fairy tale or under the sea music for an ocean themed adventure story.



*Inspire to write on a theme*



# The Senses



 TOUCH

 TASTE

 SMELL

 HEAR

 SEE

Use your own  
hand to  
memorise the 5  
senses!



# Inspire to write on a theme

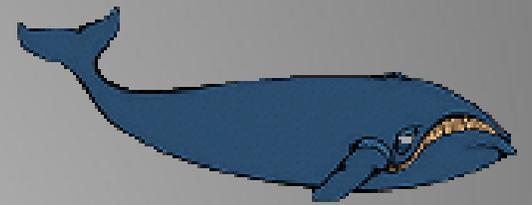


# Not Static!



# Start with a spark - Context is key!

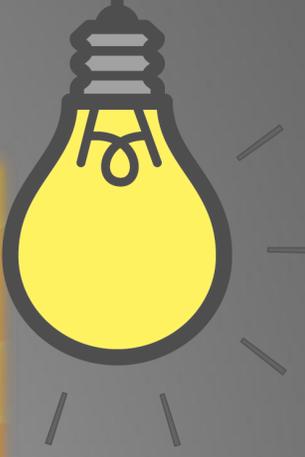
REAL instructions for REAL activities, notice boards, floor books, diaries, news reports, lists, birthday cards, menus, adverts, documentaries, gift tags, story books, well done messages, questions, parking fines, doctors surgery notes, fact sheets, score sheets, top trumps, songs, certificates, rotas.....



# Post box



# Problem Solving



# Challenge



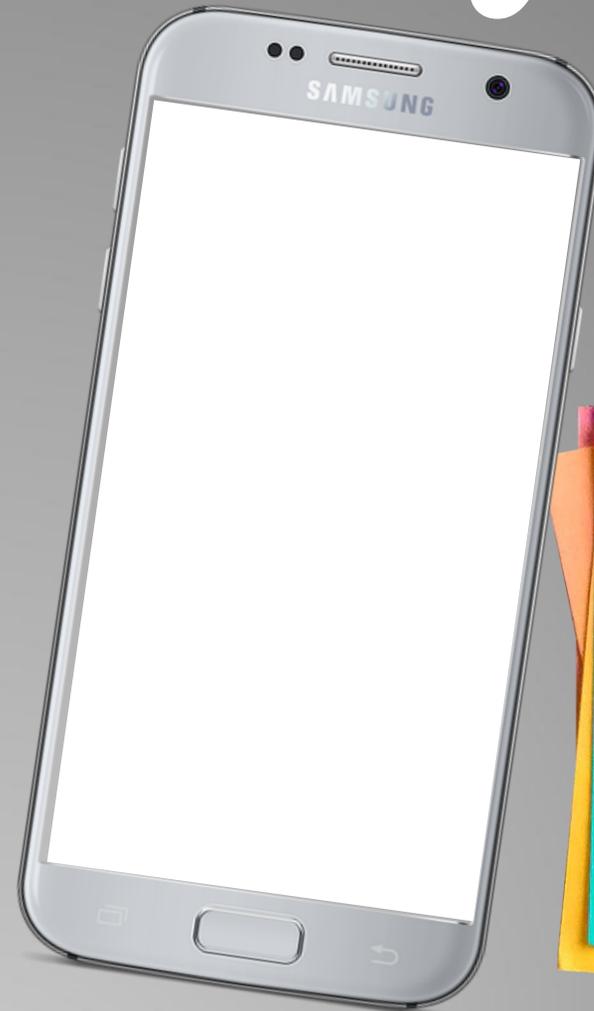
# Application



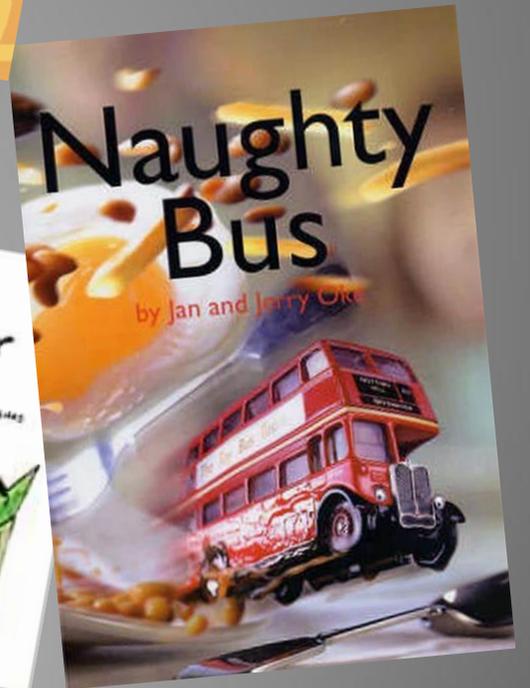
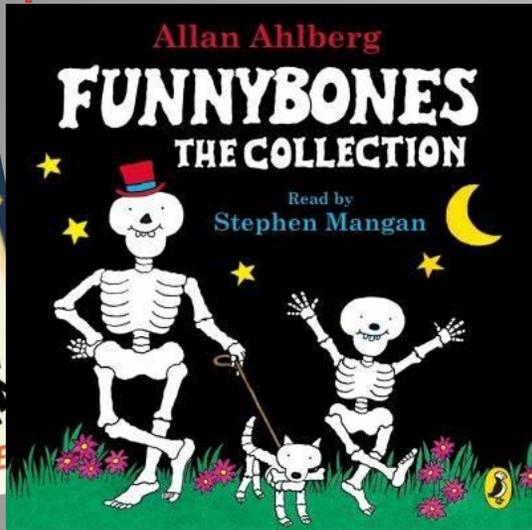
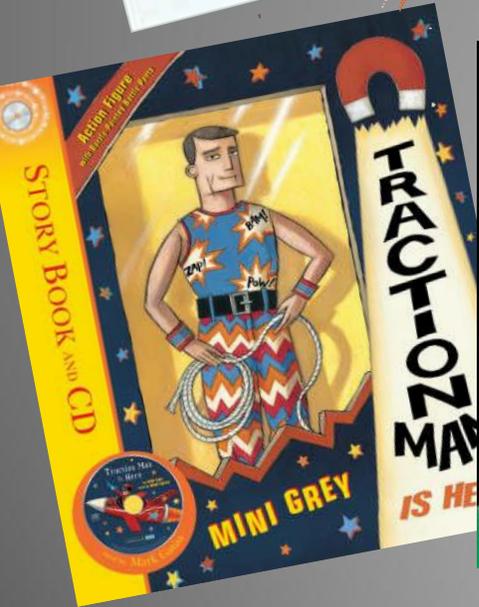
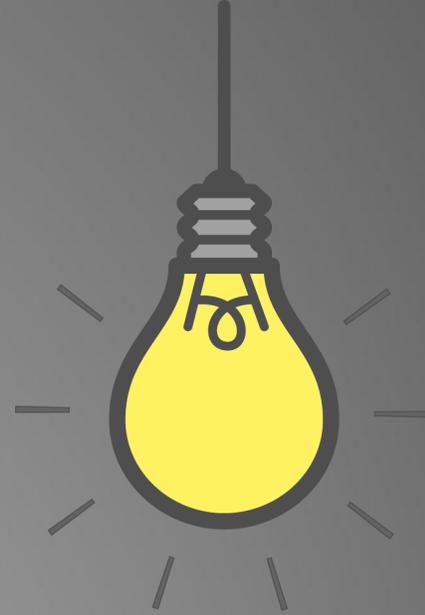
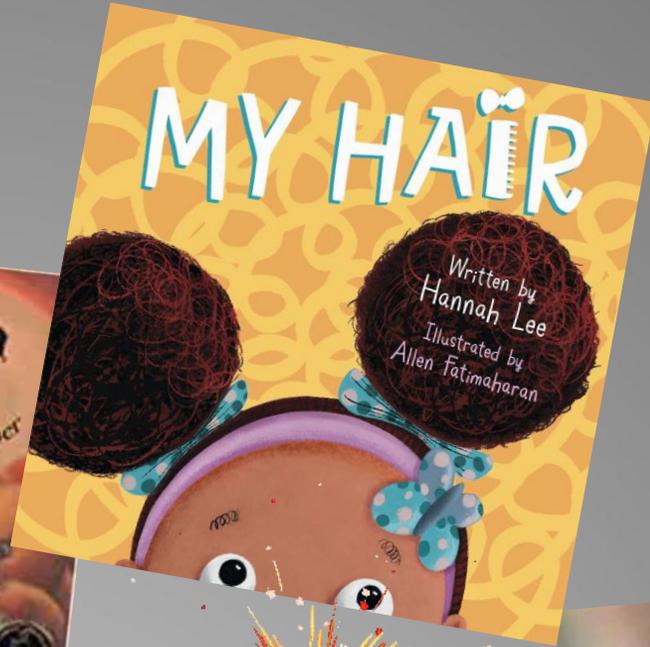
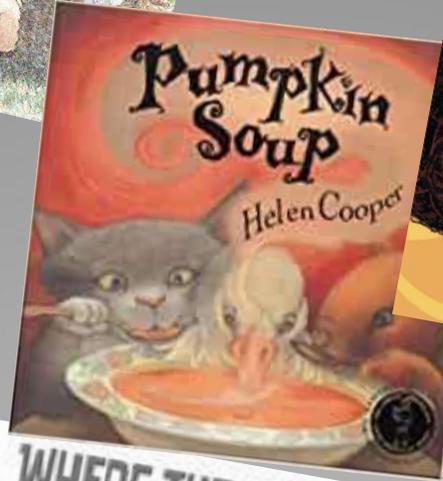
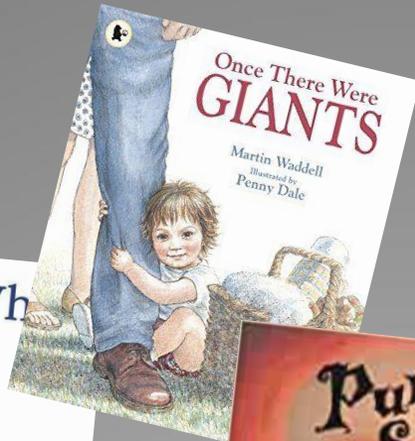
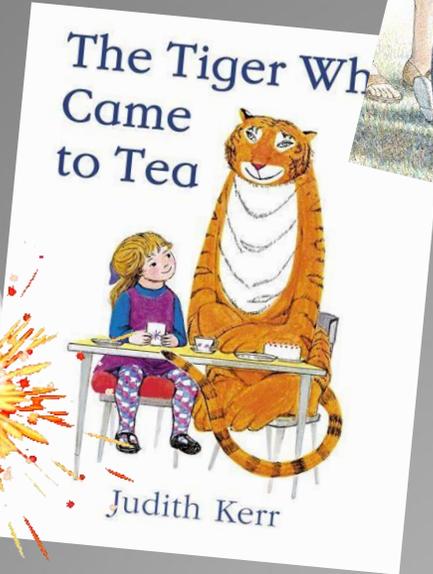
# Problem Solving



# Motivational Messages

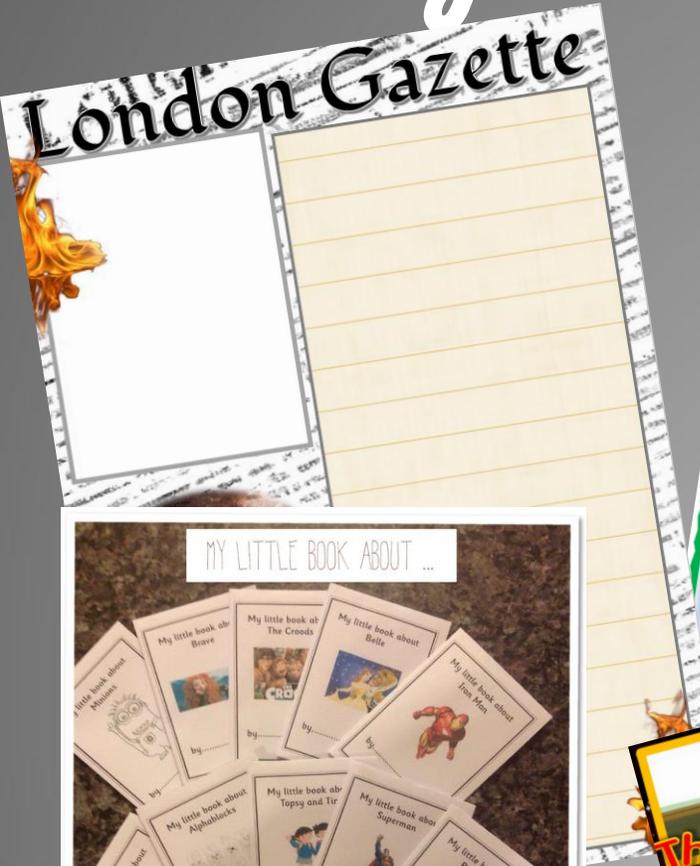


# Texts

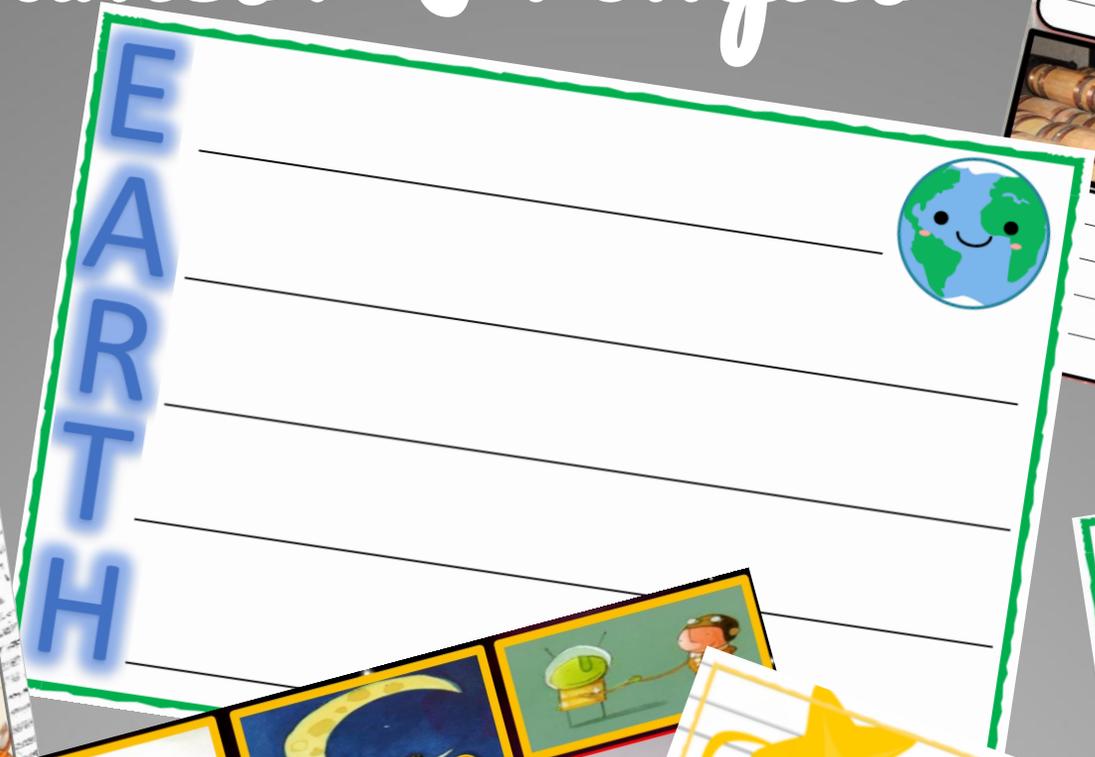


# Writing Frames / Prompts

## London Gazette



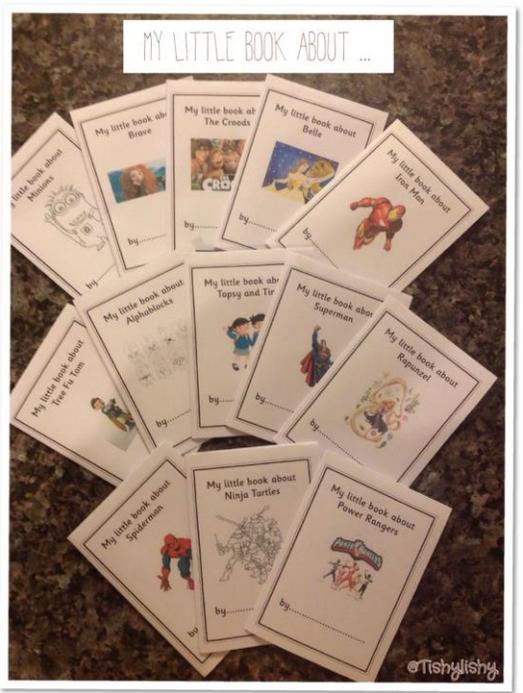
## EARTH



## THE GUNPOWDER PLOT



## MY LITTLE BOOK ABOUT ...



## The Way Back Home



## Make a wish



## Leaf



# Vocabulary vault

The foundation of all exciting writing is a **broad and rich vocabulary**. It is vital for children to be exposed to inspiring words and phrases at every opportunity and this only comes to life if vocabulary is a real focus throughout their education. Look for **every opportunity to introduce new words** by describing the world around you.

mysterious

savage

fierce

monstrous

scaly

## Class 3's VOCABULARY VAULT

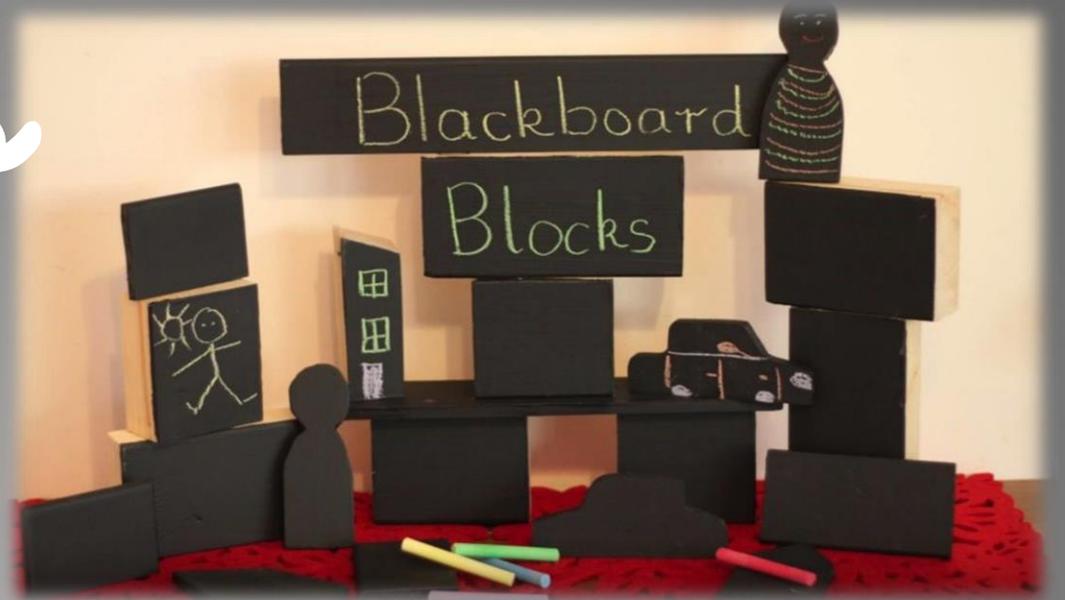
blood-curdling

terrifying

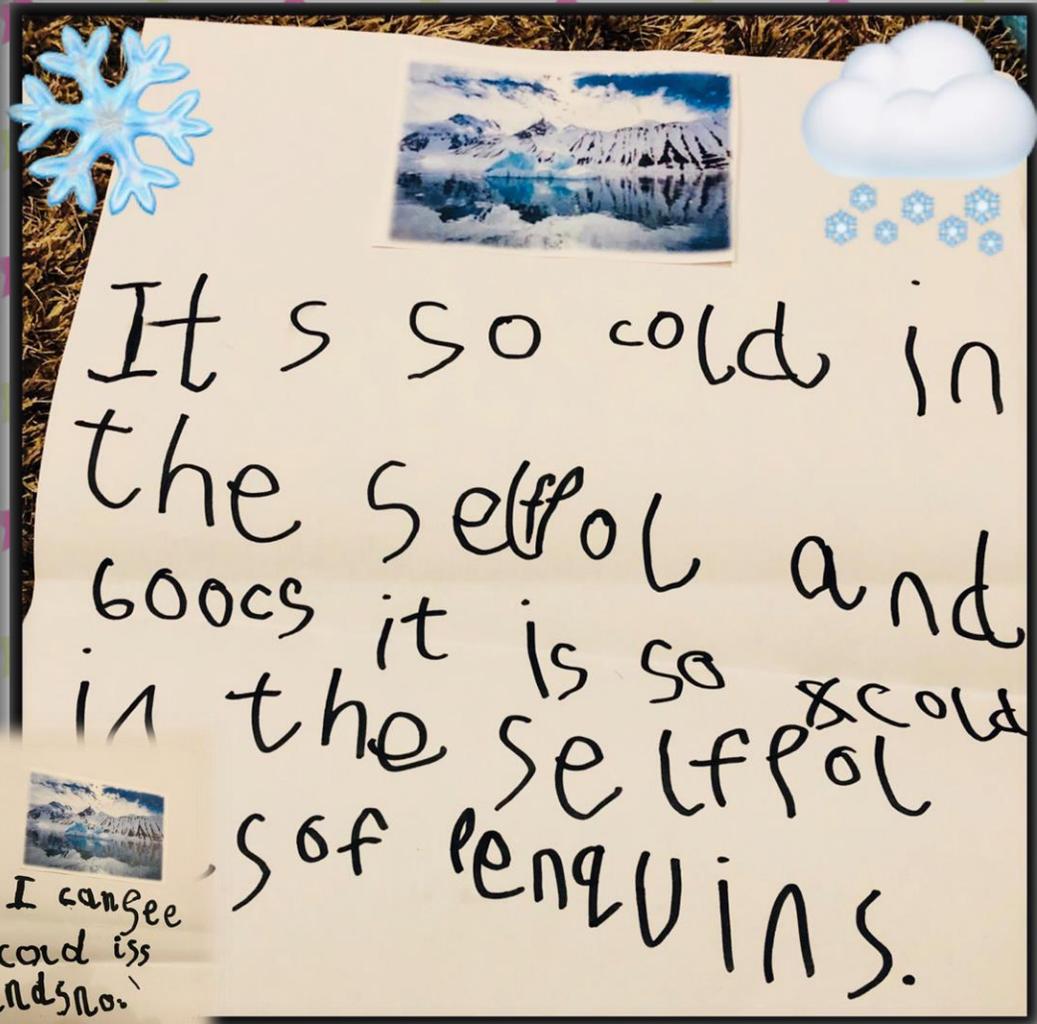
chilling



# Making marks



# Writing in Provision



It s so cold in  
the selfol and  
boocs it is so <sup>scow</sup>  
in the selfol  
sof penquins.

I can see  
cold iss  
and snow.

Decorations: snowflake, cloud with snowflakes, photo of Antarctica, photo of penguins.



I MADE A MOBILE  
PHONE  
I USED THE BLOBS  
AND THE TONOLLS  
BENNY

I MADE A MOBILE  
PHONE  
I USED THE BLOBS  
AND THE TONOLLS  
BENNY

Decorations: photos of children making a mobile phone, photos of materials like sticks and a bowl.



**The Naughty Bus**

The bus has  
present  
it was at the BUS STOP

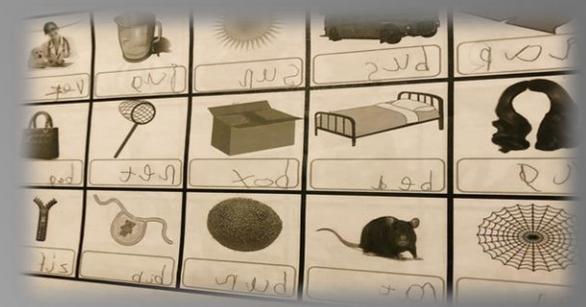
It is on  
the big bus  
dog

the bus is  
in the  
cars

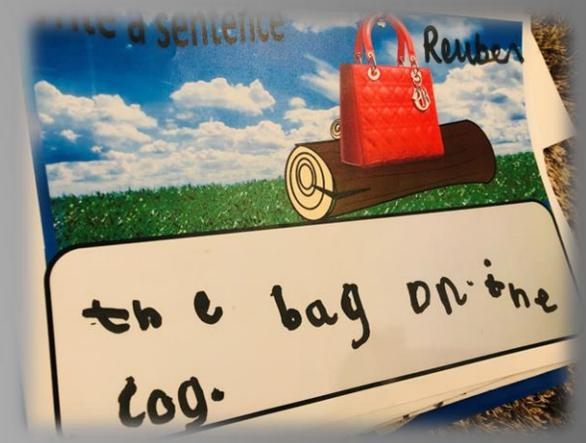
the bus is  
in the pond

the bus is  
in the sea

Decorations: colorful illustrations of a bus, a dog, and a pond.



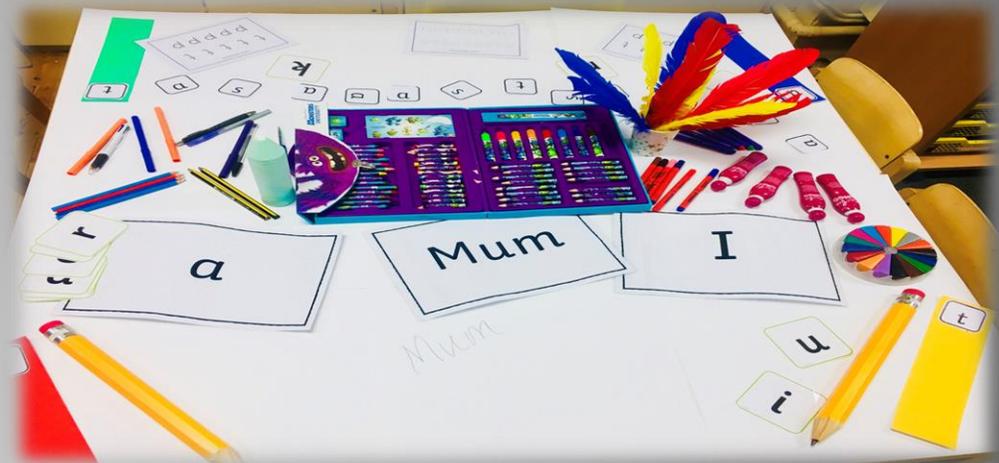
sun	tree	car	house	bird
cat	dog	box	bed	hat
Y	lion	ball	mouse	spider



the bag on the  
log.

Decorations: illustration of a red bag on a log, sky, and grass.

# Spelling / Keywords



# Foundations into year one...

**WOW! TRACTION MAN**

the sun is so very hot  
'disgusting!'

I am hot  
Good!

to

**WOW**

**WOW! TRACTION MAN**

I hate these hot temperatures  
Good Partner work!

I wish I never had to be so hot

**WHA**

**WOW**

Scientists say that red blood cells carry oxygen around the body  
Many people say most adults have 32 teeth.  
Did you know that the smallest bone is found in the ear.  
Amazingly your nose and ear never stop growing. It is true that your left side of your body is controlled by the right side of your brain.  
So much neater!  
Excellent non-fiction openers!

Excelsior

Friday Monday 20th November  
LI I can start a sentence with an interesting opener. I can write very neatly. ach x3

Scientists say that red blood cells carry oxygen around the body. It is interesting to note that most adults have 32 teeth.  
Very few people say your nose and ear never stop growing.

You said 'Openers make the sentence sound more interesting. Well done! You are loving learning about the body'

your next step is to.....  
Recall new facts (use INOORAGE)

**THE HUMAN BODY**

Appetizing acid is so filling. It can dissolve metal.

You know that a surprising organ is expiring all of the sugar at expiring time. Well done!

100 billion red blood cells.  
about 100 billion red blood cells.

Yours heart is like a leaf.



# January

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January

I can write a postcard -  
I can write in the past tense and attempt  
to entertain the reader.



ach

Dear Ella you would never guess  
where I am. I am in Norway because  
I want to see the amazing glimmering  
Northern lights. From the corner of my  
eye the Northern lights were shimmering  
past me like a zooming fast  
rocket. I am as cold as ice so I  
pulled my coat closer. The Northern  
lights are so beautiful I can't  
even see the stars. The mountains  
are so tall I can't even climb to  
the top. Every time I see a  
shooting star I make a wish  
and every wish comes true.  
Only because of the Northern  
lights. Superb! What a pleasure  
to read!

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020

LI: I can use interesting adjectives to add detail  
to my character description.  
Conjunctions / adverbs / openers



Have you ever seen such a wild,  
blood-curdling creature like this  
one? His savage eyes are so wild  
and monstrous because the rest  
of his body is! Like a roaring  
beast he stomps along the ground  
searching for food. On top of his head  
there is some shimmering spells that  
are as long as sky-shapes.  
Angry he yells people up with his  
shap messy teeth! He yells through

# Charlie



Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January



I can write a postcard -  
I can write in the past tense and attempt  
to entertain the reader.

ach!!!  
...  
...

Dear Alex you wont Believe were I'am.  
I Packed my sack and gone to  
Norway and you wont Believe what  
I saw today. I saw the Norway  
lights and I climbed <sup>up</sup> a shed <sup>roof</sup> woth  
to have a closer a look But  
I was too cold so I put <sup>my</sup> coat  
on and I was exited to see  
the Northern lights ✓  
and the Northern lights  
were like fireworks because  
they were culife. colourful  
The icy culife lights. dancing  
in the sky and also  
sooming past me and going  
50 mile's an here.



## HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Then I began to feel freezing  
cold so I put my ~~huthy~~  
coat on and then I began  
to feel hungry. and  
Norway island was very odd.  
Alex you <sup>tr</sup> really need to  
come here. because it is  
so beautiful. Love from Toby ✕  
Oh Toby! What a pleasure to  
read! Such entertaining ideas  
and so well presented. You must  
be so proud!



My handwriting is  
really improving!  
LOOK - what  
- can you do next?

You are joining  
some letters!  
'Toby' ✓



# Let's Write

Encouraging children to become confident authors



## Letter-join

Joined-up handwriting made easy!

mark  
H W

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020

LI: I can read sentences and decide whether they are fact or fiction!  
I can write my own facts.



It prefers to live in its own and is easy to discount or spot in the wild. Unlike most big cats the snow leopard cannot roar. The smallest big cat is the clouded leopard of Southeast Asia. It likes to live in trees. The cheetah is the fastest animal on land. This big cat races along almost as fast as a car on a motorway! Penguins. When nunny Penguin comes back with food from sea, she calls daddy Penguin by singing a song. did you know dolphins jump so high that if you ride on them you will fall off. you need to hold on tight

Wow!

You will be surprised when you hear that only the males are called Pouncers. The females are called Poshers. A Meringue the old tall stately Posh queen owns all the unmasked white Sneydy smeth smeth with the snappy orange beak in the place of the UK, because she loves beautiful animals. Scientists say that cats have Pawsu night wisher to see in the dark. Some people say a Park kitten are called a kindle because when they stretch up and climb it look like a kindle. It is fascinating to learn that sloths sleep on their backs in the water. It is interesting to learn that slimy slugs have side noses to smell well with

Be confident enough to know that writing is something that children will choose to do! You just need to provide the spark, the imagination and the environment in which it will happen - naturally, during children's play.

*And finally...*



Purpose  
Priority  
Praise  
Practise  
Publish  
Power

*...Thank you*