

Developing Early Literacy in EYFS at The Griffin



TalkforWriting™

What is Talk for Writing?

Talk for Writing was developed by the educational trainer, writer and author Pie Corbett. It is fun and creative, whilst also being a great approach to develop future writers. We use the 'Talk for Writing' approach throughout the Early Years at The Griffin to support children's early literacy skills, and help them develop:

- A wide range of vocabulary
- Their oracy skills through targeted reading aloud and book discussion with young children, explicitly extending pupils' spoken vocabulary by explicit vocabulary teaching, the use of structured questioning to develop reading comprehension and the use of purposeful, curriculum-focused, dialogue and interaction.
- Knowledge of story structures
- Use of their imaginations and experiences to create stories
- Enjoyment in sharing stories together

Sharing Stories

Talk for Writing starts with enjoying and sharing stories. Across our EYFS, we place a strong emphasis on children and adults reading and sharing stories together. We offer a wide range of literature including stories and information books. Through regular reading and sharing books together, we support children to build up an extensive and rich vocabulary, which they will be able to use throughout their education and their lives. Every other week, parents are invited into classrooms for a 'book and biscuit' session where they can share a story together in the classroom with a biscuit. Each child also takes home a book for pleasure alongside their phonics reading book each week. The aim of this is to develop children's interest and love for stories and allow them to explore and experience a wide range of texts.

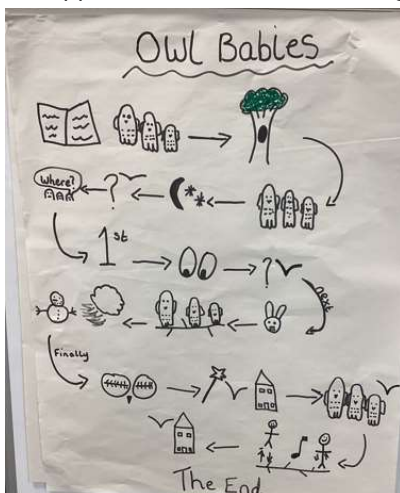
The 3 Stages

The Talk for Writing method enables children to imitate orally the language they need for a particular book, before reading and analysing it, and then writing their own version.

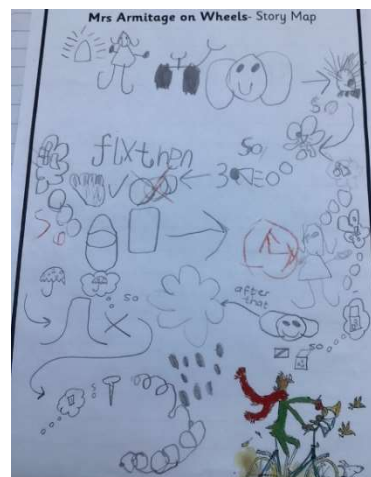
1. Imitation Stage

During the initial 'imitation' stage of Talk for Writing, children learn to tell a story off by heart using story maps and actions.

- They explore the same story for two weeks, giving them the opportunity to really learn the text.
- We explicitly teach story vocabulary and pair each word with an action or gesture to support with memory of the word along with the meaning.
- We teach the children important story phrases to help them re-tell the story, including: 'once upon a time', 'a little while later', 'next', 'finally', 'the end'
- The children retell the story with expression and actions
- The children help create a class story map to support their re-telling as well as their own independent maps to support them with their writing of the imitated story (Reception).



An example story map for retelling 'Owl Babies' by Martin Waddell in Nursery



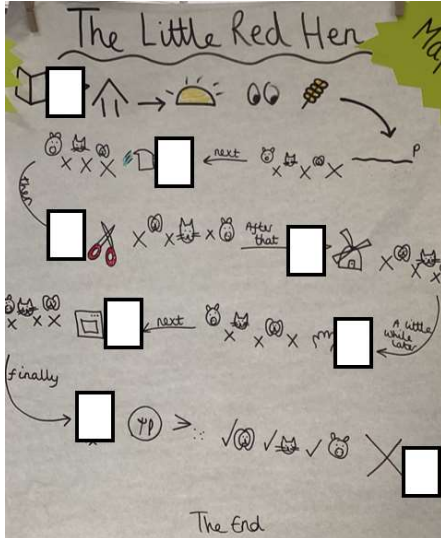
An example of an independent story map of 'Mrs Armitage on Wheels' by a child in Reception.

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2. Innovation Stage

Children become so confident at retelling stories that they are encouraged to adapt them, this is the 'innovation stage'. At the 'innovation' stage:

- Children make the story their own.
- They change the character or setting, with a substitution of a character, setting or object from the imitated story with their own ideas.



An example of a blank innovated story map for children to independently substitute the main character in the story of 'The Little Red Hen'.



An innovated class story map of 'Whatever Next' by Jill Murphy. This innovation involved substitutions to the main character and story setting.

3. Invention Stage

Finally, at the 'invention' stage, children are supported with story making – to tell their own stories using props, story maps, actions. The continuous provision offers a range of opportunities for children to create and play with stories, including dressing up to become a character, using puppets at the puppet theatre, small world play, story-telling dice among many more. In Reception there is a larger focus on children being able to draw story maps to support them with the organisation of their ideas.

At The Griffin, we use the 'Helicopter Stories' approach which involves children orally telling a story to an adult who scribes this as they tell it. The child chooses which character they want to be from their story and then we act each story out as a class, choosing children in the order they are sat in the circle to enter the 'stage' and act out the story. These stories are recorded and collated in a class book.

