



## Case Study: How Talk for Writing has achieved “outstanding evidence of the writing process” at East Hunsbury Primary School, Northampton.

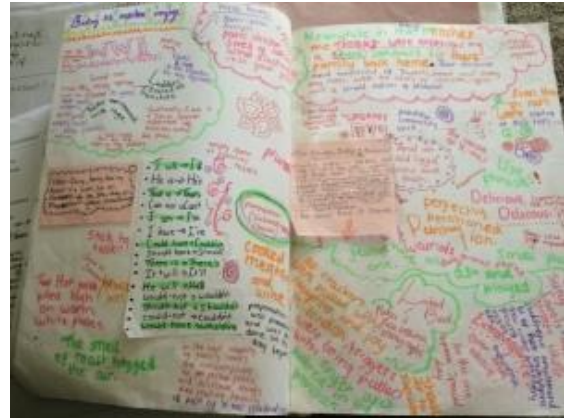
Like many other schools, our last Ofsted inspection left us pondering our writing results and how we would get raise our pupils’ writing standards to be “in line” with our reading results.

In November 2013, schools across our town were invited to a meeting to discuss the writing approach Talk for Writing as a strategy to improve the town’s writing results. After listening to the approach and seeing the success of writing levels of other schools nationwide, we decided to go for it!

As the Talk for Writing project leader in my school, it was my responsibility to trial the approach in my class, for key stage two. In addition, Talk for Writing ‘allies’ trialled the approach in key stage one. Our pupils responded positively to the strategy and – as staff – we found we were enthused and excited by our new teaching methods. Before long, my head teacher, seeing the impact that Talk for Writing was having in the two-year groups, asked us to spread the “buzz” and develop the project out to the rest of school; this meant everybody was involved: teachers, teaching assistants, senior leaders and our governors.

The advantages to our pupils in using the Talk for Writing methods are endless but it is most recently where the presentation of the Talk for Writing process in our pupils’ books has come into its own. Earlier on in the academic year, we learned that we would be subject to a moderation visit, not only with moderators but also with the moderators being moderated!

Our books clearly show the structure of the Talk for Writing process. Each unit begins with a cold task (clearly visible because of the blue paper it is written on), followed by innovated pieces based on our shared writing – the pupils have ownership over their innovated pieces. The unit is completed by a hot task. The hot task is typically a series of lessons that shows the initial rough drafting of the work, its editing – both independently and with their peers – and ending with the final draft (written on yellow paper to identify it clearly) .

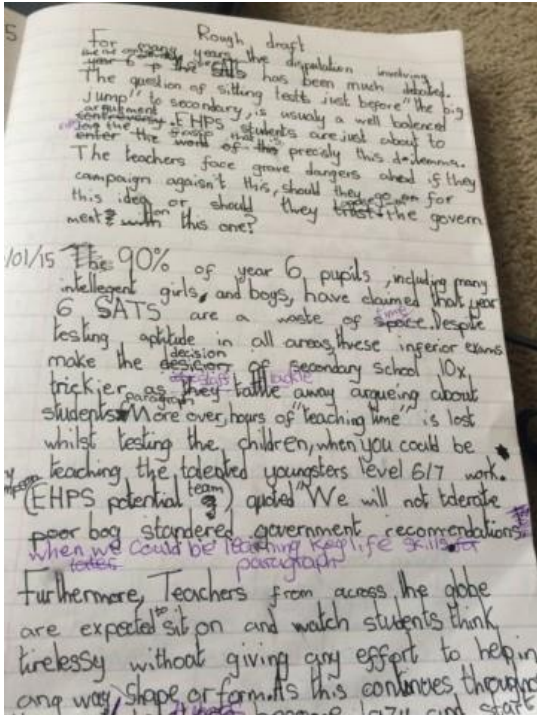


Pupils are encouraged to discuss who their writing is for (target audience), how their writing sounds and what elements have contributed to the success of their piece; here children often refer to the co-constructed toolkit for the unit. In many classes, teachers also use “amber” tasks in other curriculum areas – a chance to revisit the different text types studied in detail in English lessons. This provides an opportunity for children to apply what they have learned in a range of contexts alongside using their writing journals (a resource the children are expected to use and update independently as a record and reflection of what they have learned, as illustrated left).

At a recent cluster writing moderation meeting, members of staff from other schools had their interest peaked when looking in our pupils’ books and talking to the teachers – they asked lots of questions about how and what we were teaching. We shared our experience so far and pointed them in the direction of the town’s project.

On 4th June 2015, our moderators arrived to study our judgements and look in our books for evidence. As expected, the process was very thorough and we discussed our pupils and judgements in detail, with relevant written evidence as a basis for our judgements. Our English books were the main focus of the conversations, but foundation subject books were also explored as a way of ensuring that our pupils were writing consistently across the curriculum.

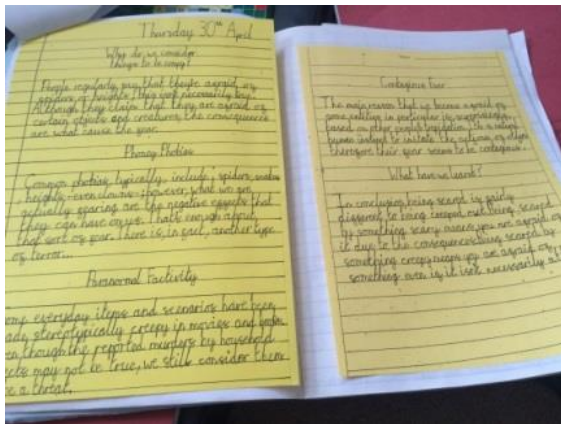




All members of staff have been excited by what their classes have produced in their writing in only our first year of using Talk for Writing as a whole-school strategy. In many cases, our children have achieved beyond what is expected, in terms of data and pupil engagement in English lessons and are increasingly able to transfer their knowledge to other areas of the curriculum. "I don't know what to write, Miss ..." has become a phrase from the past!

Liz Martin

Above: We have adopted the concept of the "pupil purple polishing pen" to show editing skills on rough drafts, indeed on hot tasks (final drafts) if pupils deem the improvements necessary.



The finale: Their final draft/hot task (above). We're only 18 months in to the project but using Talk for Writing as a tool in the classroom feels like a win-win situation: pupils and teachers get enthused, lessons are exciting, there's a love for writing and great results.