



GLEBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

A WRITING GUIDE FOR PARENTS





This guide is designed to help you to understand a little more about the progression of writing your child will follow during their time at Glebe. It provides practical guidance on how you can support your child at home.

In 2014 the government changed the way in which schools assess children. We no longer use levels and now assess the children as working at age-related expectations. Children will now be assessed as working at a standard that is Expected for their age group, Working Towards that standard or be considered as working at a Greater Depth for the standard for their year group.



Simple advice on helping your child enjoy writing

Writing is just not easy and some children find it a chore rather than fun. Some children will happily write for pure pleasure, and others have to be forced or bribed to do even three lines of writing! How can you make writing seem just a bit more attractive?

Follow your child's interests:

Does your child like football, off-road cycling, designing clothes or playing with make-up? Whatever their interests, these are good writing opportunities. Perhaps a lockable football diary for writing match fixtures and a few private thoughts on each match played. Use postcards or fancy writing paper for writing a short message to granny and make sure she writes back! Provide post-it notes/stickers and encourage them to write messages to everyone, even the cat!

Talk comes first!

The standard of children's writing at school is not only how they form letters and handwrite. They must be able to express their ideas clearly. Can they put thoughts in order and discuss what they want to say? All of these depend on speaking. So talk to your child, encourage them to express themselves, listen and respond to their ideas.

It all helps!

Golden Rules

✓ DO offer plenty of praise. Writing takes time, practice and perseverance, all of which are hard if you are feeling discouraged. Think of nice things to say: 'I love the way you've put that! It's brilliant', not 'I wish you would leave a space between your words.'

✗ DON'T bribe a child to write (or read!). When desperate to get a child to do their homework, a good bribe can seem like a simple answer. But the problem with bribery is that it gives entirely the wrong messages. Writing and reading are not things we should be bribed to do! We do them because they bring their own rewards.

✓ DO allow different forms of writing. Writing emails, typing messages or posting stuff on a blog are all perfectly good ways for children to express themselves in written form.

✗ DON'T get obsessed with spelling. The main criteria for a healthy piece of writing is that:

- We can read it.
- It is well expressed.
- It fulfils its purpose; i.e. if it is a thank-you letter to granny, it says thank you!
- If the writing satisfies all these criteria, then a few mis-spelt words do not really matter.

Writing at Home

Foundation Stage

- Encourage your child to write their own name, family names, letter sounds and key words.
- Explore writing with paint, chalk, misty windows etc.
- Develop their gross motor skills in controlling their bodies with care, such as making circles with their arms.
- Ask them to say and try to write simple sentences.

Key Stage 1

- Encourage writing in play and what they do. For example:
 - lists for shopping, record the results for their favourite sports team, etc.
- Engage with their writing through:
 - saying what you liked in it;
 - asking where their ideas have come from;
 - asking them to show you where a sentence begins and ends.
- Help them to organise and sequence their writing by asking them to talk about their ideas or to draw a sequence of simple pictures to show how the main events in a story might be organised.

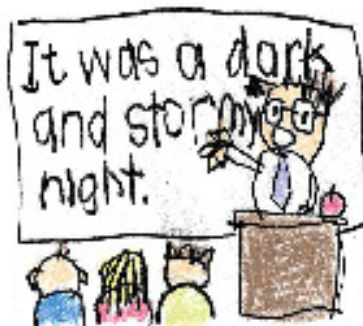
Key Stage 2

- Encourage their personal writing; for example, a journal or diary, social networking, a blog.
- Talk through their ideas with them before they start to write; for example, prompt them to think about how they intend to tackle a subject.
- Help them to reflect on their writing, particularly the effect they hoped to have on the reader; for example, is the reader sufficiently prepared for the ending?
- Encourage them to read through their work, shaping their sentences for clarity and impact and checking their accuracy.

Exciting Sentences

We use a range of strategies to support the teaching of writing at our school. To encourage children to write exciting sentences we use a variety of strategies.

Children may talk about writing sentences such as a simple sentence or a FANBOYS sentence. If they do, please ask them what they have to include in this type of sentence and ask them when they think it might be good to use them.



All sentences fit into the three main categories of:

SIMPLE SENTENCES: a simple sentence has a subject and ONLY ONE verb. **Examples:**

1. The girl sprinted after the tiger.
2. The cat purred.

COMPOUND SENTENCES: these are formed from two or more main clauses with a coordinating conjunction to join each clause. In a compound sentence the clauses are linked by coordinating conjunctions / connectives (*for, and, nor, but, so, or* and *yet*).

I like bananas **and** I like grapes.
Zoe can be rude at times **but** she is a nice girl.

COMPLEX SENTENCES: these are formed when you join a main clause and a subordinate clause with a conjunction. A subordinate clause is one that relies on a main clause to make sense.

Subordinating conjunctions tell us about the order or the place in which things happened or specify a cause or effect relationship between events. Subordinating conjunctions used in complex sentences include *after, although, as, because, if, since, unless, when, etc.*

Examples:

I love roast potatoes, ***although*** my mum prefers them mashed.
You need to prepare for the spelling test tomorrow ***if*** you want to get all your spellings right.
The big dog barked ***whenever*** I knocked on the door.
Although I was scared, I still walked into the haunted house.

At Glebe, we look at each of these sentences in depth and explore particular details or components, such as the use of the coordinating conjunction 'and' or the use of the semi colon. The following indicates progression and aspects that children are taught.

A sentence with 'and'

This sentence uses the conjunction **and**. It extends the sentence so more information/detail can be given.

Example: The boy played with his toy car *and* had lots of fun.

A question sentence

This sentence includes a question mark to indicate a question.

Example: Where are you going?

A sentence with two adjectives

This sentence has **two adjectives**, which are placed, **before** the **first** noun in the sentence. Please note the necessary use of the comma between the list of two adjectives.

Examples:

- It was an **old**, **creepy** house with a garden.
- The man wore an **oversized**, **dirty** rain jacket.

A 'but' and 'because' sentence

This is a sentence that includes **BUT** or **BECAUSE**. It extends the sentence so more information/detail can be given.

Example:

I wanted to buy the sweets **because** I was hungry.

A 'command' sentence

A sentence that tells you to do something is a **COMMAND**. In a command sentence, the subject is always you, but it is not stated. It ends with a full stop.

Examples:

- Go and take a bath.
- Eat your dinner.

An 'exclamation' sentence

An 'exclamation sentence' must start with either 'how' or 'what' and, to be a full sentence, must include a verb. It also ends with an exclamation mark.

Example: 'How amazing it was!' rather than 'How amazing!'

A 'statement' sentence

A statement is a telling sentence. It tells the reader something. A statement starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

Example: The ship sailed across the ocean.

A sentence using a coordinating conjunction: but, or, yet, so (BOYS)

A BOYS sentence is a two-part sentence. The first part of the sentence ends with a comma and the later part begins with **BUT, OR, YET, SO.**

Examples:

- He always tried his best at school, **but** sometimes he could get distracted.
- She was really helpful, **so** she decided to tidy the reading area without being asked.
- He could be the friendliest dog in the world, **or** he could turn aggressive without any warning.
- It was a cloudy day, **yet** the sun shone brightly in the sky.

A sentence involving a list

There are two ways of constructing this sentence type. The first contains three or more adjectives before the noun. Each adjective is separated by a comma.

Three adjectives

- It was a **beautiful, glorious, sunny** day.

The second contains **four** adjectives before the noun. Each adjective is separated by a comma, however the word **and** is placed between the final two adjectives.

Four adjectives

- The man wore a **long, ripped, oversized and dirty** cloak.

A sentence with four adjectives

This sentence has **two adjectives** which are placed **before** the **first noun**, and **two adjectives** which are placed before the **second noun**.

Examples:

- It was an **old, creepy** house with an **overgrown, unkempt** garden.
- The man wore an **oversized, dirty** rain jacket with a **multi-coloured, droopy** flower in the top pocket.

A sentence beginning with an '-ed' word

This sentence begins with three related adjectives, all of which end in **ed**. Each of these words must be followed by commas. Emotion words are mainly used to open this sentence type.

Examples:

- **Dazed, confused, worried,** he ran as fast as he could.
- **Excited, gob smacked, delighted,** she accepted the award.

A sentence involving a simile

A simile is a sentence, which creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind. These sentences contain either:

...**like** a ... OR ...**as** a ...

Examples:

- She shivered **like** a leaf drifting through the woods in a cool autumn evening.
- She was as pretty **as** a picture.

A sentence using a coordinating conjunction: for, an, nor, but, or, yet and so

Extend children's understanding of the **BOYS** sentence by introducing '**FAN BOYS**' which introduces a greater variety of coordinating conjunctions.

F: For

A: And

N: Nor

B: But

O: Or

Y: Yet

S: So

Extending a sentence using adverbs

The first part of this sentence ends with a **verb**, followed by **two adverbs** (words that describe the verbs).

Examples:

- The competitive girl **ran quickly and determinedly**.
- This sentence can be extended by giving an explanation that begins with **because** or **as**.
- The competitive girl **ran quickly and determinedly as** she knew she had to win the race.

Starting a sentence with a verb

With this sentence type, begin the sentence with the verb (doing word). This should always be followed with a comma then the chosen name of a person (or, he, she, they, it).

Examples:

- **Running**, she seemed to have been **running** for ages.
- **Creaking**, he knew there was something creaking behind him.

Using an embedded clause in a sentence, with relative pronouns such as 'which', 'who', 'where' or 'that'

This sentence includes an embedded clause. It always begins with a **noun**, which is followed by a comma, followed by the ending of the sentence.

Examples:

- **Tom**, who practised football everyday, dreamed of playing for Manchester United.
- **Peterborough**, which is a city, has a stunning cathedral.
- **The playground**, where the children enjoy playing, has lots of wonderful equipment.

Starting a sentence with an adjective, which describes an emotion

This sentence is constructed by using an **adjective** which describes an **emotion**, followed by a **comma**.

Examples:

- **Terrified**, he sat rocking with his head in his hands.
- **Desperate**, she ran as fast as she could through the forest. **Furious**, the man raised his voice and told the boy to go away.

Using simple and short sentences for effect

Short and simple sentences are formed with **one, two or three** words. One, two or three word sentences are only useful if they are in the following contexts:

Examples:

- After several long sentences (for dramatic effect)
- As a way of developing tension within a plot: **That wasn't all.**
- As an authorial intrusion: **It's true.**
- In speech, between characters, to indicate tension. **"Up there."** **"Where?"** **"At the window."** **"What?"** **"A gun!"**

Relating sentences regarding emotion

These sentences are made up of two related sentences. The first sentence shows how the character behaves on the **outside**. The second sentence lets the reader know how the character is actually feeling on the **inside**.

Example:

She smiled and gave the small girl a present. (**Inside, however, she was shaking with rage**).

Using a semi colon to compare

The first part of this sentence begins with the word **some**. The second part of the sentence is separated with a semi colon and the word **others**.

Examples:

Some children walk to school; **others** travel by car.

Some countries have a warm climate; **others** do not.

Some children love to wear a school uniform; **others** simply detest it.

Using a colon to give description and detail

This sentence is created by having two separate parts, which are separated by a colon.

The first part of the sentence is **description** the second part is **detail**.

Examples:

- **I was shattered: I hadn't slept for more than three days.**

description : detail

- **Hamsters are nocturnal: they sleep during the daytime.**

description : detail

Using a dash correctly in a sentence

This sentence begins with **three negative adjectives**. The first and second adjectives are followed by commas. The third is followed by a dash, then a question which relates to the negative adjectives.

Examples:

- **Fed up, sad, depressed - would he ever feel happy again?**
- **Terrified, anxious, perplexed - how would she ever escape?**

A sentence involving 'personification'

To produce one of these sentences, an element of weather, such as rain or wind, is given as a human attribute.

Examples:

- The rain **wept** down the window = sad mood.
- The wind **screamed** through the branches = tense mood.
- The snow **smothered** the town = tense, claustrophobic mood.



We hope that you have found this booklet useful.
As always, please do not hesitate to contact us
if you would like any further guidance.

