



# Leading Literacy

CPD for excellence in English

## Success In Reading and Writing: Planning for Success in Story Writing

### Key points to take away:

The planning process represented by the Y-shaped diagram is an efficient way of organising familiar elements of English sequences, and ensuring that no elements of composition are left out.

There is flexibility in how much time you spend on each of the elements; there are no fixed timings:

*immersion will take different amounts of time depending on the text (and the class);*

*generating and organising new content may benefit from a longer process, but can also be completed quickly;*

*the collaborative composition phase often requires one lesson per section or chapter, and is therefore dependent on the length of the story being written!*

*the independent application phase, again, will take as long as is required by your class.*

Shared planning enables children to focus on the new skills of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation that you

wish to see in their writing. Asking them to generate new content and simultaneously apply new skills to it is akin to us trying to unicycle while juggling! If they can do it, this suggests they are already familiar with the VGP skills – and perhaps need a new level of challenge.

Shared writing is crucial to the process, and if you lack confidence in this, practise. Attempting to apply the selected VGP skill to each section is the most useful form of planning we know. See our Tips for Success in Shared Writing course for more help in this area.

After shared writing, allow children to write about the same content in their own words, so that they will only be challenged by the VGP skills requirement. If we ask them to apply the VGP skills to different content, we are asking them to do two very challenging things at once.

The independent application phase allows you to see which of the taught skills children are able to apply, by themselves, to different content.



### Questions for you and your team

Which of the elements of the Y-planning process are you currently secure on, and which may need strengthening?

When children in your class find it difficult to write, what are the main stumbling blocks preventing them from succeeding?

How might differentiation be applied to the shared plan, and to collaborative composition? Think about access for the those struggling with writing, and deepening for those already able to do what you wish to teach the rest.

### Putting it into practice

Choose a short story with a clear narrative structure or a traditional tale, and practise segmenting it into five 'chapters'.

Consider which elements of the story might be changed: what will appeal to your class as a whole? Would it be appropriate to bring in content from another curriculum area?

Select the language foci (vocabulary, grammar, punctuation) that

- a) your class needs to develop, and*
- b) will work well in this story.*

Practise applying the selected VGP foci to each chapter, in readiness for shared writing.

Consider how the 'immerse and enjoy' phase will work in your class. Will you use drama and incidental writing?

Plan for a potential 'independent application' phase. What prompts for planning will you offer?