

What are the ingredients of BIG WRITING?

1. **A preparatory lesson** designed to introduce our students to the type of text they will be writing the next day. This will include a chance to read examples of similar writing, to discuss what makes these examples successful and also an opportunity to explore the topic to be written about (we call this 'hooking in').
2. **Talking Homework** - discussed in class and recorded in planners. This homework asks for our students to talk with someone at home about what they will be writing the next day. This is important planning and preparation time so all ideas should be recorded in students' 'Catching the Marvellous' notebooks.
3. A lively, fun starter activity the next day that focuses on **VCOP** and generates ideas for the Big Writing piece.
4. **An undisturbed writing session**, with candles, Mozart, special Big Writing folders and electric silence!
5. **An opportunity to read the writing** with a learning partner and to help each other make improvements. Progress targets are also set to encourage students to try new things next time they write.
6. All Big Writing pieces are kept in BIG WRITING folders and presented to students at the end of the year.



*Exercise the writing muscle every day,
even if it is only a letter, notes, a title list, a
character sketch, a journal entry. Writers are like
dancers, like athletes. Without that exercise,
the muscles seize up.*

(Jane Yolen)



BIG WRITING

An initiative
designed to
develop children
into
independent,
enthusiastic and
expert writers.



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What are we looking for in our students' writing?

Creativity

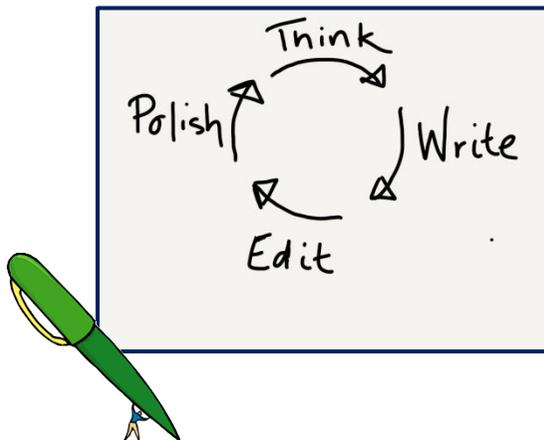
Passion

A lively voice

Independence

Enjoyment of the writing process

Accuracy!



TALKING HOMEWORK

BIG WRITING is an opportunity for you to become involved in your child's development as expert writers.

WHAT IS TALKING HOMEWORK?

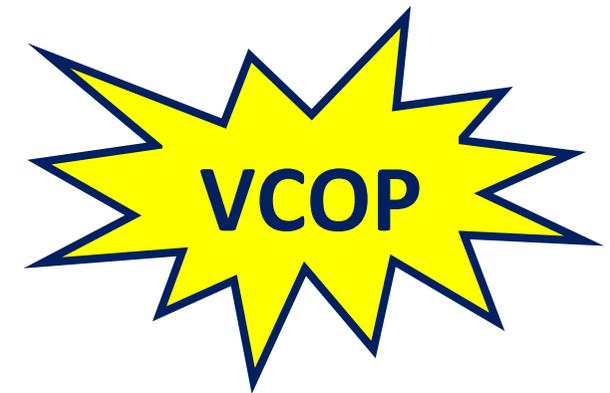
An opportunity for your child to talk about what they are going to write. They might need to talk about the **TYPE** of writing they will be doing (eg: a poem, script, letter, report, persuasive speech) or the **TOPIC** of their writing (eg: Are Disney films bad for society?)

HOW DO WE DO IT?

1. Create an opportunity to sit down together to **think through** and **discuss** ideas for the BIG WRITING piece. The homework set will always give some suggestions about how to do this.
2. **Record these ideas in notebooks.** Try to aim for detail and creative ways of presenting the ideas.
3. Try to get your child's writing ideas clear in their heads by thinking and discussing the **order** of what they will write – **will it make sense?**

The most important reason for the TALKING HOMEWORK is to develop your child's thought process.

If they can't discuss and verbalise their ideas, how can we expect them to write them down?



There are **FOUR** key aspects of quality writing:

Vocabulary –

Every student is encouraged to widen their use of language in order to make their writing richer. For example, 'the sirens filled the sky' is not that interesting! However, 'the **screaming** sirens **suffocated** the night sky' is a far more interesting sentence to read!

Connectives –

These are words that allow writers to join ideas together such as **also**, **although**, **besides** etc. These sorts of words are very important for ensuring writing is cohesive and interesting.

Openers –

By varying the way we open sentences, our writing becomes more engaging to read.

Punctuation –

This is the 'icing on the cake!' Students are encouraged to use appropriate punctuation to lift their writing off the page. For example, '**W**e were sailing hard at 23 knots through ice cold waters; who knew if we were to survive this perilous adventure?'