



Whole School Plan for

ENGLISH

of

Tramore Educate Together National School

Content of Plan

1. Introduction and Rationale
2. Aims and objectives
3. Oral Language Objectives
4. Reading Objectives
5. Writing Objectives
6. Spelling

Curriculum planning

1. Language programme
2. Strands and elements
3. Planning, teaching and assessing for learning
4. Assessment and record keeping
5. Children with different needs
6. Equality of participation and access

Organisational planning

1. Timetable
2. Resources and ICT
3. Library
4. Individual teachers' planning and reporting
5. Staff development
6. Parental involvement
7. Community links

English - Whole School plan

1. Introduction

This plan was prepared by the staff of Tramore ETNS in 2016/2017. This policy is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for English and to ensure a consist approach in the teaching of the English curriculum. It also takes into account the revised Primary Language Curriculum.

Rationale

In Tramore ETNS, we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils and language is key to the development of the child as a person. In developing this whole school plan for English we hope

- To benefit teaching and learning in our school
- To conform to principles of learning outlined in the Primary Language Curriculum
- To create and implement a core curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, oral language, poetry, spelling, phonics and handwriting.

2. Aims of the English plan

We aim through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the Primary Language Curriculum, to set out our approach to language learning. This plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short-term planning.

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to

- enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language and language learning to enhance their language learning
- encourage children of different languages and cultures to be proud of and to share their heritage
- recognise the wide variation in experience, ability and language style which children bring to language learning in school as a first step in enabling them to engage in relevant and meaningful communicative relationships.
- embrace children's uniqueness by nurturing their appreciation of their home language, their understanding of language and diversity, and their ability to use different languages, gestures and tools to communicate with people in a variety of contexts and situations
- encourage and enable children to communicate effectively in both the first and second language of the school and to communicate in their heritage language for a variety of purposes
- enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.
- promote a positive disposition towards communication and language by fostering within children a lifelong interest in and a love of language learning for personal enjoyment and enrichment
- broaden children's understanding of the world through a rich variety of language experiences and through fostering an awareness and appreciation of other languages and cultures in an enriching learning environment
- encourage children to engage personally with and think critically about a broad range of spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts

- support children to develop their literacy skills and enable them to progress at their own learning pace in oral language, reading and writing
- nurture within children an awareness of language, allowing them to appreciate and understand the content and structure of languages and acquire a basic understanding of the history of languages and other cultures.

The Primary Language Curriculum sets out an image of children as communicators, readers, writers and thinkers, and a vision and understanding of primary classrooms as places where children are enabled to progress at their own pace in environments and relationships which are supportive, engaging and inclusive.

Broad Objectives, Content and Methodologies

The broad objectives, content and methodologies for the teaching and learning of oral language, reading and writing are detailed in this document. Each of these areas is presented under the four strand headings of the Revised English Curriculum, and reflects best current practice and pedagogy.

3. Oral Language - Broad Objectives

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Gain pleasure and fulfilment from language activity e.g. Aistear theme language
2. Develop the capacity to express intuitions, feelings, impressions, ideas and reactions in response to real and imaginary situations through talk and discussion, and the development of ideas.
3. Develop fluency, explicitness and confidence in communication.
4. Develop listening skills, language conventions, vocabulary, aesthetic response and language manipulation. Appendix 1: 5 Components of Oral Language

4. Reading -Broad Objectives

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured and sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Develop print awareness, phonemic awareness, word identification strategies and sight vocabulary.
2. Develop their comprehension and analytical strategies.
3. Expand their understanding and usage of grammar, syntax and punctuation.
4. Develop their appreciation of the richness and diversity of reading material.
5. Experience the pleasure and fulfilment to be gained from reading.

DEAR time

Children are given opportunities to select reading material and read for pleasure for a sustained period during the day.

Shared Reading/ Buddy reading

Shared Reading with parents/other classes is co-ordinated by the staff. Junior Infants commence Shared Reading with parents in the second term. A letter is sent home to parents, and the school hosts regular meetings with parents on Shared Reading. Series currently in use include Oxford Reading Tree, JP Readers, Big Cat, Connects and Dandelion Launcher books. Class novels are available from the library.

Literacy Lift off/ Reading stations/Guided reading

Reading stations are co-ordinated by the staff. Each class has a 6-week block twice a year. The focus will vary depending on class needs e.g. reading attainment, letter recognition, rhyming, comprehension strategies.

5. Writing : Broad Objectives

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured and sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Write clearly, correctly and fluently.
2. Use a wide range of vocabulary.
3. Use grammar and punctuation appropriately.
4. Write in a wide variety of genres encompassing differing styles, purposes, audiences and level of formality. Appendix 2: First Steps Writing
5. Experience opportunities to develop presentation, editing and publishing skills.
6. Engage in collaborative writing experiences. Appendix 3: The Writing Process
7. Develop a high standard of penmanship. Children will be taught joined writing from second/third class.
8. Children in 3rd/4th class (subject to class split) will be given an opportunity to obtain a pen licence. Children do not use tippex, instead they cross out the word and write the correct word above or beside the error.

Free writing copies

Children from Junior Infants onwards will write independently on a weekly basis.

This will provide a record of progression throughout the school year.

Creative writing copies will be used from 1st class to encourage daily writing for agreed periods during the year. Appendix 4: Free Writing and Appendix 5: VCOP Big Write

6. Spellings

Regular class time will be timetabled for the teaching of spelling strategies. We use Jolly Grammar for the teaching of spelling strategies. We do not have Friday spelling tests but we give dictation and inform future teaching from their free writing. This is informed by Brendan Culligan's "Spelling and Handwriting".

The convention of spelling will be achieved progressively through a multi-dimensional approach. This will include:

- Linking spelling with the development of phonological and phonemic awareness (see page 58 Teacher Guidelines)
- Linking it with onset and rime, see page 58
- Building up a bank of commonly used words
- Having a rich experience of environmental print
- Compiling word walls and personal word banks, e.g. personal names, local place names, seasonal words
- Using dictionaries and thesauruses
- Using strategies such as
 1. Predict, look, say, cover, write, check
 2. Music
 3. ICT
 4. Mnemonics
 5. Rhythm and rhyme
 6. Creation of word searches
 7. Aide memoires
 8. Spelling buddies
 9. Breaking words into syllables
 10. Exaggeration of the word
- Becoming familiar with common spelling rules
- Accepting approximate spelling in creative writing
- Teachers will be familiar with the Newell approach to dictation.

Use of Dictionaries

Dictionaries will be used from first/second class. Formal time will be devoted to teaching the children how to use a dictionary correctly. For this purpose, a child friendly dictionary will be selected and provided by the school. Fallons Children's Oxford Dictionary, Irish Edition.

Rang 5 and Rang 6 will also have some class copies of a more sophisticated dictionary and an appropriate thesaurus, and pupils will be encouraged to use these.

Curricular Planning

1. Language:

The two fundamental principles of the English language curriculum are

- Children learn language and learn through language (*Curriculum p. 3*)
- Language learning is an integrated process in which it is difficult to separate the functions of oral language, reading and writing. For example, a lesson in oral language may have related activities in reading and writing and may also address a number of strands e.g. Competence and confidence in using language and Developing cognitive abilities through language (*Curriculum p. 2*)

The three strands of Oral language, Reading and Writing, as outlined in English: Additional Support Material (2005), remain unchanged as do all of the content objectives. The content objectives for each strand are re-presented under two categories: development and skills.

2. Strands and elements

Across the strands of oral language, reading and writing, the elements describe essential language learning. Each element has a set of Learning Outcomes, which describe important language learning in terms of concepts, dispositions and skills.

The elements of language learning across each of the strands are:

1. Developing communicative relationships through language
2. Understanding the content and structure of language
3. Exploring and using language.

Strands

Elements	Oral language	Reading	Writing
Communicating	Engagement, listening and attention (<i>intentionality, verbal memory</i>) Social conventions and awareness of others (<i>relevance, turn-taking, extra and para-linguistic skills</i>)	Engagement (<i>intentionality</i>) Motivation and choice (<i>relevance</i>)	Engagement (<i>intentionality</i>) Motivation and choice (<i>relevance, purpose, audience</i>)
Understanding	Sentence structure and grammar (<i>syntax, morphology</i>) Acquisition and use of oral vocabulary (<i>semantics, verbal memory, articulation skills</i>) Demonstration of	Conventions of print (<i>meaning and interpretation of text/illustration</i>) Phonological and phonemic awareness Phonics and word recognition (<i>alphabetic principle, word</i>	Conventions of print and sentence structure (<i>syntax</i>) Spelling Vocabulary (<i>semantics</i>)

	understanding (semantics)	<i>identification strategies</i> Reading vocabulary (<i>semantics</i>)	
Exploring and Using Language	Requests and questions Categorisation Retelling and elaborating (<i>narrative text and response</i>) Playful and creative use of language (<i>aesthetic dimension of language</i>) Information giving, explanation and justification (<i>expository text</i>) Description, prediction and reflection	Purpose, genre and voice (<i>awareness of author's purpose</i>) Comprehension (<i>comprehension, text organisational structure and fix-up strategies</i>) Fluency and self-correction (<i>accuracy, fluency and meaning</i>)	Purpose, genre and voice (<i>sense of voice, aesthetic dimension of text</i>) Writing process (<i>using processes, structures and language register</i>) Response and author's intent <i>author's purpose and responding</i>) Handwriting (<i>legibility</i>)

3. Planning, teaching and assessing for learning

The Primary Language Curriculum helps teachers to support children's language learning and development through the process of planning, teaching and assessing for learning in English. Four parts (components) of the Primary Language Curriculum work together to support teachers' planning, teaching and assessment for language learning: Learning Outcomes, Progression Continua (Appendix), Examples of children's learning and development, and Support Material for teachers.

Together, the Learning Outcomes and the Progression Continua provide important reference points for teachers to plan for, and make judgements about, children's language learning. Three tracker children will be selected to represent the three different levels in the classroom, enabling teachers to decide on the next steps in teaching and learning to help children progress in English.

The Learning Outcomes and Progression Continua support teachers when reporting the child's learning progress to colleagues, parents and others during the year, and to other teachers as part of the transfer process within or across primary schools.

4. Assessment and Record Keeping

Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of assessment methodologies such as:

- Teacher observations
- Teacher designed tasks
- Simple projects
- Responses the child makes to question and answer situations
- Child participation

- Interaction and reaction of the child

Standardised tests are administered in May of each year. Currently we used the Drumcondra Reading Test from 1st – 6th class. Dolch lists and Jollyphonics assessments are also used in Junior classes. In Senior Infants we administer the MIST in term two and the Drumcondra Early Literacy Test may be administered in May. BIAP and PAST are administered to Junior Infants.

Children will select work to be included in their portfolio (scrapbook). Teachers will use the progression continua or the Drumcondra Profiles (3rd to 6th) to assist them in making judgements about their pupils' achievement of key curriculum outcomes in English.

5. Children with Different Needs

It is the policy of our school that all children will participate in English lessons and activities. The English programme will be differentiated in order to meet the needs of all the children in the class. Every attempt, with the valued assistance of additional staff (Support teachers, S.N.A.s) will be made to ensure that all children are accessing the English Curriculum at their own level. Differentiation will be outlined in our Cúntas Míósúil each month to enable the teachers to reflect how effectively and successfully they have differentiated for children with different needs in each subject area.

We promote an active learning environment, with children working in groups at their level, where the class teacher is responsible for the learning in the classroom and is assisted by the SEN team. Team teaching and station teaching blocks are arranged throughout the year.

6. Equality of Participation and Access.

As an Educate Together school equal opportunities will be given to all children regardless of gender, ethnic background, and socio-economic status across all strands and activities.

Organisational Planning

1. Timetable

Time is allocated for English as laid out in the Curriculum and as amended by the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. Time spent on English has been increased by one hour overall per week (i.e. to 6.5 hours for infants with a shorter day, and to 8.5 hours per week for students with a full day). This is 1hr and 18 mins per day (78 mins per day) for Infants and 1 hr and 42 mins per day (102 mins per day) for all other classes. Discrete oral language time of ½ hour per week is timetabled. The process of language learning is naturally developed through integrated activities and through a thematic/cross curricular approach.

2. Resources and ICT

Please see the relevant appendices for an outline of the programmes we use in our school. As well as the core materials used in all classes the teachers also have a range of complimentary and supplementary materials in their classroom.

We have a selection of graded readers in each classroom. We also have access to a wide selection of class novels. These are available from the central library. When selecting a class novel, the following factors will be considered

- Suitability for reading level/age of pupils
- Suitability of content/subject
- Teacher's own interest in a particular novel
- Interests of a particular class

Each classroom is equipped with class library, a white board and a teacher's computer. Laptops and ipads are also available from the office.

3. Library

Due to the proximity of Tramore Library all teachers and classes will be encouraged to avail of the resources and books in the library. We organise regular visits to the community library throughout the school year.

4. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for English will seek to provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long and short term planning. Class teachers will be required to produce:

- Yearly/ Termly plans
- Fortnightly plans

The Cuntas Míósúil will be used to measure the success of the English plan and will inform teacher's preparation for the following year.

5. Staff Development

Staff needs will be assessed regularly and details of courses and training days relevant to the English programme will be displayed on the staffroom notice board and staff will be encouraged to attend. There is a culture of sharing the expertise acquired at these courses. Team teaching takes place in the school and this allows the sharing of skills.

6. Parental Involvement – Home School Links

The school recognises parents and guardians as the primary educators of their children. They can be involved in many ways in supporting our English Plan including:

- Parents are aware of the central importance of oral language in the learning process.
- Parents are made aware of the importance of involving children in purposeful language activity. Parents could assist their child's oral language development

by discussing the school day with their child, taking an interest in what they are learning and talking with their child on a nightly basis.

- Parents can support their child’s reading, *e.g.* paired reading, shared reading, story reading, reading environmental print, ICT programmes, homework – hearing reading and talking about reading, involvement with the school library, local library, book fairs, book week.
- The school can support parents in accessing suitable reading materials by giving them information about the local library.
- Information will be shared with parents, *e.g.* presentations at induction meetings each September, general meetings, discussion at parent teacher meetings, the school’s information booklet, newsletter, website, facebook page.

7. Community Links

The school patron, Educate Together, and the Board of Management are committed to work in such a way as to embrace the input of children, teachers, parents and members of the community and to enable the highest level of participation and partnership.

Success Criteria

The success of this school plan will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Teachers’ preparation has been based on this plan.
- Procedures in this plan have been consistently followed.
- All children should have achieved progression along the milestones during the year.

Timeframe

The current plan will be reviewed in line with the introduction of a new Language Curriculum from 3rd to 6th class.

Ratification and Communication

On ratification of this plan by the staff and Board of Management this plan will be communicated to all teachers through distribution and will become part of the School Plan.

The English plan for Tramore Educate Together NS was ratified by

Principal

Date

Chairperson

Date

Internet Resources for book related activities

www.oxfordowl.com

www.enchantedlearning.com

www.fireandwater.com

www.pfsp.ie

www.scoilnet.ie

Appendix 1: 5 Components of Oral Language



*Adapted from Eisenhart C. 1990*²

Appendix 2: Plan for First Steps Writing (Independent Construction)–Year 1 (2016/17)

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Genre:	Recount	Explanation	Report
Examples:	News, class/school events, holidays, newspaper articles, diary entries, imaginative (a day in the life of Cinderella/Michael Collins)	Water cycle, life cycle of..., why people live in homes, borrow book from the library, how earthquakes/volcanoes occur, how erosion occurs.	Animals – appearance, habitat, diet... Country/ Culture – language, foods, climate, ...
Junior Infants	Use framework to draw basic personal recount (with labels where appropriate).provide opportunity to “write” a recount.	Orally explain the different parts of simple objects; simple reasoning how/why something happens Teacher as scribe.	Shared writing of a report. Labelled picture of an animal (description, habitat); toys, food or homes.
Senior Infants	Use framework to draw & caption basic personal recount.	Orally explain the different parts of simple objects. simple reasoning how/why something happens Teacher as scribe.	Use framework to write a basic report on an animal, food, home, toys. ets (4 lines- title, classification, description, habitat & habits)
1st Class	Use framework to draw & write a basic personal recount.	Orally explain the different parts of simple objects. Label the parts of these objects.	Use framework to write a basic report on an animal, toys, food or homes etc.
2nd Class	Use framework to write a basic personal recount. Orally retell a factual recount.	Orally explain the different parts & usage of simple objects. Label the parts of these objects. Draw a simple diagram which shows the parts of an object.	Use framework to write a report on an animal, toys, food or homes. Using subheadings
3rd Class	Use framework to write a personal & factual recount.	Carry out simple experiments and discuss what was used & what happened. Use a diagram to explain how a simple object works.	Use framework to write a report on an animal, including endangered species & unfamiliar animals.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Genre:	Recount	Explanation	Report
4th Class	Use framework to write a personal & factual recount. Orally retell an imaginary recount.	Carry out simple experiments and discuss what was used & what happened. Use a diagram to explain how a simple object works. Discuss cause & effect (make connections between parts & operations).	Use framework to write a report on an animal, including endangered species & unfamiliar animals. Introducing countries.
5th Class	Use framework to write a personal, factual & imaginary recount.	Carry out simple experiments and discuss what was used & what happened. Use a diagram to explain how a simple object works. Discuss cause & effect (make connections between parts & operations). Explain phenomenon "...is...." e.g "snow is...."	Use framework to write a report on an animal, including endangered species & unfamiliar animals. Introducing countries & people.
6th Class	Use framework to write a personal, factual & imaginary recount.	Carry out simple experiments and discuss what was used & what happened. Discuss cause & effect (make connections between parts & operations). Use a diagram to explain how a simple object works. Explain & write about simple / familiar phenomenon "...is...." e.g "snow is...."	Use framework to write a report on an animal, including endangered species & unfamiliar animals. Introducing countries & people.

Plan for First Steps Writing (Independent Construction)–Year 2 (2017/18)

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Genre:	Narrative	Procedural	Persuasive
Examples	Setting, problem, resolution – fairy tales, fables, novels, mystery stories	How to make ... Step by step format Instructions for games, recipes, how to brush your teeth...	Which are better – cats or dogs/ football or soccer, etc why? Children should have a vote; Should Santa Claus come to Goldilocks?
Junior Infants	Sequence pictures of narratives and label with teacher where appropriate.	Follow simple instructions to carry out everyday tasks. Engage in shared class activities and teacher models	Orally explain why they want / need something. Use a narrative story for the context of discussion, eg a letter from the Farmer to Farmer Duck
Senior Infants	Sequence and caption pictures of narratives. Shared written narratives. Draw narratives (picture books).	Follow simple instructions to carry out everyday tasks. Sequence pictures of everyday tasks.	Orally explain why they want / need something. Explain why they like / dislike certain things (colour, food, games, tv programmes). Draw what they like & label with teacher's support.
1st Class	Use teacher's framework to write basic narratives. Good exposure to fairytales.	Carry out simple procedures (recipes) Sequence & caption pictures of everyday tasks.	Orally explaining likes & dislikes stating reasons why. "This is my favourite.....because..."
2nd Class	Use teacher's framework to write basic narratives. Orally retell fairytales.	Carry out simple procedures (recipes) & children write the procedure.	Writing letters to parents / caregivers trying to convince them to buy a present / go on a trip etc. Oral informal debate on personally significant topics.
3rd Class	Use teacher's framework to write basic narratives. Orally retell myths & legends. Begin writing their own legends.	Carry out simple procedures (recipes, making something) & children write the procedure.	Exposure to visual adverts discussing the main objective of the ad. Debates. Write on argument for and one argument against in relation to school topics/ issues.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Genre:	Narrative	Procedural	Persuasive
4th Class	Use teacher's framework to write basic narratives. Orally retell myths & legends. Writing their own legends. Good exposure to fables.	Carry out simple procedures (recipes, making something) & children write the procedure.	Exposure to visual adverts discussing the main objective of the ad. Debates. Write both sides of the argument in relation to school topics/ issues.
5th Class	Use teacher's framework to write basic narratives. Writing their own legends & fables.	Carry out simple procedures (recipes, making something) & children write the procedure using the framework. Write own procedure of their choice (familiar procedure in own words). Using a selection of equipment 'create' a game, taking photos and use to write the instructions on how to play.	Exposure to visual adverts discussing the main objective of the ad. Debates. Write both sides of the argument in relation to school topics/ issues. Study of advertising & create their own ad for a book / newspaper / school.
6th Class	Use teacher's framework to write basic narratives. Writing their own legends & fables.	Carry out simple procedures (recipes, making something) & children write the procedure using the framework. Write own procedure of their choice (familiar procedure in own words). Using a selection of equipment 'create' a game, taking photos and use to write the instructions on how to play.	Exposure to visual adverts discussing the main objective of the ad. Debates. Write both sides of the argument in relation to school topics/ issues. Study of advertising & create their own ad for a book / newspaper / school. Study TV advertising, highlighting the persuasive tactics used.

Appendix 3

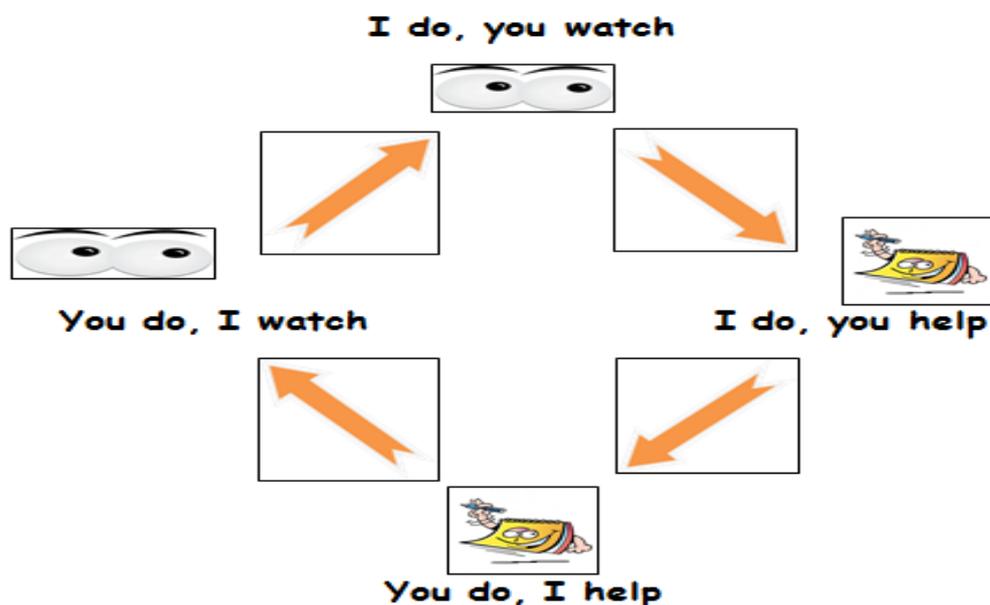
The Writing Process



It is important to note that the writing process is not necessarily strictly linear, and as teachers we can move from particular parts of the process to others over time. The process is fluid, and there will be times in our teaching and treatment of particular areas in our subject where we may only be focusing on a particular aspect of the process.

The Gradual Release of Responsibility

Regardless of the strategy being taught, the process of explicit instruction, using the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model, remains the same.



Appendix 4

Free Writing Station.

Free writing should be 10 - 15 when the children can write freely.

- The work should be dated each day.
- Children should be reminded beforehand that we will read their work but it will not have to be corrected.
- The children can choose the topic although they may need some guidance to choose a topic in the beginning.
- There are many different types of writing they can do - news, story, letter, list, menu, instructions, labels etc.
- There should be no pressure on children to "produce" an amount of writing.
- Spelling is not important as this is about the child getting his/her message down on paper quickly and without interruption.
- If a child asks a spelling prompt the child to
 - Try to sound it out yourself (use the alphabet chart)
 - Try your best and I will be able to read it
 -
- Lower groups (red, blue) may need a stimulus to begin with.
Place object in the centre of the table and ask some of the following questions to get the children thinking about the item and how to describe it in their writing. Prompt children to give full sentences in response.
 - Size Question - What size is it?
 - Number Question - How many....?
 - Colour Question - What colour is it?
What colour is the?
 - Shape Question - What shape is it?
 - Texture Question - What does it feel like?
Is it hard or soft?
 - Doing Question - What is it?
What does it do?
 - Position Question - Where would you find one?

Appendix 5: Big Write by Ros Wilson

What is 'Big Writing'?

Ros Wilson is the creator of the 'Big Writing' concept. She developed a way of teaching writing to children which focuses on four main aspects of writing – Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation (VCOP). Through weekly writing sessions (known as 'Big Writing'), children will develop their skills in these areas, as well as learning about and revising several different writing genres, therefore improving their overall writing ability.

The Four Elements of Big Writing

Vocabulary:

Every class has a 'Wow Words' board where new and impressive words that the children have used and have found in good quality texts, are shared with everyone.

The children are encouraged to use (steal) these words where appropriate in their writing.

Connectives:

Every class displays examples of powerful connectives (joining words). The children are encouraged to use these in their writing to join sentences and paragraphs, therefore improving the organisation of their writing.

Openers:

Every class displays and discusses good sentence 'openers' (sentence starters) that the children can use in their writing to make their sentences and overall texts more interesting. We teach ways of improving a basic sentence by changing how it begins e.g. 'She opened the door' to a better sentence, 'Cautiously, she opened the door.'

Punctuation:

Every class has a 'Punctuation Pyramid' displayed, showing the levels of punctuation. Children are taught the names of the higher level punctuation from Year One onwards and learn to use them in their writing. The levels of punctuation are National Curriculum levels which children are assessed against, ranging from full stops (Level 1) to using colons and semi-colons (Level 5).

What does a Big Write lesson look like?

Big Write is split into two sections.

Part one (45 minutes)

This part of Big Write involves quick fire VCOP games and activities. Here are some examples.

- The teacher writes a sentence on the board and the children have to up level the sentence. They need to make it better by either adding more exciting vocabulary, make the sentence longer by adding a connective or by changing the opener. Children can write down an up leveled sentence on their whiteboard. This can be completed for a couple of sentences.
- The teacher has a set of flashcards or power point with exciting challenging vocabulary. The teacher shows the class a word e.g. extraordinary, the child has to put that word into a sentence. They can tell their sentence to a friend, write it down on a whiteboard or tell the teacher.
- Using flashcards with openers, the teacher picks a child or group of children to create as many sentences as they can with the different openers in a minute.
- The teacher writes a sentence with incorrect punctuation. The children act as punctuation detectives to find out what punctuation marks are missing.
- Kung Fu Punctuation is a fun and exciting way of introducing the different punctuation marks. The children stand up and copy the teacher as she/he demonstrates different kung fu type moves. Once the children are confident with the moves, the teacher then says a sentence e.g. "What day is it today?" "Stop jumping on the bed!" It is very windy outside. The children then make the move for a question mark. Below is an example of Kung Fu punctuation in practice.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZHUt0MY0Xw>
- The teacher puts a picture of a character on the board, the children create a brainstorm of words to describe both the appearance and personality of the character.
- I have also attached a book of VCOP activities.
- After 20-25 minutes of VCOP games, the teacher then introduces the writing task for Big Write. The writing tasks should vary every week/fortnight. A range of different writing purposes should be explored. An example might be, to create an information leaflet about a new lizard that scientists have just discovered. The teacher puts a picture on the board. Firstly, the children create a wordbank of words to describe the lizard. The class then creates a success criteria for an information leaflet e.g. main headings, sub headings, diagrams, opening statement, etc. The class then creates a shared piece of writing on the whiteboard. Up leveling sentences where possible and thinking of better words to use.

- The children are then given 5-10 minutes to make their plan. They have a picture or photograph that they stick into their copy to inspire them. They should be encouraged to steal words from the class wordbank, the literacy wall and any other stimulus in the classroom.
- The children then go out to break or lunch.

Part two (45 minutes)

This should ideally start after a break/lunch. When the children come back to class, the room should be a creative relaxing environment. Straight away the children begin their writing. Thesauruses and word mats should be available on the children's desks. The children are not allowed to talk during this time and should not ask for help. The writing is assessed by outcome and teacher support is not recommended.

Creating a relaxing environment

1. Play calm relaxing music either from Youtube or a cd player.
2. Battery powered tea light candles are placed on the tables and the lights are turned off. Fairy lights can also be placed in the classroom.
3. On the whiteboard, display an image of a flickering candle.
(Research suggests that these elements create a sense of calm and get creative juices flowing!)
4. Children are given special big write pencils- these pencils are only taken out for big write and are kept in a special box.
5. Children write in a Big Write copy. This is simply a lined copy but you could have a special cover or picture on the front.

Peer assessment

When the writing time is over the children swap copies with their partner. Their partner reads through their piece of writing. Once they have read the written piece, they then stick in 2 star stickers and draw a magic wand at the end of the page. Beside the stars the children write two compliments i.e. 2 things they liked about the written work. Examples: I liked the suspense in your story. I liked the way you ended the story. You used lots of exciting vocabulary. You used a range of openers. They then write a wish, this is something they feel their partner could do to make their writing even better. Examples: You could use different connectives. You could try using paragraphs. You could use more adverbs.

The children swap back their copies and read the feedback. It is important that the children look back on their feedback before the next Big Write so they can improve their writing. Instead of stickers, stamps can also be used.



Some schools, tell the class the type of text they will be working on the day before so they can talk at home with their parents and have some ideas for Big Write. This is called Talk Homework.

Term 1 plan for English Tramore ETNS

	September	October	November	December
Junior Infants	Phonological Awareness Sound Linkage	Phonological Awareness Sound Linkage	JP sounds Phonological Awareness	JP sounds Phonological Awareness
Reading Writing	Nursery rhymes, listening & speaking skills. Big books. Developing hand strength.	Nursery rhymes, listening & speaking skills. Big books. Wordless books. Developing hand strength.	Writing Genre -Recount ET Wordless books hw	Writing Genre – Recount ET Wordless books/sounds book
Senior Infants	Jollyphonics sounds & Newell Phonological Awareness Sound Linkage Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Phonological Awareness Sound Linkage Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Tricky words
Reading Writing	Nursery rhymes, listening& speaking skills. Big books, ORT. Writing CVC words	Nursery rhymes, listening& speaking skills. Big books, ORT. Writing CVC words.	Reading ORT Writing Genre -Recount ET	Reading ORT Writing Genre -Recount ET
First Class	Jolly Grammar & Newell Dolch words Letter names, capital letters	Jolly Grammar & Newell Dolch words Letter names, capital letters	Jolly Grammar & Newell Letter names, capital letters.	Jolly Grammar & Newell
Reading Writing	Reading poems Listening skills/oral work Writing sentences	Reading poems Comprehension Handwriting	Power hour connects Writing Genre -Recount ET	Power hour connects Writing Genre -Recount ET Newsletter
Second Class	Jolly Grammar & Newell	Jolly Grammar & Newell	Jolly Grammar & Newell	Jolly Grammar & Newell
Reading Writing	Reading poems Listening skills/oral work Writing sentences	Reading poems Comprehension Handwriting	Power hour connects Writing Genre -Recount ET	Power hour connects Writing Genre -Recount ET Newsletter

Power hour includes reading familiar book with teacher, reading new book with teacher and selection of listening station ORT books/JPs on ipads, writing station/ phonics materials, dolch bingo, strong hand station.

Writing Genres: Recount, report and narrative Year1. Procedural, explanation and exposition Year 2. E=Expose T=Teach M=Maintain

Term 2 plan for English Tramore ETNS

	January	February	March
Junior Infants	Jollyphonics sounds, tricky words Phonics ladder	JP sounds, tricky words Phonics ladder	JP sounds, tricky words Phonics Ladder
Reading Writing	Nursery rhymes ORT books/wordlist Writing letters	Power hour connects/wordlist Writing Genre -Report ET Writing CVC words	Power hour -connects Writing Genre -Report ET Writing CVC words
Senior Infants	Jollyphonics sounds & Newell Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Tricky words
Reading Writing	Power hour Connects Comprehension	Power hour connects Writing Genre -Report ET	Reading ORT Writing Genre -Report ET
First Class	Jolly Grammar & Newell Tricky words/alternative sounds	Jolly Grammar & Newell Tricky words/alternative sounds	Jolly Grammar & Newell Tricky words/alternative sounds
Reading Writing	Comprehension Listening & speaking skills	Power hour connects/Novel Writing Genre -Report ET	Power hour connects/Novel Writing Genre -Report ET Newsletter
Second Class	Jolly Grammar & Newell	Jolly Grammar & Newell	Jolly Grammar & Newell
Reading Writing	Comprehension Listening & speaking skills	Power hour - Novel Writing Genre -Report ET	Power hour - Novel Writing Genre -Report ET Newsletter

Term 3 plan for English Tramore ETNS

	April	May	June
Junior Infants	Jollyphonics sounds	JP sounds	JP sounds
Reading Writing	Power hour -Nursery rhymes Writing Genre -Narrative ET Shared Reading with 2 nd class	Power hour -Nursery rhymes Writing Genre -Narrative ET Shared reading with 2 nd class Listening & speaking skills	Writing Genre -Recount ET
Senior Infants	Jollyphonics sounds & Newell Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Tricky words	JP sounds & Newell Tricky words
Reading Writing	Power hour – novel Writing Genre -Narrative ET	Power hour – novel Writing Genre -Narrative ET Listening & speaking skills	Writing Genre -Recount ET
First Class	Jolly Grammar & Newell Comprehension/Vocab	Jolly Grammar & Newell Comprehension / Vocab	Jolly Grammar & Newell Comprehension / Vocab
Reading Writing	Power hour – novel Writing Genre -Narrative ET Writing tricky words	Power hour – novel Writing Genre -Narrative ET Listening & speaking skills	Writing project Novel Newsletter
Second Class	Jolly Grammar & Newell Comprehension/Vocab	Jolly Grammar & Newell Comprehension / Vocab	Jolly Grammar & Newell Comprehension / Vocab
Reading Writing	Power hour – novel Writing Genre -Narrative ET Shared reading with JI Joined writing	Power hour – novel Writing Genre -Narrative ET Shared reading with JI Listening & speaking skills	Writing project Novel Newsletter Joined writing

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	Rang 1	Rang 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Learn the 42 sounds · Develop automaticity/fluency with letter sounds · Sing the ABC song. · Recite the alphabet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Revise 42 letter sounds · Teach the ‘magic e’ · Teach the alternative spellings of the vowels ai, ee, ie, oa, ue, er · Teach the letter names. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Revise sounds and alternative spellings. · Apply the rules for reading “If the short vowel sound doesn’t work, try the long vowel sound.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Alternative spellings – · As per Grammar 2 handbook
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Blend simple regular words (CVC). · Read tricky words 1-24. · Start reading simple sentences, which include tricky words 1-24. · Begin to read the Pink and Red band Readers developing fluency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read simple words & stories. · Practice blending with alternative spellings, double letters and magic e. · Read the blue band Readers developing fluency. · Read tricky words 1-40. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop much greater fluency in reading. · Continue to read Graded Readers and practice blending. · Read tricky words 1-72 · Read dolch lists -220 words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop greater fluency in reading · Continue to read Graded Readers and practice blending. · Read tricky words 1-72
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · form lower case letters correctly - air writing/ direct instruction re: letter formation. · write words by listening for sounds (CVC). · Write/spell tricky words 1-12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participate in direct instruction lessons and modelling of letter formation. · Teach how to form capital letters correctly, as well as to say their sounds and names. · Teach the handwriting rules finger spacing, full stops and capital letters · Take dictation – words & sentences · Weekly free writing sample in copy. Write three or more sentences independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participate in direct instruction lessons and modelling of letter formation. · Practise printing skills · Write using neat, well-formed letters. · Be able to write longer stories- free and independent writing. · Continue to practice dictation of words and sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participate in direct instruction lessons and modelling of letter formation using cursive script. · Write using neat, well-formed letters. · Be able to write longer stories independently. · Continue to practice dictation of words and sentences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Spell tricky words 1-24. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Spelling words with double letters, alternative spellings and magic e. · Become aware of reversals in writing e.g. b and d words. · Spell tricky words 1-72 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Spell words with silent letters and alternative spellings · Spell dolch lists · Spell tricky words correctly in free writing.

