

Writing

Our approach

At La Fontaine Academy, we have designed a writing curriculum that develops the teaching of English and Writing Skills from word level, to sentence level, and through to the development of impactful pieces of writing that effectively communicate meaning to an audience. The fundamental principle is that all children can be successful writers when given high-quality instruction and meaningful support. We believe that in order for our children to leave La Fontaine as successful writers, they need to have an understanding of a range of texts: we are driven by a canon of culturally, historically and contextually diverse books, curated by the school, to suit the needs of our children.

Our content-rich writing curriculum enables children to be confident, creative and independent writers who are able to articulate their ideas and use these transferable skills across the wider curriculum.

We do this by:

- * Choosing high quality texts as a stimulus for writing;
- * Using a three-phase approach whereby teacher-written models are studied, then used as building blocks for independent writing;
- * Identifying the purpose for writing (to entertain, to inform, to persuade or to discuss);
- * Building the skills for specific types of writing in clear, logical and manageable steps;
- * Practising these skills consistently and building on prior knowledge;
- * Using clear structures to plan pieces of writing;
- * Producing extended pieces which clearly demonstrate the application of writing skills studied;
- * Consistently sharing, editing and improving work;
- * Reflecting on, and re-drafting writing based on formative feedback.

Our reason for taking this approach

We have chosen this approach to writing, as we believe that understanding the fundamentals is crucial to children's ability to access the wider curriculum and to express themselves clearly - writing confidently, creatively, independently and with intention.

"If you were building a house, would you start with the roof? Probably not... the importance of spending plenty of instructional time working with sentences can't be stressed enough. Sentence-level work is the engine that will propel your students from writing the way they speak to using the structures of written language."

Hochman, J.V., Wexler, N. and Lemov, D. (2017). *The Writing Revolution: a guide to advancing thinking through writing in all subjects and grades*, p.23. Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand.

Giving children the opportunity to form a solid understanding of the building blocks of writing, and allowing them time to apply these before writing independently, results in excellent written outcomes.