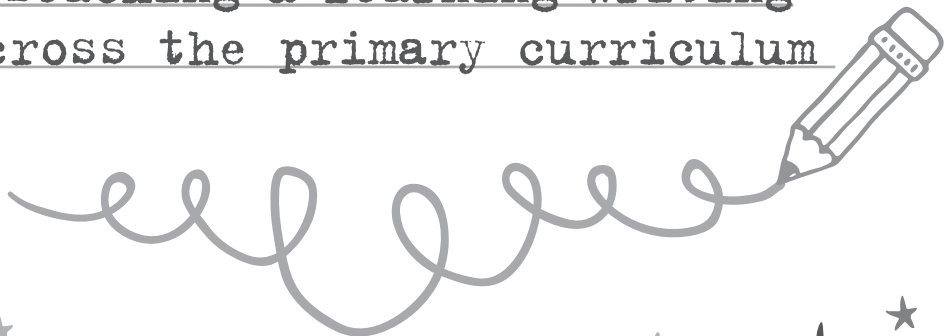




INVITING *writing*

Teaching & learning writing
across the primary curriculum



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Learning Matters
An imprint of SAGE Publications Ltd
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP

SAGE Publications Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320

SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd
B 1/1 1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area
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New Delhi 110 044

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#10-04 Samsung Hub
Singapore 049483

Editor: Amy Thornton
Production editor: Chris Marke
Marketing manager: Dilhara Attygalle
Cover design: Wendy Scott
Typeset by: C&M Digitals (P) Ltd, Chennai, India
Printed in the UK

Published in 2017 by Learning Matters Ltd.
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Library of Congress Control Number: 2016960204

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-4739-9161-3
ISBN: 978-1-4739-9162-0 (pbk)

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Introduction

Adam Bushnell and David Waugh



This book focuses on writing across the primary curriculum. Throughout the book, contributors show how writing can be an integral part of their subjects, offering opportunities for consolidation of ideas and creative responses to learning.

Every subject in the primary curriculum is covered, including religious education, social, moral, spiritual and cultural education and modern languages. We also devote a chapter to writing non-fiction.

The contributors have been drawn from schools, universities and organisations that are strongly involved in education and educational consultants. All have in common a passion for sharing good practice and a keen desire to develop children's ability to express themselves in writing.

Each chapter provides research focuses, critical questions, activities and reflections to encourage you to consider your own practice in the light of what you have read. There are also case studies to demonstrate how teachers and trainee teachers have used developed writing in the classroom. The chapters also include recommended further reading to enable you to develop stronger insights into how teachers can help children move beyond early writing.

In Chapter 1, David Waugh maintains that there is a misconception among some children that good writing has to be lengthy. He argues that it is important that we show that high-quality writing can be concise and convey powerful messages briefly, and provides several examples of writing that can engage children, which focuses on quality and concision.

Chapter 2 examines non-fiction writing across the curriculum in order to provide an overview of possibilities before individual subjects are explored. Adam Bushnell, Rob Smith and Sarah McAllister assert that non-fiction is a genre of writing that is extremely varied and offers lots of opportunities for multiple types of writing.

Lynn Thompson and David Bolden make a powerful case for the place of writing in mathematics in Chapter 3. Children need to develop fluency so they can *describe* their mathematical understanding; they need to develop this understanding so they can *explain* their mathematics; and they need to deepen their understanding in order to *communicate* and reason mathematically and to solve problems. The authors maintain that children should write in a variety of ways, using words as labels, short sentences to add clarity to their work, paragraphs and longer pieces of prose to communicate their understanding – to describe, compare, predict, interpret, explain and justify. The chapter includes thought-provoking examples of activities which bring writing into mathematics.

We make no apology for including two chapters on writing in science: science is a broad subject, which is subdivided into subjects at secondary school. In Chapter 4, Lynn Newton argues that one of the priorities in science education has to be to provide opportunities for the learners to communicate, record and interpret information. Children should be able to report findings from investigations, including written explanations of results, explanations involving causal relationships and conclusions. The chapter includes a fascinating forensic science activity, *Who Robbed Teddy?*

In Chapter 5, Rachel Simpson draws upon her own experience of visiting the Galápagos Islands and the work she subsequently did in school to show that creative writing about biology can inform, engage, demonstrate knowledge and develop understanding. She maintains that these are important skills for children to both recognise and practise, as they start to think like scientists and organise their knowledge through their writing.

Douglas P. Newton maintains in Chapter 6 that writing in design and technology offers specific opportunities for writing to support purposeful thought and, hence, develop competence in practical problem solving. In addition, it offers opportunities for descriptive and informative writing. His examples of activities and case studies are imaginative and have great potential for engaging young minds.

In Chapter 7, Rosie Ridgway discusses the opportunities that computing as a 'new' subject in the curriculum offers for developing writing. The chapter explores how computing supports learners to develop strategic approaches, organise activities, develop creative projects, evaluate and improve writing and communicate with authentic audiences. She offers vivid examples of writing through computing using a range of approaches. For example, demonstrating how with careful planning, social media (like blogging) can offer learners a global audience for their written work.

In Chapter 8, Andrew Joyce-Gibbons argues that we need to enable the articulation of balanced and evidence-based explanations of the past, explanations that use the language of possibility, of chronology and of compromise. Andrew provides interesting examples of historical writing and expresses clear views on what constitutes successful teaching and learning in his subject.

Adam Bushnell, Heather Jarvis and Emma and Mark Anyan look, in Chapter 9, at music as a stimulus for writing, providing examples across the primary age range. They also explore the possibilities that song lyrics provide for children to develop poetic writing. They argue that finding meanings within lyrics is also good for developing comprehension techniques. Difficult subject areas can be studied by looking at rap songs like Lowkey and Logic's *Relatives*.

Of all the subjects in the curriculum, PE may seem the least likely to provide opportunities for children's writing yet, in Chapter 10, Jonathan Doherty shows that being active and interacting with others and to solve problems through movement provide rich opportunities for classroom writing. Jonathan begins by offering 23 possibilities for getting children writing through physical education.

Angela Gill's Chapter 11 shows that writing in geography can produce outcomes such as a new mapping symbol for a local landmark, or a report debating and justifying opinions about opening a new mine near a settlement. Angela argues that we use geography and writing as part of our everyday lives: drawing a map to guide someone to a place or, perhaps, checking and sharing the weather app on our devices. Such writing activities enable children to collect, analyse, interpret and communicate.

Adam Bushnell and the Education Team at the Bowes Museum show how the written word can be stimulated by the beautiful and the grotesque through art. Chapter 12 includes examples of ways in which literature, portraits and ancient art works can be used so that art and writing can be studied side by side.

In Chapter 13, Tina Page maintains that writing in a foreign language can be supported with a cross-curricular approach: all primary curriculum subjects can be reference points. For example, English can be used to consolidate understanding a foreign language story or poem; geography can supply a foreign language focus on an ecological theme; and religious education can support a foreign language in intercultural awareness.

In Chapter 14, Adam Bushnell and Staff of Durham Cathedral Education Team provide practical examples of how Religious Education can produce not only effective learning, but also enhanced thinking skills and ultimately high-quality writing. The chapter looks at the potential for writing in the study of different religions and at common themes in world religions.

In the final chapter, Claire Patterson in association with Educate&Celebrate explore the teaching of British values, which is now part of the curriculum, and look at how children can be encouraged to become passionate about issues that are happening in the world they live in, including those surrounding LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) equality. They provide examples which show how teachers utilise this to enable children to create exceptional, relevant pieces of writing which can then be shared with the world via blogs and social media.

We hope that you will enjoy reading the contributions of our various authors and will gain the same stimulation and enthusiasm for writing that we did as the chapters arrived.

Adam Bushnell
David Waugh
March 2017