CASE STUDY REPORT

Planning for progression using the Support for Writing materials

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This study was originally published in 2010 as part of the 'What Works Well' initiative, part of the National Strategies for Education in England.

Abstract

Background: The purpose of the study was to use the 'Support for Writing' materials to ensure progress through whole class and guided precision teaching, within a unit of work, to support teachers with resources, strategies and activities for target groups of pupils.

Aims: The main aim of this CPD was to use the 'Support for Writing' materials to ensure progress through whole class and guided precision teaching, with the intention of developing resources, strategies and activities to support teachers with target groups of pupils.

Methods: Participants were teachers from various schools who attended CPD sessions to learn about Support for Writing materials, APP and AfL principles, and how to use them to improve pupil learning. Methods used included CPD sessions, gap task contributions, teacher assessment, pupil work, and teacher evaluations to measure progress and impact on learning. Resources such as Primary Strategy Consultant support, websites, and Power Points were used to support teachers.

Findings: The main findings of this CPD are that teachers have developed greater understanding and confidence in teaching text structure, organization, and paragraphing, and that pupils have become more engaged and motivated to write with greater detail and confidence.

Implications: The findings of this CPD suggest that using Support for Writing materials, APP and AfL principles, and visual literacy, drama and speaking and listening activities can help motivate pupils to write confidently and with growing independence. This has had a positive impact on pupil learning, teaching, and school organisation and leadership.

This abstract was generated by Camtree using a large language model (LLM) and added to the original report in 2023.

Keywords: Primary education; Assessment and target setting; Creativity; Transfer and transition; English - reading; English - speaking and listening; English - writing

Introduction

What were your reasons for doing this type of development work?

This continuing professional development (CPD) was developed in response to nationally and locally identified concernsabout pupil progress at upper Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. The intention was to use the'Support for Writing' materials to ensure progress through whole class andguided precision teaching, within a unit of work. We wanted to develop the gaptask 'Planning for Progression' booklet we had begun in 2007–8 further, tosupport teachers with resources, strategies and activities for target groups ofpupils.

Who might find this case study useful?

- Head of school improvement
- Headteacher
- Middle leader
- National Strategies consultant
- Senior leadership team (SLT)
- SIP (School Improvement Partner)
- Subject leader
- Teacher

Description

What specific curriculum area, subject or aspect did you intend to have impact on?

- Assessment and target setting
- Creativity
- Transfer and transition
- English - reading
- English - speaking and listening
- English - writing

How did you intend to impact on pupil learning?

- Enhance teacher subject knowledge through practical application of the 'Supportfor Writing' resources, Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) and Assessment forLearning (AfL) principles.
- Provide a context for writing creatively toimprove writing skills in Strand 10, Assessment Focus (AF) 3 and AF4.
- Motivate pupils to write confidently and with growing independence usingvisual literacy, drama and speaking and listening activities.

What were your success criteria?

Teachers to be able to:

- identify a target group of children
- planand teach a unit of work matched to their personalised learning needs
- monitor their progress
- measure the impact on learning
- presenttheir findings across the LA.

Pupils to be able to:

- present wholetexts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events(AF3)
- construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs(AF4)

What information or data did you use to measure progress towards your success criteria?

- Pupils' work

Describe the CPD approaches you used

CPD Outline

Part 1 Content - QualityFirst Teaching; APP; Support for Writing; Precision Intervention; Set Gap Task

Part 2 - Participants to undertake Gap Task in school

Part 3 Content -Gap Task feedback/discussions; Blooms Taxonomy (developing readingcomprehension); The Teaching Sequence Bubbles; The Writing Quadrant; Talk forWriting

During the CPD, teachers explored the teaching approaches listedabove. They identified which approaches would be most appropriate to use withtheir identified target group, and have the greatest impact on their writingoutcomes. The teachers were fully involved in the activities, as "the pupil" todemonstrate the effectiveness of varied teaching approaches.

We(consultants) provided the resources to support the units of work.

Weprovided opportunities for participants to network and share good practice.

We supported teachers in improving planning for writing using the PrimaryFramework.

Gap Task

At the end of CPD Part 3, we collected gaptask contributions from the teachers. These included samples of pupils work,teachers planning, completed APP guidelines, photographs, interactive whiteboardflipcharts and any other relevant materials produced by teachers for theirchosen unit. Teachers also provided a completed gap task proforma.

Theproforma asked: "which group was identified and why; what they did andwhat the impact on learning had been; how the task could be changed toimprove learning in the future."

The gap task contributions were collatedfor each year group and sent for printing. All contributions provided wereincluded in the three year group volumes and the proformas introduced eachindividual school's section.

Teachers were also asked to consider howthey would use the SfW materials in their future planning and teaching.

So that teachers could share their contributions, a CD was also producedand attached to the books for each year group.

The CDs will enable teachersto personalise the resources with ease, so that they match their pupils learningneeds.

The content of each year group booklet is the original work fromthe schools and has not been altered in any way.

What CPD materials, research or expertise have you drawn on?

Primary Strategy Consultant support

Who provided you with support?

- Leading teacher

How were you supported?

Prior to Part 3 of the CPD, a Lead teacher and an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) were asked to use the Support for Writing materials within a unit of work of their choice.

They presented the teaching approaches they used and the impact they had on pupils' learning.

Impact

Thoughts you think are relevant to overall impact on learning

The focus on an unfamiliar person from history eg Grace Darling or Walter Tull:

- Engaged pupils by starting with a picture
- Pupils workingco-operatively – use of KWL grids; QUADS; Enquiry
- Use of "post-itparagraphing" to organise notes
- Explicit, relevant and appropriate linksacross the curriculum
- Gradual development of the teaching sequenceproviding opportunities to talk, question, research then write.
- Pupilcuriosity and eagerness to be a 'detective', to discover the character in thepicture, their life and importance in history
- Providing opportunities touse a range of drama techniques to improve writing

To summarise, a quotefrom a Year 3 Teacher:

The children were engaged from the start. It wasclear they felt full ownership over their learning as they wanted to know moreabout the person. Breaking each step down into sections, which were then easilyadapted to fit the target, allowed not only myself but the children to see thelinks, and take steps to meet the target, being aware of why they were doingit.

Quotes you think are relevant to overall impact on learning

Quotes from teachers:

The children independently and confidently wrote their own information text using paragraphs.

The children thoroughly enjoyed theunit of work because it worked so well with their topic work. We saw them usingtheir literacy skills in their other work.

The majority of children arestill paragraphing in their writing and have a clear idea why they are doing it.

Children very excited and motivated, lots of good quality discussion,questioning and answers.

Much more detail from boys with excellentdescriptive and technical vocabulary used.

More reluctant writers were keento write and to improve language.

By the writing stage, the children wantedto write because their confidence had built up and they had a bank of knowledgeto use.

Children who were reluctant speakers were more willing to sharetheir thoughts.

The children have also begun to write in paragraphs in otherunits of work.

Quantitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Periodic teacher assessment

Qualitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Pupils' work

Describe the evidence of impact on pupil learning

As this LA CPD focused on a unit of work and its teaching approaches,evidence of impact on learning is not immediate. But the materials teachersbrought to Day 3 provided evidence of impact on pupil learning.

ON theSummary page are sample extracts from the year group school gap task books. Wethank Brookside Primary School, Etchells Primary School, and St Mary's (MarpleBridge) Primary School Stockport for sharing their contributions on thiswebsite.

What has been the impact on teaching?

Greater understanding and confidence in teaching text structure, organisationand paragraphing.

Strengthened planning opportunities, making relevantand appropriate curriculum links for writing

Greater impact on learningwas evident when the teachers had identified a a target group and taught totheir specific learning needs

Increased teacher demonstration writing

Growing use and familiarity with the Primary Strategy Framework site

Quotes you think are relevant to the impact on teaching

Quotes from Teachers:

The Steps for Learning helped with differentiation andscaffolding of AfL for children so that they knew their next steps moreexplicitly.

Questioning strategies for developing comprehension andguided reading.

Using post-its to build up ideas then transferring theseto create sections/paragraphs.

Making teaching exciting again! Step bystep ideas for building writing.

Evidence of impact on teaching

- Evidence from planning
- Teacher perceptions

Describe the evidence of impact on teaching

There is evidence from teacher evaluations, discussions and the gap taskbooklets of teachers:

- greater focus on planning and learning in thereading and writing AFs identified through APP
- use of Support forWriting
- use of Text Types
- use of Steps in Learning
- use ofwriting targets linked to Strands 9, 10 and 11 and objectives fordifferentiation
- use of activities to support learning eg KWL grid, post-itnotes, conscience alley, hot seating, Photos

as stimulus for writing, etc.

Evidence from the 'Planning for Progression' books show:

- the useof ICT eg IWB flipcharts
- curriculum links made with DT; History; Science;Geography
- use of APP guidelines
- use of a range of planning
- adaptation of unit to use Support for Writing with a Narrative focus
- pupils note-making; photographic evidence; pupil targets.

What has been the impact on school organisation and leadership?

Shared understanding of expectations and outcomes in schools across the LA aspart of a three-year developmental model:

- 2007–8 focused CPD and gap taskwith Yrs1, 3 and 5
- 2008–9 focused CPD and gap task with Yrs 2, 3 and 4
- 2009–10 focused CPD and gap task with Yrs 1 and 2 together, Yrs 4 and 5together leading to the embedding of key pedagogies in teaching and learningto raise standards in writing across the primary phase.

Evidence of impact on school organisation and leadership

There is a growing culture of sharing practice between colleagues across the LA.

The gap task has taken on "a life of its own!"

Teachers eagerlycontribute, await its publication and delivery of their personal copy of the GapTask Booklet to share in school.

Summary

What is the crucial thing that made the difference?

The entire CPD is part of a strategic LA approach to raising standards over 3years. Supply funding is available for gap task when a participant attendsthe Part 3 session. All participants are expected to contribute to the gaptask booklet – you don't receive a copy unless you contribute.

Acknowledgement of contribution is recognised in the booklet with theparticipants name and their school. Teachers liked that colleagues had givenpermission for them to 'magpie' their ideas, resources, planning, IWB flipcharts, etc. from the gap task booklets, relevant to their year group.

What key resources would people who want to learn from your experience need access to?

- Websites previously listed and CPD
- Power Points from Yrs 2 and 4.

What CPD session and resources were particularly useful?

- 'Planning for Progression' Gap task booklets
- Websites previously listed
- CPD Power Points from Yrs 2, 3, 4
- 'What works well' proforma forparticipants to complete which included sections on: Which group did youidentify?; Why was this group identified?; What did you?; What was the impact?;If you used the SfW

materials again, how would you use them?

If another individual or school was attempting to replicate this work, where would they start and what would the essential elements be?

- Secure funding and time to ensure the gap task can be fully completed byteachers.
- Identify year groups for CPD.
- Invite schools to take part in CPD.
- Set a CPD content outline and expectations of participation.
- Set asidetime for planning, acquiring and collating resources.
- Set aside time forpreparing, organising and publishing costs of the year group books.

What further developments are you planning to do (or would you like to see others do)?

Third year of the LA strategy offers specific CPD to Years 1 and 2 together and Years4 and 5 together building on the Support and Talk for Writing materials.

Supplementary Materials

This report is accompanied in the library by the following supplementary material:

- Part 3 Gap task proforma
- Year 2 CPD Part 1
- Year 2 CPD Part 2
- Year 4 CPD Part 2
- Year 4 CPD Part 1
- Year 2 sample Gap Task Book contribution
- Year 4-5 sample Gap Task Book contribution
- Year 3 sample Gap Task Book contribution

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About 'What Works Well'

This case study was originally published as part of the 'What Works Well' section of the National Strategies for Education in England. The National Strategies were professional programmes aiming for improvements in the quality of learning and teaching in schools in England. 'What Works Well' involved teaching practitioners from all phases and areas of education sharing accounts of real developments which had improved learning and teaching, and made a difference to pupil progress. 'What Works Well' case studies were designed to support practice transfer and include sufficient detail and resources to enable others to implement the effective practice described. They were reviewed by experts prior to publication as 'User Generated Content' (UGC) under a licence which encouraged reuse and derivative works, but which precluded commercial use.

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