What is 'Talk for Writing'?

Talk for writing is an approach we use at Laygate Community School to improve standards of writing.

Writing can be very challenging for all children.

Here are some of the challenges they face: *having ideas, having enough ideas, shaping the whole text, achieving sophisticated expression, varied sentence structure and a strong and growing vocabulary.*

Talk for writing supports children by giving them lots of model examples of writing that they can learn from.

Talk for writing is split into different phases.

IMITATION

Before the imitation phase starts the children will have a go at the text type they are about to study. This is called a 'cold write'. It tells the teacher what the child needs to focus on in improving their writing in the coming weeks. Imitation phase is when the children really get to know what text type they are going to be learning about. They read and retell the text and look at the structure, the language and other features that they need to know for their own writing.
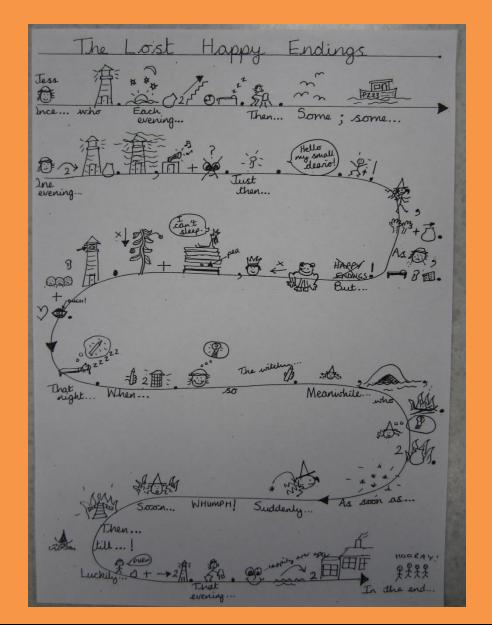
Pupils work as a whole class, in small groups or in pairs to act out and retell the text.

INNOVATION

This phase is when the teacher uses shared writing (writing as a class) to create a text that is very similar to the one they have just learnt in the imitation phase. They would use similar language and the same structure. Children are encouraged to keep rereading their work and to edit as they go to improve their writing. Within this phase we would also encourage children to 'magpie' good ideas/vocabulary to use in their own writing.

At this stage the pupils follow a text map or plan to help structure the text and to use effective sentence structures and vocabulary.

INVENTION

The invention phase is when the children are expected to write independently. Their final piece of writing is called the 'hot write'. This final piece should show what they have learnt over the last few weeks. The independent piece shows the teacher whether a child has understood the structure and language choices. It will also inform the teacher what needs to be a focus in the next unit of work.