



DOHA BRITISH SCHOOL

Keeping up with
the Kids

Talk for Writing

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Talk for Writing

“If you can’t say it, you can’t write it”

At DBS our priority is to raise writing standards across the school. We believe that Talk for Writing is the way to do this. It not only excites and motivates children to write, it also emphasises the importance of reading and engages children in fun, cross-curricular activities. In sharing the Tfw model with parents our aim is to develop a reading culture both in school and at home as we believe the best readers are the best writers.

A Brief Overview of Tfw

Talk for writing is a Literacy approach developed by Pie Corbett, which is based on the principle that children need to say it before they write it.

“In order for you to be able to write in any text type, the writer has to be very familiar with it...a powerful way to internalise language patterns comes through ‘hearing it’ and ‘saying it’ – talking the text type.”

Pie Corbett

Tfw follows three key stages-

1. Imitation- children learn the story orally so that it becomes embedded in their working memory and is embedded into their linguistic repertoire.
2. Innovation- Once children are familiar with a story they adapt it in order to create a new version.
3. Invention- children draw upon a range of stories to create their own.

Throughout all the stages children are engaged in meaningful language and writing activities. This booklet contains activities that you can use to support your child at home.

Recommended Books

Below are some books that are ideal for retelling with your child.

Picture Books ideal for Early Years:

- Where's Spot? - Eric Carle
- Dear Zoo - Rod Campbell
- Handa's Surprise - Eileen Browne
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Eric Carle
- We're going on a Bear Hunt - Michael Rosen
- Owl Babies - Martin Waddell
- The Gingerbread Man
- The Little Red Hen

Picture Books for KS1:

- Gruffalo - Julia Donaldson
- The Tiger who Came to Tea - Judith Kerr
- On the Way Home - Jill Murphy
- Can't You Sleep Little Bear - Martin Waddell
- Billy's Bucket - Kes Gray & Garry Parsons
- You Choose - Nick Sharratt (ideal for choosing characters, settings and objects when making up stories)

Books for KS2:

- The Minpins - Roald Dahl
- Flat Stanley - Jeff Brown
- The Ice Palace - Tarjei Vesaas
- The Firework-maker's Daughter - Philip Pullman
- I was a Rat! - Philip Pullman
- The Big Friendly Giant - Roald Dahl
- Goodnight Mister Tom - Michelle Magorian
- The Midnight Fox - Betsy Cromer Byars

Useful Websites:

<http://www.storylineonline.net/>

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/gingerbread/index.html>

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/programmes/primary/time-to-read>

Retell a Familiar Story

You can make storytelling easier by choosing a story with a repetitive pattern and phrases e.g The Gruffalo or The Three Billy Goats Gruff.

Activities:

- Encourage your child to join in with repeated phrases from the story.
- Watch it and join in- you can find lots of story videos on You Tube.
- Actions- use actions to help your child remember the story.
- Use puppets and toys to retell the story.
- Create your own puppet using card, socks or toilet roll tubes and use it for retelling.
- Draw a story map- draw the main events in the story.
- In pairs, retell a story sentence by sentence.

Person 1: Once upon a time there was a little old lady who decided to bake a gingerbread man

Person 2: First she rolled out the gingerbread man then she popped him in the oven

Person 1: She could smell the gingerbread man cooking

Person 2: As soon as she opened the oven door, the gingerbread man ran out of the house.

- Babble Gabble- retell a story as fast you can.
- For KS2 children retell a paragraph from a book, story or a movie.
- Dictionary- use a dictionary to find the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Become a Storyteller

You can make a familiar tale your own by:

Alteration- changing the story

- Change the setting- a city instead of a forest or under the sea instead of on the farm.
- Change the nature of a character- a big, bad wolf becomes a kind, friendly wolf.

Addition- add something new

- Simple additions- one day= one sunny day
- Add more description- adjectives, adverbs, verbs and similes
- Add a new character- a little old lady, a little old man and a giant
- Add more dialogue between the characters- what else did the gingerbread man say to the cow?

Substitution - change the words

- Names of the characters- a big friendly giant instead of a little old lady.
- Types of animals- The Three Black Sheep instead of the Billy Goats Gruff

Create your own-

- Create a Storybox- collect figures, animals and objects and encourage your child to use them to tell a story.

Talking about Stories

- First thoughts – after hearing a story, think of a word that captures their feelings or that seems to sum up a key theme in the story.
- Magpie- steal interesting words and ideas from whatever you read.
- Write a book review- would you recommend it to a friend? Why?
- Write a blurb for a book.
- Bring the book to life- bake and taste gingerbread men, find out what a cottage looks like, build a boat for the gingerbread man to cross the river.
- Change the words- use a thesaurus to find new words. How many can you find?

Writing Activities

- Shrink a Story- rewrite a story in 100 words.
- Guess the Tale- write a story in 50 words and see if you can guess the tale.
- Draw your favourite part of the story.
- Write a speech bubble for a character e.g “you can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man”.
- Encourage your child to talk and then write in role as a character from the story- write a letter from the gingerbread man to the little old lady explaining why he ran away.
- Write a diary entry.
- Write a description for a character. Use a thesaurus to find more interesting words.
- Write an opening paragraph for a story.