

## Lesson study; case 2 teaching writing

### Cases:

2 Year 6 boys with SEN with focus on slow progress in writing:  
Case Pupil A has AS and Case Pupil B has ADHD and dyslexia.

### Research Question:

How effective are different teaching ideas explored through the lesson study approach in improving the progress in writing of two Year 6 boys with SEN?

### LS team:

Three teachers, one of whom was SENCO, doing training course.

### Research lesson teaching:

The LS team group decided that one teacher would observe pupil A and another pupil B. Pupil worked in pairs and the RL was planned to benefit that child but also other children with similar difficulties.

Prior to beginning this research, both boys were interviewed (one to one) about their perception of their writing skills and their attitudes towards writing

Pupil perspectives on writing:	Pupil A	Pupil B
What do you like about writing?	I don't like writing.	Nothing.
Is there anything you don't like about writing? Can you explain why?	I don't know	Spelling. I'm no good at it.
What writing skills are you good at?	Joined handwriting	None.
What writing skills do you need help with?	I don't know	Spelling. Full stops and that.
What writing skills would you like to be better at?	I don't know.	Spelling. Handwriting – I want to get my pen licence

### LS. Cycle 1:

Cycle 1 explored the use of film as a stimulus for writing, but data was collected on a different date for each case pupil, using a different piece of film.

Research lesson planning: cycle 1	
Pupil A success criteria	Pupil B success criteria
Focus and concentrate on writing throughout lesson Include interesting and imaginative details Keep to narrative style Write half a page of interesting / imaginative narrative	Remain positive and focused throughout lesson Write narrative using dictionary, word banks, - adult / child support with spelling as needed Write at least half a page of interesting narrative without difficulties with spelling being a barrier.
Research lesson 1 timing: stage	Teaching activity
1	Identify good features in example text (story opening for pupil A and description of planet for pupil B) (10 minutes)
2	Watch and discuss video clips of penalties (pupil A) and extract from BBC The planets (pupils B) (10 minutes)
3	Independent writing (20minutes)
4	Sharing and evaluating own and partner's writing (10 minutes)

<b>RL1 expect and observe template</b>				
<b>Lesson stage</b>	<b>How expect A to respond</b>	<b>How A observed to respond</b>	<b>How expect B to respond</b>	<b>How B observed to respond</b>
1	Find it challenging to identify good features in time available	Started reading story opening while still handed out to class; followed text as read by teacher; spent time underlining text, while listening. On task but unwilling to answer. Questions; no discussion with partner	Will need reminders to focus; will let partner do most of work	Followed text when read by teacher; worked sensibly with partner once spoken to by TA; did not put up hand during discussion, but had good answer when asked directly
2	Keen to share thoughts, particularly factual information about player, team, events	Recognised 2 <sup>nd</sup> goal (seen before) was really interested, then uninterested in feeling words, wanted to focus only on factual details in clips	Will need reminding to focus ; may put up hand to share thoughts.	Remained focussed throughout clip from The planets and keen to share thoughts.
3	Need support to start and remain focussed. Not write much, finding that including imaginative detail challenging.	Did not want to start, not find his pencil; borrowed a pencil and then began without problem; he drew on the match to support his ideas; gave lots of information, not much character response.	Will rely on others for support with spelling; need reminding to focus on task.	Began straight away; asked nearby peers for spellings and also from TAs, who came to sit at his table to support another child; he used dictionary independently from TA suggestion to do so.
4	Will be able to give partner feedback, probably focussing on punctuation and spelling.	Told partner words spelled incorrectly and correctly; pointed out missing full stops, apostrophes, capital letters and misplaced inverted commas.	Unlikely to share work willingly; will give some feedback to others	Reluctant to focus on reading through his own work; refocussed after being out of class for a few minutes to go to toilet; gave brief positive feedback to partner.
<b>Lesson stage</b>	<b>How expect A to respond</b>	<b>How A observed to respond</b>	<b>How expect B to respond</b>	<b>How B observed to respond</b>

<b>RL1: post-lesson review</b>		
	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
Progress made	He called the lesson the 'best literacy lesson ever' because of football link; managed to write more than usually, including how character might feel.	Focus during lesson better than usual; said he 'liked watching the space clip'; used others (peers, adults and dictionary) to support spelling; used more interesting and adventurous vocabulary than usual.
Initial reflections	Using clips of something pupil interested in motivated writing (though writing based on facts as he recognised the penalty clip)	Film stimulated writing; he used strategies to support spelling rather let it be barrier.

<b>RL1 pupil interviews</b>	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
What enjoy most about lesson?	Watching penalties	Watching film about space.
What did you learn?	That sometimes writing is fun.	To use brackets; got help from friends and TA with spelling
What did teacher do to help you?	Made lesson about football	Showed film clip; let us look at example writing first.
What change in lesson if taught to another group?	nothing	Have longer fil, so we get more ideas.

<b>RL1: post-lesson review</b>	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
What progress did each pupil make? (was this enough?)	Pleasing to see more motivation; improved output due to linking film to child's interest	Motivated by film; pleased to seem more positive attitude and difficulty with spelling not barrier to writing; more writing than usual.
Need to revise assessment of pupil?	Linking writing to child's interest likely to improve quality/quantity of writing	Continue to encourage more positive approach to writing
How teaching helped/hindered pupil's learning?	Use of film good motivator and helped learning.	Use of film, good motivator and helped learning.
What aspect of teaching could be adjusted to improve pupil learning?	Support pupil in planning writing: collect imaginative vocabulary, give checklist of features to include that child can. Tick off	Collect words to use before starting for TA to list (this gives correct spelling). Allow peer support to assist editing skills.

### LS cycle 2:

The aim of this RL was to explore the use of word processing instead of handwriting for writing poetry.

<b>Research lesson planning: cycle 2</b>	
<b>Pupil A success criteria</b>	<b>Pupil B success criteria</b>
To focus and concentrate on writing throughout lesson To write a poem on the The Secret using word processing rather than handwriting To use imaginative adventures vocabulary to create detailed ideas. To write own poem following the same structure as the example.	Remain positive and focused throughout lesson To write a poem on The Secret using word processing rather than handwriting To use the spellcheck feature on Word to correct misspelt words and ensure difficulties with spelling are not a barrier to writing To write own poem following the same structure as the example.
<b>Research lesson 1 timing: stage</b>	<b>Teaching activity</b>
<b>1</b>	Identify structure and good features of example poem, The Secret (10 mins)
<b>2</b>	Work in groups to brainstorm ideas for each verse (about 15 minutes)
<b>3</b>	Sharing and evaluating own and each other's writing (about 5 mins)
<b>4</b>	What progress has been made?

<b>RL1 expect and observe template</b>				
<b>Lesson stage</b>	<b>How expect A to respond</b>	<b>How A observed to respond</b>	<b>How expect B to respond</b>	<b>How B observed to respond</b>
1	Will be focused and keen to contribute ideas, particularly about the structure	Hand up top contribute to questions about the role of each verse in the poem	Will be focused and share ideas, particularly about the good features of the example poem	Shared example of an idea. He liked with the class and explained why when prompted.
2	Will let others write their ideas first; will want to write his own idea (rather let another child scribe); reluctant to pass the paper to the next group when instructed , if not finished recording his own idea	Need some encouragement to put his ideas down; elaborated his idea by adding detail when asked to; did not really pay attention to others' ideas in his group	Will have some ideas to share; will be happy to let another child scribe; will need reminding to stay with his group (will probably want to see what others groups are doing)	Missed initial group instruction, as been in toilet, but listened to an explanation of task from another child; initially engaged with task, then lost focus and looked to see what other groups were doing. Refocused following reassurance that his ideas were valuable to group; willingly contributed ideas as another child acted as scribe for the group
3	Will take time to get started and will type slowly using computer; will want to ensure layout of page is exactly as he wants it; will refer to group ideas she but will only use ideas he contributed;; will need reminding to elaborate and add descriptive detail.	Ng asked to suddenly realized he had not put the title, so deleted the completed first verse.; refused teacher's offer to retype first verse for him; needed teacher's attention and positive feedback on ideas he rewrote them – found it difficult to refocus after setback without this support. More positive again after he began the second verse; was keen to share his work with a TA who came into the room; completed poem in time allowed.	Will refer tot ideas sheets as support; will ask another child/adult how. To spell words he does not know but will use spell check on Word for any spellings identified by the computer programme.	Quickly logged into the computer; looked for support from another child/ teacher to set up the page. Then began working. Sat still and self-motivated. Lost concentrations after 15 minutes but refocused when asked. He used spell checker. Helped another child who asked him to help with punctuation. Became annoyed when another child based an idea on open of his –'that's cheating'. Unable to sustain concentration further even when asked. Ran out of time half way through third verse.
4	Will read through own work and give positive feedback to partner	Showed much pride in his work; keen to share with the class; gave appropriate feedback to partner	Will read through own work with reluctance; unlikely to make any correction/improvements without support	Read through own work briefly; no changes made; went to the toilet therefore unable to share work with the class /feedback to others.
<b>Lesson stage</b>	<b>How expect A to respond</b>	<b>How A observed to respond</b>	<b>How expect B to respond</b>	<b>How B observed to respond</b>

<b>RL2: post-lesson review</b>		
	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
Progress made	Wrote complete poem in less time that would if done by hand; ideas were imaginative and enjoyed that he could be 'off the wall' with them; appealed to his sense of humour; very pleasing writing	Worked well for most of lesson; enjoyed word processing; no spelling mistakes; used. Spell checker and independently asked others for spelling support
Initial reflections	Really benefitted from following a given structure and group ideas to refer to; found word processing very motivating despite setback of forgetting title	Wrote more using WP than he would have if hand written; enjoyed feeling confident that spelling was accurate.

<b>RL1: post-lesson pupil interview</b>	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
What did you learn?	Using computer; writing own poem; reading it out	Using computer
What did teacher do to help you?	Better at typing	Using computer spell checker
What change in lesson if taught to another group?	Let me use computer	Using computer and spell checker; told me ideas were good

<b>RL2: post-lesson review</b>	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
What progress did each pupil make? (was this enough?)	Completed task in much less time than if done by handwriting; chance to include 'off the wall' ideas; more imaginative descriptive piece. than usual	Poem incomplete but interesting and without spelling errors; given structure was helpful
Need to revise assessment of pupil?	Continue to give writing structure where possible; more imaginative ideas arise from task that allows 'off the wall' responses	Strategies like. Use of spell checker allows spelling difficulties to be less of barrier
How teaching helped/hindered pupil's learning?	Use of group ideas sheet was helpful; even though he only used own ideas; he could refer back to them rather than have to rec all them	Using computer meant he sat closer to other pupils than usually; therefore was more aware of what other children near him were doing; so his negative reaction when he saw another other using one of his ideas from poem
What aspect of teaching could be adjusted to improve pupil learning?	Task finished in detail without extra time being needed.	Computer use motivated him to produce writing without spelling errors.
What aspect of teaching could be adjusted next time to improve progress of case pupil?	Set up Word page before lesson (font, size, title etc.)	Find ways of computer use further away from others; perhaps laptop; set up page beforehand; allow time complete on another day.

### LS cycle 3:

The final cycle followed the same pattern, with a focus on writing a recount of a school trip

Research lesson planning: cycle 1	
Pupil A success criteria	Pupil B success criteria
Focus and concentrate on writing throughout lesson Write a recount of the year 6 trip to Cathedral To include feelings about different parts of the day To write recount that uses paragraphs, wide range of punctuation, include feelings about parts of the day	To keep positive attitude and remain focused throughout lesson Write a recount of the year 6 trip to Cathedral To use a dictionary, words banks to support spelling Write a recount of trip using paragraphs, accurate spelling and punctuation, including feelings about different parts of the day
Research lesson 1 timing: stage	Teaching activity
1	Small group discussion about trip – favourite parts, what they did, who they met (about 5 mins)
2	Produce class mind map of trip (about 15 mins)
3	Independent writing (use mind map as support) and each other's writing
4	Sharing and evaluating own

RL3 expect and observe template				
Lesson stage	How expect A to respond	How A observed to respond	How expect B to respond	How B observed to respond
1	Will listen to other members of the group, but unlikely to. contribute unless asked directly	Not interested as missed trip due to illness; paid some attention to rest of group, but no interaction; not ask any questions despite being told to by teacher	Probably be happy to let others in group. Do most of talking; probably share something he found amusing	Listened to other children in group; rubbed eyes and did not contribute at first, then made funny comments
2	Will give some factual responses (e.g. how many people in drama class)	Head down on desk; not focused; became interested in length of journey – wanted to know how long it took; became more attentive as others brought in humour. Responded to teacher's direct questions but not when teacher addressed whole class; sat slumped on chair, fidgeting with pencil. More interested again when told what drama he would have done had he been there; lost focus again, facing wrong way and fiddling with pencil	Will give some responses about the day, particularly about things he found amusing or interesting.	Not focused; Yawned, scratched head, head on desk, played with glasses, fiddled with pencil; Distracted a. child sitting near him, deliberately dropping. Things on floor for her to pick up. Made comments to child next to him, 'What did I do, cannot remember'; became animated when another child talked about game drama group had played; responded to teacher's direct question; then lost focus. Head on table. Rocked chair back and forward; became interested again when discussion changed to the banner they created together.
3	Will find it difficult to get started without support; will stick to the facts –	Asked to write about recount from perspective of other children as he had been absent; very reluctant to start; fiddling	Will need support to get started; will produce about half a page about the trip; will use mind map for spelling, but need	Made silly comments behind his hand, to make nearby children laugh; continued even when they ignored him. When asked by teacher

	unlikely to include feelings unless directly told to and supported	with something under the desk; told teacher he could not write but unable to say why, when asked. Teacher wrote date and title for him; did not write anything; very disengaged' said 'can I just leave it in my head?'; finally gave teacher a sentence for her to write down; continued like this refusing to tell teacher next sentence for her to write down.	reminding to use dictionary for other words.	directly to start writing, he took off glasses and put head on table; then. Began some writing after discussion with teacher. Used mind map as support for spelling and to structure the text.; focused on writing for about 20 minutes, with teacher support every few minutes to stop fiddling, rocking chair and refocus.
4	Will read through own work briefly; will not want to share writing with the class	Refused to add anymore to the opening sentence scribed by the teacher; continued fiddling while others were sharing their work.	Will read through own work; will prefer peer to adult support to make corrections/improvements	Briefly read through his work, then asked to go to the toilet; returned at the end of the lesson.
<b>Lesson stage</b>	<b>How expect A to respond</b>	<b>How A observed to respond</b>	<b>How expect B to respond</b>	<b>How B observed to respond</b>

<b>RL3: post-lesson review</b>		
	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
Progress made	No progress this lesson; found engaging with task very difficult as had missed the trip on which writing was based; unable/unwilling to write from another child's perspective	Wrote recount of the day but did not include paragraphs or edits his work; used mind map for spelling support but not use dictionary
Initial reflections	Time did not allow for another trip to enable him to have opportunity to write recount	Pupil had not taken does of Ritalin; ability to focus affected greatly as a result.

<b>RL3: post-lesson pupil interview</b>	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
What did you learn?	nothing	Talking about drama we did
What did teacher do to help you?	I do not know	The mind map
What change in lesson if taught to another group?	Write about trip I have been on	Nothing

<b>RL3: post-lesson review</b>	<b>Pupil A</b>	<b>Pupil B</b>
What progress did each pupil make? (was this enough?)	No progress due to unwilling ness to engage in task; outcome different if been on trip	Recount completed but not to usual standard; focus and concentration affected by no ritalin
How teaching helped/hindered pupil's learning?	Expected that writing from first hand experience. Would have made task easier for him; mind map would have been useful support	Writing about an event experienced first hand. Made completing task easier; writing imaginatively without Ritalin would have been more difficult for him; mind map helpful as spelling support.

What aspect of teaching could be adjusted to improve pupil learning?	If time had allowed, writing a recount of another trip. That he had been on would have allowed interesting comparison	.If time allowed writing recount of another trip on a day where Ritalin had been taken would allow interesting comparison
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<b>LS overall findings</b>	
What were main findings about the pupils? What ways will this change your teaching?	Use of film when linked to child's interests is good motivator and increase writing output;  Use of word processor rather than hand written work was motivating and also includes useful spell checker' will use computers for. Writing more often  Tasks allowing use of more 'off the wall'/random. Ideas appeal to some children
What are key learnings you will share with colleagues?	Writing tasks that link with. Child's interests are likely to produce improved quality/quantity of written work

### End of Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment Framework of writing attainment

	<b>Pupil A:</b>	<b>Pupil B:</b>
before LS	Can use tense verbs consistently and correctly throughout writing Can spell correctly mots words from year 5/6 list and use dictionary to check spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary.	None
After LS	Can write for range of audiences and purposes Can in narrative describe characters, settings and atmosphere Can integrate dialogue in narrative to convey character and advance action Can select vocabulary and grammatical structure that reflects what the writing requires. Can use a range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs Can use tense verbs consistently and correctly throughout writing Can spell correctly mots words from year 5/6 list and use dictionary to check spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary.	Can write for range of audiences and purposes Can in narrative describe characters, settings and atmosphere Can select vocabulary and grammatical structure that reflects what the writing requires. Can use a range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs Can use tense verbs consistently and correctly throughout writing

### Summary and conclusions

Neither pupil reported liking writing at the start. Pupil A was unable to explain what he did not like about it, but felt he was good at joined handwriting and spelling. Pupil B referred to not being 'good at' spelling and could not think of any aspect of writing he was good at. When asked about what writing skills they wanted to be better at and needed help with, pupil A simply replied 'I don't know', whereas pupil B mentioned spelling; 'full stops and that'; and a desire to 'get my pen licence' (given for consistently neat, joined handwriting).

The Teacher Assessment Framework for writing showed that both boys' writing attainment had minimal evidence for 'Working at the expected standard', particularly pupil B. It was clear that both boys needed support to feel more positive about writing if their progress was to improve, as well as the necessity to improve their writing skills.

#### Cycle 1: Use of Film

LS showed how the film clips tailored to each boy's interests had a positive effect on their writing. Pupil A called the lesson 'the best literacy ever' because of the link with his obsession of football. He wrote more than he would usually do and he included how the character might feel. Not surprisingly for a child with AS, he based his writing in fact, as he recognised the games the penalty clips came from rather than added imaginary detail of his own. Pupil B's focus during the lesson was better than usual, making effective use of other children, adults and a dictionary to support his spelling. He used some interesting and more adventurous vocabulary than usual, and that he used strategies to support his spelling rather than let it be a barrier.

#### Cycle 2: Use of Word Processing

The use of word processing had a very positive effect on the attitude of both boys and on the writing they produced during the lesson. This supports research findings on the benefits of ICT. Both boys found use of the computer very motivating, particularly Pupil A, as indicated above. Pupil B's writing was interesting and contained no spelling mistakes through using spell checker and asking others for support. This pupil was able to tell teacher what helped him with his writing.

#### Cycle 3: A Recount Following a School Trip

Both boys' responses to Cycle 3 were disappointing due to unexpected circumstances which meant that the effect of writing about a school trip on their writing skills could not properly be investigated. It would have been useful to repeat this cycle but unfortunately time constraints meant this was not possible.

### **Writing Attainment and Attitudes after LS**

The pupil interviews after the 3 cycles showed some interesting findings, with both boys having developed a more positive attitude towards writing. They were also able to explain what they liked about writing and were happier to talk to me about it. The Teacher Assessment Framework for writing completed at the end of the research (see above) showed that the boys' writing attainment had much improved.

### **Conclusions**

Research findings show that children with SEN have difficulty with aspects of the writing process, were certainly evident in both boys at the start of the research (Taft and Mason, 2011; Sumner, 2014). The improvement in their attitude is of particular significance; if a child enjoys writing, has received positive feedback from their teacher along with targeted support to improve their skills, they will in turn have improved self-esteem and resilience to cope with the aspects of the writing process that they find challenging. The use of film and the use of word processing both motivated the boys to write and were effective in

improving their performance. It was also felt that writing tasks that link with a child's interests are likely to produce improved quality and quantity of written work.

These findings align with those of Rodríguez et al (2015) regarding the importance of early targeted support, and that of Re and Cornoldi (2010) regarding the comparative capabilities of children with ADHD in generating ideas for writing. The most effective teaching idea investigated in this research was the use of word processing instead of handwriting, as found by Andreou (2016) and the DfE (2017). This is likely to be due to the reduction in the demands on a child's working memory, and also on the opportunity to use features like the spell checker.

## References

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