



مدرسة المتحدة الدولية
United School International
The Pearl Island جزيرة اللؤلؤة
an Orbital Education School

THURSDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2025

Year 4-6 Reading & Writing Workshop

USI VISION:

**TO PREPARE ALL USI STUDENTS FOR A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD BY INSTILLING IN THEM
OUR CORE VALUES OF EXCELLENCE, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, INTEGRITY AND
COMPASSION.**

When discussing reading at USI we consider the following areas:

Word reading - This is the ability for children to read words by decoding them using known sounds.

Fluency - The ability to read a text quickly and accurately with expression.

Comprehension - The ability to read a text, process it and understand its meaning.

Keystage 2 classes all have 2 reading lessons per week which are continuously adapting to ensure that they suit the needs of the learners within each year group.

Reading lessons will have a range of focuses all linked to VIPERS:

Vocabulary Inferencing Prediction Explain Retrieval Sequence



Within reading lessons children will have time to explore a variety of age and stage appropriate texts as a whole class, in small groups and 1:1 with teachers. This allows children to develop their fluency when reading as well as ensuring they have a deeper understanding of the texts which they are engaging with.

What can you do to support reading at home?

- Read, read, read!

*Teach a child to read and keep that child reading and we will change everything.
And I mean everything.*

Jeanette Winterson

- This does not just include reading the books that children come home with. It can include reading when you are out as a family. Anything from **signs, posters, shopping lists, ingredients** or putting the **subtitles** on when your child is watching a film.
- Read books to or listen to books online with your child.
- Discuss the events in the stories you read to develop comprehension skills.

IMPORTANTANCE OF READING AT HOME

Regular reading impacts a child's success at school.
If not addressed early the educational gap widens...



Child A

Reads **20 minutes**
per day

3,600 minutes
per school year

1,800,000 words
per school year



Scores in the
90th percentile



Child B

Reads **5 minutes**
per day

900 minutes
per school year

282,000 words
per school year



Standardised Test Scores

Scores in the
50th percentile



Child C

Reads **1 minute**
per day

180 minutes
per school year

8,000 words
per school year



Scores in the
10th percentile





By the end of grade 6, Child A will have read the equivalent of 60 school days,
Child B will have read for 12 school days and Child C will have for 3 days. Nagy and Herman, 1987.

What are the benefits of reading for children?

Children who read frequently and who are read to regularly, improve their reading skills; it is definitely a case of "practice makes perfect".

- **Bonding** – Reading provides great opportunities for you and your child to spend time together and take time out during otherwise busy days.
- **Language development and vocabulary expansion** – Children learn new words as they read and, subconsciously, they absorb information on how to structure sentences and how to use words and other language features effectively in their writing and speaking.
- **Improvement in listening skills** – Children need to concentrate in order to comprehend when they are being read to, in other words they need to pay attention and listen. When they are listening, they are more likely to sit still and this develops a longer attention span.
- **Cognitive development** – Reading is a much more complex task for the human brain than watching television, for example. Reading strengthens brain connections and builds new connections; this helps to build skills such as problem-solving and reasoning.
- **Development of imagination and creativity** – Books and stories open up a whole new world to your child; many stories go beyond the real world and employ fantasy elements that get children thinking outside the box. They use their imagination to "see" what a character or place looks like. Often children already have vivid imaginations, so reading serves to further feed their creativity.
- **Social and emotional development** – Reading to children can teach them how to cope with difficult or stressful experiences and provides an opportunity to talk about real-world situations in age-appropriate ways.

How Can You Help at Home?

-  Reading and writing go hand in hand. A child's writing level cannot improve until their reading is at a high level. Read Together Regularly – Talk about stories, predict what happens next, and discuss new words.
- 
-  Use Story Maps – Draw pictures to sequence events before writing.
-  Praise & Encourage – Focus on effort, ideas, and creativity rather than just spelling and handwriting.

Talk for Writing:

Talk for Writing is a fun and engaging way of teaching children to become confident writers by talking, acting out, and internalising language before putting it onto paper. It was developed by Pie Corbett and to quote him: “If children can’t say it, they can’t write it.”

How Does It Work?

- **1** Imitation (Learning the Model Text)
 - Provide a clear visual structure for narratives or non-fiction texts.
 - Support retention and sequencing of ideas.
 - Help students internalize the structure and language of a genre.
- **2** Innovation (Adapting the Text)
 - Children change parts of the story, such as characters or settings, while keeping the structure the same.
 - This stage encourages creativity while reinforcing key writing skills.



3 Independent Application (Writing Their Own Version)

- Children write their own stories or non-fiction pieces, applying what they've learned.
- They edit their work with support and begin to develop their own writing voice.



Why Is It Effective?

- ✓ Builds Confidence – Children learn to express their ideas before writing.
- ✓ Develops Vocabulary – Encourages rich and varied language use.
- ✓ Supports All Learners – Actions, talk, and repetition help all children, including those with additional needs.
- ✓ Improves Writing Structure – Children internalise good sentence patterns and storytelling techniques.

ORACY

Why is it important for your child to develop strong speaking and listening skills to improve and uplevel their writing skill?

- Talk for Writing begins with oral storytelling and internalizing language patterns, making oracy a cornerstone of a child's literacy development.
- To quote Pie Corbett: "If children can't say it, they can't write it."

Practical Strategies for Embedding Oracy.

1. Talk It Out Before Writing

👉 Encourage your child to say their sentences aloud before writing them down. This helps them check if their sentences make sense and naturally spot any grammar errors.

2. Sentence Challenge Game

Play a game where you give your child a simple sentence and challenge them to expand it aloud by adding adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, or different punctuation.

👉 For example:

- You say: The dog ran.
- Your child improves it: In the blink of an eye, the energetic dog sprinted quickly across the park!

3. Role-Play Editor

Switch roles and let your child become the "teacher".

👉 SPaG focus: This technique makes checking writing fun and boosts confidence in spotting SPaG errors independently! 🙌🎵🎤

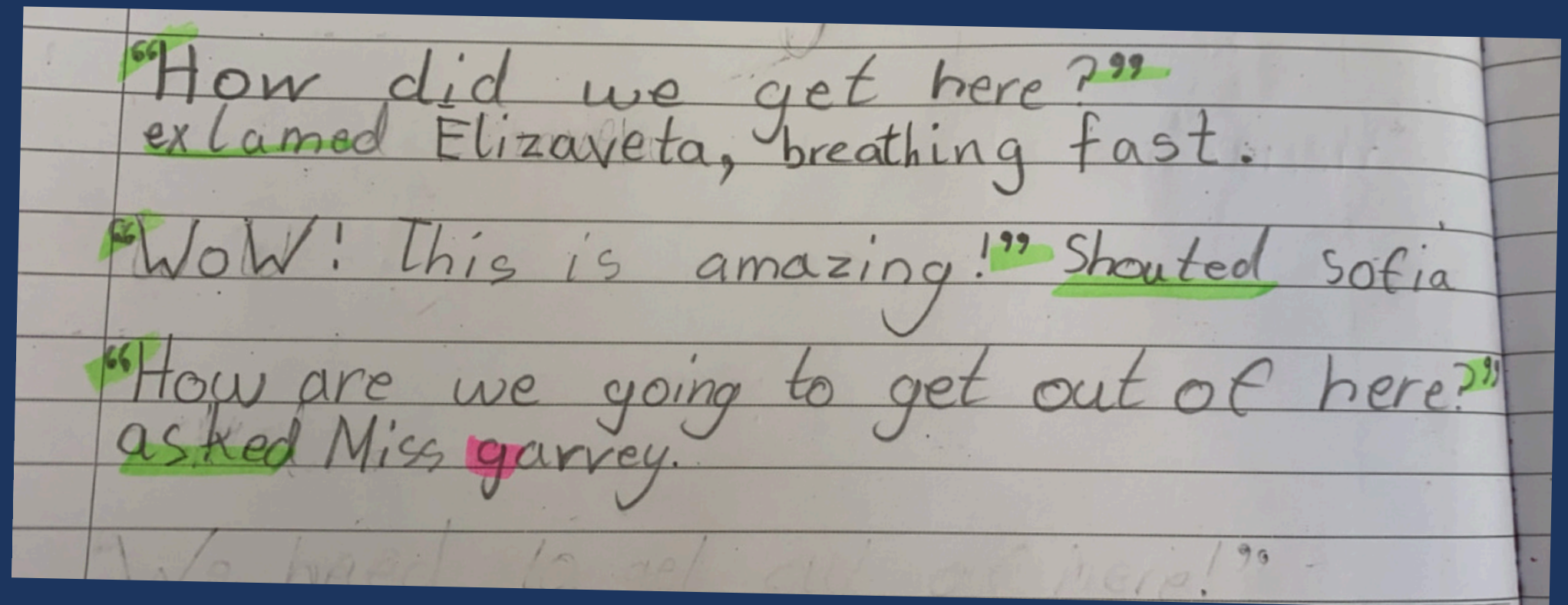
ORACY

SPAG Objectives:

Acting and oracy can be used to embed SPAG objectives.

Example from Y4 covering objective punctuating direct speech.

Opportunity to put 'said to bed', show and not tell - her heart raced, breathless etc.



SUPPORTING WRITING AT HOME



Make Writing Fun & Purposeful

- Encourage real-life writing opportunities like shopping lists, notes, letters etc.



Plan Before Writing

- Help your child organise ideas by using story maps, bullet points, or mind maps.
- Discussing ideas before starting to write.



Praise Effort & Progress

- Focus on what they did well rather than just mistakes.
- Celebrate creativity and encourage a love for writing.
- Give positive feedback, such as: "I love how you described the setting!"

- In USI we follow the Nelson Handwriting framework.



This promotes use of cursive while also allowing for children's independent writing style as long as it's legible and neat.

Help at home:

1. Provide the Right Tools

2. Make it Fun

3. Encourage Daily Practice

4. Praise Effort, Not Just Perfection

Nelson Handwriting Poster

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

There are four basic handwriting joins:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai ar un
2. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou or oi
3. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. oi fi
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol fl

Remember the letters that can't be joined are:

g j p q x y z s

SPELLINGS

- Children will be given spellings to learn each week to learn to support their reading and writing in school.
- Children can access Spelling Shed at home using their own login to practice their spellings.



What can you do to help?

- Ensure your child is accessing their spellings weekly.
- Encourage the use of:
- Look, Cover, Write, Check method for spelling practice.
- Online spelling games and apps.
- Ask your child to say/write each spelling in a sentence to support understanding of each word.

Please could you scan the code below to provide us with any feedback from the session today.

Reading and Writing Workshop

