



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

SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 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 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.

Key Stage 2 classes all have 3 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.

Lesson 1 - Carousel - Differentiated to meet needs of children in year group/class. This includes:

- Reading with a teacher 1:1 or in a small group
- VIPER style activities
- Spelling Shed/Spelling activities
- Comprehension activities

Lesson 2 - Focus on embedding VIPER skills through comprehension for all

Lesson 3 - Continue to focus on VIPER skills but with less focus on comprehension questions. For example through story mapping, character description, role play or re-telling stories.

NGRT ASSESSMENTS

All children from Year 2 - 6 will carry out a reading assessment. NGRT stands for New Group Reading Test and is used to assess a student's reading level.

This is completed once every term to give us accurate reading levels for all children.

It is used to find out your child's current ability level as compared to the UK national average and allow for identification of students who may benefit from interventions or from being stretched further.

The NGRT is divided into two main sections:

A. Sentence Completion (Word Reading & Decoding)

- *Assesses how well pupils understand words in context.*
- *Students read an incomplete sentence and choose the correct word to complete it.*
- *Example: “She wore a red ___ to the party.”*

(Options: hat, walk, swim, quickly)

This part checks vocabulary knowledge and contextual understanding.

B. Passage Comprehension

- *Pupils read short passages or texts and answer multiple-choice questions.*
- *Questions test skills like retrieving information, making inferences and understanding meaning.*
- *Example: “Why did the boy run home?” (4 multiple-choice options)*

Passages increase in difficulty as the test progresses.

Timing

- *The test takes about 30–40 minutes in total.*
- *It is adaptive: the difficulty adjusts based on the pupil’s answers.*

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.

IMPORTANCE 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



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

Standardised Test Scores





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. This helps child plan their ideas.
-  Praise & Encourage – Focus on effort, ideas and creativity rather than just spelling and handwriting.

- In USI, we teach writing through a rich, engaging British curriculum that builds children's confidence and enjoyment.
- Children learn through reading high-quality texts, drama and discussion.
- Focus areas:
 - – Grammar and punctuation in context
 - – Vocabulary development
 - – Handwriting and presentation
 - – Building stamina for writing
- Aim: Happy, confident, imaginative writers.



- We follow the Talk For Writing approach.
- **Three stages:**
 - 1. **Imitation** – learning a model text with actions, story maps, drama.
 - 2. **Innovation** – changing parts of the text.
 - 3. **Independent Application** – children apply all skills in a final piece.
- **Benefits:**
 - – Builds vocabulary.
 - – Supports EAL learners.
 - – Helps children speak before writing as Pie Corbett says, *‘If a child can’t say it, they can’t write it!’*
 - – Improves confidence and structure understanding.



Year 4

- Organising ideas into clear paragraphs.
- Using a wider range of conjunctions (e.g., although, however, meanwhile).
- Expanded noun phrases and precise vocabulary.
- Correct use of direct speech punctuation.
- Varied sentence openers (fronted adverbials).
- Proofreading for spelling patterns and punctuation.

Year 5

- Writing with clear cohesion across paragraphs.
- Using figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification) for effect.
- Accurate use of complex sentences and relative clauses.
- Precise punctuation: commas, brackets, dashes for parenthesis.
- Selecting vocabulary to match purpose, audience and genre.
- Editing for clarity, impact and style.
- Independent editing, redrafting and improving for purpose.

Year 6

- Writing that flows with a clear voice and controlled tone.
- Advanced cohesion using adverbials, repetition and linking ideas.
- Range of complex punctuation: semi-colons, colons, hyphens.
- Crafting precise, well-controlled figurative and emotive language.
- Manipulating sentence structure for effect and emphasis.
- Independent editing, redrafting and improving for purpose.

ORACY

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

- Talk For Writing begins with oral storytelling and internalising 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. Draw their story and tell it to you (whether it's a setting, character description etc.)

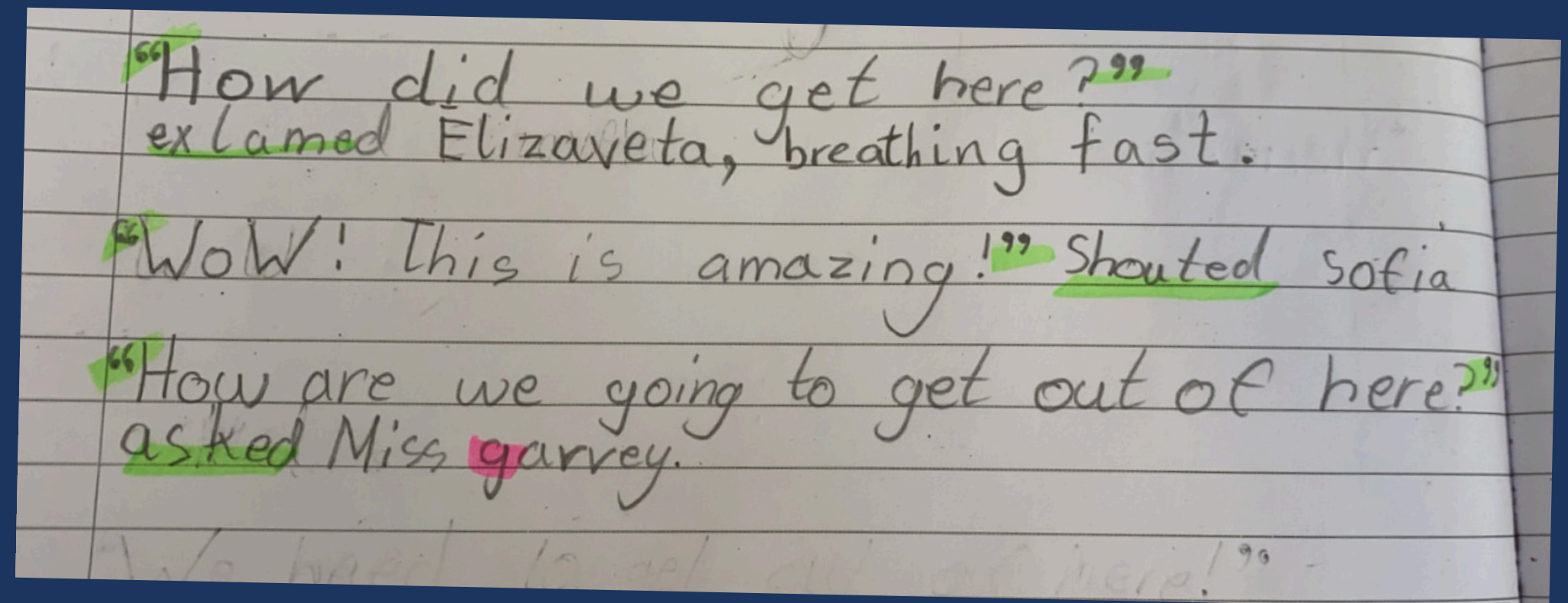
ORACY

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.



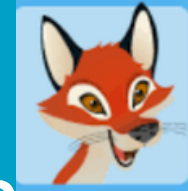
SUPPORTING WRITING AT HOME

How Can You Help at Home?

- Encourage daily reading to build vocabulary.
- Talk about stories, events and ideas.
- Practice phonics and tricky words.
- Provide writing opportunities:
 - Shopping lists
 - Cards
 - Simple diaries
 - Labels
- Praise effort over perfection, we follow this in school also as we celebrate writer of the month.
- Let children see you writing too!



- In USI we follow the Nelson Handwriting framework.



Nelson
Handwriting

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

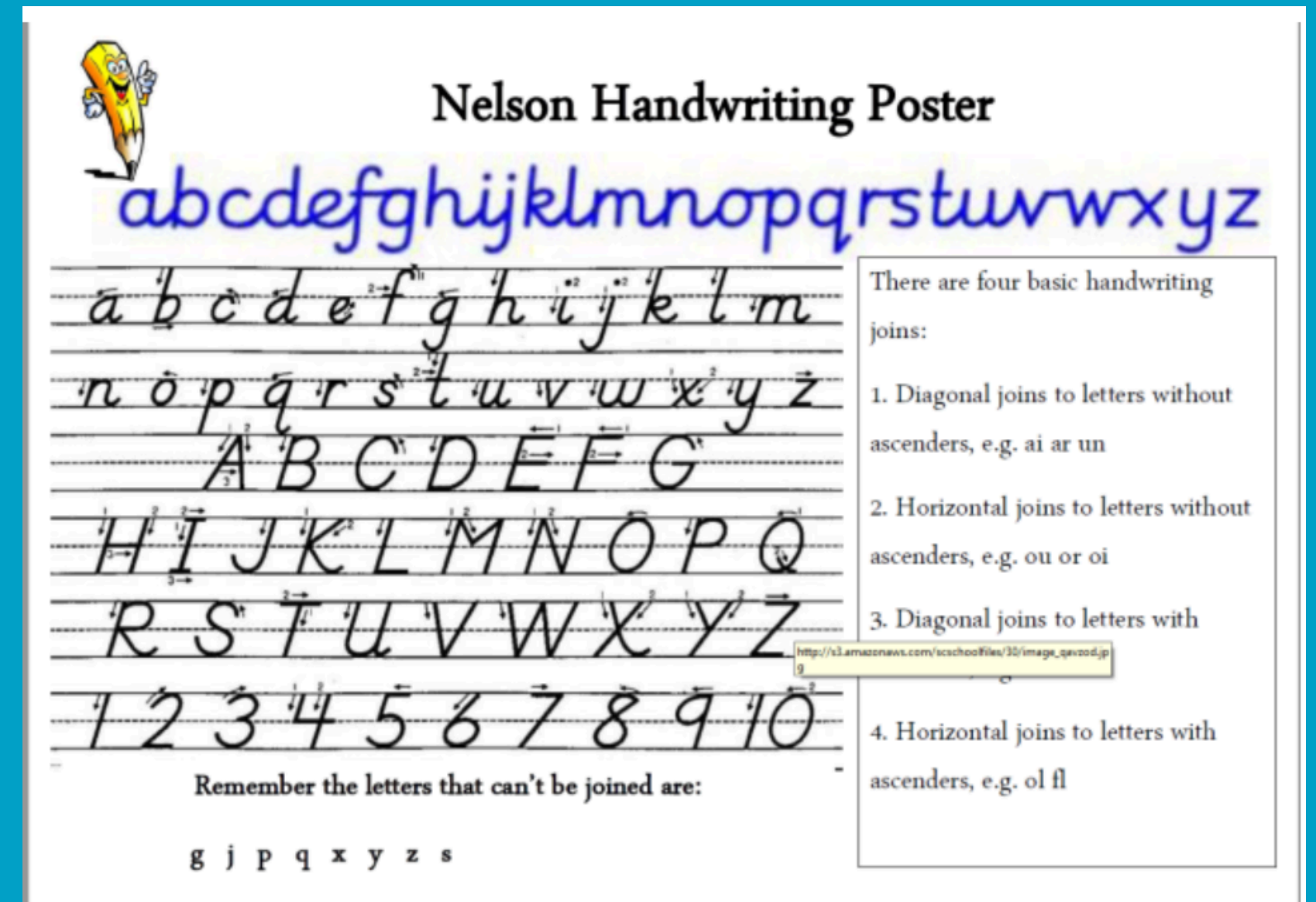
Help at home:

1. Provide the Right Tools

2. Make it Fun

3. Encourage Daily Practice

4. Praise Effort, Not Just Perfection



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
30th November 2025

