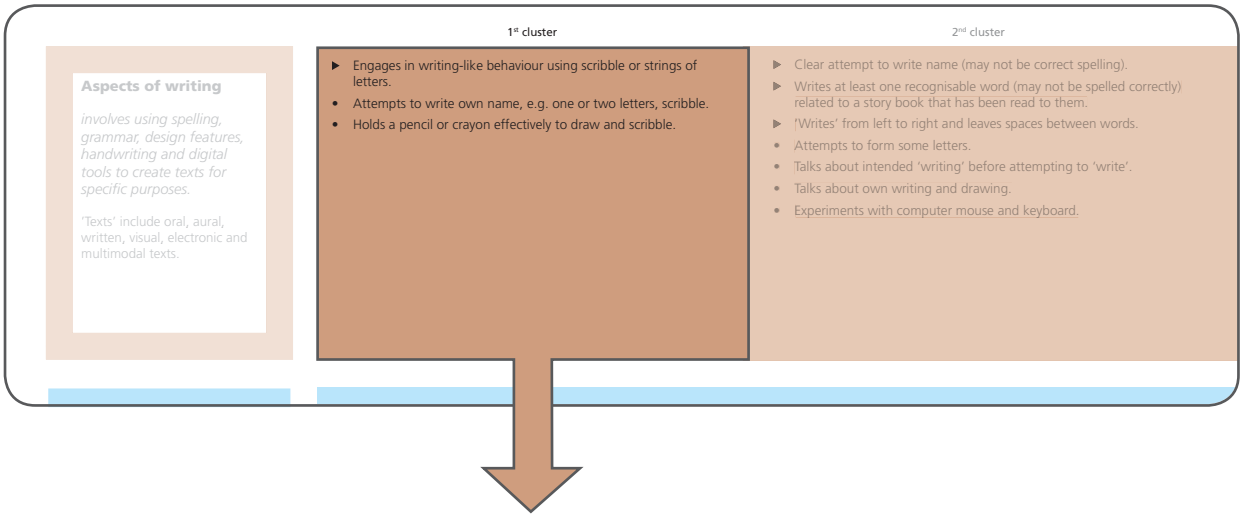
Literacy Continuum K-6
Literacy Teaching Ideas:
Aspects of Writing

NSW GOVERNMENT Education & Communities
NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre



First cluster of markers:

- ▶ Engages in writing-like behaviour using scribble or strings of letters.
- • Attempts to write own name, e.g. one or two letters, scribble.
- • Holds a pencil or crayon effectively to draw and scribble.

Tracing own name

Prepare traceable models of each student's first name, e.g. their name in dots written on cardboard strips.

Distribute a model to each student and ask them to practise tracing over their name using a pencil.

Ensure that these traceable models:

- are written in large print
- have cues such as a star or coloured dot to indicate where the student should start writing
- have arrows to indicate in which direction the writing should go
- are displayed on students' tables for them to copy when writing their names on other work.

Practising 'writing'

Model holding a pen/pencil correctly.

Provide students with opportunities to practise 'writing' and drawing with a variety of implements, e.g. chalk, crayons, textacolours, pens and pencils.

Students should also be given opportunities to 'write' and draw on different surfaces as well, e.g. paper, cardboard, whiteboard, blackboard.

Experimenting with word processing

After modelling how to use a word processing program, provide students with time to practise simple skills like keying in letters, numbers and words and using the Enter and the space bar keys.

Organise time for pairs of students to experiment with word processing on computers.

Encourage students to write their names and copy familiar words from writing models on display around the classroom, e.g. wordlists, signs, posters.

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Responding to stories

Provide students with opportunities to respond to stories read, heard and viewed.

Encourage students to 'write' about and draw their favourite characters, the setting and their favourite parts of the story.

Ask students to share and talk about their 'writing' and drawing about stories with partners or a small group.

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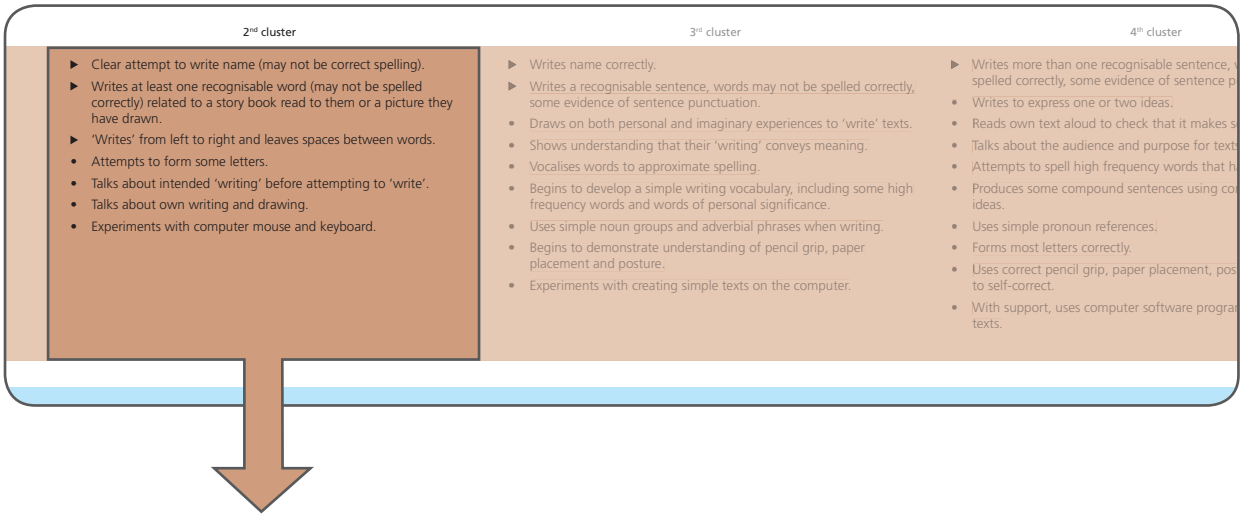

Second cluster of markers:

- ▶ Clear attempt to write name (may not be correct spelling).
- ▶ Writes at least one recognisable word (may not be spelled correctly) related to a story book read to them or a picture they have drawn.
- ▶ 'Writes' from left to right and leaves spaces between words.
- • Attempts to form some letters.
- • Talks about intended 'writing' before attempting to 'write'.
- • Talks about own writing and drawing.
- • Experiments with computer mouse and keyboard.

Writing own name

Prepare laminated cards with a model of each student's first name.

Distribute a model to each student and encourage them to use it when they are writing their names during the day.

Provide time for students to practise writing their name with a variety of writing implements, e.g. chalk, crayons, textacolours, pens, pencils, using the keyboard on the computer and on an interactive whiteboard.

Students should also be given opportunities to write their name on different surfaces as well, e.g. paper, cardboard, whiteboard, blackboard.

Writing centres

Set up a writing centre in the classroom.

Provide a wide variety of writing materials for students to use including:

- textacolours – thick and thin
- highlighter pens
- chalks, crayons, pencils, pens
- provide different types of paper – newsprint, computer paper and coloured paper
- large and small chalkboards
- envelopes and writing paper to encourage students to write letters to each other
- computer/s.

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Include a variety of laminated writing models, such as:

- high frequency words
- student name cards
- letter formation charts
- some simple sentences/questions to copy, e.g. *I like you. How are you?*
- a variety of text models, such as class news books, classroom signs/word banks/charts and messages on cards
- writing pattern cards and outlines of simple pictures for tracing or copying.

Leaving spaces between words

Prepare a sentence strip for students to complete.

Remind students about the function of spaces between words in sentences.

Issue a sentence strip to each student.

Ask students to write in a friend's name or draw a picture of their partner in the first space:
_____ is my friend/partner.

Ask students to read their sentence strips to a partner moving their finger along the sentence strip as they read.

Practising writing letters

Organise sets of small whiteboards, whiteboard markers, cleaning cloths and cards with models of correct letter formation on them.

Provide students with opportunities to select a set of cards and practise writing letters on small whiteboards.

Partner talk

When students have completed a 'writing' activity ask them to choose a partner.

Each student takes it in turns to tell their partner about their 'writing'.

Remind students to talk about their 'writing', their drawings and their ideas.

Encourage students to ask each other questions and make comments.

Beginning word processing

After modelling how to use a computer mouse and keyboard, provide pairs of students with time to practise typing in a few familiar letters or words.

Remind students to use the mouse and the keyboard responsibly.

Students can also be shown how to use simple drawing programs to create shapes and simple pictures and how to write their name using a range of font styles and sizes.

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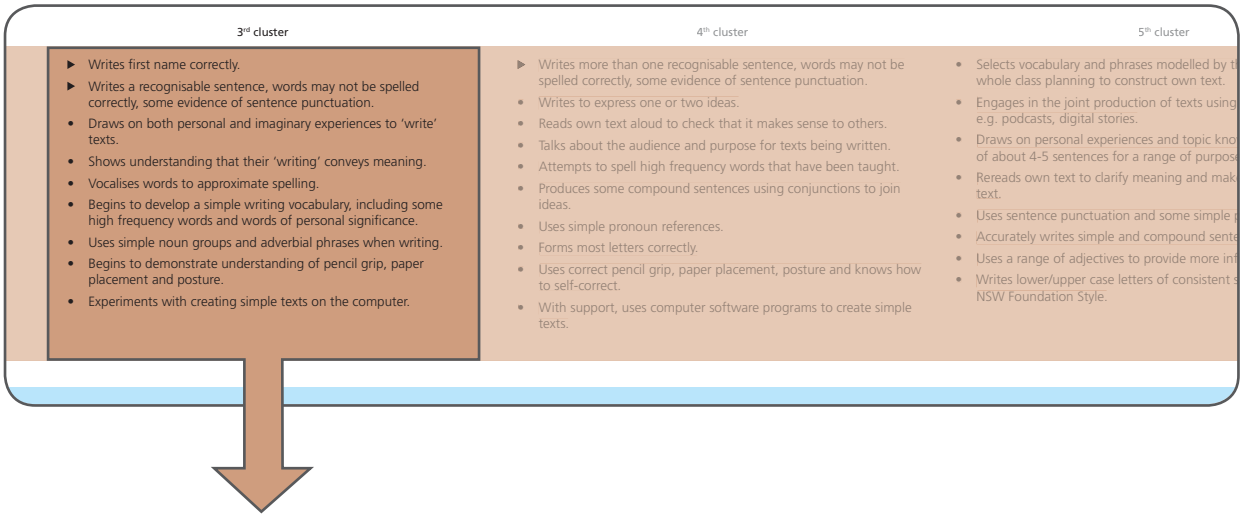

Third cluster of markers:

- ▶ Writes first name correctly.
- ▶ Writes a recognisable sentence, words may not be spelled correctly, some evidence of sentence punctuation.
- Draws on both personal and imaginary experiences to 'write' texts.
- Shows understanding that their 'writing' conveys meaning.
- Vocalises words to approximate spelling.
- Begins to develop a simple writing vocabulary, including some high frequency words and words of personal significance.
- Uses simple noun groups and adverbial phrases when writing.
- Begins to demonstrate understanding of pencil grip, paper placement and posture.
- Experiments with creating simple texts on the computer.

Sentence writing

Prepare sets of *Who?* and *What do they do?* cards.

Revise sentence punctuation with students and display *Who?* and *What do they do?* cards to support students creating sentences.

Select a topic familiar to students, e.g. my family.

Demonstrate how to use the stimulus cards to create sentences, e.g. *Who? My family. What do they do? They go to the park with me.*

Ask students write their own sentence using the questions as a prompt.

Encourage students to draw a picture about their sentence.

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Practising correct letter formation

Provide opportunities for students to practise forming letter shapes in NSW Foundation Style on paper, on their hands, in the air, on blackboards or by tracing laminated letter cards and letter shapes.

Encourage students to use a variety of implements to practise letter formation, e.g. textacolours, chalks, pencils, crayons, paints on surfaces that vary in size and shape.

If students are reversing letters, provide a range of activities that focus on using correct starting points and direction including modelling starting points for letters and letter directions, tracing sandpaper letters and verbalising letter formation.

Descriptive writing

Revise the use of adjectives to create noun groups.

Prepare sentence cards related to a current topic with a space before the noun for an additional word to be added.

Provide students with the sentence cards and ask them to complete the sentence by adding an adjective, e.g. *Birds have _____ feathers.*

Ask students to write and illustrate their topic sentence.

Students could also type their sentences on a computer, print it out and illustrate it.

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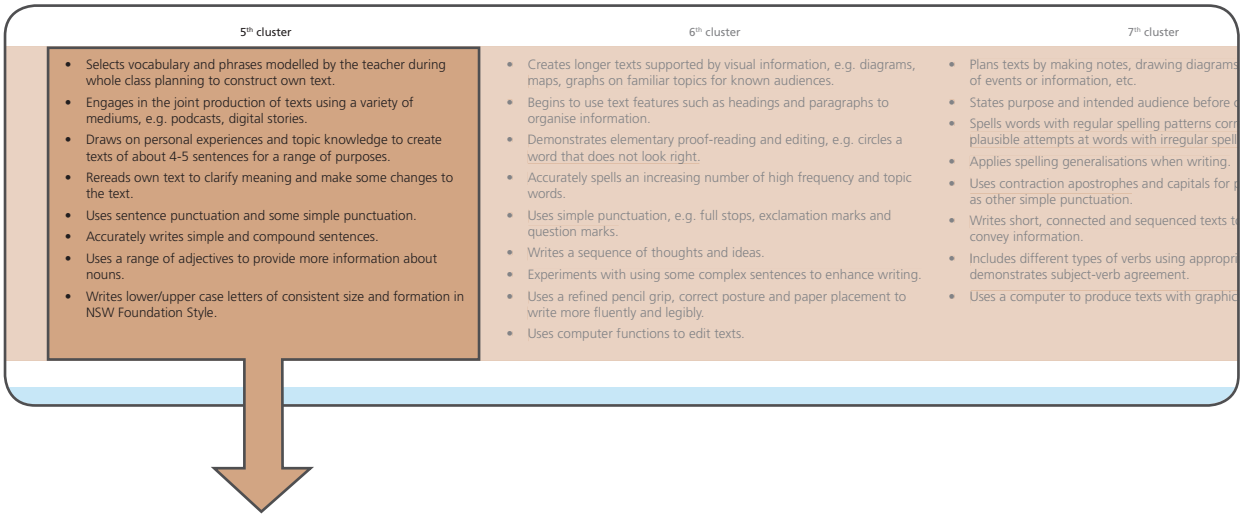

Fifth cluster of markers:

- Selects vocabulary and phrases modelled by the teacher during whole class planning to construct own text.
- Engages in the joint production of texts using a variety of mediums, e.g. podcasts, digital stories.
- Draws on personal experiences and topic knowledge to create texts of about 4-5 sentences for a range of purposes.
- Rereads own text to clarify meaning and make some changes to the text.
- Uses sentence punctuation and some simple punctuation.
- Accurately writes simple and compound sentences.
- Uses a range of adjectives to provide more information about nouns.
- Writes lower/upper case letters of consistent size and formation in NSW Foundation Style.

Capital letter detectives

Prepare copies of the Capital Letter Detectives Chart (see below) and photocopy sections of a familiar text for students to use.

Remind students about the use of capital letters, e.g. sentence beginnings, names, days of the week, etc.

Organise students into pairs. Provide them with a copy of a short, familiar text and a copy of the chart (see below).

Ask students to read the text together and put ticks in the correct column for each capital letter they find in the text and write in the words.

Capital Letter Detectives Chart			
Sentence beginning	Person	Place	Day

Discuss the results as a class.

Using adjectives in simple sentences

Prepare copies of a cloze maze for students to create sentences which include adjectives.

Review how to use adjectives in sentences.

Students independently complete a cloze maze.

Using highlighters or coloured pencils, students select one adjective from each pair and then write and illustrate the sentences they have created.

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A	spotty,	black	dog buried a	yellow	bone in a	deep	hole.
	fluffy,	brown		brown		shallow	

Students can also be encouraged to innovate on the text to write their own sentences by choosing their own adjectives.

Correct letter formation

Provide a variety of models of handwriting for students to copy and practise correct letter formation, e.g. on Interactive Whiteboard, chalkboard, stencils, writing cards.

Demonstrate and explain correct letter formation and relative size on the Interactive Whiteboard or whiteboard/ chalkboard and on individual students' work.

Ensure:

- students demonstrate correct pencil grip and body position when writing
- left-handed students are shown how to angle their page to see the writing
- left-handed students, when seated with right-handed students, are on the left-hand side of the table, allowing both students to write freely.

Students should be given opportunities to practise writing on surfaces on another plane, e.g. copying from the board (vertical plane) to a book on their table (horizontal plane).

Provide guide cards and slope cards to assist students to write in straight lines and with consistent slope.

English K–6 syllabus (1998), page 101

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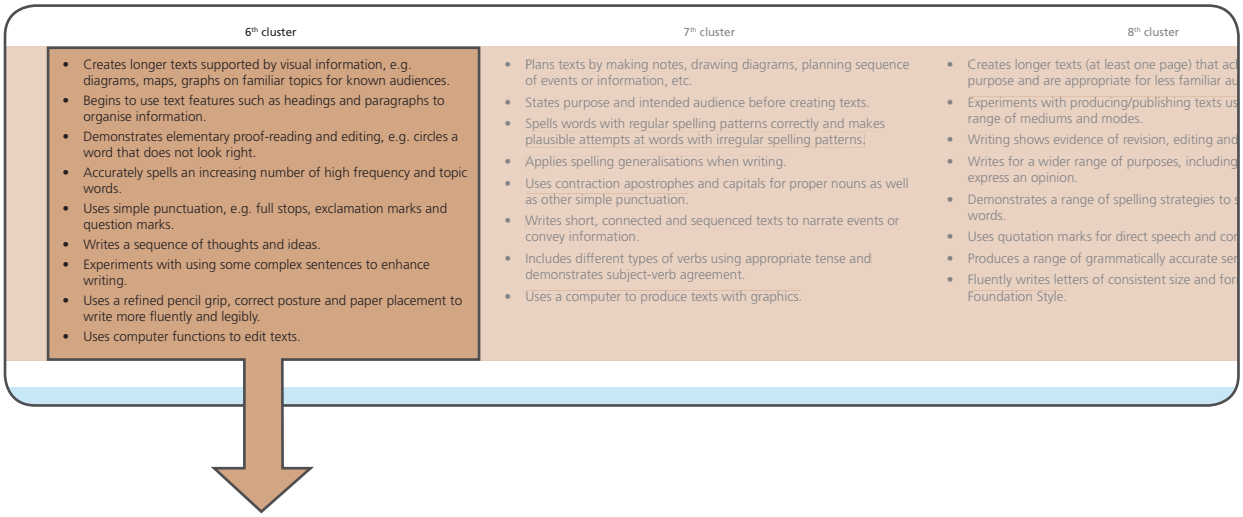

Sixth cluster of markers:

- Creates longer texts supported by visual information, e.g. diagrams, maps, graphs on familiar topics for known audiences.
- Begins to use text features such as headings and paragraphs to organise information.
- Demonstrates elementary proof-reading and editing, e.g. circles a word that does not look right.
- Accurately spells an increasing number of high frequency and topic words.
- Uses simple punctuation, e.g. full stops, exclamation marks and question marks.
- Experiments with using some complex sentences to enhance writing.
- Uses a refined pencil grip, correct posture and paper placement to write more fluently and legibly.
- Uses computer functions to edit texts.

Proofreading and editing guide

Liaise with teachers across the school to design a proofreading and editing guide for all students.

Display enlarged copies of this guide in all classrooms across the school (example below).

Provide individual copies of the proofreading and editing guide for students to use on their own work (initially) and on a partner's writing when peer-conferencing.

Use the proofreading and editing guide when engaging in individual writing conferences with students.

Symbol	Explanation	
m\ M\	Does this word need a capital letter?	
◯	What punctuation is missing?	. , ?
spee	Would you please check this spelling?	
said	Can you find a better word?	
Then	Can you find a better sentence beginning?	
^	Check to see if you have left any words out.	

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End marks

Prepare sets of punctuation marks and sentences for pairs students to use. See example below:

Are you sick	Help	.	!	?	Stop that

Apples are good for you	Can you come to my party	My dad builds roads

Remind students about the difference between a statement and a question.

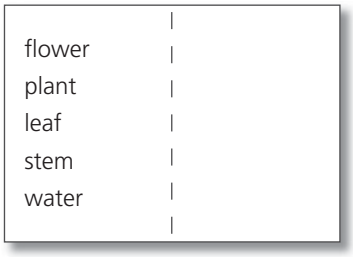
Explain how exclamation marks are used to show that a sentence is spoken louder and that exclamations are designed to get our attention and to show that we are excited, scared or shocked.

Ask students to choose a partner and work together to complete the sentences in their set using the punctuation marks.

Mystery words

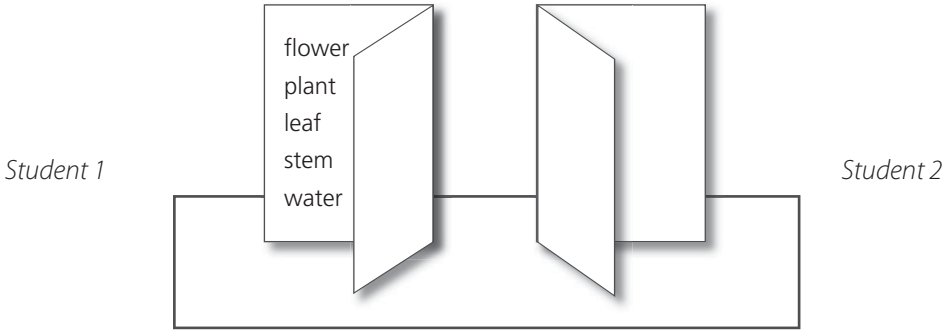
Provide a list of topic words familiar to students.

Print the list so that it fits on one side of an A4 sheet of cardboard when printed landscape layout.



Divide students into pairs.

Each partner sits facing the other with their word list standing up facing them and the blank side facing their partner:



One student chooses a word for their partner to guess and puts a mark against the word so that the word is not chosen twice.

The other student asks three questions about the word before guessing which word it is.

Questions can only be answered with *yes* or *no*.

Questions might be about:

- the letter the word begins with, e.g. *Does the word start with 'f'?*
- the length of the word (how many syllables), e.g. *Does the word have two syllables?*
- what the word rhymes with, e.g. *Does the word rhyme with 'shower'?*

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Once the student has asked three questions, they close their A4card and write what they think is the selected word on the back of the card.

The partner checks the word and spelling and awards one point if both the word and spelling are correct. Students should take turns and keep track of scores.

Using computers to edit

Select a short piece of text and save it onto computers.

Prepare a set of instructions for students to use to edit the text.

Instructions could be:

- Find the word ****, highlight it and delete it.
- Find the full stop after the word ****, use the *Enter* key to start a new line for the next word ****.
- Add a question mark after the word *****, use the *Enter* key to start a new line for the next word ****.
- Find the word ****, use the *Caps Lock* key to change it to upper case.
- Find the name of the character and change the first letter to a capital letter.

Divide students into pairs.

One student reads the instructions while the other student edits the text.

Students then swap roles.

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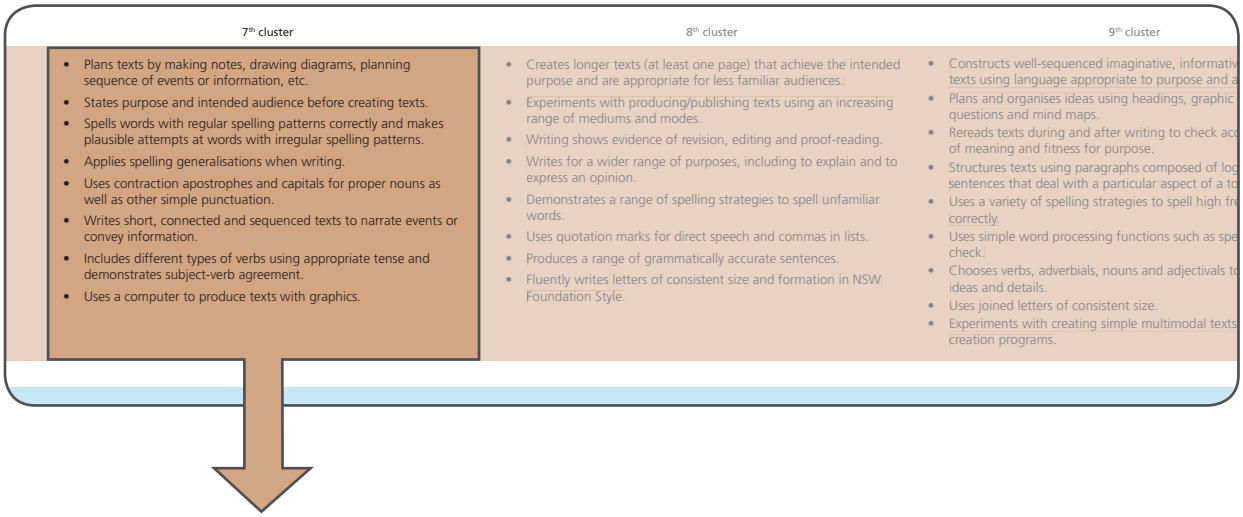

Seventh cluster of markers:

- Plans texts by making notes, drawing diagrams, planning sequence of events or information etc.
- States purpose and intended audience before creating texts.
- Spells words with regular spelling patterns correctly and makes plausible attempts at words with irregular spelling patterns.
- Applies spelling generalisations when writing.
- Uses contraction apostrophes and capitals for proper nouns as well as other simple punctuation.
- Writes short, connected and sequences texts to narrate events of convey information.
- Includes different types of verbs using appropriate tense and demonstrates subject-verb agreement.
- Uses a computer to produce texts with graphics.

Planning sheet

Prepare planning sheets to assist students with research and organising their writing.

Revise locating information and organising into sections of the planning sheet.

Students use a planning pro forma (sample below) to organise information in preparation for writing:

Report Planning	
Classification	**Description**
Location	**Behaviour**

After learning about report writing, these sheets can serve as a guide for students to structure their report.

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Punctuation checklist

Display an editing code for student reference when checking their own writing or the writing of others.

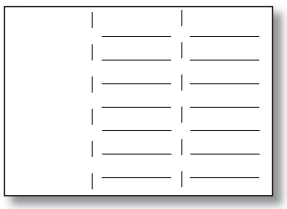
Symbol	Explanation	
m\ M\	Does this word need a capital letter?	
◯	What punctuation is missing?	. , ?
spee	Would you please check this spelling?	
said	Can you find a better word?	
Then	Can you find a better sentence beginning?	
^	Check to see if you have left any words out.	

Students can work individually or with a partner to complete a punctuation checklist on a piece of their writing.

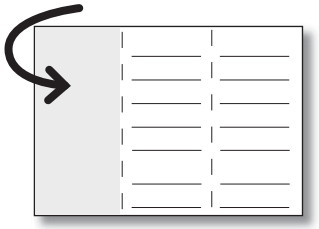
Did I …	Sometimes	Always
start each sentence with a capital letter.		
finish the sentence at the end of the idea.		
put a full stop at the end of each statement.		
put a question mark at the end of each question.		
use an exclamation mark where needed.		
use a capital letter for the names of people, places or days.		
use apostrophes when part of the word is missing.		

Have a go spelling cards

Create an A4 landscape page with lines across the middle section. Prepare *Have a go* spelling cards as shown below:



Students write words to be learnt on the left-hand lined paper. Alternatively these could be printed on the page ready for students. The student reads the first word and spells it aloud (to you or to a partner) and folds the panel furthest to the left over the word list:



The student then attempts to write the word on the right hand side then unfolds the lefthand side to check the spelling.

This strategy is useful when particular words need to be learned automatically, e.g. high frequency words, words with irregular spelling patterns, technical terms for a particular topic or a student's own nominated errors.

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Subject/verb match

Prepare a text related to a current topic. Include sentences with examples of singular and plural verb forms to match the subject.

Revise subject/verb agreement using examples familiar to students.

Ask students to work with a partner to choose the correct verb for the sentences on the provided text and write the sentences.

The sample passage on pelicans below would provide opportunities for students to talk about plural subject/verb agreement in report writing.

> Pelicans **(have/has)** a big bill and a pouch.
>
> All pelicans **(have/has)** short legs and webbed feet.
>
> The mother pelican **(lay/lays)** one to four eggs.
>
> An egg **(take/takes)** 35 days to hatch.

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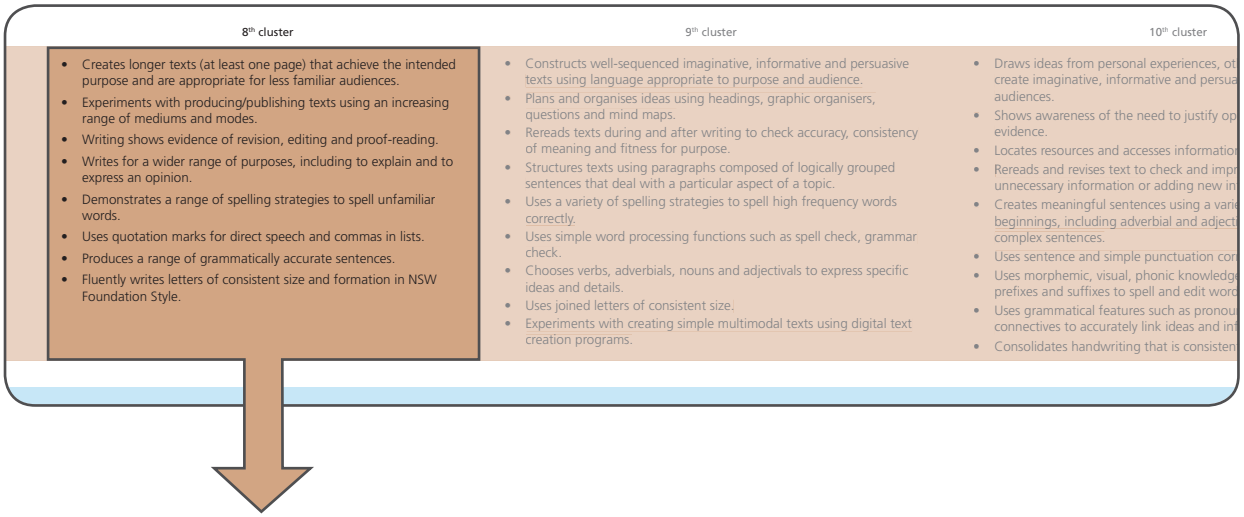

Eighth cluster of markers:

- Creates longer texts (at least one page) that achieve the intended purpose and are appropriate for less familiar audiences.
- Experiments with producing/publishing texts using an increasing range of mediums and modes.
- Writing shows evidence of revision, editing and proof-reading.
- Writes for a wider range of purposes, including to explain and to express an opinion.
- Demonstrates a range of spelling strategies to spell unfamiliar words.
- Uses quotation marks for direct speech and commas in lists.
- Produces a range of grammatically accurate sentences.
- Fluently writes letters of consistent size and formation in NSW Foundation Style.

Using a conference checklist

Display to the class process for conferencing and remind students of the steps involved, e.g.

Step 1: By myself
Read my own work
and make any changes

→

Step 2: With partner
Use the Conference
checklist with a partner.

→

Step 3: With teacher
Conference with
teacher

As students complete their writing, they choose a partner and take turns to conference with each other.

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Each student completes a conference checklist:

Conference checklist		
Name:	Date:	
Title:		
Purpose:	Audience:	
My writing makes sense:		
I have added words I left out.		☐
I have checked for capital letters and full stops.		☐
I have circled words that I need to check for spelling.		☐
I have written words on my Have-a go sheet.		☐
My writing achieves my purpose:		
I have used……#	# Add focus statements here, according to purpose.	
I have used……#		
Spelling has been checked with:		
a dictionary		
a friend		
a teacher/ helper/parent		
My partner has:		
read my writing		
checked my spelling		
made some suggestions		
My best part was:		
I am ready to conference.		

Constructing a variety of sentences

Prepare sets of clauses and conjunctions for students to use to create a range of sentences.

For example, one sentence containing two clauses could be reconstructed using different conjunctions:

It was raining	so	we opened the rainwater tank.
Because	it was raining	we opened the rainwater tank.

Review the use of clauses and conjunctions to create sentences with students.

Ask students to choose a partner, read the clauses and choose the conjunctions which could be used to join them.

Encourage students to discuss alternatives, reading their attempts and conferring with each other to determine whether the sentence makes sense.

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Using quotation marks

Revise the use of quotation marks with students.

Select a visual from a familiar text that shows a conversation taking place amongst a few characters.

Prepare copies for students to use.

Discuss some details in the visual with students.

Ask students to choose a partner.

Distribute a copy of the visual to students and ask them to work together to write a short conversation between two of the characters.

Remind students about using quotation marks to show what the character is saying.

Ask some student pairs to read their conversations to the class.

Increasing spelling competence

Organise students to work in pairs as spelling partners.

Allocate a number of spelling words for each pair. The number of words may vary according to individual student needs.

Ask the student who is testing first to say the word clearly twice and then use it in a sentence for his/her partner.

Students can ask their partner to repeat the word, if necessary.

The spelling partners then proofread each other's writing for spelling mistakes and provide feedback.

Students take turns to write each word their partner says from a list of spelling words.

Students may also benefit from using the *Have a go* sheet below:

My first attempt	My second attempt	Spelling checked

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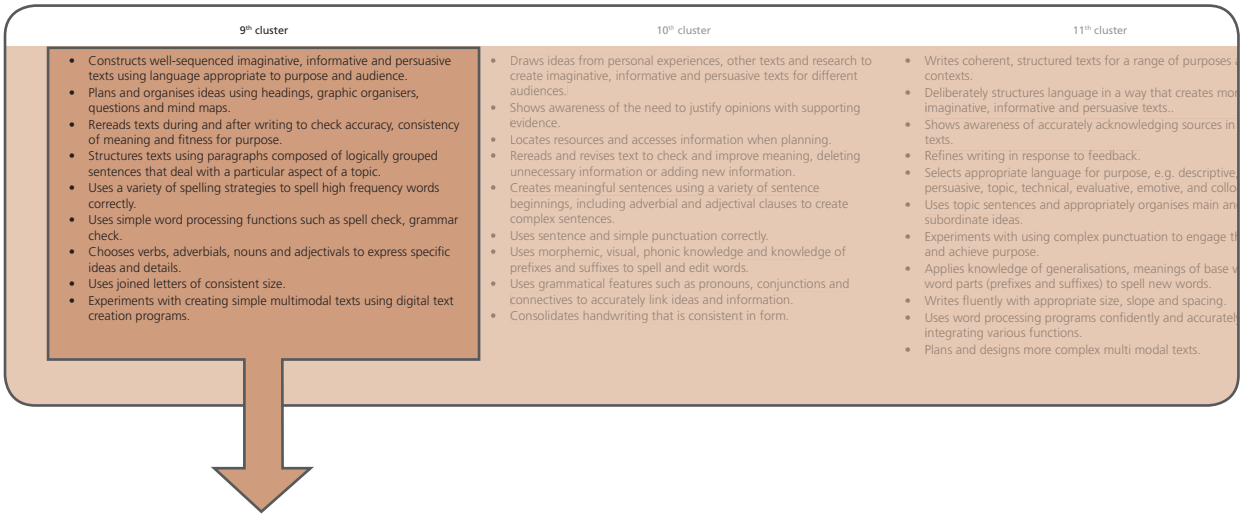

Ninth cluster of markers:

- Constructs well-sequenced imaginative, informative and persuasive texts using language appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Plans and organises ideas using headings, graphic organisers, questions and mind maps.
- Rereads texts during and after writing to check accuracy, consistency of meaning and fitness for purpose.
- Structures texts using paragraphs composed of logically grouped sentences that deal with a particular aspect of a topic.
- Uses a variety of spelling strategies to spell high frequency words correctly.
- Uses simple word processing functions such as spell check, grammar check.
- Chooses verbs, adverbials, nouns and adjectivals to express specific ideas and details.
- Uses joined letters of consistent size.
- Experiments with creating simple multimodal texts using digital text creation programs.

Persuasive re-creations

Teacher to view the video *Creating effective persuasive texts* by Dr Sally Humphrey available at: **http://www.nlnw.nsw.edu.au/events10.htm** as professional learning, then demonstrate to the students a scaffold for creating an effective persuasive text.

Ask students to log on to: **http://www.writingfun.com/writingfun2010.html** and read over an example (available at the foot of the page).

Students use the text organiser provided to create their own persuasive text on a topic of their choice by clicking on the *Writing online* hyperlink found on the bottom right of the *Writing Fun* screen.

Variation:
Create word walls featuring persuasive language to be accessible for student reference.

Provide students with examples of reviews to listen to, read or view (TV, film or DVD).

Students should work in pairs to create a persuasive review for their favourite song, film or recording. These could be presented as a broadcast or a podcast.

Provide time for students to share their texts with the class on a rostered basis.

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Imaginative re-creations

Show students examples of writing in the first person narrative. See examples of students' writing in the archived **Book Raps** at: **http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/pipermail/readiscover07_rap/2007/000676.html**

Assign a character from a recently read text or share a picture book, such as *Bear and Chook by the sea* by Lisa Shanahan and Emma Quay.

Model writing some diary entries for Chook and ask students to write equivalent entries for Bear. See: **http://www.bearandchook.com.au**

Extend imaginative recreations to other subject areas, e.g. diaries or blogs from diggers on the goldfields or members of Captain Cook's crew.

NB: Goldfields resource: **http://tlf.dlr.det.nsw.edu.au/learningobjects/Content/L680/object/index.html**

Planning organisers

Provide students with a range of planning pro formas with which they can experiment when planning independently. Two examples are provided below.

Discuss with students which planning technique might best suit the task.

Display examples of mind maps, storyboards and other graphic organisers, such as in the example below.

Select key vocabulary from a familiar story. Arrange into two lists, one for the modelled activity and one for students to work on independently.

Display the first list in random order.

Determine meanings for the selected words and model sorting the words onto a graphic organiser, such as in the table below:

Predict-o-grams

Characters	Setting	Problem	Events	Solution

Supply the second list of words arranged in random order.

Ask the students to work in pairs to allocate the words to the categories in the predict-o-gram table.

Students can work in pairs to convert their predict-o-gram into a story map.
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/storymap/

Print out the text on *Mysterious time travel:*
http://arc.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/go/stage-2/english/stu-work/a/narrative-sascha/ and cut it up so that the paragraphs are all separate.

Ask students to re-structure the text and later to highlight key words that link the text together.

Discuss the vocabulary and what students know about information reports.

See **http://www.writingfun.com/writingfun2010.html** and **http://resources.mysparklebox.co.uk/s2b38.pdf**.

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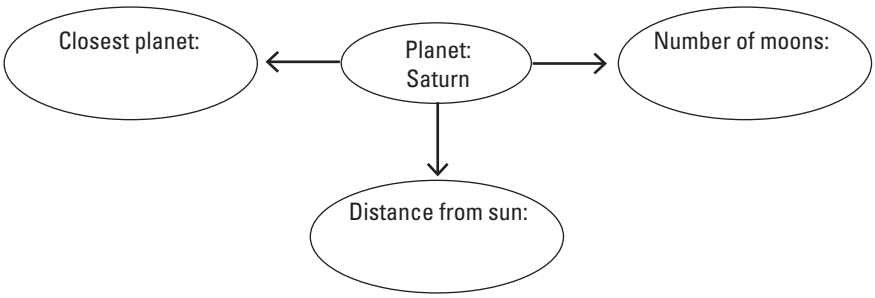
Mind mapping

Revise how to use an electronic mind mapping tool and model how to use mind mapping tools to plan writing.

Select a familiar topic, e.g. *The Solar System.*

Suggest categories to map, e.g. distance from sun.

Provide students with print resources to research a planet of their choice or, if students have access to the Internet, they may use a website such as: **http://www.kidsastronomy.com/solar_system.htm** to research the topic.



Ask students to work in pairs to brainstorm all they know about a planet in the Solar System by creating a mind map on paper.

Students share their mind maps using the interactive whiteboard.

Supplementary activities: Guessing games

Model a guessing game with words from a wall chart.

As a model, ask a student to think of a word on the list.

Model asking 4-5 questions about the topic area; the pattern of letters or a smaller word inside, e.g., the 'each' in *teacher*; the presence or absence of a prefix or a suffix; a rhyming word or the grammatical function of a word.

Assign rotating roles of thinker, guesser and helper.

Provide time for students to play some guessing games with the words on the wall chart.

Other ideas:

After writing a dictation, students should be encouraged to proofread their work from the word wall.

Highlight words like *their/there* and *where/were*. Ask students to keep a list of sentences using these words and compare how they're used.

Also see online programs allowing for topic word input on: **http://www.kidsspell.com**

Any words misspelt should be added to the students' personal word journal and revised in the *look-cover-write-check* technique during time set aside for this activity.

*See hints on:
http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/4_WritingSkills/writing_tuts/spelling_LL/index.html and
http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/4_WritingSkills/writing_tuts/spelling_LL/activity1.html

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Fun with handwriting

Prepare multiple copies of a variety of short riddles or jokes (see link below*).

Also prepare lined cards large enough for students to publish their riddle/joke and the answer.

Model the correct joining of letters by writing one of these riddles/jokes on the board in unjoined text.

Join up words with a different colour.

Provide worksheets of other riddle/jokes for practice. (Worksheets should have a few extra lines for drafting.)

When students have produced their best piece of writing on the worksheet and had it checked, they are given the blank index cards for the final draft for display.

Provide time for students to circulate around texts and match the questions to the answers.

* NB: Example: **http://www.cambridge.org/uk/education/primary/literacy/penpals/files/0521755107p16.pdf**

Spell checking

Prepare an electronic text* with deliberate errors in it (such as column 1 in the table below).

Establish a scenario where students have been hired as editors for the local newspaper and have urgent articles to electronically edit.

Review with students how to run a spelling and grammar check in a document editor, e.g. *Microsoft Word*. Remind students that spelling errors are underlined in red and grammar errors are underlined in green or blue.

Prepare and display a table on an interactive whiteboard or computer, such as the one below, and fill in the middle column with help from the students.

people	What can go wrong	What we call it	
peiple	One incorrect letter	Typo	Sp
peopple	One extra letter	Insertion	I
peple	One missing letter	Omitted	O
pepole	Correct letters but in the wrong order	Transposed	T
persons	Incorrect agreement (number)	Grammar	G

Give students the language to diagnose the errors (as above) and the opportunity to work on the text in pairs at a computer.

Organise the students into pairs. Each pair is to run the spelling and grammar tool on one of their own work samples and discuss the possible corrections provided by the spelling and grammar tool.

NB: Ask the students to read the text aloud as well to pick up errors of meaning, e.g. *sued* instead of *used*.

* NB: The text may be printed out and annotated with the symbols in the table above.

Grammar checking

Prepare an electronic text*, with deliberate errors in it, for students.

Discuss the differences between the wavy red lines and the wavy green lines in electronic texts and the F7 function key. (Make sure students know when and how to use it.)

Give students time to discuss the options suggested and the opportunity to revise the text based on the suggestions made through F7.

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Each student should have the same text and be encouraged to share their final edits and receive feedback on their choices with a partner.

NB: Sample texts can be found on **http://spellcheckplus.com/** also see the bibliography for grammar checker tutorials.

* If there is insufficient access to computers, this text may be printed out and annotated with the symbols in the table above.

Expressing ideas: Poems

Select a literary text with which students are familiar, such as a poem.

Model how to create a new text by changing the setting, tense and vocabulary to suit the context:

Original	Transformation Convert train context to ocean context
I heard a train!	I see the ocean!
Everybody stopped.	Everybody is active.
Everybody listened.	Everyone smiles.
We all heard the train whistle.	We all watch the waves rolling towards the shore.
Should we run ahead to the bridge?	Should we dash across the sand to the water's edge?

Adjective detectives

Ask students to revise texts where adjectives have been overused.

One example might be to suggest a specific noun to replace an unspecific phrase, e.g. *a big, dangerous bird = an eagle*.

Challenge students to work in pairs to reduce the number of overall words without losing the sense of the text.

Expanding texts

Give students practice at expanding sentences.

Explore the relationship between Humpty Dumpty and his soldiers suggested by the descriptive words used in the text below.

Hand out copies of the text and discuss the literary devices the author has used.

> The sun was hot, very hot. Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall. For hours he gazed proudly at his uniformed troops as they stood in rigid ranks before him. He felt on top of the world.
>
> Life was great. He was great. He was top egg. Sheer power welled up inside him. He leant forward and punched the air with his clenched fist. "Yes!"
>
> Suddenly his rounded body began to rock. He felt giddy and his world began to spin. He wobbled. He toppled. He fell. Splat! His shell shattered and its contents oozed onto the hot concrete, a yellow yolk glistening in the middle.
>
> Cautiously the exhausted soldiers broke rank and approached the wall. They huddled around the egg rapidly frying in the sun. They looked at each other in shocked silence. There was no way now that they could put their over-confident, arrogant leader back together again.
>
> What is more, they would not have done so, even if they could.

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Students should spend time reading and discussing the text in pairs.

Before collecting the texts, ask students to draw some sketches to help them remember the story.

Advise them that they are going to re-write the story in their own words and that they should write down any of the words they would like to use in their story before handing in their texts.

Allow time for students to work on their texts in pairs.

Checking by tracing

Prepare a connectives chart for display.

Enlarge a copy of an anonymous student's writing* completed to first or second draft.

Discuss how the pronoun reference is used throughout this text and trace it with different coloured pens.

Ask students to edit their own writing in the same manner.

Checking by highlighting

Ask students to re-read recent drafts independently and come up with a list of things that they could improve them.

Invite students to suggest where more information may be required and highlight those areas of text.

After scoring their writing according to the targeted areas (see suggestions in the table below), students should swap texts with a writing buddy.

In pairs, students should work together to improve the texts.

Feature	Ranking			Notes: Things to change
Vocabulary	1 I don't think I've done this well.	2 I think this is okay.	3 I'm happy with this.	Change the too frequent use of "he said" and *then*.
Agreement	1 I don't think I've done this well.	2 I think this is okay.	3 I'm happy with this.	Check the grammar.

For modelled text, use from other or previous classes for anonymity or use sample texts from the Board of Studies NSW, such as **http://arc.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/index.cfm?objectid=46BDEC36-9F80-0551-EDBCDD52D9B14D03**

NB: Before embarking on this task, students should be given guided practice in delivering encouraging feedback.

One formula could be the feedback 'sandwich' approach which involves sandwiching something that could be improved as indicated in column 1 above with praise for items in columns two and three.

Digital text creation

Prepare a folder of images to use in a slideshow using a PowerPoint presentation, such as *Microsoft Photostory 3*.

Also prepare a bank of texts to match these images.

Review how to use the software with the students.

Discuss how design, layout and graphics can impact on an audience.

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Cluster 9

Organise students into pairs.

Ask them to rate the graphics, colours and information on several of the sites at this link:
http://www.copacabana-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/tch_links/Science&Tech_Pages/A_Look_Inside.html
or
http://sites.google.com/site/smclibraryshaz/stage2webquests or http://edu.glogster.com/new/

Based on their research, encourage students to prepare a slideshow on a familiar topic using some examples of good design.

Re-group pairs into groups of four and ask students to share their work and justify their choices.

Extension:

Discuss a variety of book covers referring to the effect that different styles/colours layout have on communicating to the target audience.

Ask students to rate the examples.

See *The book cover creator* which allows students to create new covers for books they write:
http://198.104.156.44/student_mat/student_material.asp?id=58

Students also can design book covers for stories they have been reading or writing.

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Tenth cluster of markers:

- Draws ideas from personal experiences, other texts and research to create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts for different audiences.
- Shows awareness of the need to justify opinions with supporting evidence.
- Locates resources and accesses information when planning.
- Rereads and revises text to check and improve meaning, deleting unnecessary information or adding new information.
- Creates meaningful sentences using a variety of sentence beginnings, including adverbial and adjectival clauses to create complex sentences.
- Uses sentence and simple punctuation correctly.
- Uses morphemic, visual, phonic knowledge and knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to spell and edit words.
- Uses grammatical features such as pronouns, conjunctions and connectives to accurately link ideas and information.
- Consolidates handwriting that is consistent in form.

Using other texts

Ensure that students have access to a wide variety of literary and factual texts so that they can extend their understanding of how texts work and for whom they are written.

Students should begin collecting ideas and/or literary devices used by favourite authors in a notebook or in a Word document.

Arrange space on a wall chart for displaying some of these ideas.

Additional research might involve visiting popular authors' websites and/or completing an author study.

Ask students to examine myths and folktales and compile a list of common features used in these texts.

Use one student's list to model a story planning idea with the students.

Students then plan their own story.

Scholastic has a section on brainstorming myths to explain natural phenomena: **http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/mythswshop_index.htm**

Provide models of legends from literature and encourage students to compose one of their own folktales (or tall tales) to explain everyday occurrences, such as weather patterns. For more examples, visit and scroll down at: **http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends.htm**

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Factual persuasion

Display scaffolds for writing texts for different purposes.

Show students how to analyse and map the structure of the text when reading factual texts.

Encourage students to refer to photocopies of a model text with the steps clearly marked when planning their writing. See 'information report' at: **www.writingfun.com**

Visit healthy eating sites such as: **http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/mpk_poster2.pdf** (food pyramid) to compile a list of items that appear on the healthy eating food pyramid and their attributes.

Allocate the members of each food group to pairs of students.

Students should conduct additional research to plan a persuasive, one-minute speech in favour of their item appearing in the lunch box or canteen.

NB: Display a chart with attention grabbing sentence starters and some examples of persuasive language modelled in previous lessons.

Encourage students to refer to these while preparing their speeches.

Students might also produce posters or slide shows to promote their item.

Using other texts

Review a recently studied narrative text with five or more significant characters.

Organise students into small groups and allocate a character from the narrative to each group.

Present the situation to the students that their character must be removed from the narrative and they are to write a defence as to prevent this from happening.

Advise that their defence should be based on information in the text and groups should defend their character by detailing the probable consequences of that character's removal. Students should cite page references as part of the defence.

Ideas from research

Discuss the overall purpose and intended audience of the writing activity and how they are going to make this clear to the reader.

Encourage students to record their understanding of what a successful text would cover for their chosen context, e.g. visiting a National Park.

Fill in the anticipation table below for a National Park that students have studied.

Issue blank tables and ask each pair to prepare a slide presentation for a different National Park.

Your family is organising a camping trip in the next school holidays in a local National Park. Your task is to research the National Parks website, decide where to go, complete the table below and then design a slide show about your chosen National Park. Visit: **http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/**		
Who is your reader? What you think the reader would expect to see in your chosen National Park?	What do you want the reader to know? How are you going to show this clearly?	Design your slide show.

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Internet research

Prepare a class wiki, e.g. use *Wikispaces*.

Revise the purpose of a wiki with the students.

Inform students they will be contributing to a class wiki about a specific, current topic.

Review effective ways to locate specific information from the Internet and how to take notes efficiently.

Organise students into pairs. Students should search for and gather relevant information about a sub-strand of the topic from print and electronic sources.

Ask students to use a wiki template (-see sample below) for their wiki page.

Wiki page title:	
Wiki page body:	
Author(s):	
References (put the author of the text and/or copy and paste the website address):	

Once information for the wiki page has been summarised and edited, students submit it to the teacher to upload for viewing.

Adding interest

Collect a range of visuals showing interesting faces or use a card game (such as *Happy Families*) to suggest possible occupations.

Model how to embed adjectival clauses into sentences (including using appropriate punctuation) to give interesting, detailed information about people in a similar fashion to newspaper articles, e.g.:

- the *Happy Families* card for *Mr Bun the Baker* becomes:
  Mr Bun, who has been baking bread for over 20 years, …
- a photo of a man in a car becomes:
  Mr Crotchett, who has travelled the same route to work every day, …
- a photo of two adolescents becomes:
  Anna and Alex, who are unalike in every way, …

Provide sample texts without punctuation and ask students to edit them.

Model combining sentences such as:
Mrs French was our teacher in Year 3. She had an accident last week.

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Model combining these sentences on a table such as the one below:

Who	Add something **about** this person	Tell what they **did (action)**
Mrs French,	*who taught us in Years 3,*	*had a car accident last week.*
The plumber, *My friend,* *Her aunt,*		

Ask students to select one visual stimulus and write a headline and an opening paragraph about the visual.

Students should copy the formula in the table to create sentences about the visual stimulus provided or be requested to bring in their own pictures from home.

Students should ensure that they punctuate the news article.

The following site will format texts as newspaper paragraphs:
http://www.fodey.com/generators/newspaper/snippet.asp

Variation: Draw students' attention to examples from content areas, e.g.

The Daily
Sunday, August 30, 2006
He came in from the cold
A schoolboy who spent the night trapped in a butcher's cold store after being locked

Molten rock,	from the Earth's mantle,	burst violently through the continental crust

Adding detail

Wh words as prompts	Plain example	More detailed version
Who	There are many games we play.	~~There are~~ **Our class** enjoys playing many different games.
When		Our class enjoys playing many different games **at recess.**
What		**(add details)** Brainstorm what some of those 'things' are.

Provide students with some flashcards to use as sentence starters:

Usually

Normally

Sadly

Ask students to think-pair-share what they are going to write about, remembering to include their audience and purpose.

Dictogloss

Prepare a text (approximately ten sentences long) and include some fairly difficult topic words. Prepare this text with cloze gaps as in the example below.

Record the text and restate the topic words at the end of the recording.

Delete the difficult topic words and others from the written script and reproduce enough for each student.

Initially, present the first paragraph by itself, modelling the activity to pairs with volunteer students acting as note-takers.

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Elicit as many of the topic words as possible and ask the students to re-tell the passage.

Display the script with gaps, e.g.:

> Ahmed was an enormous elephant — the biggest land animal on Earth. He was famous because of his tusks, which measured at least three metres long.
>
> The tusks dug into the ground as he walked and became entangled in vines, so he had to hold his head high. This posture gave him a 'royal' appearance.

NB: Repeat the following words once only: *enormous; land; tusks; measured; metres; entangled; head; posture; royal.*

Arrange students in small groups around the recording device.

Assign two students in each group the roles of group leaders and note-takers respectively.

NB: All students should take notes when the text is being played.

The note-taker has special responsibility for writing down the topic words included at the end of the passage.

The group leader should then issue the cloze passage to the group.

The group then completes the task collaboratively, calling on their morphemic and phonic knowledge to fill in the gaps in the cloze.

Students should use visual cues (*Does this look right?*) and semantic knowledge (*Does this make sense?*) before sharing their ideas/answers.

NB: Students should hear the recording once only.

Following the collaborative work, students should check their group response with the teacher's main copy.

Handwriting for others

Students should have a clear, authentic purpose for creating handwritten texts.

Provide models of handwriting for students who may need more practice.

Students can write labels for photographs, posters, class charts, etc. The teacher could approach the Library or the canteen so determine if they would like any signs to be created.

Provide clear guidelines and encourage students to submit a first draft of the writing if the work is to be published.

Using connectives

Review the concept of cause and effect, e.g. *There was a big bang. Why? Because someone dropped a heavy book.*

Prepare a list of cause-effect connectives, e.g. *because, so, which.*

Prepare a text in an electronic document on a current topic, e.g. *What happens during an earthquake?*

Divide students into pairs.

Ask students to copy and paste the text into a word cloud generator, e.g. **http://www.wordle.net**

Using the word cloud as a reference, ask students to type sentences in a document editor using a different cause-effect connective for each sentence, e.g. *Rocks begin to break because tectonic plates at the surface of the Earth collide.*

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Refining

Display a text on the interactive whiteboard, e.g.

Letter to the editor: Dingo culling on Fraser Island

The dingoes on Fraser Island shouldn't be culled for starters as they were here before us and they have more right to be there than us.

Secondly, people don't take any notice of the "Don't feed the dingoes" signs and so the dingoes have grown up knowing that they will get food from humans.

It makes no sense that if the dingoes attack someone, they get shot. However, the rangers don't get shot if they kill a dingo.

If they don't want the attacks to happen, they should put up a fence to stop the dingoes coming into the campgrounds.

One fact about the dingoes is that they are pure-bred dingoes not bred with other dogs, so they are killing Australia's only pure-bred dingoes.

They should ban people from going to Fraser Island. They should NOT shoot the dingoes.

Discuss the purpose and intended audience for the text with the students.

Draw up a T chart (see below) and divide students into pairs to critique the letter to the editor.

Students should arrange their notes to the left and the right of the T chart indicating the strength of the arguments.

Purpose:		Audience:
Relevant (strong arguments)		Irrelevant (not as strong)

NB: Students should also be encouraged to share their ideas about the topic and suggest improvements/ points where additional information would be helpful.

Pairs could forms into groups of four to share findings and, if possible, compose a joint reconstruction, paying careful attention to the purpose for writing and audience.

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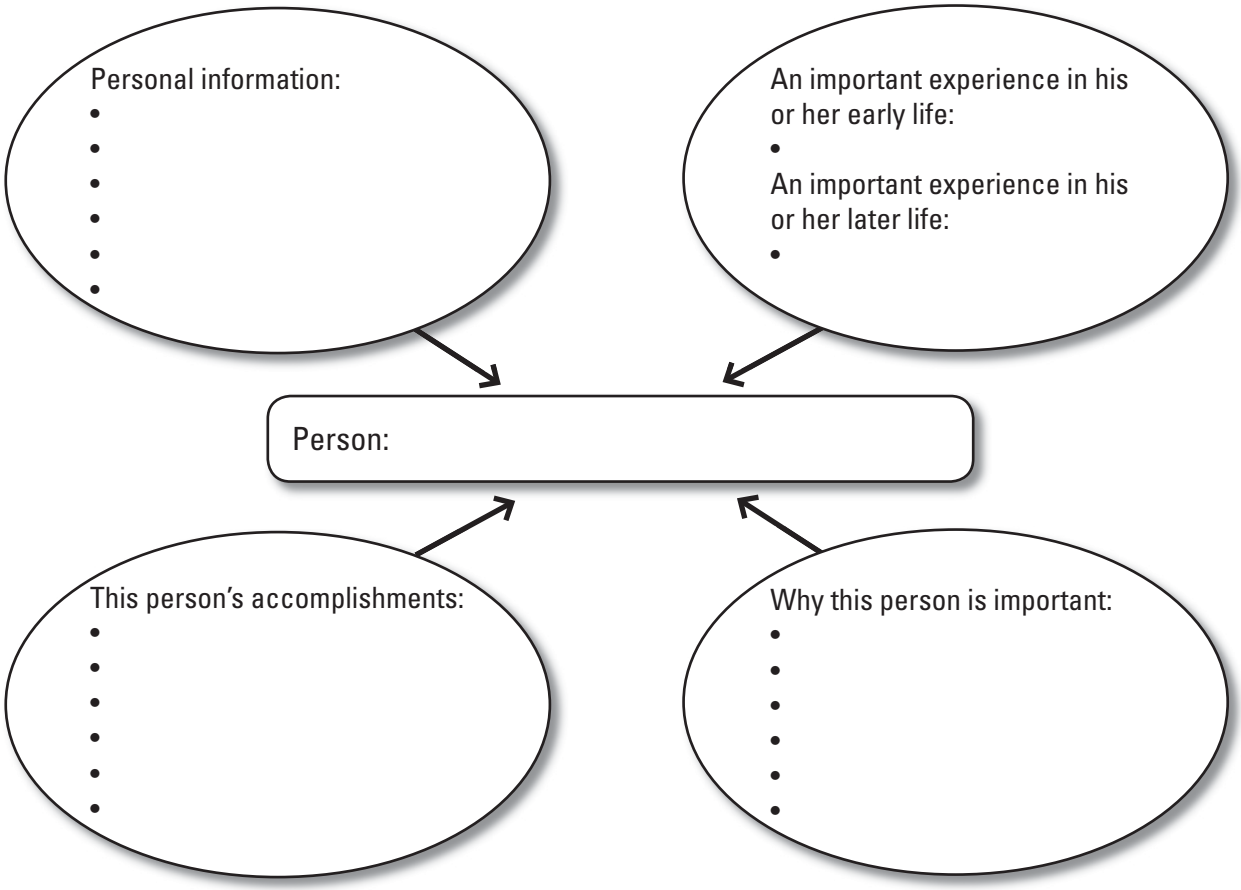
Cluster 10

Revising

Display a text on the interactive whiteboard. (See suggestion below.)

Discuss the purpose and the audience the text was intended for.

Introduce the idea of an organiser for planning such texts, e.g.:



Visit: Time for Kids website: **http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/media/hh/pdfs/samplepapers/biography_sample.pdf**

Work with students to transfer information from the text below to the graphic organiser above.

Encourage students to consider better ways of organising some of the information (for example a graphic, such as a family tree and including a photo with a caption).

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* Suggested text:

ROALD DAHL

Do you like books by Roald Dahl? I really do. You should read some. He's one of my favourite authors. He wrote at least 19 children's books, if not more.

Roald Dahl was born on September 13, 1916. His mum's name was Sophie and his Dad's name was Harold.

Roald Dahl never really met his Dad because he died before Roald was even one or one and a half-years-old.

Roald had four sisters whose names were Astri, Else, Asta and Alfhild. Roald was the only boy. I guess that's why his mum called him "Boy".

Roald's father died a few months after Astri died of appendicitis; Roald lived with his mother and 3 remaining sisters.

Roald Dahl grew up in Wales. He became a writer during World War II.

In 1953 Roald Dahl married Patricia Neal. She was an actress. They had five kids named Olivia, Tessa, Theo, Ophelia and Lucy.

His first two novels for children were *James and the Giant Peach* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* both of which were made into movies.

He wrote about the things that happened in his life, for example, a lot of people died in Roald Dahl's family, like his Dad, so in almost all of his books someone dies or is already deceased. In the *BFG*, Sophie (the little girl) is an orphan. I wonder if he named this little girl after his mother.

Reconvene to share suggestions for:

- information that could be deleted or represented in a different way
- new information that could be added
- style changes, e.g. *kids* versus *children*.

NB: Also use this as an opportunity to practise 'sandwich feedback'.

Proofreading

Liaise with teachers across the school to design a proofreading guide for all students to use when editing electronic texts as in the example below.

Display an electronic editing code for students to refer to when peer editing.

Code	Example	Explanation
C (capital)	C the man was	Does this word need a capital letter?
\ (backslash)	m\	Do these joined words need splitting?
Caret	^	What punctuation is missing? e.g. . , ?
Sp (spelling)	Sp speek	Would you please check this spelling?
Wavy underline	said	Can you find a better word?
Underline	Then	Can you find a better sentence beginning?

Discuss the finalised chart with the students and then ask them to proofread some recent writing in their own workbook.

They could swap their proofreading work with a partner to see if the partner agrees or can offer any suggestions for other improvement.

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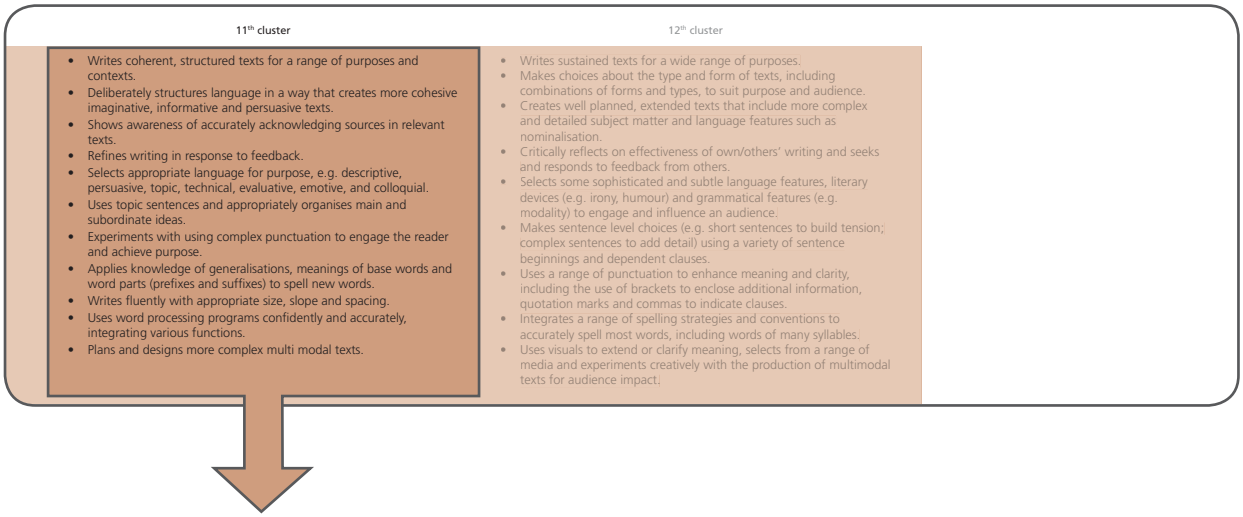

Eleventh cluster of markers:

- Writes coherent, structured texts for a range of purposes and contexts.
- Deliberately structures language in a way that creates more cohesive imaginative, informative and persuasive texts.
- Shows awareness of accurately acknowledging sources in relevant texts.
- Refines writing in response to feedback.
- Selects appropriate language for purpose, e.g. descriptive, persuasive, topic, technical, evaluative, emotive, and colloquial.
- Uses topic sentences and appropriately organises main and subordinate ideas.
- Experiments with using complex punctuation to engage the reader and achieve purpose.
- Applies knowledge of generalisations, meanings of base words and word parts (prefixes and suffixes) to spell new words.
- Writes fluently with appropriate size, slope and spacing.
- Uses word processing programs confidently and accurately, integrating various functions.
- Plans and designs more complex multi modal texts.

RAFT letter writing

RAFT writing planners provide the opportunity for students to address audience and purpose in a variety of styles.

Examine the bicycle safety photo story in the *Move ahead with street sense** kit and brainstorm what it takes to look after a bicycle.

Introduce the elements of the RAFT and model with a sample text (see below).

Role = unwanted bicycle at the tip

Audience = young owner

Format = farewell letter

Topic (purpose and strong verb) = complaint.

Dear Alex,

Thanks to you I've been forced to lie in this scrap yard for the past year. I've had to face the loss of more and more parts until there is almost nothing left of me. Tomorrow, I'm scheduled to be compacted, so I have to write this letter urgently.

It is hard for me to say this, but I think you have been really mean! You … etc.

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Ask students to add middle and concluding paragraphs, keeping the tone of the writing consistent.

Ask students to compose new letters from another unwanted item (perhaps now in a Vinnies store), pleading for better treatment.

Note that RAFTs are written:

- from a viewpoint *other than* that of a student
- to an audience *other than* the teacher
- in a form *other than* students would normally compose
- with words *other than write*, instead use strong verbs such as *plead, persuade, convince, clarify* to set the tone of the letter.

RAFT fiction writing

Use shared reading as stimulus for RAFT responding, e.g., the characters' page with text taken from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* **http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/services/treasure/book/chars.html** or a familiar text on the chosen topic.

Role: A stow-away on a pirate ship	
Audience: The captain of the pirate ship	
Format: Letter	
Topic: (purpose)	Scene: five years later *Pair A:* Reminisce about the fun you had on board.
	Scene: ten days before the ship sails *Pair B:* Convince the captain you'd make a good member of the crew.

Divide students into pairs and allow them time to plan their responses.

NB: Share texts that promote looking through different lenses, some are recommended in the *Reading Rockets* link on: **http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/raft/**

RAFT nonfiction writing

Review a recently studied topic, e.g., National Parks of NSW.

Examine one of the maps drawn up by the National Parks and Wildlife Information office, such as: **http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/parks/parkMaps/MutawintjiMap.pdf**

Assign writing roles and audience roles to students based on the chosen resource, e.g.:

RAFT in pairs			
R: Lost tourist	A: Park ranger	F: Telephone call	T: Requesting directions
R: Journalist	A: Visitors	F: Brochure	T: Warning of regulations
R: Teacher	A: Parents	F: Blog	T: Persuading them to visit as well

Use the map (see above) and downloaded material from a familiar National Park* to brainstorm what the audience needs to know and what the author wants to convey.

Ask students to role play the telephone conversation.

Ask students to select one of the RAFT situations in the table above and allow sufficient time for them to plan and execute the task independently.

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Students could review the different tones of the resultant texts as an extension exercise.

* NB: additional information may be gained by visiting: **http://www.visitnsw.com/area/Broken_Hill_and_Surrounds.aspx** and **http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/parksafety/**

Acknowledging sources

Before conducting or discussing research, it is essential that students understand and plan what questions they need answered.

Students need to know how to record the specific sections of text that provide the answers to their questions.

Provide students with headings that prompt them to record relevant data, such as:

Title and author	Year of publication	Number of page/ paragraph	Importance

See **http://www.kyvl.org/kids/p3_notes/datasheets.html**

For research conducted online, students should record:

- how old the site is
- the organisation or individual responsible for publishing the information
- the website address.

One way of students practising this note-taking is to compose 'busted' biographies.

Research an online biography of an author/illustrator the students with which students are familiar.

Write a 'busted' version of that biography containing approximately 10 errors in at least six of the following areas:

1. author's/illustrator's name
2. author's/illustrator's birthplace or childhood home
3. the name of at least one book by the author/illustrator
4. current home of the author/illustrator
5. fact about how author/illustrator obtains ideas for books
6. a detail from the author's/illustrator's childhood
7. at least three details about the author's/illustrator's life now (e.g., pets, hobbies, family members)
8. information about any awards or honours received by the author/illustrator.

* NB: Visit: **www.memfox.com** and **www.emmaquay.com**

Power planning

It is useful to demonstrate how writers help readers to follow their arguments and determine what's important in a text.

Students should have already had practice at highlighting the main ideas with one colour and the secondary or supporting ideas with another.

Demonstrate how ideas can be ranked and organised in a Power Chart. Use numbers (as in Powers 1–4 in the chart below) to signify the relative importance of ideas in the text.

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Power Chart:

Power 1 = Main topic, e.g. *Animals that live with us*

Power 2 = Specific details supporting Power 1, e.g. *Domesticated pets*

Power 3 = Detail or supportive information for Power 2, e.g. first example – dogs

Power 4 = Detail or supportive information for Power 3, e.g. second example – cats

Distribute students with the following questions before handing out a text:

- What is the author trying to tell you?
- Why is the author telling you that?
- Does the author say it clearly?
- How could the author have said things more clearly?
- What additional information do you need?

Divide students into pairs and ask them to read through an informational text, e.g., as found in: **http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/english/write_k6engsamples_syl.pdf** (see page 160 discussion on *Irrigation*)

Provide time for the students to discuss the questions above in relation to the text organisation and/or suggestions for improvement.

Style guides

A selection of learning objects freely available on *TaLe* allows students to practise writing for a purpose within the context of a game, e.g., for information reports, see *Sea Chase* at: **http://tlf.dlr.det.nsw.edu.au/learningobjects/Content/L866/object/index.html**

For explanations, see *World Wonders: Thunderstorms* **http://tlf.dlr.det.nsw.edu.au/learningobjects/Content/L6194/object/index.html**

Students are given a selection of options to choose from when constructing a text.

The text can be then be printed out.

After reviewing the print-outs, ask small pairs to work on different texts using the worksheets below.

Reference materials:

- Recount: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/td_tu6_wksh1a.pdf**
- Procedure: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/td_tu6_wksh1b.pdf**
- Description: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/td_tu6_wksh1c.pdf**

Ask pairs to form a group of four to review different styles and collaboratively produce a style guide chart listing important aspects of the featured text structures purposes for writing. A teacher's guide is available at: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/teachersguide2009part3.pdf**

For explanations: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/td_tu6_wksh1e.pdf**

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Topic sentences

Choose a topic the students have already dealt with in class, e.g., National Parks of NSW.

Print out the text from *Staying safe in national parks*:
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/parksafety/GeneralSafetyInformation.htm

Reproduce enough copies and divide students into two groups to look at:

- planning the visit
- precautions to take while visiting.

NB: Remove the introductory paragraph. Divide the introductory paragraph into separate sentence strips, one per each student in the group (to be issued later).

Remove texts and ask students to form pairs and suggest some points that should be covered in a new pamphlet to be created on *Safety in national parks*.

Ask students to arrange the sentences in the best order to introduce the topic.

Sentences in correct order:

It's great to escape city life and go bushwalking, cycling, picnicking or driving in national parks and reserves.
However, these are natural environments so you need to take some precautions.
Many parks are remote and rugged places, weather can change quickly, rivers, lakes and the sea may be unpredictable
The wildlife in national parks should always be treated with respect and you should avoid approaching or feeding them.
When visiting national parks be aware of the risks and take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of any children in your care.
Remember to plan ahead, and choose your walks and activities to match your stamina and fitness level.

Students should compare and share their work.

Print off several of the categories under the *General safety information* tab and jumble the sentences in the introductory paragraph, as above, and ask students to reconstruct the text.

For more information on topic sentences, visit:
http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/4_WritingSkills/writing_pdf/editing_writing.pdf

More complex punctuation

Remind students that some forms of punctuation are considered more complex because they are either more difficult to apply, used infrequently or are used in complex sentences.

Students should be encouraged to employ a variety of punctuation marks within sentence boundaries.

Provide opportunities for students to read aloud, as in (quietly) rapping, which may help them to understand the need for punctuation at points other than the beginning and end of a sentence.

Ask students to confer in small groups when improving their drafts.

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During the editing process, pairs should read their writing aloud and give feedback on each other's writing.

Provide checklists, such as:

My 'end of sentence' punctuation was looked over by .....

My commas and apostrophes were looked over by .....

I need to double-check.....

Sample activity:

After reading *The School Magazine* article *Greta Bernice: Grammar Police**, students can work in pairs to produce similar signage regarding classroom rules, uniform requirements, sports information, etc.

*Visit *The School Magazine*: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/gretabernice_story_teachingsession.pdf**

Editing online

Prepare a Notebook presentation on a current topic that contains inverted commas and apostrophes in both correct and incorrect positions.

Review when to use inverted commas and apostrophes for contractions.

Organise pairs of students to work together using sheets or on a computer.

Instruct one student to read the text out while the other student marks the text with a tick or cross to indicate correct or incorrect punctuation usage.

Words plus

Provide students with an opportunity to work at their own level to create new words or revise some base words taken from recent work.

Write up a word bank, such as:

appear	taste	fear	colour	doubt	help	care	like

Challenge students to create as many words as possible by adding prefixes and suffixes to the base words.

Provide time for pairs of students to share their words and reflect on spelling discoveries.

Writing with the computer

Encourage students to use such functions as cut, paste and save when using a computer to compose texts.

Establish a buddy system where peer tutors (as computer 'experts') can assist their partners to use different fonts and word art on posters and signs.

Provide time for students to experiment with colour, font size and styles in programs such as PowerPoint.

Encourage students to display, share and compare their work.

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Cluster 11

Managing multimodal texts

Select two texts without graphics and remove any organisational features such as headings and captions.

Duplicate for students' use.

John's report on pigmy possums at: **http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/strategies/5tscomplexnoun.htm** provides a model to use with students.

Cut up the text for ease of placement and model how the layout, punctuation and spelling might be improved.

After deciding on the purpose and audience, encourage students to suggest additional graphics and elements of a more appealing layout.

Provide pairs with a second cut-up piece of another text. They should then work on re-designing the layout of the text considering:

- where the text should be positioned
- where illustrations, diagrams or pictures should be positioned
- the font, size and position of titles, headings, labels and captions
- the targeted audience and purpose of the text.

Ask students to add any other text features that will enhance the appeal and readability for their audience.

Provide time for pairs to share their text in a group of four and ask students to discuss their reasoning for choosing the design features.

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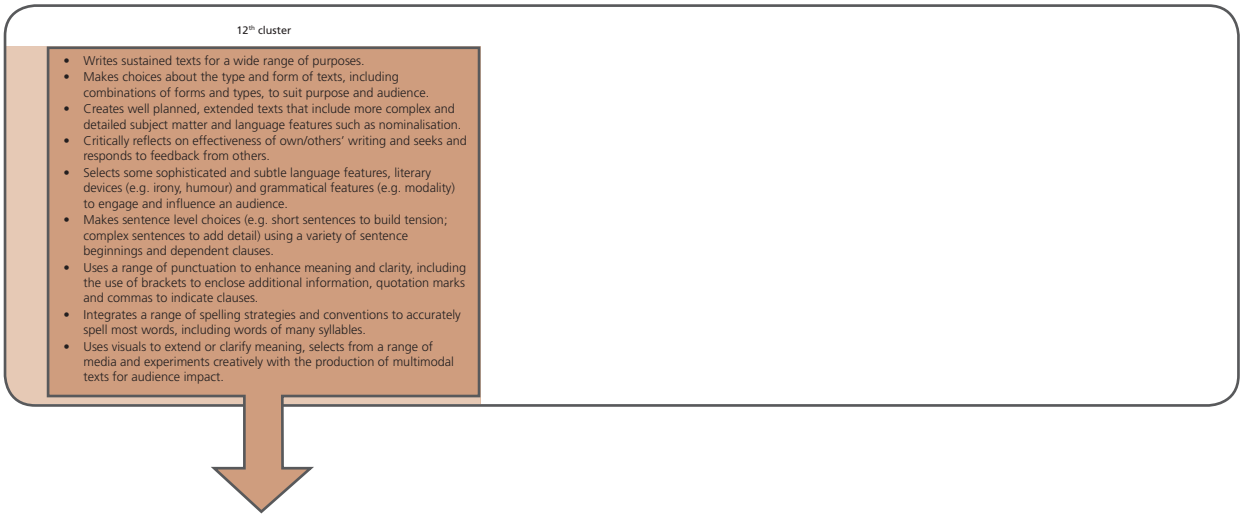

Twelfth cluster of markers:

- Writes sustained texts for a wide range of purposes.
- Makes choices about the type and form of texts, including combinations of forms and types, to suit purpose and audience.
- Creates well planned, extended texts that include more complex and detailed subject matter and language features such as nominalisation.
- Critically reflects on effectiveness of own/others' writing and seeks and responds to feedback from others.
- Selects some sophisticated and subtle language features, literary devices (e.g. irony, humour) and grammatical features (e.g. modality) to engage and influence an audience.
- Makes sentence level choices (e.g. short sentences to build tension; complex sentences to add detail) using a variety of sentence beginnings and dependent clauses.
- Uses a range of punctuation to enhance meaning and clarity, including the use of brackets to enclose additional information, quotation marks and commas to indicate clauses.
- Integrates a range of spelling strategies and conventions to accurately spell most words, including words of many syllables.
- Uses visuals to extend or clarify meaning, selects from a range of media and experiments creatively with the production of multimodal texts for audience impact.

Combining texts

Select opportunities for students to be involved in projects outside the classroom, such as producing pamphlets, short films, writing signs, rosters and letters to parents.

Such projects could culminate in the preparation of multimedia presentations, such as the one below, e-books or a display/performance/convention involving others.

Students should also be encouraged to reflect on their learning in writing. This writing may be shared in a blog, an e-book or the school magazine, such as: **http://www.specialforever.org.au/?page=ebooks**

Students might design and story map a presentation they have done, e.g. see **http://www.specialforever.org.au/?page=Source-to-the-Sea**

The link below showcases Griffith Public School reporting on their composting and recycling projects, the creation of their billabong, bush tucker and heritage gardens, all backed by a catchy rap written and performed the students. **https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/about-us/yol4s/year-of-learning-for-sustainability-awards-of-excellence-regions** (Scroll down to select Griffith Public School.)

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Adding details

Talk to the students about how their narrative drafts might be improved using an example from the link below:
http://www.highlightingwriting.com/docs/handouts/Show,%20Don't%20Tell%20-%20Examples.pdf

Brainstorm how students might substitute actions for feelings in their writing, e.g.:

He was scared	He started to shake/shudder/quiver

Students should revisit a drafted piece of writing and critically assess where more details would improve the writing.

Supporting opinions

Reproduce an expository text (see example below).

Using colour, model how to group the major arguments.

Discuss with students the strength of the arguments and highlight the details (evidence) that support these opinions.

Arrange students in pairs and provide them with chart paper cut into sentence strips and textas or crayons.

Provide students with sentence starters such as:

- *Teenagers shouldn't be allowed to* ..... *because* . . .
- *Another reason* ..... *is* . . .
- *As well,* ....., etc.

Ask students to brainstorm as many arguments in favour of the topic as possible.

Students should group the arguments according to the strength of the argument and the relevance of the supporting evidence.

NB: Allow time and provide resources for students to research supporting evidence for their arguments, e.g. in the argument below dealing with teenagers getting unemployment benefits , students could research statistics about the number of teenagers on unemployment benefits and the number of teenagers at school versus institutions such as TAFE doing their HSC.

Should 16 and 17 year olds get the 'The Dole'? (adapted from **http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/english/write_k6engsamples_syl.pdf** and scroll down to p. 153):

> The Government is considering and, in fact, is about to take action on stopping 'The Dole' payment for 16 and 17-year-olds.
>
> The reason is that the teenagers to whom the Government is paying 'The Dole' are those who don't go to school.
>
> The Government feels that their families should be responsible for them.
>
> At this age, teenagers should be doing the HSC. If they do not do this, then they do not get any money from *Austudy*.
>
> They should not get 'The Dole' and miss out on an important education. Since the Government is paying 'The Dole' to the 16 and 17-year-olds who have no education, the Government wants to encourage the children to go to school and learn things.

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Another reason that the Government does not want to spend the money on 16 and 17-year-olds is that the Government could use the money for different purposes, such as education.

Also the Government could spend the money on community services, such as family counselling. This would benefit the whole community, not just the 16 and 17-year-olds.

The Government has been treating the students worse than the people who are unemployed. It seems that the Government is now changing its attitude because teenagers are starting to go back to school.

The Government should care more about students who work hard to improve themselves, more than about the unemployed teenagers. Even though 16 and 17-year-olds are teenagers, they can be still considered as children.

When people consider them as children, then their parents should look after them.

It is not the responsibility of the Government.

Strengthening

Use the following link to provide students with a model of an argument: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/services/schoolmagazine/assets/pdf/td_tu6_wksh1f.pdf**

Add a fifth column to the RAFT writing organiser to provide prompts for strengthening the language used in arguments.

Ask students to work together in pairs to change personal statements of opinion to more impersonal language.

Pairs should work together to fill in the chart below for two different texts, such as an example of spoken speech, e.g. the *Talking and listening* module on *Dingo Culling* in the Stage 3 *Classroom Assessment Resource* and the extract from the *Wildlife Australia Magazine* entitled *Outrageous reactions* in the plastic sleeve at the back of the same resource.

Students should construct word banks of vocabulary used in persuasive writing for the fifth column.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic (type of text)	Strengthening statements *This clearly demonstrates …*

Literary devices: Text innovation

Provide opportunities for students to discuss texts where, in order to create ironic humour, the author plays with the reader's understanding of the way a tale might unfold, e.g., the *Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch*.

Provide opportunities for students to discuss texts where the author adapts traditional elements of a tale to create ironic humour.

The setting, the charcterisation*, and/or the resolution can be tweaked for humour.

After reading a text, e.g., *Snow White in New York* by Fiona French, ask students to talk about their heroes, hobbies and interests with their partner.

Students should attempt to reflect something of their interests to change the characterisation or setting/resolution of a traditional tale.

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Provide opportunities for pairs of students to rewrite a familiar tale as a Reader's Theatre script.

*See review of the *Paper Bag Princess*: **http://www.allreaders.com/topics/info_34023.asp** and **http://www.flipkart.com/snow-white-new-york-fiona-book-0192722107**

*Also see *The true story of the three little pigs!* as told to Jon Scieszka: *http://www.shol.com/agita/wolfside.htm*

Complex sentences

Revise the features of a dependent clause and how they differ from an independent clause.

Create an electronic 'drag and drop' matching activity on a current topic, e.g. rainforests. Each question in the activity will contain an independent clause (e.g. *The world's rainforests are currently disappearing*) and a variety of dependent clauses (e.g. because companies are over-harvesting timber).

In pairs, students match the most suitable dependent clause with the independent clause.

Ask students to discuss why they think the dependent clause is most suitable to match or suggest an alternative dependent clause to match the independent clause.

Editing online

Prepare a Notebook presentation on a current topic that contains the use of brackets to enclose additional information in both correct and incorrect positions.

Review when to use brackets and the placement of simple punctuation, e.g. full stops.

Organise pairs of students to work together on one computer.

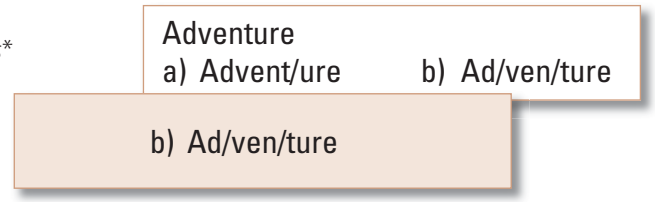
Instruct one student to read the text aloud while the other student marks the text with a tick or cross to indicate correct or incorrect punctuation usage.

Reference for parenthesis (– which could be adapted as a cloze exercise):
http://www.informatics.sussex.ac.uk/department/docs/punctuation/node38.html

Spelling: Syllables

Prepare several board games, e.g. *Snakes and Ladders** for this activity.

Model how to make the game cards pictured using a word with several syllables.



Model how the words are written with both incorrect and correct syllable split versions on the front and the correct version on the (shaded) flipside.

Students should select two or three such words from their vocabulary logs.

(NB: Check they have all selected different words.)

When playing in a group of four, the students who give the correct answer are able to move forward one place on the game board.

At the end of the game, students should discuss similar patterns and come up with a rule to describe as to where syllables are split.

*Alternately a simple board game can be printed off from: **http://www.beaconlearningcenter.com/documents/1702_01.pdf**

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Spelling: Word walls

Provide students with daily newspapers and index cards.

Ask each student to find, cut out, and glue a new word from the newspaper to an index card. It must be found in either a dictionary or an encyclopaedia (i.e., it should not be a person's name or a place).

Students should write out the sentence in which they found the word and share why it was important to understanding the news item. Pronunciation tips and syllabification should also be included.

These cards can be displayed alphabetically on a word wall or electronically on: **www.wallwisher.com**

Spelling: Dictogloss

Prepare recorded texts for students to use. Model this activity by using one of the texts.

Demonstrate how to scribe key words as they are heard.

Think aloud to fill in semantically obvious words before listening again.

Fill in remaining words, thinking aloud to suggest correct spelling.

Students should then perform this task independently with pre-recorded texts

(NB: This can also be done with one student reading the text aloud).

After listening to the whole text twice, students work in pairs to reconstruct the text using a range of strategies to reproduce unfamiliar words.

Nominalisation: News reports

Select a fictional tale with which students are familiar, such as *The Great Escape from the City Zoo* by Tohby Riddle* or a similar, easy-to-read picture book.

Model converting one of the incidents into a news item for the evening edition, noting where verbs have changed to nouns.

Ask students to prepare their own news reports based on other incidents in the book. (Familiar tales such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* or *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* also lend themselves to this treatment.)

NB: Language used in newspapers should be displayed and added to periodically.

* For some very interesting background notes, visit: **http://www.tohby.com/Images/Notes_on_TheGreat%20EscapefromCityZoo.pdf**

Reworking

Display charts to remind students of the routines they need to follow during revising, editing and proofreading their writing.

Some examples of questions that might be included are listed below:

<table>
<tr><td>Structure: Moving/Removing:
Do I need to move or remove anything?
Are some sentences too long or do some need to be combined?</td><td>Meaning:
Are the ideas in a logical sequence?
Have I read my writing aloud to someone else?
Have I used words that convey exactly what I mean?</td><td>Refining:
Can I substitute a more interesting word?
Have I used a variety of words?
Have I written a good topic sentence?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Details: Adding:
Can I add more detail to any sentences?
Have I added some interesting details?</td><td colspan="2">Proofreading:
Did I underline the words that I'm not sure I spelt correctly?
Have I checked the punctuation?
Have I been consistent in the use of tense?</td></tr>
</table>

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Cluster 12

Illustrating meaning

Students who have access to computers can plan to use a program such as *Storybird* (**http://storybird.com/**) to select visuals to enhance their storytelling.

Using *Microsoft Photostory*, students can create slideshows using digital photos with a single click. Students can add special effects, soundtracks and their own voice narration then personalise them with titles and captions. Download at: **http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx**

For further applications, students can visit: **http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/digital_rev/libraries/toolkit/index.htm**

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