



FJS PARENTS AND PUPILS WORKING TOGETHER

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH WRITING

At Fakenham Junior School we believe that developing good writing skills is an essential part of your child's literacy learning.

READING is vital to your child developing good writing skills. It will help your child gain an understanding of sentence structure, the features of different types of writing and to develop a wide vocabulary. All essential components to achieving good writing skills. So **READ, READ and READ!**

However, **word games** can also help your child build the vocabulary knowledge they need for writing.

This leaflet contains ideas for **GAMES** designed to improve your child's writing skills. Games are **FUN** which in turn makes learning fun and more memorable. Have a go at some of these Games, but remember to keep them fun and play them little and often.

NAME IT!

The aim of this game is to improve writing by using precise nouns rather than general ones - e.g. poodle rather than dog.

Choose a category such as cars, dogs, shops, flowers, animals and ask your child to list as many types as they can - there is no need to write them down, unless you want to.

To make this slightly more complex choose some of the suggestions and discuss what characteristics they may have, e.g. poodle: neat, trimmed, tippy-toed, labrador: bouncy, energetic, enthusiastic.

WORD ASSOCIATIONS

However you play this game it is a great way to develop quick access to words without thinking and you may just get some unusual combinations, which is what we are looking for in writing.

The game is played in pairs. You set the first word and then your opponent offers other words. Try not to think, but just say the first word that comes in to your head, taking it in turns.

Examples:

The waterfall came....

Cascading, pouring, crashing, gushing

The pyramid stood.....

Proud, tall, strong, bold

CHAIN LINK

This game is based around generating vocabulary and then using this vocabulary.

Start off with a statement:

The birds are swooping in the clear blue **sky**.

Sky is like an azure gem.

Gem of an idea in the **air**.

Air.....

The last word of the sentence must be used to start off the next line or statement. It encourages children to think and use words flexibly.

If you play this with young children, the lines that follow on do not have to make sense, but can stand on their own.

FORTUNATELY, UNFORTUNATELY

Play this game in pairs. Make a statement to start off with, e.g. 'Mrs Simpson walked across the playground.' Then take it in turn to give another statement starting with Fortunately or Unfortunately. It might go something like this:

Fortunately she was going in the right direction

Unfortunately she tripped over

Fortunately she had skateboard pads on her knees

Unfortunately she didn't have them on her elbows

WHAT IF.....?

Describe a situation, e.g. 'Spiderman has landed in school' and from this generate lots of 'What ifs'?

What if he wore his pants inside his tights?

What if he lost his powers?

What if he picked up a child and flew off with them?

The idea is just to generate lots of 'What ifs'. The 'What ifs' can then be used to build up some ideas and how they might grow to make a story. The ideas could then be used to write a short story.

SEE THE PICTURE

This is an imagining game, designed to help children to use the images in their own minds and attach words to them.

Create an image in your head. This might be a setting in a story they are writing, something that they are writing a poem about or an experience that your family has had on a trip. Encourage your child to hold on to the image and then ask:

- ◆ What can you see?
- ◆ What colours stand out most?
- ◆ How does it feel?
- ◆ Walk around your image. What other things do you see?

Jot down a list of words and phrases from their image.

JOINING WORDS

This game will help your child develop the use of connecting words to help them make more complex sentences. Begin with a simple sentence:

‘The cart stopped.’

Provide a selection of connecting words to develop the sentence:

‘The cart stopped *because* there was a barrier up ahead.’

after	but	as	as soon as
because	while	before	although
so	when	whenever	even though

ED-ING-LY

This helps your child to find different ways to start a sentence. Begin with a simple sentence and then use ed-ing-ly starters to vary the opening and develop the sentence.

Example:

Daisy swam towards the wooden raft.

Desperately, Daisy swam towards the wooden raft.

Frightened by sharks, Daisy swam towards the wooden raft.

Hoping she was not too late, Daisy swam towards the wooden raft.

After playing these games you could try encouraging your child to write some of these sentences down and to use the correct punctuation. However, remember to make it fun, a ‘little but often’ approach works best, and a competitive element can sometimes also help to make games more exciting.