

Writing Fact Cards Professional Development Activities

Balancing transcriptional and compositional aspects of writing

Based on evidence and reliable research, UKLA's free downloadable writing fact cards tell you all that you need to know about writing. You can use them for whole school development or in teacher training to look at the writing curriculum as a whole or to target specific features of writing. These Fact Cards are the perfect starting point for discussion leading to short, medium and long-term plans to develop writing.

Download the Fact Cards from http://www.ukla.org/news/new_ukla_fact_cards_on_teaching_writing/

The following sessions are based on the full set of Fact Cards for Writing. Suggestions are made for further reading to support planning for development.

Balancing transcriptional and compositional aspects of writing

You will need several copies of Fact Card 1 for this Activity, sets of all the Fact Cards (photocopying is fine) and everyone's planning for the next unit of work.

It's always worth talking through what a group of staff or trainees see as the current picture so that you can identify as priorities for action or further reading. To establish common principles across a year group you may want to ask people who teach the same age group to work together or, if you are looking at issues of progression, you may want to have all key stage 1 or 2 teachers working together.

Starting with **Fact Card 1**, working in groups of two or three, ask colleagues to highlight examples in their planning in two colours (one for transcription and one for composition) to check out how effectively they **balance** the technical and compositional aspects of learning to write and **integrate** these complementary aspects of learning to write.

What does the colour coding indicate: more emphasis on transcription or more on composition or equal emphasis on both? Are the elements integrated or taught at separate times?

Managers/ senior teams might want to consider how to give colleagues detailed feedback on strengths before considering how to address any imbalance or gaps in practice. Confidence in describing good practice leads to more effective self-review.

If there is an imbalance between the two elements, use the other Fact Cards to identify one aspect of writing that individual teachers or year groups might develop. (It's best to focus on just one aspect at a time so as not to have too many initiatives going at the same time.) Make plans to develop this in the mid-term, considering:

What are the specific areas to be addressed?

Which classes/staff (including teaching assistants) will be involved?

What will the time scale be?

What action will be taken?

What support/resources will be necessary?

What examples of good practice already exist in the school? How might these be shared?

How will success be evaluated?

Specially for trainees – reflective practice

School-based tasks: to identify and research good practice

You can do this individually, but it's always a good idea to work with others to get discussion going and to share ideas about where to go to find out more.

Using all the Fact Cards, note down good classroom practice you have witnessed for the topic of each card. How does the practice you have seen relate to the research indicated on each Fact Card?

If there are gaps, how might you research these areas?

As well as the references listed on the UKLA website on: http://www.ukla.org/news/new_ukla_fact_cards_on_teaching_writing/ the UKLA booklet *Teaching Writing: What the Evidence Says* will give you plenty more suggestions for reading. You'll also find the UKLA journal *Literacy* very useful for accessible research based on practice.