

## Writing Fact Cards Professional Development Activities

### *Language play in school*

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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/](http://www.ukla.org/news/new_ukla_fact_cards_on_teaching_writing/)

The following sessions are based on Fact Card 6. Suggestions are made for further reading to support planning for development.

### **Language play in school**

*You will need several copies of Fact Card 6 for this Activity (photocopying is fine), a large sheet of paper for notes and the planning for the next unit of work.*

It's always worth talking through what a group of staff or trainees know themselves before looking to 'fill the gaps'. To establish common principles 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.

Ask colleagues in groups of two or three briefly to recall a rhyme that they liked as a child. What is the appeal? It might be nonsense and funny, or have some amusing sounds or it might be pleasingly repetitive, and it will have rhythm and rhyme – and certainly a great appeal as it's been memorable over several years. What features do these rhymes have in common? What do they suggest about the sounds, structures and meanings of language? Although most people recall rhymes from their childhood, teachers are often reticent

about reading and writing poetry with their classes. Discuss in the group the last time they read poetry to their class? Is it a daily, weekly or less frequent activity? When did the children last write poetry?

Using Fact Card 6, and the plans for the next unit of work, ask the groups to discuss how they might use the factors mentioned in the bullet points either as a way of discussing language use (spelling and punctuation can be very effectively taught using rhyme and poetry) or as a way of introducing more poetry into units of work. A good starting point might be with the children; if adults can recall rhymes and jingles from childhood, it's likely that the children will be able to and these contributions can be a rich resource for talking about language.

**Senior managers** might like to:

- Ask year groups to agree to try to introduce language play and poetry more frequently into their planning for English) and other subjects too of course) and decide on a date for review of developments.
- Audit the schools' book resources for up to date and lively poetry books. How might resources be augmented?

The UKLA Minibook Poetry Matters by Andrew Lambirth has a wealth of great ideas for developing language play and poetry.

The UKLA website has a Resources section with plenty of suggestions for good classroom practice with poetry and rhyme.

## **Specially for trainees – reflective practice**

### **To pinpoint what you know and what you'd like to find out more about:**

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. What rhymes or poetry can you remember from when you were younger? What is the appeal? Do the rhymes or poems have any common features?

Using Fact Card 6 discuss ways you have observed teachers using rhyme and poetry. Start gathering ideas, and add to them from your own discussions, about how you could use rhyme and poetry to:

- discuss and develop language
- encourage children to write their own poetry
- extend the children's repertoire of poetry.

There are plenty of practical resources on the UKLA website and for more research into the area, as well as the references listed on the UKLA website on: [http://www.ukla.org/news/new\\_ukla\\_fact\\_cards\\_on\\_teaching\\_writing/you'll\\_find\\_the\\_UKLA\\_journal\\_Literacy\\_very\\_useful\\_for\\_accessible\\_research\\_based\\_on\\_practice](http://www.ukla.org/news/new_ukla_fact_cards_on_teaching_writing/you'll_find_the_UKLA_journal_Literacy_very_useful_for_accessible_research_based_on_practice)

