

The Writing Curriculum at Swindon Academy

Talk for Writing – Pie Corbett

The core principle in the Talk for Writing approach is that telling stories is a great way to learn about language, communication and ideas. Listening to stories fills the listener up with words but learning to tell that same story moves those words and phrases from the passive to the active language part of the brain; the new elements of language become ready to be used. Storytelling internalizes patterns of language and plot that the storyteller will then be able to use actively, both in speaking and later in writing.

The act of learning to speak a story also creates a deeper identification with the content of the story than is possible by just reading or memorizing from a text. To tell a story well, you have to know the characters, setting and plot intimately.

At Swindon Academy, teachers introduce texts to their class through story telling or reading non-fiction text. This text could be:

- a finding tale
- a conquering the monster tale
- a newspaper report or
- an information text

Once the children have heard the text, they will use a series of techniques to learn and then re-tell the story/text a few times so that the language and content of the text is fully internalized. From there, the teacher uses deepening activities to further develop the children's understanding of the text. Children also unpick the grammar and the impact it has on the reader. The middle stage is 'Innovation' where the class try to innovate the text together. In the final stage, pupils will write an independent application of the text type based upon a new stimulus.

The Talk for Writing approach begins in Reception and continues to Year 6. During this time, pupils become experts at listening, remembering and retelling and the features of different text types. The main features of Talk for Writing are Imitation, Innovation and Independent Application.