

Writing Process

Support Information

Background

The Example is from Second Class in a mainstream school. There are 26 children in the class, 14 girls and 12 boys. The teacher engaged in both **whole class teaching** and **smaller group station teaching**, as can be seen from the footage. The children are very familiar with station teaching within smaller groups.

A whole school approach is used to teach the writing genres, and station teaching is employed in all classrooms throughout the school for literacy teaching. All children in the school are accustomed to working in small groups, rotating stations and working with other teachers in the classroom setting from Junior Infants. While the class teacher and SEN teachers lead specific stations, there are also stations independently led by the children themselves.



Gradual release of responsibility model as a whole-school approach

The school adopts the **Gradual Release of Responsibility Model** when teaching the writing genres. In relation to the current Example, the teacher moved through the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model as follows.

1. Initially, to introduce the class to the narrative genre, the children watched a selection of traditional fairy tales online. The teacher detailed the structure of a narrative, by taking a story narrative that had already been read in class and deconstructing the different parts; beginning, middle (problem) and end (resolution). The teacher then constructed a very simple narrative adhering to the narrative structure. At this initial stage the learning experiences involved whole class situations.

During the guided stage, the teacher broke the content into stations; each station examines the writing features of the narrative genre. The teacher moved between groups guiding children where necessary. The children also engaged in peer tutoring within groups, helping each other where possible. The stations were as follows:

- Sequencing well known narrative stories, The Three Little Pigs and Cinderella into beginning, middle (problem) and end (resolution).
- Reading an unknown narrative and finding/ highlighting the beginning, middle and end; paying attention to the problem and its resolution.
- Reading the beginning of a narrative and continuing the story by writing about a problem and resolution.

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- Choosing a narrative storybook from a selection of Read it Aloud books, and investigating and writing a short description of the beginning, middle and end.
2. At the independent stage, children completed a plan looking at characters, setting and the beginning, middle and end when thinking about their own narratives. Again, using small station groups, the class worked through the writing process, drafting, editing and redrafting narratives, until they were ready for presenting.
 3. All children presented their narratives to the class in written form. Some children produced their narratives in book form with a view to presenting to their own class and to reading their narratives to other classes. Finally, some children presented their books as e-books which played for the class on the interactive board and which were also made available on the school website.



Preparation for Teaching and Learning

The teacher described how her knowledge of the **children's likes, interests, curiosities and abilities** helped to inform her preparing for teaching and learning. Children were encouraged to consider their own likes and interests when choosing what topics to base their narratives upon. In this way, children's narratives reflected **children's personal choices**. Using her **knowledge of the children** and **content knowledge** of the Primary Language Curriculum, she identified appropriate learning outcomes from the **Writing strand** and the focus of new learning. These are as follows:

Learning Outcome (LO)	Focus of new learning
LO6: Purpose, genre, and voice	Draw and write with a sense of purpose and audience while creating texts in a range of genres, and develop an individual voice to share their thoughts, knowledge and experiences.
LO7: Writing process and creating text	Use the writing process when creating texts collaboratively or independently.
LO9: Handwriting and presentation	Write using cursive script.

Using her **knowledge of pedagogical approaches**, the teacher tailored learning experiences accordingly; connecting them with the needs and abilities of children and the learning outcomes identified. Additional learning experiences which took place at other literacy stations focused on **grammar, conventions of writing and oral language**.

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Using **content knowledge** of the Primary Language Curriculum, the teacher also identified additional **incidental learning** relating to other learning outcomes in the **Reading strand** that took place during the learning experience. These are as follows:

Learning Outcome (LO)	Focus of new learning
LO1: Engagement	Enjoy listening to others reading their completed pieces of writing. Recognise themselves as readers as they read their completed narrative stories in class.
LO7: Purpose, genre, and voice	Respond to the creative and imaginative aspects of narrative texts.
LO8: Response and author's intent	Discuss and share thoughts and opinions on their narrative texts and those of others, and consider and discuss author's intent.

Assessment

The teacher described assessment as a **collaborative process** involving the children and the teacher. The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model was adopted supporting the teacher to move between different groups - **observing**, **posing questions to scaffold learning** and **responding** with appropriate support for individual children as needed. These forms of **intuitive assessment** were ongoing and unplanned, but integral in supporting the children's progression.

Focusing on the completed narratives, the teacher used a **teacher-designed rubric to assess and record the children's progress** in creating narratives. In doing so, she examined the structure of their narratives, their ability to convey a problem and resolution within the plot and their use of creative and descriptive language. The teacher continued to use this information to **provide feedback to children in a formative way to support their learning**. Opportunities for **self-assessment** were also provided by the teacher. Children were asked to examine their finished narratives and complete simple rubrics based on their writing. This provided them with the opportunity to examine their own work more closely and **identify the strengths of their writing and areas for improvement**.

The children also engaged in **peer-assessment**. They swapped their completed narratives with a partner and completed a rubric on the piece of writing in front of them, examining the narrative for **spelling, handwriting and presentation, structure and grammar**. They created a '2 Stars and a Wish' on their partner's completed piece; choosing two things they liked about the story and one improvement they felt they could make. The children became accustomed to engaging in peer assessment and **providing feedback on their peers' work**. These types of **planned interactions** enabled the teacher to assess children's understanding of and ability to engage in the writing process.



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Reflective Questions

- What is your opinion of using the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model for teaching in your classroom? What are the implications of using this model for classroom practice?
- Consider the children's presentation of their narratives in written and digital formats. How might you use digital technology when engaging children in the writing process in your classroom?
- How do you feel about the opportunities provided by the teacher for self-assessment and peer assessment in the classroom?
- Consider children's engagement with the writing process in Irish by examining *Toradh Foghlama 7 Próiseas na scríbhneoireachta agus ag cruthú téacs in the writing strand for Gaeilge*. How might children's engagement in the writing process as demonstrated in this Example transfer to their learning in Irish? How might the teacher prepare for this transfer of skills from English to Irish?



To view the videos related to this support information click here.