This work has been kindly submitted for members by *Literacy for Pleasure* who have created a comprehensive, well referenced manifesto to help schools explore and consider the place of writing for pleasure in our curriculum.

Literacy For Pleasure

For further information visit their website :
https://literacyforpleasure.wordpress.com/about/

Introduction

As literate adults, most of us would have little difficulty in defining what we mean by reading for pleasure and indeed it is now a statutory part of the UK National Curriculum (2013). Cremin (2014) states: *'at the core of reading for pleasure is the reader's volition, their agency and desire to read, their anticipation of the satisfaction gained through the experience and/or afterwards in interaction with others.'* Although the act of reading is very often solitary, it is clearly also deeply social. So it is with writing. If it is true that young people who read for pleasure also tend to enjoy writing (National Literacy Trust 2013), then perhaps *Writing For Pleasure* can be similarly defined as a volitional act, undertaken with the anticipation of gaining satisfaction and/or enjoyment from effective communication with others.

Just like reading, the specific sources of enjoyment and satisfactions in and of writing must be many and varied, and will be different for individual writers in different contexts. If we examine what professional writers say on the subject (Cremin *et al* 2017), alongside Cremin's (2014) definition of reading for pleasure, it could be argued that there are two types of pleasure in writing. Namely, writing *as* pleasure (enjoyment) and writing *for* pleasure (satisfaction).

What might writing *as* pleasure & writing *for* pleasure mean?

What comprises pleasure for a writer? This is not a simple question to answer. The specific *sources* of enjoyment (writing *for* and *as* pleasure) must be many and varied, and will be different for individual writers in different contexts.

The writing of a dissertation about a particular aspect of working-class children's education in the late nineteenth century gave me immense pleasure over and above my usual satisfaction in chipping away at the sentences; I felt the writing connected me to my grandparents and their generation in an original and highly personal way. In another example, my colleague found pleasure in reliving, for the briefest of moments, a childhood adventure with his friends up on the South Downs and sharing it with his class. He hoped

that the children would sympathetically understand why he felt the need to write it and would relate such feelings to their own lives, which indeed they did.

Writing as pleasure

Writing *as* pleasure is pleasure gained from practising the craft of writing, from engaging in the process, or at least in particular parts of the process, whether it be generating ideas, getting the words down on paper or screen, editing to perfection or publishing with care. Carol Joyce Oates and Ernest Hemingway both recorded that, for them, the pleasure was all in the revising. For some writers, writing *as* pleasure is where their writing pursuit ends and the idea that their writing may be seen by others can fill the writer with dread.

Writing for pleasure

This type of pleasure is the anticipated satisfaction, pleasure after the act of writing. It comes from a sense of purpose fulfilled and from the expectation of a response, in sharing something (knowledge, feeling, experience) with a specific audience, in reading back your own writing voice, in saying what you mean to say, achieving what you want the reader to feel. Or, as Alan Bennett recently said, in simply 'talking to yourself'. However, as Gene Fowler clearly demonstrates too: *'writing is easy: all you do it sit staring at a blank sheet of paper until the drops of blood form on your forehead…'* writing isn't always pleasurable. So why do we put ourselves through it? Perhaps it is with the view of writing *for the pleasure* of a purpose fulfilled rather than the act itself.

Why the need for a *Writing for Pleasure* curriculum and pedagogy?

There is no reason to suppose that children and young people cannot experience these same kinds of pleasures in writing. A recent survey conducted by the National Literacy Trust (NLT, 2016) makes it clear that for many years there has been a decline or stagnation in UK children's enjoyment, volition and motivation to write both in and out of school; with 49.3% of children showing largely indifference or dislike for writing (NLT, 2017). Importantly, The National Literacy Trust also states that *'eight times as many children and young people who do not enjoy writing write below the expected level compared with those who enjoy writing'* (2017, p.14). Graham & Johnson (2012, p.11), in a review of writing perceptions in their classroom, state that: '*while 75% of the children demonstrated a positive attitude towards their reading experiences, only 10% of the same children described positive or happy associations in their writing memories. The majority of children within my class associated the writing experience with incompetence or anxiety; even those children who were perceived by me to be able writers did not consider the experience to be emotionally rewarding… Children who were competent in their literacy skills, who met their targets, who could write successfully in a variety of genres, failed to express any sense of joy in their written achievements'.* With this evidence, it could be concluded that children are underachieving as a result of their dislike for writing. The National Literacy Trust concludes by stating that *'the findings highlight the importance of writing enjoyment for children's outcomes and warrant a call for more attention on writing enjoyment in schools, research and policy'* (2017, p.15).

This makes sense with educational research consistently telling us that there are significant academic benefits to be gained alongside the personal and affective, with The National

Literacy Trust (2017) stating that *'seven times as many children and young people who enjoy writing write above the expected level for their age compared with those who don't enjoy writing.'* According to research, the most important pointer to high attainment in writing is motivation/volition (Alexander 2010; Beard 2000; Clark 2012; Hillocks 1986; NLT 2016) and that the best motivator is agency (Au & Gourd 2013; Dyson & Freedman 2003; Ketter & Pool 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Watanabe 2007). As defined above, agency, volition and motivation in writing have very clear links to the experience of pleasure.

In his review of 100 years of literacy research, Hillocks (2011) forcefully states, '*we now know from a very wide variety of studies in English and out of it, that students who are authentically engaged with the tasks of their learning are likely to learn much more than those who are not*' (p. 189). However, evidence also suggests that historically too many students are underachieving (Ofsted, 2009, 2012), with *'one in five primary pupils… not achiev[ing] the expected standard in English [with] far more pupils fail[ing] to achieve this standard in writing.'* With Ofsted (2012a, p.4) also stating that *'only 69% of boys achieved national expectations in writing'* (Ofsted, 2012a, p.9) with '*white British boys eligible for free school meals… amongst the lowest performers in the country*' (Ofsted, 2009, p.4). Further, *'standards are not yet high enough for all pupils and there has been too little improvement in primary schools'* (Ofsted, 2012a, p.4). To end, Ofsted (2012b) remark that '*writing is the subject with the worst performance compared with reading, maths and science at Key Stages 1 and 2.'* Again, this could indicate that many children are underachieving as a result of their indifference or dislike of writing (The National Literacy Trust, 2017).

A working definition of A *Writing For Pleasure* curriculum

Writing For Pleasure is any research-informed curriculum which seeks to create conditions that promote writing as a pleasurable experience. It has as its goal promoting a love of writing which will be continued into children's personal and working lives long after they leave school. It involves:

Writing *as* pleasure (enjoyment)
- Feeling a need to practise the craft of writing.
- Feeling capable and empowered to engage with the processes of writing including talking about writing.

Writing *for* pleasure (satisfaction)
- Having a sense of purpose fulfilled.
- The expectation of a response.
- Sharing something to be proud of.
- The discovery of your own writing voice.

Writing For Pleasure therefore means the promotion of: *self-efficacy, agency, volition, motivation, self-regulation, enjoyment, writer-identity* and *satisfaction* in writing.

- Agency will be ensured through the shifting of control from teachers to children, allowing them the time and the space to write for their own chosen purposes, at their own pace, using their own writing processes and in their own chosen forms. They will write on subjects they care about and be able to use their own cultural reference points, values and interests.
- The importance of grammatical and transcriptional knowledge will be balanced by attention to composition, beginning with generating ideas and establishing an authentic purpose and personal writing process.
- Writing will be seen as a highly social process, led by a writer's desire and choice, with meaning-making at its centre and an awareness of the potential impact on a reader.

It will look to ensure an interconnection between the 14 principles outlined in this audit leading to high levels of pleasure, academic achievement and success in writing.

Writing *As* Pleasure (Enjoyment) Writing *For* Pleasure (Satisfaction) *(pride and happiness)*		
Agency *(I have a say)*	**Volition** *(I want to)*	**Self-efficacy** *(I can!)*
Self-regulation *(I don't need your help right now)*	**Writer-identity** *(I am!)*	**Motivation** *(I know why)*

The 14 Interconnected Principles That Make Up A *Writing For Pleasure* Pedagogy

We believe that there are many schools who subscribe to a *Writing For Pleasure* philosophy and need an evidence-rich pedagogy which will be instrumental in cultivating an enduring love of writing with academic achievement. The ambition is for children's writing to match (both in composition and transcription) the standards of writing which are achieved out in the real world, and for children to experience the kinds of pleasure available to engaged adult writers through personal and artistic expression, effective communication and the possibility of making changes for themselves and others. The principles identified below are grounded in educational research on effective writing instruction, and are ones we have put into practice in a real working primary context.

Creating A Community Of Writers (1)

When writers see their teachers as positive, caring and interested in pupils' lives, they are more likely to engage in writing at a high level of achievement. The aim is to create a community of writers, in which teachers write alongside children and share their own writing practices, and children are shown how to talk and present their writing to others in a positive and constructive way.

Every Child A Writer (2)

Effective writing teachers hold high achievement expectations for all writers. They see all children as writers and, from the first, teach strategies that lead to greater independence and ensure they remain part of the writing community. They make the purposes and audiences for writing clear to children for both their class and personal writing projects. They teach what writing can do. They also model and promote the social aspects of writing and peer support in their classrooms.

Reading, Sharing And Talking About Writing (3)

Children are given ample opportunities to share and discuss with others (including teachers) their own and others' writing in order to give and receive constructive criticism and celebrate achievement. The writing community begins to build its own ways of talking, thinking as *writers*. This happens best when the writing environment is positive and settled in tone, and has a sense of fostering a community of writers.

Purposeful & Authentic Writing Projects (4)

Meaningfulness affects learner engagement and outcomes to a considerable extent. Writing projects are most meaningful to children if they are given the opportunity to generate their own subject and purpose, write at their own pace, in their own way, in a self-chosen form, and with a clear sense of a real reader. Given these circumstances, writers are likely to remain focused on a task, maintain a strong personal agency over their writing, and produce something significant for themselves and in keeping with teacher expectations.

Explicitly Teach The Writing Processes (5)

Effective writing teachers give direct instruction in the different components of the writing process (how to generate an idea, plan, draft, revise, edit, publish). They scaffold children's learning and understanding of the process and the features (including purpose and audience) of new genres through demonstration, discussion, modelling and sharing exemplars which they have written themselves. Other resources, such as Genre-Booklets or displays, support the learning and help children towards independence. The ultimate aim is for children to relinquish their dependency on this scaffolding and develop their unique writing identity. For example, they should come to realize and use a version of the writing process which suits them best. They will also come to understand through their own independent writing that it is possible to create hybrids of different genres to serve particular purposes and audiences.

Scaffolding New Learning & Setting Writing Goals (6)

Setting distant goals through class writing-projects combined with short-term process goals (e.g. generating an idea/planning/drafting/revising/editing/publishing) benefits learners in terms of cognitive load, focus, motivation and achievement. The class as community should have a say in setting writing goals which explain what it requires for class-writing project to be successful. Understanding strategies for each stage of the writing process also means that children can self-regulate and have greater independence and agency over their writing.

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Reassuring Consistency (7)

Good classroom organisation is absolutely vital as it facilitates learning, ensures focus and builds writing confidence. It also saves time; time that can be used beneficially by the teacher and the children. Children need the reassurance of knowing how a writing lesson is expected to proceed. Teachers can plan to work with the whole class, groups or individuals (via conferencing). A well-organised classroom will direct children to the act of writing regularly and largely independently. For example, children will know the routines for working on class writing projects, and that once finished they may work on their personal projects. Resources will be visible, consistent across classes and the school and will communicate strategies clearly.

Personal Writing Projects: Writing Everyday (8)

It is essential that children are given time to write for a sustained period every day and to work on both class and personal writing projects. Personal projects should be seen as an important part of the writing curriculum since it is here, through exercising their own choice of subject, purpose and form, that they have true agency and come to see writing as an empowering and pleasurable activity which they can use now and in the future. It is also advantageous to the teacher as it not only provides an insight into your children's personalities and helps build relationships, it is also evidence when assessing children's development as writers.

Balancing Composition With Transcription (9)

Schools will have their own policies for the teaching of spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Studies emphasise that writing skills are obviously best learned in the context of a child's purposeful and reader-focused writing. Invented spellings are acceptable in the composition stage, and handwriting skills are best practised when publishing a completed piece. Mini-lessons should take place at the beginning of a writing session, and spelling and punctuation should largely be self-monitored as children write; marking their text for items to be checked and corrected at the editing stage. Research shows that there is no evidence to link the formal teaching of grammar and improvements in children's writing. Successful writing teachers know that, if grammar is to be understood in a meaningful way, it must be taught functionally and applied and examined in the context of real composition.

Teach Self-Regulation Strategies (10)

While all children will need guidance and advice at times, they need to know the self-regulating strategies which will help them to write confidently and independently, such as how to generate ideas, use planners and checklists, and have access to resources for editing and publishing. They should also be able to access these resources and writing material independently; freeing their teacher up to conduct pupil-conferences.

Being A Writer-Teacher (11)

Become a writer-teacher who writes for and with pleasure. Children gain from knowing that their teacher faces the same writing challenges that they do. Write and share in class your own pieces in relation to the projects you are asking the children to engage in, but be sure to maintain reciprocal relations when discussing and modelling your own writing

processes and the exemplar texts you have written. Share the strategies that you really employ in your own writing is also seen as effective to instruction.

Pupil Conference: Meeting Children Where They Are (12)

A rich response to children's writing is crucial. Many teachers use both written and verbal feedback. Research particularly emphasises the usefulness of 'live' verbal feedback, which is immediate, relevant and allows children to reflect on and attend to learning points while actually still engaged in the writing. This is seen as superior to 'after-the-event' written feedback. Conferences will be short and are most successful in a settled, focused and self-regulating classroom. Teachers give feedback initially on composition and prioritise those who are in most need of assistance. Writer-teachers are better able to advise and give feedback because they understand the issues children encounter when writing themselves.

Literacy For Pleasure: Reading And Writing Connecting (13)

Successful writing teachers know that children who read more, write more and better. A reading for pleasure pedagogy assists a writing for pleasure pedagogy since the reading of good texts available in school and in class libraries can provide children with models and suggest ideas and themes for personal writing projects. Successful writing teachers also know that reading aloud poems and whole texts to the class in an engaged way has a significant effect on children's vocabulary and story comprehension, and increases the range of syntactic structures and linguistic features they use in their writing.

Successful Interconnection Of The Principles (14)

We cannot emphasise strongly enough that all these principles are powerfully interconnected and should be considered as such. As many studies show, they are critical to the effective teaching of writing. Where do you currently see your practice making links between these different principles and where is more development needed?

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