Connor Downs Academy

Handwriting: Intent, implementation and Impact.

Intent

At Connor Downs, we seek to realise the potential of all learners and recognise that all pupils have an entitlement to access handwriting through a personalised curriculum.

We aim for learners to show commitment, resilience and independence in their handwriting development. To aid this, we use Little Wandle Handwriting for EYFS and KS1, as this accompanies their phonics scheme and in KS2, we follow Morrells Handwriting Scheme.

Throughout school learners will:
• enjoy experiences that allow them to explore patterns in writing materials such as modelling clay, sand, rice and with writing tools such as pencils, IWB, tablets, pens.
• understand the language associated with handwriting in preparation for letter formation.
• continue to acquire, develop and apply gross and fine motor skills related to handwriting, including improving their posture and position.
• develop handwriting that is legible, speedy and fluent.

Handwriting development

1. Fundamentals

In Reception class and when appropriate through school, curriculum opportunities to develop skills underpinning handwriting to develop the stability and strength to sit in the correct position. Likewise, hand and finger muscles must be able to hold and steer the pencil/pen across the paper. Gross motor skills allow us to co-ordinate our movements between our fine motor skills, which enables us to write with speed and accuracy over long periods of time. Children also need to have good hand-to-eye coordination to develop a legible, fluent and fast style.

- **Postural Control & Shoulder Stability**

– Hand pushes (place palms together with elbows out and forearms held horizontally, then push hands together as hard as possible and hold for 5 seconds)
– Rolling a ball slowly up a wall (slow & controlled)
– Chair push ups
– Work lying flat on the floor

- **Bilateral Integration**

– Jumping & skipping
– Beating a drum
– Throwing & catching a ball
– Threading beads
– Fastening/ unfastening buttons
– Lacing activities
– Cutting activities

- **Wrist Extension**

– Work on vertical surfaces (stick paper on the wall, whiteboard, chalkboard etc)
– Hungry Hippos

- **Hand Separation**

– Tear paper with little finger curled in, and roll into small balls with thumb & index finger
– Flatten small balls of playdoh by pinching them between pads of thumb & index finger

– Roll small balls of playdoh between pads of thumb and index finger
– Use hole puncher to punch holes along strips of paper
– Hide small objects inside playdoh (beads, pennies, beans) inside playdoh and pull out with thumb and index finger

- **Hand Arches**

– Playdoh activities
– Use small beads or items to cup hands and fill hands, then transfer between hands.
– Paper tearing

Other hand strengthening activities include:
· Using pegs to squeeze
Squeezing (water bottles, stress balls, play doh)
· Rolling (playdoh rolled into small balls)
· Tearing (paper, magazines, tissues)
· Building (blocks)
· Pressing (pressing down on a hole punch to create lines along the edge of a paper)
· Pinching (eye droppers and tweezers to move liquids / small items)
· Squirting

Examples of Materials to use for mark making/ developing writing:
• Sand, water, rice, pasta (cooked and uncooked), gloop, powdered foods (chocolate, potato, custard), salt, slime, paint, shaving foam, foam soap, toothpaste, glitter, play dough, soil, play foam, flour, sugar, pencils, paint and paint brushes, chalks, felt tips, crayons, pencil grips/ support
• Marking making on different mediums: paper, card, stone, trees, screens, material etc

2. Early stages of handwriting- secure motor control and hand-eye coordination.

The learner is only able to engage in handwriting activities if the rest of the body is stable enough to support them

Learners will:

– Develop physical control through large-scale movement such as outdoor play, balancing, climbing, marching and moving to music.
– Manipulate objects and use one-handed tools and equipment with increasing control such as using tools, cooking utensils and scissors.
– Develop fine motor control and hand-eye coordination, through activities such as jigsaws, threading, cutting and manipulating 'small world' equipment.

Pencil grips for children:

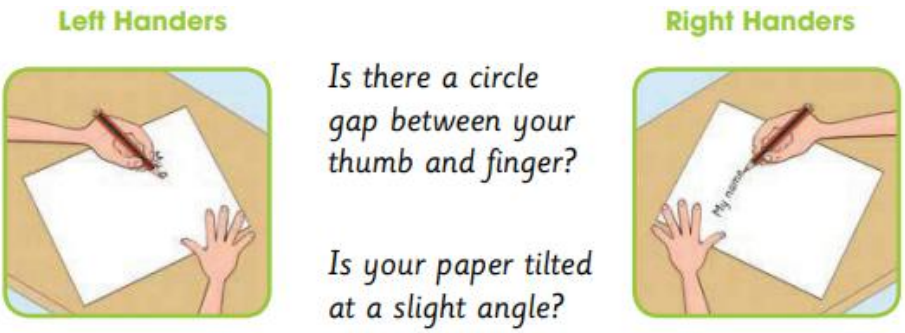
Ideas to Develop a Tripod Grasp
This means that the pencil is held between the tips of the thumb, index and middle fingers; the pencil is held in a relaxed way without too much pressure; the pencil rests on the hand between the thumb and the index finger (webspace); the webspace gap is open; the ring and little fingers are held away from the pencil.
· Pegs (place clothes pegs around the rim of a container), threading beads, picking up cards, popping bubble wrap, posting (coins into a box with a slot in the lid), pipettes, short Crayons (very short crayons can't be held with a whole hand grasp), soft pencil grip (to help position their fingers around the pencil)

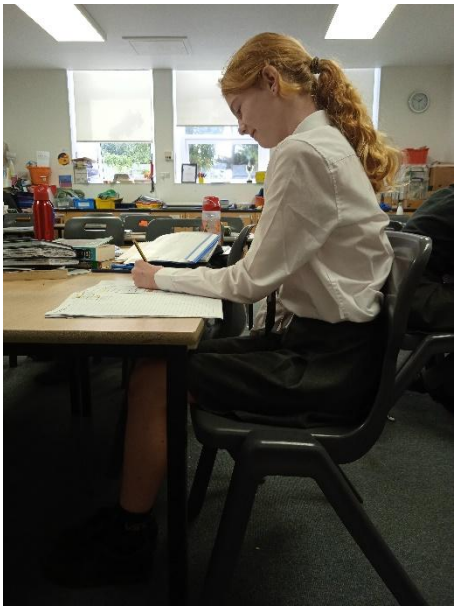
Ideas for Developing Motor Accuracy / Pencil Control
· Always sit with feet flat on the floor with the hips, knees and elbows flexed at 90 degrees. The table should be at a height so that the elbows can rest comfortably.
· Encourage a correct pencil grip (tripod), a pencil grip can help position the fingers correctly.
· Practice drawing between tramlines.
· Practice doing dot to dots, mazes, colouring in, tracing around templates or stencils.
· Practice naming, tracing and copying simple shapes.
· Practice drawing people, houses, flowers – naming the shapes being used.
· When practising pencil skills start using a large scale initially.

3. <u>Handwriting Families- shapes and lines, then letters.</u>

The learner must have ***sufficient strength and stamina*** in the intrinsic muscles of the hand to enable them to hold the pencil and move it skilfully. They are need ***sufficient attention and memory*** to process and retain information. They also need v***isual perception*** to accurately interpret what is seen.
Learners will:
- Use movement and retrace/ copy lines/ shapes.
– Draw/ form circles, lines and simple shapes.
– Use a writing tool (pencil, paintbrush, chalk etc) and hold it effectively. Handwriting sits on a line/ follows lines.
– Write legibly using upper and lower case letters.

Sitting position and posture for handwriting activities:

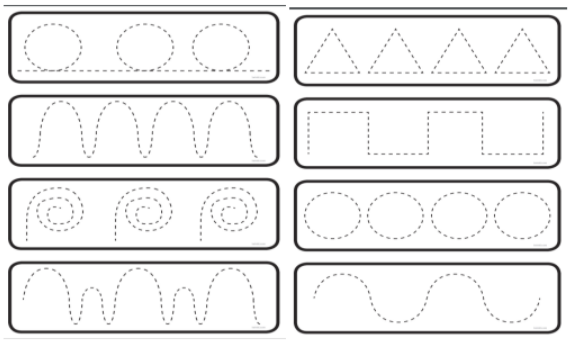




- Arms should be bent at the elbow with the forearm resting on the surface of the table.
- Feet should be flat on the floor and knees at the same level as the hips
- Shoulders should be relaxed and not tensed up towards the ears
- The non-writing hand should be used to stabilise the workbook / paper.

Step 1- Handwriting shapes and lines

– Loops
– Straight Lines
– Curved Lines
– Circles
– Wavy lines
– Zig zags
– Shape (e.g circle, square, oval, triangle)



Step 2- Handwriting Letter families

The children learn to form each letter in the following manner, which is in line with our phonics scheme, 'Little Wandle' in Reception class and Y1. Handwriting practise takes place in these classes on a daily basis using Little Wandle booklets or in a book.

-Curly caterpillar family- c, a, d, s, e, f, o, g
– Ladder family- j, t, u, i, y, l,
– One armed robot family n, b, h, k, m, r, p
– Zig zag monster family z, w, x
-See appendix 1

Step 3 -Cursive handwriting

In the summer term of Year 2, children begin to learn to use cursive handwriting. This is a writing style where letters are joined together rather than printed separately. Fluid cursive is a skill which saves the writer time as they do not need to lift their pen from the page.
-See appendix 2

Handwriting Language used in school

Left, right, up and down
Baseline: The line on which most letters rest.
Midpoint: The height of all letters that are not ascenders and descenders:
Letters that do not go above the x-height are: a c e m n o r s u v w x z

Ascender: A letter that goes above the x-height. Letters that go above the x-height are: b d f h k l t and all CAPITAL LETTERS.
Ascender line: The line that ascenders go up to- b d f h k l

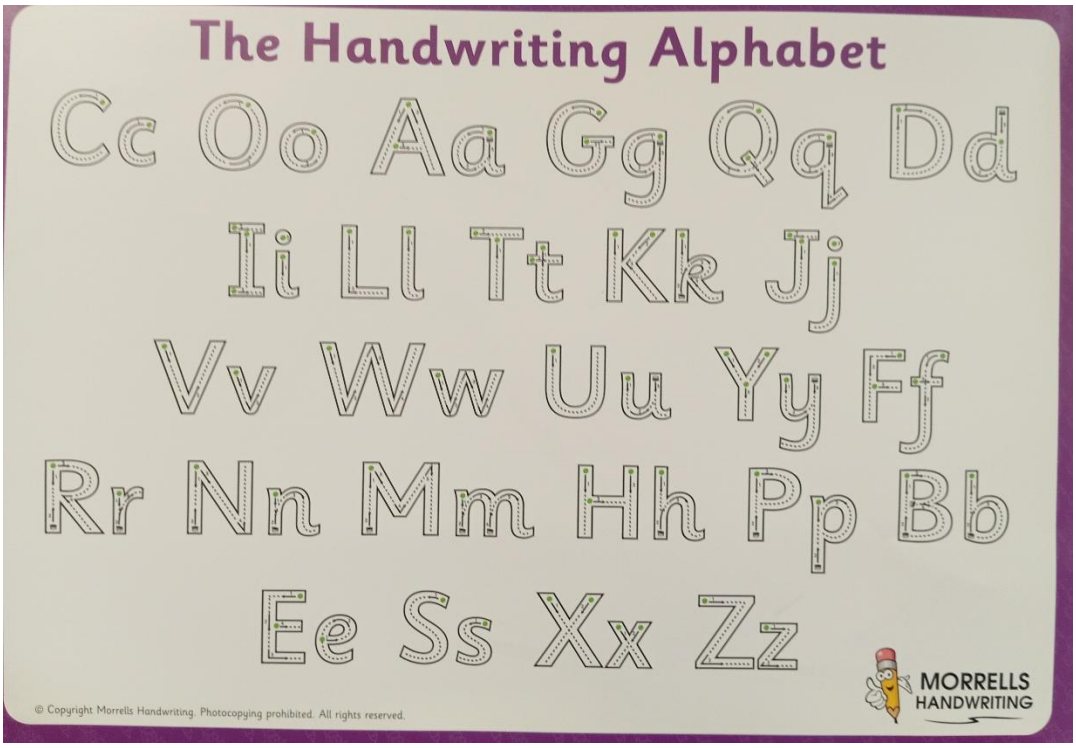
Descender: a letter that goes below the baseline. Letters that go below the baseline are: g j p q y. The part that goes below the baseline is called the tail.
Descender line: The line that descenders go down to- g j p q y

Push up: any movement upward with the writing instrument.

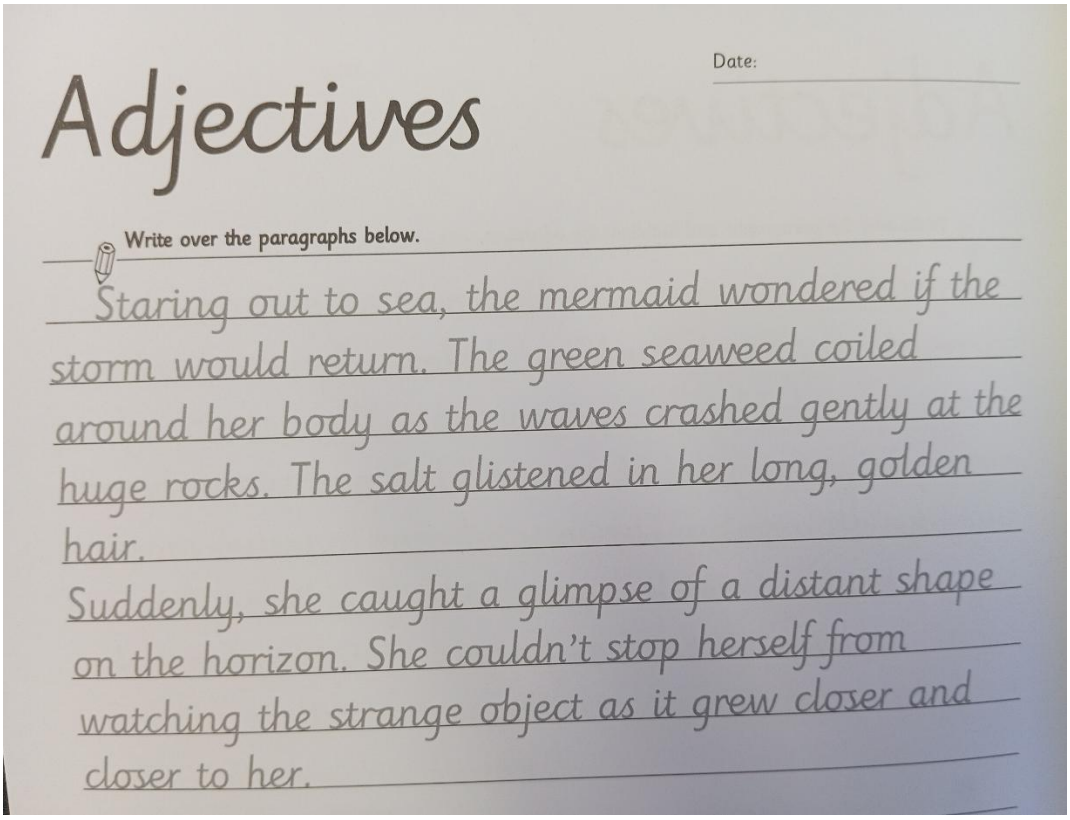
Crossbar: the horizontal line through these letters: A E F f G H T t
Flourish: An ornamental stroke at the start or end of a letter- for example 'r'

The structure of handwriting lessons
• Handwriting lessons take place every day. If pupils have significant difficulties, then handwriting is likely to take place additionally in an intervention group. • Sessions start by warming up hands and feet by drawing letters of them or creating spirals. Children practise circling with each finger, waggling fingers, rapid opening and closing of hands like the sign for people 'chatting'. Create glasses over eyes, clench fists, interweave fingers, play heads, shoulders knees and toes, slowly walk a mouse up with arm and run down. • Good posture is checked- feet flat on floor, not too close or far from the table, paper at a slight angle in line with arm, flip pen to get pencil grip. • The following offers a logical order to focus on similarities of letters/joins 1. Push up to join to next letter- a, c, d, g, s, p, q, e 2. Other middle-sized letters- i, m, n, u, x, z 3. Ascenders- b, d, h, k, l, t 4. Descenders- f, g, j, p, q, y 5. Horizontal joins- o, w, r, v 6. Tricky letters- f, y, g 7. Capital letters – including sizes 8. Then practise 2-3 letter combinations (ai/ou/ea/le/fa/ing/ed/ale/ght etc) 9. Practise words with spacing between and consistent sizing. • The resource Writing Repeater - mobile friendly (ictgames.com) is excellent to model to the children a join or word. • Handwriting lessons should be short- practising one perfect row of letters/joins is preferable to extended sessions. • Teachers look out for common errors- the size of 'F', the shape of J, G and I, mixing upper and lower case and backwards rotations and correct these. • All children will start each new school year by using pencil. The use of handwriting pens is at the teacher's discretion when consistency is established. This is monitored throughout the year with additional practise offered where appropriate. • Examples of handwriting from each year group can be found at the end of this document (Appendix 3).

Appendix 1

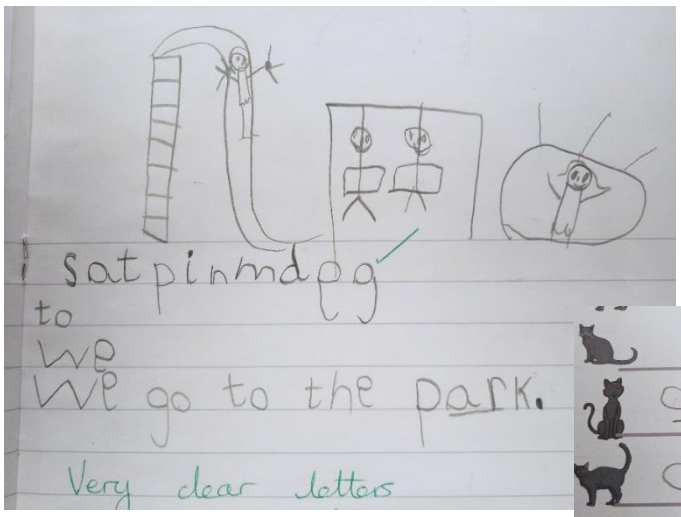


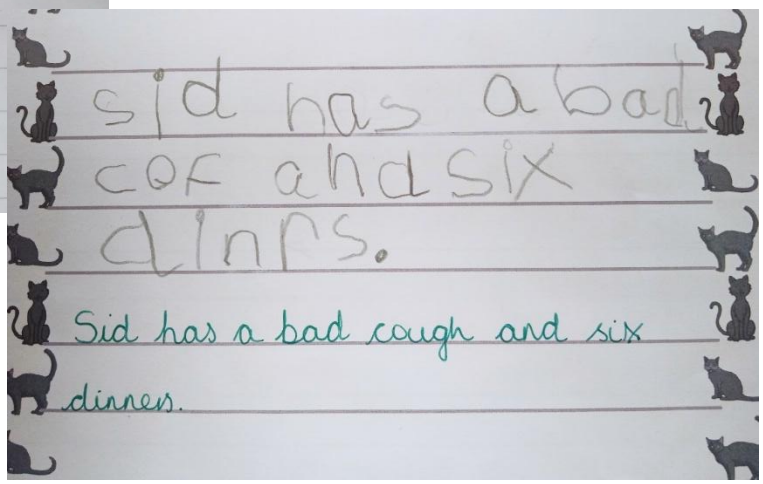
Appendix 2



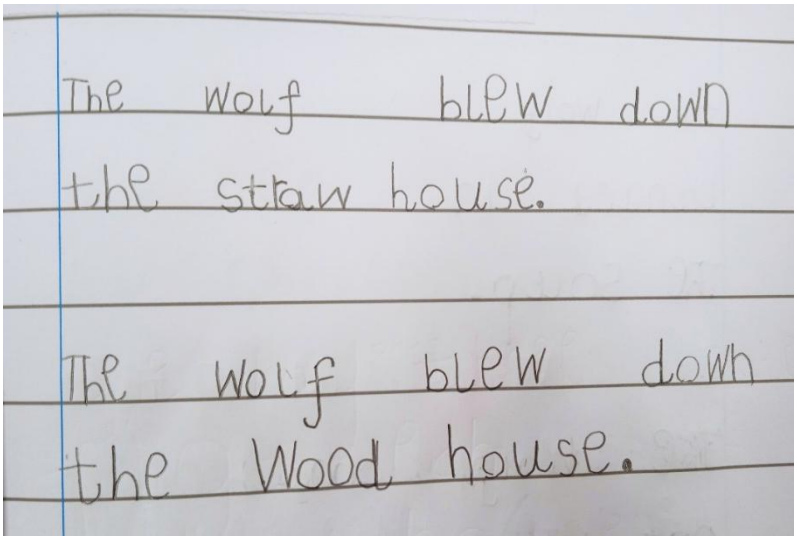
Appendix 3: Samples of handwriting from year groups.

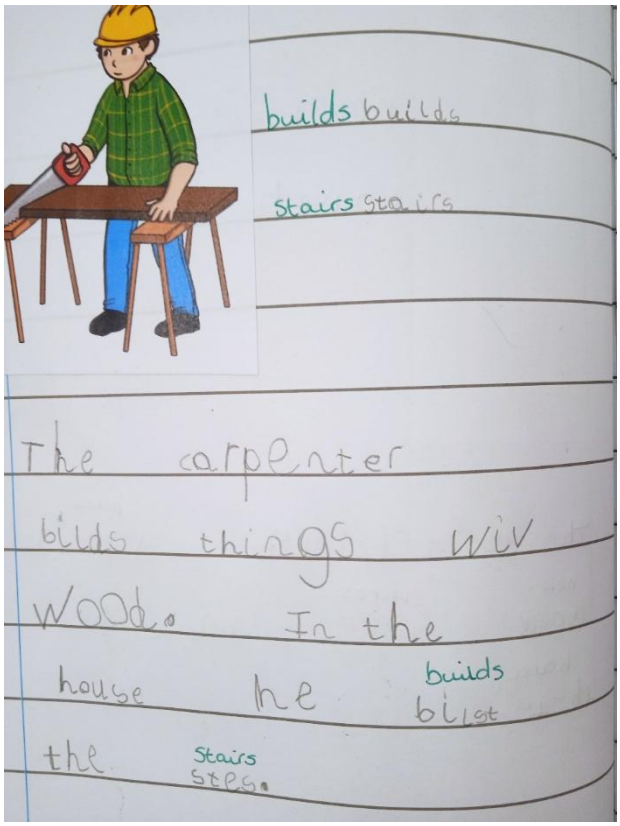
<u>Reception Class:</u>



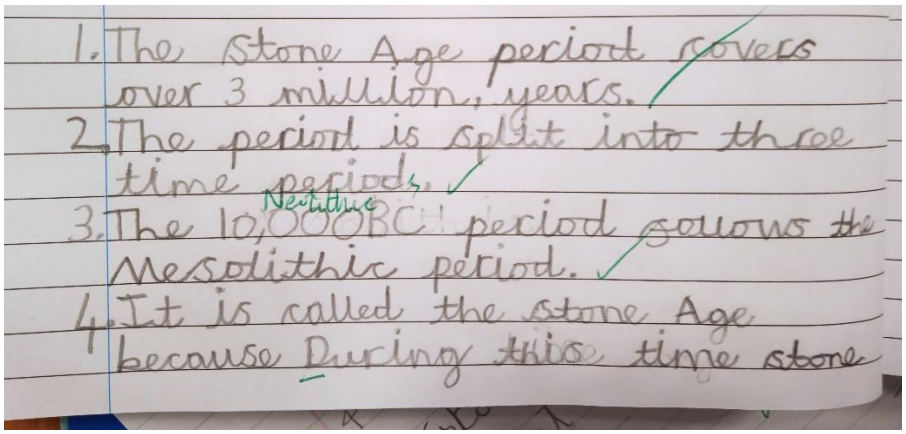


<u>Year 1:</u>

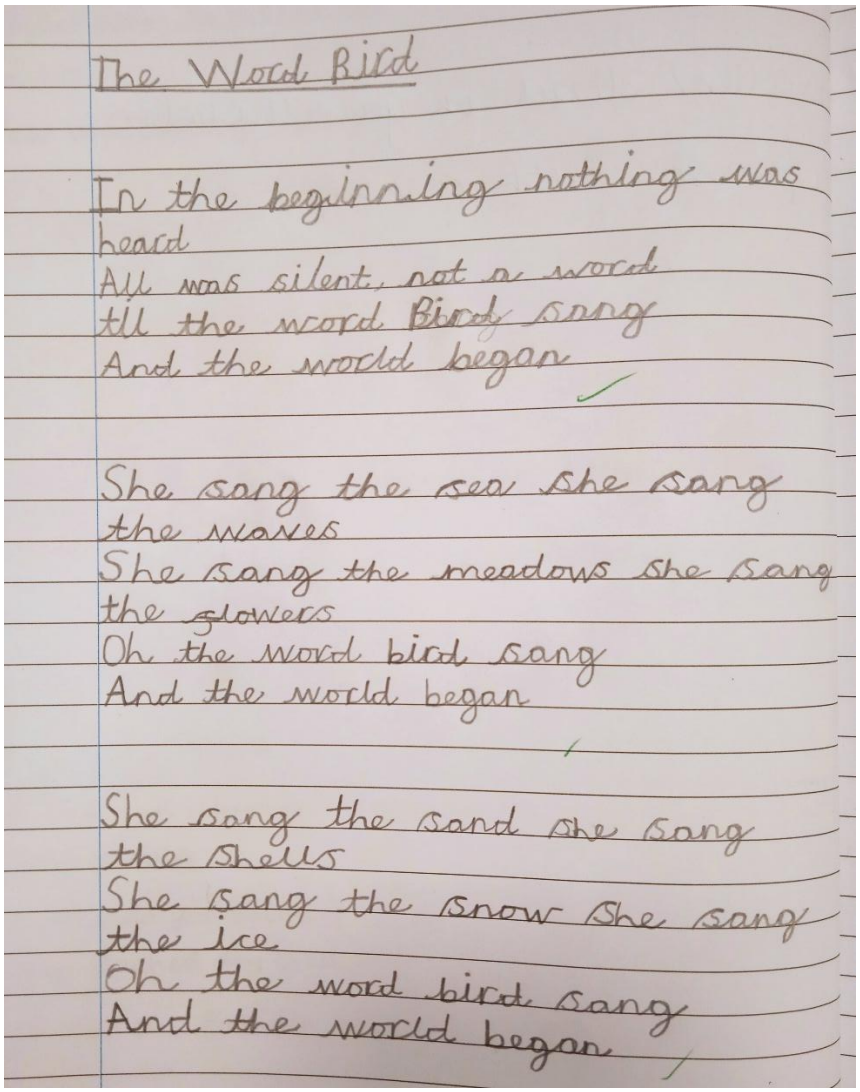




Year 3:



1. The Stone Age period covers over 3 million, years.
2. The period is split into three time periods.
3. The 10,000BC period follows the Mesolithic period.
4. It is called the Stone Age because During this time stone



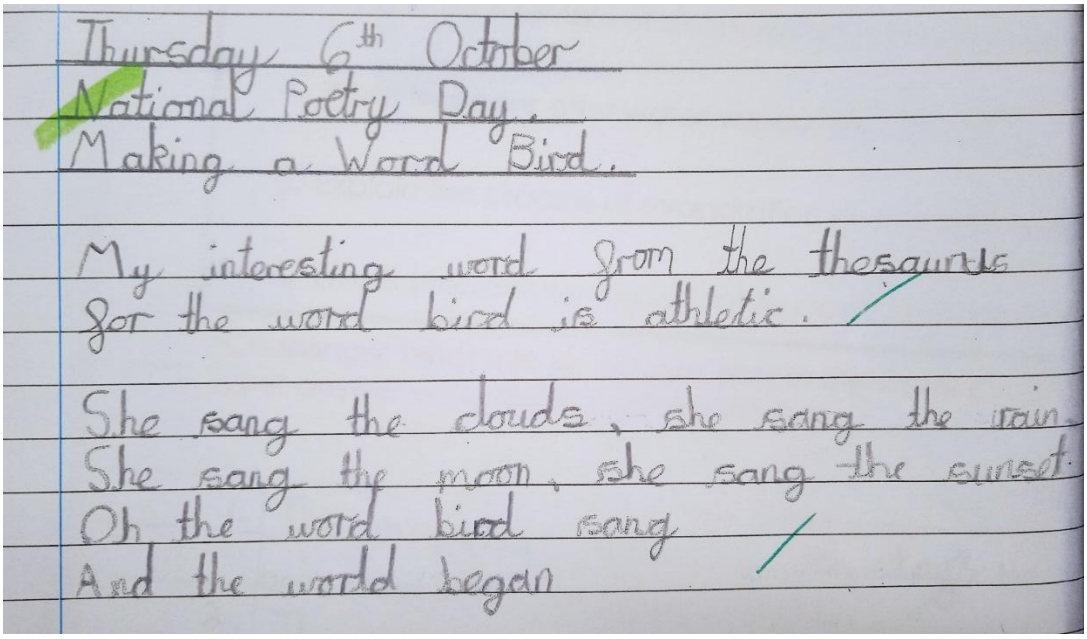
The Word Bird

In the beginning nothing was heard
All was silent, not a word
tll the word Bird sang
And the world began

She sang the sea she sang the waves
She sang the meadows she sang the flowers
Oh the word bird sang
And the world began

She sang the sand she sang the shells
She sang the snow she sang the ice
Oh the word bird sang
And the world began

Year 4:

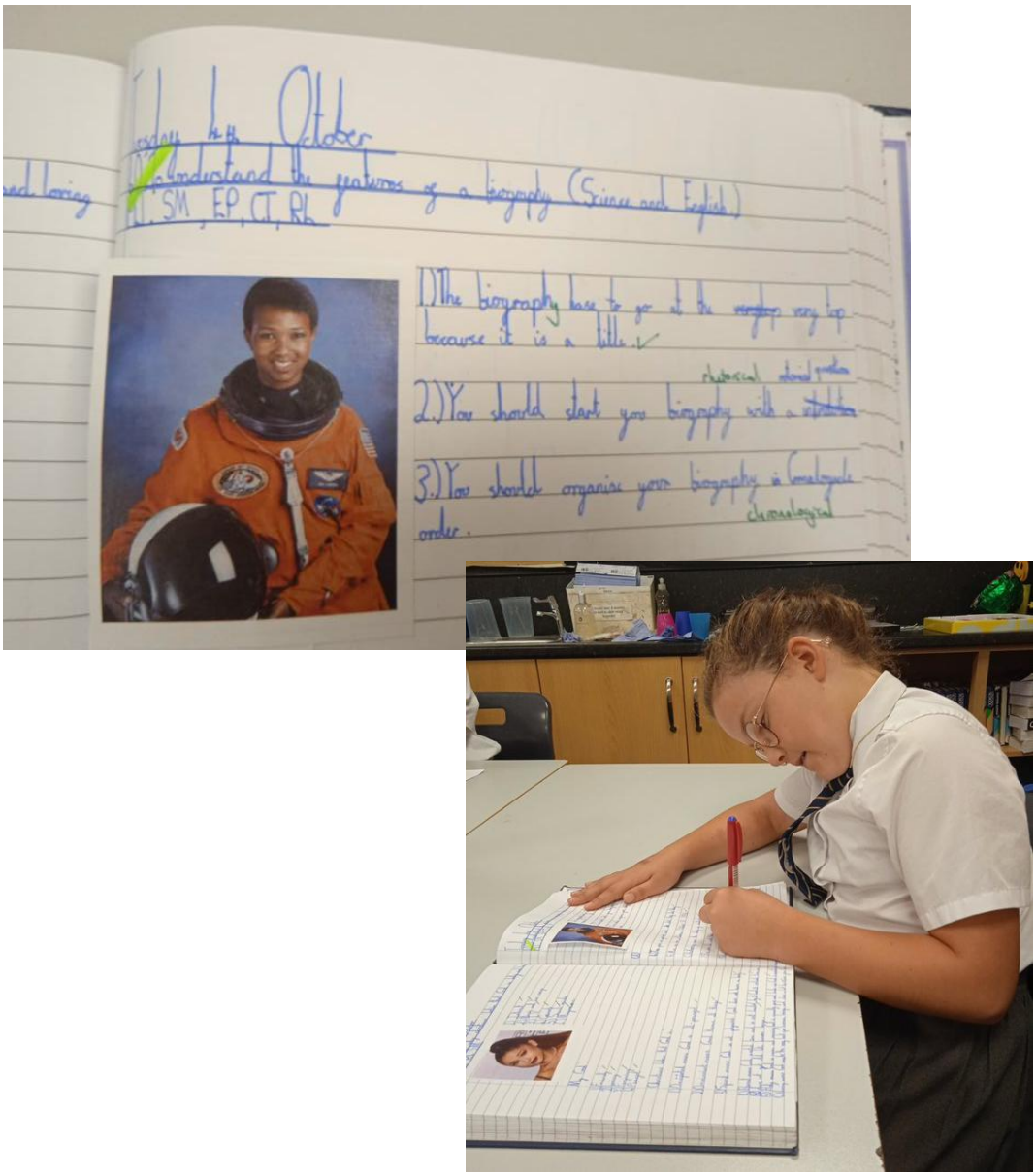


Thursday 6th October
National Poetry Day.
Making a Word Bird.

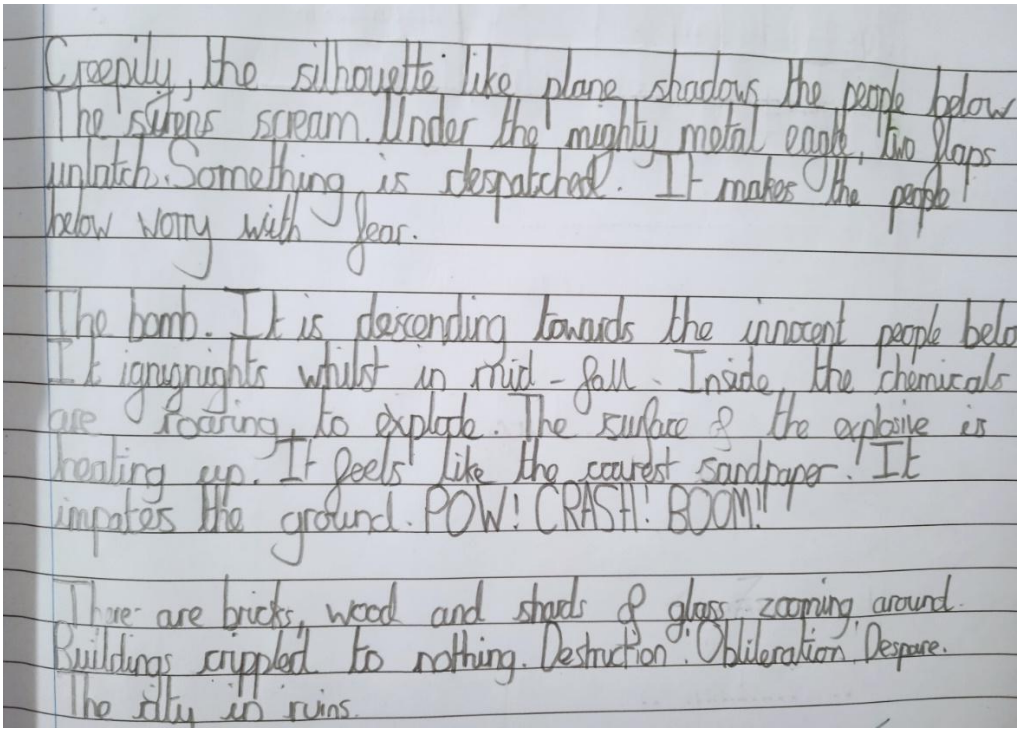
My interesting word from the thesaurus for the word bird is athletic.

She sang the clouds, she sang the rain.
She sang the moon, she sang the sunset.
Oh the word bird sang
And the world began

Year 5:



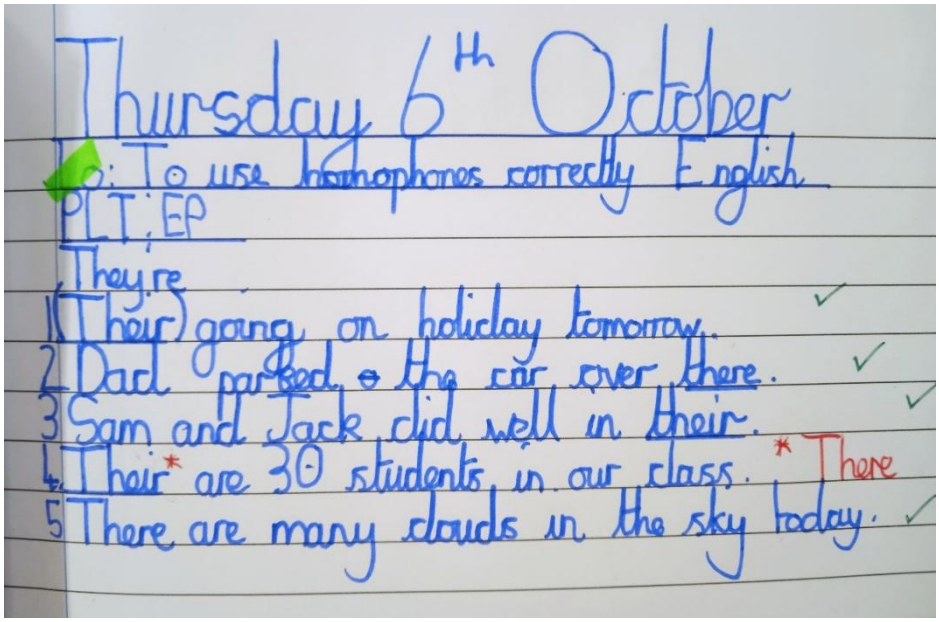
Year 6:



Creepily, the silhouette like plane shadows the people below. The sirens scream. Under the mighty metal eagle, two flaps unlatch. Something is despatched. It makes the people below worry with fear.

The bomb. It is descending towards the innocent people below. It ignynights whilst in mid-fall. Inside, the chemicals are roaring to explode. The surface of the explosive is heating up. It feels like the coarest sandpaper. It impates the ground. POW! CRASH! BOOM!

There are bricks, wood and shards of glass zooming around. Buildings crippled to nothing. Destruction. Obliteration. Despare. The city in ruins.



Thursday 6th October

LO: To use homophones correctly English

PLT; EP

They're

1 (Their) going on holiday tomorrow. ✓

2 Dad parked the car over there. ✓

3 Sam and Jack did well in their. ✓

4 Their* are 30 students in our class. * There

5 There are many clouds in the sky today. ✓

The amazing species of iguana live in so many different locations around the world. They can vary from the humid rainforests, Florida and even the Galapogos Islands. The Galapogos Islands are home to the Marine Iguana. they love to spend time near the water and are the only of their kind that can swim. They can swim down to 20m below the ocean.