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Drama (Mantle of the Expert)

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Abstract

This assignment provides evidence of the impact of a dramatic enquiry based teaching method; Mantle of the Expert, on particularly reluctant writers. Through work sampling, classroom observations and pupil interviews the progress of a focus group of Key Stage 1 children over two terms was noted and evaluated. The opportunities for writing and the outcomes within and outside the work of the Mantle of the Expert Company were compared and evaluated. Along with research based on relevant literature, this begins to demonstrate the potential of drama to enhance effective learning in the primary classroom; with the most reluctant writers appearing to be more willing and confident to write.

Personal audit

Working in a community first school in an area of high deprivation, a GDF of 98 and an above average proportion of children with Special Educational Needs, I am constantly seeking ways to improve the children’s basic skills and understanding. Indeed the unofficial mantra of the whole school is, “What more can we do for our children?”

The need to encourage our particularly vulnerable pupils to be active learners drives me to explore ways to engage and motivate them and to support them in fulfilling their potential.

Following a successful OFSTED in March 2010 where the school was seen to ‘promote[s] good learning for all’ and ‘where pupils’ achievement and enjoyment are good’ but where there is a need for ‘more focussed opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop their writing, by building step-by-step on previous learning’ I began to actively explore ways to develop children’s writing in a more systematic manner and to provide further opportunities for them to apply their learning to more meaningful and relevant contexts.

As part of the Leadership and Management Team I regularly lead whole school developments but felt that the Primary Framework for Literacy (DfES 2006) on its
own was not enough. The appointment of an Acting Head teacher in the Autumn term 2010, with the experience of introducing and embedding the use of Mantle of the Expert, offered us the ideal opportunity to experiment with a more creative curriculum.

Island Explorers, our first Mantle, involved using drama conventions to travel to an uninhabited island and research the animal and plant life found there. I quickly became captivated by the children’s thought provoking responses and their high levels of involvement. For instance the task of making maps and labelling them for the client came from one of the children; with even the most reluctant of writers confident to “have a go”. I began to see the potential of Mantle of the Expert (Heathcote and Bolton 1995) to drive standards in our school and in particular to improve children’s writing. Reading an article on the Mantle of the Expert website I agreed that ‘as teachers we can plan activities that are at the same time both engaging from the children’s viewpoint and required curriculum tasks from ours’ (Edmiston undated).

My early experience of using Mantle of the Expert led me to consider the progress in writing afforded by the tasks involved, compared with those within what might be considered as traditional writing activities. The question I now want to explore is:

“Does Mantle of the Expert improve the standards of writing of reluctant writers?”

To answer the question I will conduct a case study inquiry (Winston 2006: 42) with the aim to inform future policy in school. The research will include participant observation (Yin 2003; Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011) enabling me to continue with my role as class teacher. Drawing on the work of Dyson (2003: 12 in Hatch 2007) I will sample the written work of a focus group of the most disinclined and hesitant writers in my class. This will provide evidence of the quality of composition and effect; particularly the children’s sense of purpose and audience. In addition to this, observations of the children, within and outside Mantle of the Expert lessons, will highlight levels of motivation and confidence and will be supported by pupil conferences at different stages of the writing process. I will attempt to incorporate triangulation into the findings in particular investigator triangulation (Stake 1995)
using observations from other adults working in my classroom and gather the views of other professionals in school.

I will use literature on the theories of learning and teaching to explore the effectiveness of drama based learning, how children learn to write and apply their writing skills and any links between drama and writing.

**Background on Teaching and Learning**

Learning is described within the theory of constructivism as an active process which includes selecting and processing information, making decisions, generating questions and making meaning from information and experiences – discovery learning (Smith 2002). The work of Piaget identifies the importance of participation of the learner in constructing and reconstructing knowledge; assimilating and accommodating information so that understanding can be achieved (Sigel and Cocking 1977). But, as discussed by Davis (1986: 75), Piaget places stages of development at the centre of his theory; it involves ‘the unfolding of stages of logical operations of the mind, ending with the highest level of formal operations’. In his classic publication *The Process of Education* (1977) Bruner also draws our attention to learners as active problem solvers, however rather than needing to be ready to learn as Piaget suggests, he explains how learners are capable of exploring a wide range of challenging concepts and ideas at any stage of development. Early teaching should emphasise grasping basic ideas intuitively according to Bruner. These ideas may be revisited then as part of a spiral curriculum; building on them each time and developing understanding (GTC 2006).

In order for children to think intuitively, modelling of this skill is needed and it should be part of the whole ethos of the classroom. There follows an obvious impact for teaching; as Bruner states (1977: 68):

> It takes a sensitive teacher to distinguish an intuitive mistake – an interestingly wrong leap – from a stupid or ignorant mistake, and it requires a teacher who can give approval and correction simultaneously to the intuitive student.

I believe that Mantle of the Expert provides an ideal vehicle for this within the safety of a responsible team. I wondered if this also extended within the Mantle to the often difficult task of writing.
In recent times the traditional focus on individual learning has been extended to incorporate collaborative and social aspects. It is possible to see the bringing together of aspects of the work of Piaget with that of Bruner and Vygotsky as social constructivism (Wood 1998: 39). Whilst acknowledging the ‘individual as active agent in development’ (Daniels 2001: 15) Vygotsky maintains that children do not develop in isolation, ‘rather that learning takes place when the child is interacting with the social environment’ (Daniels 2001: i).

Along with Bruner, who claims that rather than a superficial memorising of facts children need to make connections between different experiences (GTC 2006), Edmiston (2011) talks about moving from experiencing to reflecting in order to deepen learning. Part of engaging with those experiences and reflecting on them is an acknowledgement of their social dimension. Here the work of Vygotsky demonstrates how learning communities can actively co-construct knowledge in a social situation (Daniels 2001).

Writing, which can often be thought of as an individual activity, is actually described by Vygotsky (1978) as a ‘complex cultural activity’ which must be ‘relevant to life’. The work of Mclane (1990) in an after school writing program reinforces this notion that writing can at best be collaborative and used as a means of ‘exploring and conducting social relationships’. Also Gundlach (1983) stresses the need for an audience for children’s writing; to be part of a ‘community of readers and writers’.

The role of the teacher within such a learning community is not to follow a purely child centred approach but rather to provide guidance to accelerate children’s thinking. As advocated by Bruner, teaching should start from where the learner is and support, scaffolding or instruction should move the learner on (GTC 2006). This is explained by Vygotsky’s theory of the zone of proximal development, that is; ‘actual development levels as determined by independent problem solving’ and the higher level of ‘potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers’ (Vygotsky 1978: 86). It should be noted that a learner’s progression through collaboration is, ‘restricted to limits which are determined by the state of his development and his intellectual potential’ (Vygotsky, 1978: 209). However:
Every function in the child’s development appears twice: first, on the social level and later, on the individual level; first between people [interpsychological], and then inside the child [intra psychological] (Vygotsky 1978: 57).

This suggests that the best learning is in advance of development and it is argued that the impact of this relationship can also have a positive effect even when the learner is apart from the supporter or supporters (Daniels 2001); drawing on an internal coherence. ‘With the aid of the teacher and her peers she [the child] will be a head taller than herself in the present, in preparation for being a head taller later in life, on her own’ (Davis 1986: 80). It would seem plausible then that within a ZPD children’s writing can be at a high level and this can be applied away from direct support too.

Daniels (2001: 119) discusses the work of Brown et al. (1996); extending the idea of the social dimension of learning by describing a classroom as a collection of zones of proximal development - ZPDs. It takes a skilful teacher therefore to harness the potential of all children in the class through active participation and with the control being in the hands of the learners.

Newman et al. (1989) and Moll (1990) stress the importance of the adult or peer negotiating ways forward within the ZPD with the learner rather than forcing some scaffold or support upon them and this is certainly the case within Mantle of the Expert. The intervention by an adult, usually by the subtle and flexible use of a role within a drama, promotes high quality learning.

Mclane (1990) also highlights the importance of skilled support from confident and encouraging adults during the writing process. In creating zones of proximal development within a meaningful context the aim should be to move children’s writing forward in terms of the language of writing rather than secretarial skills. She goes on to point out that:

"If children can be helped to find their own uses for writing, it may help them to construct zones of proximal development which can enable them to find entry points to this complex cultural activity." (1990: 3140)

Importantly the children should retain an element of control and choice within the writing. This could be compared to the thinking of Dewey as Cam (2008: 163) states:
For surely it was Dewey who, in modern times, foresaw that education had to be defined as the fostering of thinking rather than as the transmission of knowledge.

He wrote in *How We Think* (1991) and *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938) about the power of learning through inquiry. Inquiry as a method should not be separated from knowledge to be acquired. Dewey states

Nothing has brought pedagogical theory into greater disrepute than the belief that is identified with handing out to teachers recipes and models to be followed in teaching (1966: 169-170).

Indeed inquiry as a pedagogy has become more widely used and highly rated in many schools in this country and worldwide (Harste 2001). In Lipman’s (1991) work he creates a community of inquiry, ‘in which children are engaged together in various aspects of the inquiry process’ (Cam 2008). Teachers support children to follow the inquiry where it leads and not stick to the use of a concrete plan. Whilst Lipman uses purely philosophical narrative texts, it does seem to hold true that in the most effective inquiries supported by adults fostering learning we have ‘education as experience, experience as thinking and thinking as inquiry, all wrapped into one – a thoroughly Deweyan conception’ (Cam 2008).

Among others Cuffaro (1994) and Edmiston (2011) highlight the educational value of play as experiential learning. If you are playing you are open to ideas; working, talking, collaborating; making meaning together. Cuffaro discusses the foundation of much Early Years practice; that of giving children time to pursue a self-directed activity in which they are engaged. The learning in these playful situations is serious and with the support of a skilful practitioner can be developed and deepened.

Vygotsky explains in *Mind in Society: The Prehistory of Written Language* (1978) the direct but complex link between play and the development of written language. Young children discover that they can draw spoken words as well as objects and this second order symbolism leads children to write in a more conventional sense.

In *John Dewey and the Challenge of Classroom Practice* (1998) and *Experimenting with the World: John Dewey and Early Childhood Education* (1994) the authors kept Dewey’s importance of experiential learning at the forefront of their classroom research; remembering that ‘we learn from doing, interacting and experimenting with ideas, not from passive reception of them’ and ‘for education to be meaningful to
students, their experiences need to be taken seriously, and woven into the curriculum’ (Hytten 2000: 460) and what could be more meaningful and active that elements of play?

The widely held view that ‘children are best motivated to learn when they are interested in what they are involved in’ could be said to be linked directly to Bruner’s ‘need for teachers to maintain and direct children’s spontaneous explorations’ (Smith 2002). Similarly Cuffaro (1994) discusses the need to follow unexpected twists and turns in the learning; moving away from standard plans with determined lesson outcomes. Again a theme which is central to work in Mantle of the Expert; the requirement for the children to steer the drama with the skilled curriculum support of the teacher.

Dewey was unequivocal in his view that the curriculum must be meaningful to the children; that there must be some ‘continuity’ between the two (Hytten 2000). Consequentially:

Teachers must encourage students to find genuine problems which excite their interest, problems which can be explored and ameliorated by engagements with the curriculum (Fishman and McCarthy 1998: 19).

They also allude to the importance right from an early age of being reflective; thinking about thinking and of being critical; actively processing and evaluating information resulting from observation and experience ‘since [later] it may be hard to break established patterns of intellectual passivity and complacency’ (Hytten 2000: 465).

The need as teachers to be responsible for active, collaborative, motivating, challenging, problem solving experiences, in which children have ownership whilst co-constructing knowledge and developing skills, values and understanding is by no means straight forward. Although, it is claimed that the drama based Mantle of the Expert approach to learning and teaching can provide those experiences. In Dorothy Heathcote: collected writings on education and drama it is also suggested that drama is an ideal and unique tool ‘vital for language development’ (Johnson and O’Neill 1984). Consequently these experiences could perhaps also been seen to provide a social, collaborative, supportive and playful context for writing in which children are engaged in wanting to write in order to address genuine problems.
Background on Mantle of the Expert

Much has been written about drama in education, with concepts such as child-centeredness, self-expression and drama as performance art discussed within the work of pioneers such as Slade, Way and Caldwell Cook (Bolton 1984). However the idea advocated by Harriet Finlay-Johnson of drama that ‘attaches a considerable importance to subject matter’ (Bolton 1984: 12) and as a ‘process of making factual knowledge more interesting’ (Bolton 1984: 52) was an early recognition of drama without an audience and as a means to learning as a process. Similarly, as discussed further by Bolton, Dorothy Heathcote places curriculum content at the forefront of her drama work with Mantle of the Expert but goes further; moving ‘beyond the facts to more universal implications of any particular topic’ (1984: 52) and stressing the ‘child’s engagement with his culture’ (1984:12).

Mantle of the Expert combines drama, inquiry based learning and the tasks and activities of a responsible team; putting children at the heart of the learning with a point of view to be explored. Right from the start of any Mantle the children and teacher make a contract that they shall take on the responsibility for running an enterprise and doing all the tasks normally required of the staff who work in that enterprise or business. The driving force of the enterprise chosen is the learning curriculum the teacher selects; and this needs to be precisely defined. Mantle of the Expert is always ‘an approach to the whole curriculum, not a matter of isolating one theme’ and ‘we have to ensure that all the curriculum areas we want are accessible’. (Heathcote and Bolton 1995: 16)

At a recent workshop (2011) Dorothy Heathcote was keen to stress that the work should always be based in doing something – tasks, and teachers should constantly ask themselves “what will the children be doing?” This relates directly to theories of learning as an active process and proposes that Mantle of the Expert can improve standards as

The students are to be in role in a fictional context, they will bring a sense of responsibility to their learning, with the result that the teacher is able, through the drama, to make greater demands on the students than if this alternative trigger were missing. (Heathcote and Bolton 1995: 46)
For Mantle of the Expert to be effective the first matter to be established in this complex method of learning is “who are we and what powers do we have in the enterprise”, building belief in the enterprise can then begin. As far as possible the children and the teacher share power and responsibility throughout the work and the language used is inclusive; we, us, our. The sequence of tasks in this early part of the work ‘induct through first intriguing, then engaging and interesting’ (Johnson and O’Neill 1984: 179) the children. They adopt ‘a mental disposition of metaxis’ and ‘agree to behave as if they are sharing the same fiction’ (Bolton 1984: 165) and are supported in their learning by the teacher acting as a mentor; scaffolding as advocated by Vygotsky (1978). Heathcote (2011) describes the three “voices” required by the teacher

1. The manager of all tasks
2. The introducer of curriculum
3. The role of “others” as they are required

By taking on a role the teacher can share the learning experience and ‘refrain from burdening her pupils with her own knowledge’ whilst ‘helping her pupils discover what they already know; bringing this knowledge into consciousness in order to build a path for change’ (Johnson and O’Neill 1984: 11). Through use of role the teacher models the high expectations associated with the enterprise and as the children move through the Continuum of Engagement (Heathcote undated) they become obsessed with achieving at a high level. Working in role requires risk taking which may then conceivably transfer to writing within the Mantle of the Expert.

Publishing what has been learned at each stage of the work is paramount and as the children have invested so much into the work they know what there is to write about. In Drama for Learning: Dorothy Heathcote’s Mantle of the Expert Approach to Education Heathcote describes work focussed on reading, writing and talk based situations on the theme of King Arthur. This example demonstrates to me the potential of such work to provide a heightened sense of audience and purpose; there are always demands from the client or the other workers or colleagues which the children respond to. In the King Arthur work Heathcote explains:

The students may not have expected that entry into dramatic fiction would entail a high standard of written language. It is important that the logic of the
need to do this writing, arising out of their promise to the BBC, seems reasonable to them. But the teacher is doing more than setting an exercise in accuracy: the writing gives status to the fiction and is itself a demonstration to the students of how written language and experience are deeply connected. The writing is *personal* in the sense that it has grown naturally from their experiences during the session; it is also *public* in the sense that it can communicate to anybody. There are not many opportunities in school when this combination can occur. (Heathcote and Bolton 1995: 131)

**Mantle of the Expert and writing in action in the classroom**

In my own classroom I aimed to create such purposeful writing opportunities within work on Mantle of the Expert. Referring back to my question “Does Mantle of the Expert improve standards of writing of the most reluctant writers?” I began to gather evidence. At the time of Neelands’ (1993) research there were five studies linking drama with a specific improvement in writing with four of these studies related to children aged ten years and above. I was keen to explore any improvement with Key Stage 1 aged children in my class.

As the school is at the early stages of using Mantle of the Expert the children were taught writing skills through daily phonics and literacy lessons alongside the cross curricular Mantle work. However I found that there were less and less opportunities to analyse work outside the Mantle as the work took over more and more curriculum time than I initially planned for. Over two terms I reflected on my teaching and on the attitudes to writing of a group of the most reluctant writers and the outcomes produced. To begin with the six boys struggled to record on paper without support; stating that they didn’t know what to write or they didn’t know how to spell a word. They were generally not motivated to write and had very little confidence to have a go. Even with support from an adult they did not enjoy writing and would do as little as possible! I wanted to discover most importantly if as according to Bearne *et al.* (2004) incorporating drama and writing into the curriculum together improves boys’ attitude and attainment in writing.

A turning point for Child A came in work in the first term on Island Explorers. Starting as suggested by Heathcote (2002) with iconic representation he was able to use images of an Indonesian Island and rainforest habitats to produce his own map and without prompting or support he added sticky labels; moving to symbolic representation and naming different features such as a volcano “vocayn”. It seems
that the need for a map for the team of researchers provided an impetus for the task which he responded to and enjoyed. There was a strong element of dramatic play in this work; the long journey to the island and acting as researchers. However, although he is very active in the drama activities and makes extended and thoughtful contributions, the content of his writing has not yet improved further as demonstrated by examples of his work in Appendix A. Wherever possible he will draw; annotating only when encouraged.

Other tasks seem to be more forced upon him and maybe there needs to be a connection with a more urgent need for him to write at more length.

The subsequent Mantle theme of Heirhunters, detailed in Appendix B, produced a greater motivation to write across the whole class. Again starting with icons such as the drawing of an abandoned house, items of jewellery, toys and photographs a clear picture of the characters in the story was built by the children. So, when publishing the work so far, children representing “John” in a symbolic way decided to write about him. Given the choice of how to record, one child chose to write a sentence alongside his picture when usually he would find this a real challenge (Appendix B). The task of responding to a letter from the concerned client [John’s great grandson] about progress of the work resulted in empathetic writing from the majority of the class with a real sense of audience. The tension produced in the drama helped to include consideration of feelings and therefore had an impact on the language used. Even though the case study group of boys were enthused, at this stage they were unsure of how to structure their ideas and also found the secretarial skills overwhelming. Grainger et al. (2003: 2) might argue that with this genre specific writing planned by the teacher the children know they are ‘playing the game called writing’ and so the outcomes are less effective.

Nevertheless their response to a request from an RSPCA inspector for leaflets about rescuing hedgehogs was approached with more confidence as shown in Appendix C. In this case the symbolic representation came after the iconic and enactive as described by Bruner (1996) and contrary it seems to Heathcote.

It is suggested by many that writing may be ‘closer to gesture than speech’ (Neelands 1993) and perhaps when the children “played” at rescuing hedgehogs, as seen in the photographs in the appendix, this had a direct link to their writing as
opposed to the previous stimulus of responding to a letter which is seemingly removed from action. The preceding inquiry into removing the hedgehogs from danger, resulting in making boxes, was a collaborative one and so it could be said that there was a communal feel to the writing; linking back to Vygotsky’s work on social learning. It is possible to surmise that the combination of active, inquiring, collaborative play all contributed to the success of the writing.

Over the two terms of this study the most reluctant writers appeared happy to write about animals. A feasible explanation being that this is closest to their experiences. Donaldson (1978) exemplifies this well

It is when we are dealing with people and things in the context of fairly immediate goals and intentions and familiar patterns of events that we feel most at home. And when we are asked to reason about these things, even verbally and at some remove, we can often do it well.

Child C and Child D worked successfully together; one as a member of the Canine Carers team and one as an Inspector to check the dog shelter. It was the first time I had observed Child B write at ease independently (Appendix D). Indeed Beame et al. (2004) suggest a direct link between drama and ‘decreased need for adult support during writing’. The audience for this writing was the child’s peer who accepted his marks as meaningful and responded to them appropriately in role; a clear example of writing matched to purpose. Both of these children were keen to contribute to a written action plan on how to deal urgently with a dangerous dog in the local area and to write an information sheet on their favourite breed. Though it could be assumed that the drama work with its sense of audience and purpose increases their confidence, both children have had intensive intervention in the form of paired daily phonics work to improve their writing. It could be argued that this could be the main reason for them becoming more prolific writers. But having seen them struggle to write captions without a context in phonics sessions I maintain that the importance of the client within the Mantle work and the protection or support into the writing from iconic/ enactive/ expressive representations has a bigger impact on their writing.

In actual fact a colleague working with our Foundation Stage children commented in the first term on a noticeable drive from the children to write within the Mantle work and for them to take this writing into their own play inside and outside the classroom.
This had not been seen previously with writing mainly in phonics and small group sessions. This observation was reinforced by a Key Stage 2 colleague who also noticed an eagerness to write within the drama work.

The desire to write coming from the children was also evident during the most recent work in my class. As a member of the Emergency Care Team, Child E wanted to add captions to a group representation of his group’s patient. His sentences conveyed an informative style and he actively sought to rehearse them aloud with his peers before writing; collaboration in action and an example of another child acting as the supportive other within a zone of proximal development. Generally research supports this positive impact of peers (Labbo 1996; Rowe 1994; Troyer 1991 in Yaden et al. 1999) as seen in Appendix E.

When writing to the fictional Dr James Mills represented in a painting of Scutari Hospital in the Crimea, the case study group of children were particularly eager to convince him to allow Florence Nightingale to help the injured soldiers; see appendix F. Child F even wanted to continue with his writing during “Golden Time” when the class has complete free choice of activity. This is unheard of for Child F and he gained such a sense of pride from finishing the letter unaided by an adult. Similarly Child B and D wrote an instructional text independently – helping an ailing Florence Nightingale to train new nurses. The urgency of the task, the compassion for the client and caring about the team all contributed I believe to the motivation to write and complete engagement with the writing process.

**Conclusion**

Reflecting on the findings of this small scale case study the most obvious finding was that Mantle of the Expert does improve children’s motivation to write and their engagement with the writing process. It also seems possible that their awareness of audience and purpose can improve too. Five out of the six children in the sample group are more motivated to write and more independent. In the drama work the writing is more than just something to be done for the teacher and personally I find the Mantle writing to be more enjoyable than traditional literacy work. Seeing the palpable engagement of the children coupled with the extensive evidence of the
benefits of drama for learning affirms my belief that learning and teaching in this way can only help in the longer term to raise standards at our school. When talking to two Year 4 boys who find reading and writing a challenge their opinions confirmed this for me; “We’re writing an important report… without Mantle it wouldn’t be fun anymore.” “It’s better to write in Mantle because you can see what you’re writing – because it’s happened and you get to put different ideas in; your ideas and things you want to make up. In literacy you have to write their ideas [the teacher’s].”

One of the possibly contentious issues that emerge from these findings however is the need for literacy style lessons alongside the Mantle work; Neelands (1993) was mindful of the idea that different styles of writing ought to be taught discretely. The study by Cremin et al. (2006: 5) however argues that ‘seize the moment’ writing is ‘more engaging for both the children and their teacher’ and enables ‘more effective compositions to be produced’. Further research would therefore be useful to inform school policy in this area; especially with beginning writers and children who may have a barrier to learning associated with writing.

Contrary to expectations this study did not find evidence within this particular group of a significant difference in composition and effect of writing inside and outside the drama. It may be that, as these children are working at an emergent level of writing and may have specific literacy difficulties, their writing skills are not yet at a level whereby they can communicate their ideas fully in print. Certainly writing by other children in the class had a much clearer sense of audience and purpose and was livelier and more interesting within the Mantle: as demonstrated by work as The Emergency Care Team in Appendix G. This finding has important implications for how our school curriculum is structured; I would now advocate more time spent engaged with Mantle of the Expert. This will have an impact on the training needs of the staff and will rely on their belief in its positive influence on learning and their confidence to carry it forward as whole school pedagogy. This assignment has certainly given me a clearer understanding of underlying theories of learning and the prehistory of written language and I will aim to use my role in the school leadership team to support and encourage others to improve writing standards through the opportunities that arise within Mantle of the Expert work.
Appendix A – Examples of writing by Child A

Child A – joined our school in Year 1 with no phonic knowledge and a view of himself as a non-writer. By the end of Year 1 he was assessed as working towards level 1 for writing. Mantle of the Expert has provided him with opportunities to share his creative thinking and express himself fully during the drama work. However he continues to be reluctant to write; even when engaged in this work. The following examples are in chronological order.

With a lot of encouragement he will write a sentence in traditional style literacy work.

An independent piece of writing in response to a picture book story.
As a member of the Emergency Care Team he was highly motivated during the drama work but his thoughtful and detailed ideas did not transfer to his writing.

A letter to the doctor in charge in Scutari Hospital to convince him to let Florence Nightingale and her nurses into the hospital. “Please let Florence Nightingale in to help the soldiers”

Instructions for the nurses in Scutari Hospital. One to one adult support given.
A newspaper report following interviews with the Emergency Care Team members.

Very simple sentences in writing not linking to the extended contributions in the interviews.
Repetitive “safe” writing.
A return to drawing when organising equipment for the Emergency Care Team to take to China to help deal with the aftermath of an earthquake.

An annotation was added to a plan to deal with escaped petrol only when he accepted that there was no way to speak to the client directly.

It was agreed to write a letter in role as a member of the Emergency care Team from the site of an earthquake in China to a concerned mother back home in England.

Transcript of the writing:

*Deya mom I haf sin craxs in the flur*

This sentence took twenty minutes to write and again did not show the contributions this child had made during the drama work.
Appendix B - Heirhunters

Initial Planning – with some of the possible opportunities for writing.

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| Draw the house and introduce the fictional story of a family living in a grand house in the past. Present day - invisible wall; listen in to someone walking around the site describing it.  | • Sort houses - could be/ couldn't be  
• Draw how the house might look now and write a caption  
• What if... predict why its in this state of disrepair |                                                                                                           |
| **Episode 2**             |                                                                      |                                                                                                           |
| “Heir hunters” listen to phone call - what do you find out? Talk about what heir hunters do. Predict what might be in the box belonging to the old lady. Explore the artefacts.  | • Make lift the flap type box with predictions  
• Chart - what I know/what I think I know  
• Timeline of photos/ artefacts with captions |                                                                                                           |
| **Episode 3**             |                                                                      |                                                                                                           |
| Plan to find the ancestor mentioned in the letter. Ancestor gets in touch via letter/ email keen to develop the land according to the Florence Bellamy’s wishes.  | • Place advert in newspaper/ on Facebook etc  
• Research New Zealand.  
• Reply to John Bellamy’s letter/ email |                                                                                                           |
| **Episode 4**             |                                                                      |                                                                                                           |
| Set up firm of architects. Meet to decide on way forward with the project.  | • Portfolio of previous work  
• Company name and badges  
• Set up office  
• Map out land use  
• Meet with the community |                                                                                                           |
| **Episode 5**             |                                                                      |                                                                                                           |
| Design teams               | • Sketches and models with captions  
• Instructions to make models  
• Presentation  
• Newspaper report  
• Add to portfolio |                                                                                                           |

There was a high level of engagement when replying to letters or emails from the client and when writing captions for model buildings made.
Child B – a Year 2 child accessing our Nurture Group for his self negating attitude and therefore his reluctance to take risks and work independently. At the end of Year 1 he was assessed as working towards level 1 in writing. He engaged immediately with the icons and artefacts and this had a powerful impact on his desire to ask questions and share his findings during this work.

This usually reluctant writer added captions independently to his drawings.
Appendix C – Rescuing Hedgehogs

The children worked in teams to make maps of the area and then use them to find a safe place to release the rescued hedgehogs.

This provided the impetus for follow up writing led by the children.

A leaflet written by Child E for local people asking for help with the hedgehogs.
One of the case study children [Child B] was particularly enthused by this task and worked over a whole afternoon to make his leaflet; when talking to him there was an urgency to share the information with other people and this spurred him on to finish the task when he might otherwise lose interest in such a writing task ordinarily.

An advice leaflet on what to put in a hedgehog rescue box, where to release the animal and what not to give it to drink.
Appendix D - Canine Carers

Child C – a Year 1 child at School Action Plus of the SEN Code for difficulties with literacy and numeracy skills. At the time of this work he did not write independently. Child D – an incomer into Year 1 from South Africa; a non-reader and writer.

The children worked in self chosen pairs in role as an RSPCA inspector and a member of the Canine Carers team inspecting the new premises. Child C and D worked together; the first time Child D had been seen to write freely and confidently without an adult.

The inspectors report shared confidently between the pair and resulting from and in meaningful dialogue between the two children.
Child D then wrote an information sheet about a German Shepherd dog in the animal shelter; “He is not good with other dogs.”
Another example from the case study group; Child E.
Annotations around a patient from Child E as part of The Emergency Care Team.

During this Mantle the children have been motivated to write collaboratively as part of our class blog which is on our school website. The following are examples from children in the case study group with a self-chosen partner.

Dear everybody china has been distroyed and there has been aarf cwayc. and adeestruh what is veree dayngrus. every body needs our help in china. SO we wil be helping them.
we heard the earth wobbling.
by abdullah and savas.

Dear evrybody we have been doing some mantele work about china and we have been haveing fun doing this mantele work becuase its good mantele from Jon and Ellie/mae

mary seacole helperd the soldiers oz the brrtile field
by Alfie and billy

Appendix F – Scutari Hospital and the Crimean War
Child F – a Year 1 child with below 80% attendance. The children were writing to Doctor James Mills to persuade him to allow the team and Florence Nightingale into the hospital. This was a breakthrough piece for him; previously he would become distressed at the thought of writing. Although it needs moderation to be understood, he had clear ideas expressed appropriately in sentences with a sense of audience and purpose. He persevered with the task without encouragement; returning to it during free choice time.
A letter written by Child E using persuasive language and providing relevant details.
Instructions for the nurses in Scutari Hospital written in an appropriate style by Child E.
Appendix G – Earthquake writing

Child G - during Year 1 he would struggle to write independently. During the first term of Year 2 he was captivated by the work of The Emergency Care Team in China and produced his best writing so far.

Newspaper style writing by Child G
I was worried and I was help mi children become ava.

The rain was cross, we current get into the house, but we got lucky, said Mr. Chen.

Tuesday, December 5th, 2011
Earthquake.
children playin tens,
people cleaning up.
children fillin cits.
children watchin telee.
children playin to geez.

destroying
flutting
cracing
touars forling on suls.
brilis forling in the world.
roads cracin.
Housy is crumbling.

destroy
(ayas, dayn)
References


Davis, D. (1986) *Drama, Learning and Mental Development*. 2D Drama Dance 6(1) 73-80.


