

The impact of Storytelling Schools on children's writing in Tower Hamlets primary schools

Evaluation of roll-out Phase 1: 2013-14

"It's giving me a better standard because it gives me more ideas."

Child, Year 5

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank The Story Museum and the pupils and staff at the following schools in Tower Hamlets, London without whom this study would not have been possible: Bygrove Primary School; Lansbury Lawrence Primary School; Manorfield Primary School; Mayflower Primary School; Stebon Primary School; St Saviour's CofE Primary School and Wellington Primary School. Our generous funders: Anonymous Foundation, Drapers, The Peter Minit Trust, SHINE, Schroder Charitable Trust.

We would also like to thank Claire Hardman, Helen Leadbitter, Rachel Poulter, Jazmine Poulter and Jayne Newbery at the University of Winchester.

The Project Team: Chris Smith, Nanette Stormont and Helen Lavery.

Evaluation written by Jonathan Rooke, University of Winchester, January 2015.

Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Contents	3
List of charts	4
Executive summary	7
Recommendations	10
Summary of findings	13
Introduction	16
Data collection	18
Impact of Storytelling Schools on children’s attainment in writing	20
Comparison of progress of Storytelling Schools sample and national attainment in writing at Key Stage 2	29
Comparison of Storytelling Schools and national attainment in writing 2014 using RAISEonline	30
Comparison of Storytelling Schools and local attainment in writing 2014	34
Impact of Storytelling Schools on children’s confidence and engagement in storytelling and writing	35
How children respond to learning with Storytelling Schools	48
Teachers’ experience of acquiring and embedding Storytelling Schools methods 1: interviews	55
Teachers’ experience of acquiring and embedding Storytelling Schools methods 2: surveys	62
Conclusion	73
Appendices	77
Children’s writing perception survey KS1	
Children’s Storytelling Schools survey KS2	
Storytelling Schools Teacher Survey	
Storytelling Schools Coordinator Reflection	
Storytelling Schools Case Study Three: Year 6 boy (link to film)	
Storytelling Planning (link to file)	

List of Charts

Figure 1: This chart shows composition of sample children by year group

Figure 2: This chart shows Average Point Scores used to assess children's writing

Figure 3: This chart shows Free School Meal and English as an additional language composition of sample children

Figure 4: This chart shows average progress in attainment of children in writing measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 5: This chart shows the progress in attainment of children in writing measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 6: These charts show the average progress in attainment in writing of all children in each year group measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 7: This chart compares the attainment in writing by boys and girls across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 8: This chart compares the attainment in writing of children with English as an additional language, children who receive Free School Meals and all children across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 9: This chart shows the proportion of children with English as an additional language

Figure 10: This chart compares the attainment in writing of children with English as an additional language and children who do not have English as an additional language across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 11: This chart compares the attainment in writing by English as an additional language boys and girls across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 12: This chart compares the attainment in writing by non-English as an additional language boys and girls across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 13: This chart shows the proportion of children who receive Free School Meals

Figure 14: This chart compares writing attainment of children who receive Free School Meals and children who do not receive Free School Meals across all year groups, measured in Average Point Scores

Figure 15: This chart compares by year group the average progress in writing of children nationally with children participating in the Storytelling Schools project measured in sublevels

Figure 16: This chart compares overall writing attainment in Average Point Scores in 2014 for Storytelling Schools sample and national Year 2 pupils at the end of 2014

Figure 17: This chart compares the average attainment in writing of Storytelling Schools and national Year 2 pupils at the end of 2014

Figure 18: This chart shows best fit submission of teacher assessment writing scores

Figure 19: This chart compares overall writing attainment in Average Point Scores in 2014 of

Storytelling Schools and national Year 6 pupils at the end of 2014

Figure 20: This chart compares the average attainment in writing of Storytelling Schools and national Year 6 pupils at the end of 2014

Figure 21: This chart shows Tower Hamlets Performance Tables KS2 2014 attainment in writing

Figure 22: This chart shows composition of participants in children's writing perception survey

Figure 23: This chart shows all children's perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014

Figure 24: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014

Figure 25: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014

Figure 26: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014

Figure 27: This chart shows all children's perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014

Figure 28: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014

Figure 29: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014

Figure 30: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014

Figure 31: This chart shows all children's attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 32: This chart shows English as an additional language children's attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 33: This chart shows Free School Meals children's attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 34: This chart shows all boys' and girls' attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 35: This chart shows all children's perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 36: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 37: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 38: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014

Figure 39: This chart shows all children's perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer

term 2014

Figure 40: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014

Figure 41: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014

Figure 42: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014

Figure 43: This chart shows frequency of all children telling stories at home in summer term 2014

Figure 44: This chart shows how many children from each year group were interviewed

Figure 45: These two charts compare teachers' perceived confidence to teach Storytelling Schools approaches 2013 and 2014

Figure 46: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'telling a story' in summer Term 2014

Figure 47: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'mapping a story' in summer term 2014

Figure 48: This chart shows teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'stepping a story' in summer term 2014

Figure 49: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'shared writing' in summer term 2014

Figure 50: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'innovation' in summer term 2014

Figure 51: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'invention' in summer term 2014

Figure 52: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'plot matrix' in summer term 2014

Figure 53: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'non-fiction' in summer term 2014

Figure 54: This chart shows the aspects of Storytelling Schools teachers identified as working well in their classrooms summer term 2014

Figure 55: This chart shows the challenges of delivering Storytelling Schools most frequently identified by teachers in 2014

Figure 56: This chart shows most frequently identified training needs of Storytelling Schools teachers in 2013

Executive summary

This study evaluates the impact of the Storytelling Schools method during Phase 1 of its roll-out into ten Tower Hamlets schools in the academic year 2013-14. Seven of the schools participated in the study. By the end 2013-14, two of the participating schools had been involved in Storytelling Schools for 1 year, three schools had been involved for 18 months and two schools had been involved for 3 years.

Pilot project, Roll-out Phase 1 and Phase 2

There was a pilot project between 2011-13 at one school, prior to roll-out Phase 1. Roll-out Phase 1 took place between September 2013 and July 2014. Seven schools, including the pilot school, participated. Storytelling Schools' methods were used by teachers and pupils throughout each school in each year group. Phase 2 is currently continuing in the same seven schools and, in addition, four new schools from the same area are now also participating. There is regular training including six whole cluster training mornings and six leader meetings in the afternoon with additional support provided by a Storytelling Schools trainer. The current Phase 2 is being funded by participating schools demonstrating the sustainability of the project.

Storytelling Schools are situated in an area of deprivation and linguistic diversity

Tower Hamlets was recorded in the Indices of Deprivation 2010 as being the seventh most deprived local authority in England out of 326 local authority districts (reflecting average level of multiple deprivation)¹. According to the 2011 census, Tower Hamlets has had the fastest growing population of any country in the previous 10 years with 254,100 usual residents. The population had increased by 21% since 2001. English and Bengali were identified as the two most commonly used languages. 66% of residents used English as their main language while 18% used Bengali and 16% used a wide variety of other European and international languages. Tower Hamlets was the fourth most linguistically diverse area in England and Wales and had the largest number and proportion of Bengali speakers in England. Nearly two thirds of households use English as the main language while the remaining third were either mixed language households or no one used English as their main language.²

Participating Schools

Storytelling Schools had already established itself in five schools in the Poplar area of Tower Hamlets by the beginning of the roll-out Phase 1 in 2013. These formed the nucleus of the schools participating in Phase 1. Participation in roll-out Phase 1 was offered to all ten schools in the Poplar Partnership (an administrative partnership of schools that exist in the same area of Tower Hamlets) of which seven signed up to participate.

Training for teachers

Each participating school received after-school training sessions for staff and mentor visits during the year. In addition, a member of the project team provided training days for staff in

¹ Indices of Deprivation 2010 Research Briefing 2011-13 June 2011

http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCwQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2Fidoc.ashx%3Fdocid%3D7d09b443-cc9a-4913-bb2b-b0a88c654f49%26version%3D-1&ei=h-eSVMvAO4af7gbvxIDYDg&usq=AFOjCNE3FZknRAA1dGTNOjri7_e3ToBgG&bvm=by.82001339.d.ZGU

² Language in Tower Hamlets, Analysis of 2011 Census Data research Briefing 2013-02 April 2013

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgsi/901-950/916_borough_profile/research_and_briefings/diversity.aspx

Storytelling Schools' methods and the lead practitioners from each school attended six training days. All schools received a copy of *The Storytelling School: Handbook for Teachers*³

Sample of children

A sample of 1,642 children drawn from Years 1 to 6 was used to measure impact on attainment in writing, confidence and engagement. 12 teachers were interviewed and 96 teachers surveyed to identify impact on teachers' practice and attitudes towards Storytelling Schools. Three children were filmed to provide exemplar material of children's experience of Storytelling Schools' methods.

Method

The evaluation of roll-out Phase 1 used a range of data: children's writing perception surveys; teachers' perception surveys; interviews with participating teachers; writing attainment scores of participating children; interviews with focus children, written reflections by English lead coordinators; RAISEonline attainment data and Tower Hamlets Local Authority writing attainment data, 2014.

Children's attainment in writing was above local and national averages

Primary School (KS2) Performance tables 2014 for Tower Hamlets show, overall, that the average percentage of children in Storytelling Schools achieving Level 4 or above in KS2 writing teacher assessment was 91.4% which was more than the local average of 87% and national average of 85%.⁴ Similarly, overall, the average percentage of children in Storytelling Schools achieving Level 5 or above in KS2 writing teacher assessment was 38.5% which was more than the local average of 32% and the national average of 33%.

This suggests that Storytelling Schools' methods contributed to raising standards in writing in an area of social deprivation. The fact that the sample had a high proportion of children for whom English is an additional language (hereafter EAL) suggests that Storytelling Schools contributed positively to the attainment of EAL children.

Children made good progress in writing

Children made good progress in writing in this roll-out Phase 1 of Storytelling Schools. Two thirds of children in the sample across all year groups made 4 Average Point Scores (hereafter APS) progress in writing during the year which exceeds expectation of 3 APS per year which is needed for children to make expected progress of 2 levels of progress between KS1 and KS2⁵. 83% of children in the sample were described as using EAL and, again, two thirds of children across all year groups made 4 APS progress in writing during the year which exceeds expectation. Similarly, two thirds of children in the sample who have Free School Meals (hereafter FSM) made 4 APS progress in writing during the year which exceeds expectation. In all these categories, boys and girls in the sample benefitted roughly equally, with girls making slightly better progress overall. This indicates that during roll-out Phase 1, Storytelling Schools has contributed positively to children's attainment in writing.

³ Smith, C. & Guillian, A. (2014) *The Storytelling School: Handbook for Teachers* Stroud: Hawthorn Press

⁴ Primary School (key stage 2) Performance tables 2014 Tower Hamlets 211 Department for Education www.gov.uk/schools/performance

⁵ DfE: National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England, 2013 (provisional) http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18393/1/SFR34_2013_KS2_T_ext.pdf

Comparison of the Storytelling Schools sample with Department for Education research⁶ shows children are making an average increase of around half a sublevel progress (or 1 APS) in writing more than the national average which may be significant for schools. Year 6 children in Storytelling Schools made nearly 1 whole sublevel of progress (or 2 APS) more than the national average which is a significant difference.

Children were positive about Storytelling Schools' methods

Questionnaires from 647 children were received and 16 children were interviewed. Children responded positively to their experience of Storytelling Schools' methods and most said that they enjoyed it and that the collaboration, peer assessment and 'Hear, Map, Step and Speak' processes supported their learning at word, sentence and text level.

Children enjoyed writing and held positive attitudes about themselves as writers

Most of the children surveyed said that they enjoyed writing, were positive about their identity as writers and storytellers and thought that Storytelling Schools' methods had helped them to learn to write. This was true for both boys and girls though a larger proportion of girls than boys held these views. EAL and FSM children shared this level of enthusiasm. This indicates that all these categories of children, overall, believed that they benefitted from using Storytelling Schools' methods. This suggests that Storytelling Schools builds children's confidence and engagement with writing and has a positive impact on most children. It is important that children who have FSM or have EAL were positive about Storytelling Schools.

Support for teachers was effective

Questionnaires and surveys were received from 96 participating teachers and 12 teachers were interviewed concerning training, implementation and confidence with Storytelling Schools' methods. Teachers responded very positively to their experience of implementing Storytelling Schools' methods and said that they were confident to use most of them. Interviewed teachers said that the training and support for developing the pedagogy of Storytelling Schools was highly effective. This suggests that the roll-out procedures for training and supporting teachers was effective and that teachers can learn, implement and feel confidence with the Storytelling Schools methods contained in *The Storytelling School: Handbook for Teachers*⁷.

⁶ Department for Education (2011) How do pupils progress during Key Stages 2 and 3, Research Report RR096. <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR096.pdf>
28

⁷ Smith, C. & Guillain, A. (2014) *The Storytelling School: Handbook for Teachers* Stroud: Hawthorn Press

Recommendations

Storytelling Schools' success seems to be partly located in its highly structured content and delivery by teachers. It separates the planning, translating and revising components of the writing process and allows children to concentrate their cognitive resources. While in the first Phase of roll-out this can contribute to success, it may also become a barrier unless participating schools feel they can make adaptations to accommodate the variety of learners and any emerging shortcomings of a highly systematic method. The following recommendations have been arrived at after reflection on the responses collected from teachers, children and lead English coordinators.

1. The length of time allocated by participating schools to each unit in writing can limit the quality of teaching and Storytelling Schools need to devise a range of solutions that will suit different school circumstances. The lack of time to complete all components of the imitation, innovation and invention sequence was frequently identified as a problem by teachers and lead English coordinators. This is not a problem specific to Storytelling Schools, but if unaddressed it may impact on the quality of children's learning and sense of adequacy in teachers.

2. Children need to engage meaningfully with the invention stage. Teachers, English lead coordinators and children identified the problem that they did not always write an invented composition. One lead English coordinator wrote "As a whole school – not enough invention. Fell off map due to time." This would be a typical comment. If children are not writing an invented composition it is difficult to see how the previous two stages are being fully exploited in terms of children orchestrating independently all the skills they have learned. Some schools require children to write an assessed piece regularly which addresses this to some extent.

3. Teachers in roll-out Phase 2 need monitoring, explicit training and ongoing school support with invention in order to provide children with a high quality writing experience. While teachers claimed the paucity of invention was a consequence of time, it is also possible that it is the component with which they may lack both confidence and subject knowledge. Invented writing does not have the supports of imitation and innovation and requires teachers to assess children's writing formatively at each stage of the writing process (planning, translating and revising) and rapidly respond with 'in flight' assessment during the lesson. One lead English coordinator wrote "Invention does not come 'naturally' to staff and they need more training." By 'come naturally', the lead English coordinator may have been referring to the skills and confidence with written language that teachers need. This can be addressed with training and engaging teachers with their own writing in the same way they have been engaged in training with their own storytelling.

4. Children need to develop their own writing voice. While this is a sentiment deeply held by teachers, academics and trainers, Storytelling Schools in roll-out Phase 1 may not be offering children space to develop this important and creative aspect in writing. If teachers are reporting that they are not engaging in invention, then it can be surmised that children are imitating and even innovating on a prepared story but they are not experiencing equivalent opportunity to be playful, creative and experimental in order to eventually develop their own style through guided trial and revision and even to write what is meaningful to them outside of the designated structures of Storytelling Schools. In essence, the purpose of the Storytelling Schools method is ultimately that children can independently write for academic

purposes as well as for personal meaning.

5. Teachers need to monitor and respond to the way Storytelling Schools addresses known needs and challenges for EAL children. It is significant that a high proportion of children have EAL. Knowing this, teachers could assess the difference their writing units are making to the specific features in writing EAL children need to learn, as identified by research⁸ (modal verbs, subject verb agreement and verb tenses, prepositions, adverbials, subordinators, formulaic phrases and complex sentences). Similarly, the extent to which the needs of non-EAL children are being met may need to be considered.

6. Children's development of transcription skills needs to be monitored. Interviewed teachers identified an anxiety that children were so focused on oral storytelling that insufficient time was given to develop children's orthographic skills (spelling and handwriting). This is not a new problem in primary schools but it is an anxiety that needs to be listened to because while a strength of Storytelling Schools is the distribution and concentration of cognitive load, ultimately, cognitive load is concentrated when children develop automaticity with orthographic skills. Independent writers efficiently manage their cognitive load when they do not need to spend energy on spelling and handwriting. It is a vital and intrinsic characteristic of independent, efficient and creative writers.

7. Management of differentiation during Storytelling Schools units should be explored and the effects on different groups of children understood and articulated. In roll-out Phase 1 it is understandable that teachers will learn to use the systematic approach with some rigidity. Once some dexterity and confidence has been acquired by teachers, children need to experience a growing willingness and ability to provide different experiences for writers with different abilities. In particular, children who are proficient writers might be given different challenges. They might not be present for the entire lesson but instead work at an advanced level with the teaching assistant and even be prepared to peer tutor groups of children to use a skill that they have already acquired. While it is likely that this is already happening, this practice should be identified and shared. Children who fall into the able writer category should also be consulted about their experience.

8. Teachers could consider how they are using Storytelling Schools to develop children's metacognitive knowledge about their writing. Teachers could develop explicit ways within Storytelling Schools lessons to engage children in deliberate, collaborative and individual dialogues about how they are thinking about writing and the way they are managing their writing skills and the complex mental processes writing demands of a novice writer. Externalising and articulating this metacognitive knowledge so that the child can then internalise it 'knowingly' is a way of developing independent and efficient writers who can manage the complex cognitive demands in writing and monitor and revise their own writing towards intended writing goals as well as deliberately develop their own writing voice.

10. Support with planning could be further developed amongst teachers in school and between teachers in complementary Storytelling Schools. Planning collaboratively was identified by teachers as a key support.

⁸ Cameron, L. & Besser, S. (2004) *Writing in English as an Additional Language at KS2* University of Leeds

11. Develop supportive peer observation across individual schools and between Storytelling Schools. Teachers identified this practice as a key support in their development as teachers of Storytelling Schools' methods.

12. Teachers need to ask themselves to what extent children are self-selecting topics to write about and how far they are developing their own voices as authors. They need to consider to what extent Storytelling Schools elicit children's own ideas for sentence and text structures and explore the children's ideas for development of story and non-fiction texts⁹.

13. Shift more children towards expressing a more positive response when asked if they enjoy writing or think that they are good writers.

⁹ Parr, J, Jesson, R. & McNaughton, S. (2009) 'Agency and Platform: the Relationship Between Talk and Writing', in Beard, R, Myhill, D., Riley, J. & Nystrand, M. (eds) *The Sage Handbook in writing Development*. London: SAGE pp.246-59

Summary of findings

Attainment

Primary School (KS2) Performance tables 2014 for Tower Hamlets show, overall, that the average percentage of children in Storytelling Schools achieving Level 4 or above in KS2 writing teacher assessment was 91.4% which was more than the local average of 87% and national average of 85%.¹⁰

This suggests that the Storytelling Schools method contributed to raising standards in writing in an area of social deprivation. The fact that the sample had a high proportion of children for whom English is an additional language (hereafter EAL) suggests that Storytelling Schools contributed positively to the attainment of children for whom EAL. This is reflected in the findings of this small scale evaluation of Storytelling Schools' roll-out Phase 1 2013-14.

The sample of children used in this report suggests that Storytelling Schools' methods significantly benefitted both Year 2 and Year 6 children who receive Free School Meals (FSM) and children who have English EAL. The fact that 83% children in the report sample have EAL suggests that this is a very effective approach for children with EAL. 53% of the sample children receive FSM so these results suggest that Storytelling Schools' methods benefit these children. In the Storytelling Schools sample the percentage of EAL children in Year 6 achieving L4+ in teacher assessment in writing in 2014 was 87% compared with the national figure of 82%.

Progress

Children made good progress in writing in this roll-out Phase 1 of Storytelling Schools. Two thirds of children in the report sample across all year groups made 4 APS progress in writing during the year which exceeds expectation of 3 APS per year which is needed for children to make expected progress of 2 levels of progress between KS1 and KS2¹¹. 83% of children in the sample had EAL and, again, two thirds of children across all year groups made 4 APS progress in writing during the year which exceeds expectation. Similarly, two thirds of children in the sample who have FSM made 4 APS progress in writing during the year which exceeds expectation. In all these categories, boys and girls in the sample benefitted roughly equally, with girls making slightly better progress overall.

Sample children in classrooms where teachers are using Storytelling Schools in the teaching and learning in writing are making an average increase of around half a sublevel progress (or 1 APS) in writing more than the national average which may be significant for schools. Year 6 children in the Storytelling Schools sample made nearly 1 whole sublevel of progress (or 2 APS) more than the national average which is a significant difference. This indicates that during roll-out Phase 1, Storytelling Schools has contributed positively to children's attainment in writing.

¹⁰ Primary School (key stage 2) Performance tables 2014 Tower Hamlets 211 Department for Education www.gov.uk/schools/performance

¹¹ DfE: National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England, 2013 (provisional) http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18393/1/SFR34_2013_KS2_T_ext.pdf

In the opinion of the project team, this indicates a successful roll-out Phase 1 and suggests that there is likely to be more gains in writing attainment in subsequent years as the methods are sustained in the schools.

Writing Attainment of children in sample

1. Sample children in all year groups, on average, made at least expected progress with some year groups substantially exceeding expected progress
2. Overall, two thirds of children made at least 4 APS progress with one quarter of children making 6 APS or more in one year
3. The proportion of children attaining 4 APS progress in individual year groups ranged from 57% to 82%
4. Boys and girls made similar progress in their writing attainment
5. Children with EAL and FSM, on average, made at least expected progress, in line with the whole sample
6. Although a greater proportion of children with EAL made progress of 6 APS than did children without EAL this was not statistically significant
7. Two thirds of children with EAL exceeded expectations making 4 APS or more progress
8. Almost two thirds of children who receive FSM exceeded expectations and made progress of at least 4 APS in one academic year

Impact of Storytelling Schools on sample children's confidence and engagement in storytelling and writing

Children's summer 2014 surveys indicated:

1. 84% of all children enjoyed writing and 40% said that they enjoyed writing quite a lot or a lot
2. 83% of EAL and 85% of FSM children enjoyed writing and more than a third enjoyed writing quite a lot or a lot
3. 77% of boys and 90% of girls enjoyed writing.
4. 18% more girls than boys said they enjoyed writing. Half the girls enjoyed writing quite a lot or a lot
5. One quarter of boys approximately said they did not enjoy writing
6. 81% of children were positive about themselves as writers
7. More than one third of all children, EAL and FSM children identified themselves as quite good or very good writers
8. Nearly one fifth of all children, EAL and FSM children did not positively identify themselves as writers

9. 8% more girls than boys identified themselves as quite good or very good writers
10. Nearly a quarter of boys did not positively identify themselves as writers
11. Nearly three quarters of all children, EAL and FSM children liked storytelling
12. A quarter of the children did not like storytelling
13. 67% of boys and 79% girls liked storytelling though more girls than boys said they liked it
14. Nearly a third of boys and a fifth of girls did not like storytelling
15. Most children, EAL and FSM children were positive about themselves as storytellers
16. Nearly one third of children did not think they were good at storytelling
17. 78% of girls and 63% of boys were positive about themselves as storytellers
18. Nearly one quarter of girls and more than one third of boys were not positive about themselves as storytellers
19. 84% of children thought that storytelling had helped them to write
20. More than four fifths of EAL and FSM children thought that storytelling had helped them to write
21. 12% more boys than girls thought it had not helped them to write
22. Over half of the children told stories at home at least once a week
23. Nearly one quarter of children never told stories at home

How sample children responded to learning with Storytelling Schools

Children during interviews in summer 2014 said:

1. They were positive about all aspects of Storytelling Schools discussed in the interview
2. Story mapping was one of the most useful Storytelling Schools' methods
3. Their understanding of structure is supported by Storytelling Schools' methods
4. Their memory is supported by Storytelling Schools' methods
5. Collaborative learning underpins Storytelling Schools and children thought it supported their learning
6. Peer assessment in Storytelling Schools supported their learning
7. Storytelling Schools supports development of their vocabulary
8. Shared writing was one of the most useful Storytelling Schools' methods
9. Storytelling Schools supports development of their sentence construction
10. Repetition of telling in Storytelling Schools helped them
11. They enjoyed Storytelling Schools' processes
12. They had mixed responses about the effectiveness of differentiation

13. They did not make up their own stories as much as they would like
14. They benefitted from Storytelling Schools but some children said they could benefit differently if the process was adjusted
15. Whole school approaches to learning influence the way children engage with Storytelling Schools

Teachers' experience of teaching Storytelling Schools

Teacher surveys and interviews indicated:

1. Teachers' confidence to use Storytelling Schools' methods increased during 2013-14
2. Teachers were most confident to teach the telling, stepping, mapping, shared writing and innovation aspects of Storytelling Schools in summer term 2014
3. Teachers were less confident to teach the invention, plot matrix and non-fiction aspects of Storytelling Schools in summer term 2014
4. Teachers identified telling, mapping and stepping a story as the aspects of Storytelling Schools that worked best in their classrooms
5. Factors that contributed to Storytelling Schools success in the classroom were identified by teachers as: structure, enjoyment, breaking down the story, expanding vocabulary and repetition
6. Teachers identified invention, innovation, stepping, non-fiction and shared writing as areas presenting most challenge in their classroom
7. The challenge in the classroom identified by teachers the most frequently was 'time restriction'
8. Teachers identified non-fiction and invention as their most pressing training needs at the beginning of 2013-14
9. Teachers identified as their main roles in the classroom: modelling being enthusiastic writers and storytellers and providing good quality stories

Introduction

Storytelling Schools is an approach that uses storytelling to develop writing as well as reading and spoken language. In schools where improving basic literacy levels is a priority, Storytelling Schools is used to raise standards. Storytelling provides a way of developing rich and active story language for children to recycle in their own story making and writing¹².

¹² <http://www.storytellingschools.com/#who-are-we>

Aims

The principle aim of Storytelling Schools is to develop a model of effective practice in English. The focus of this evaluation is the impact of Storytelling Schools on the teaching and learning in writing. The aims of the evaluation are to understand more about:

- Individual children’s educational attainment in writing
- Quality of teaching using Storytelling Schools’ processes in the classroom
- Means of embedding and monitoring the quality of Storytelling Schools’ approaches in the curriculum and enhancing staff development
- Individual children’s development of confidence and engagement in storytelling and writing

Research questions

- What impact does Storytelling Schools have on children’s attainment in writing and reading?
- What difference does Storytelling Schools make to children’s confidence and engagement in writing?
- What components of Storytelling Schools do teachers integrate into their classroom?
- How do teachers acquire and embed processes of Storytelling Schools?

Sample

A sample of seven primary schools was selected from the ten schools in the Poplar district of Tower Hamlets, London. The schools were geographically close, and all subscribed to Storytelling Schools. At the end of roll-out Phase 1 in July 2014, each school had been involved in Storytelling Schools for different periods of time ranging from 1 year to 3 years. Staff turnover meant that staff had different levels of experience within each school. Three schools were not in a position to participate in research for roll-out Phase 1. Useable attainment data was collected from 1,642 children in Years 1 to 6 from all seven participating schools.

Figure 1: This chart shows composition of sample children by year group

Year	Boys	Girls	Total children
Year 1	72	95	167
Year 2	152	153	305
Year 3	176	161	337
Year 4	148	154	302
Year 5	132	162	294
Year 6	122	115	237
Total children	802	840	1,642

Data collection

This report draws on a range of data: children's writing perception surveys; teachers' perception surveys; interviews with participating teachers; writing attainment scores of participating children; interviews with focus children, written reflections by English lead coordinators; RAISEonline attainment data and Tower Hamlets Local Authority writing attainment data, 2014.

1. Children's writing perception surveys

Writing perception surveys were conducted by participating children to identify their perceptions of their own confidence and their level of engagement with writing and storytelling as a consequence of Storytelling Schools.

2. Attainment progress of sample children

Children's progress in writing attainment from September 2013 to July 2014 was measured and differences in APS were recorded. Assessing Pupil Progress assessment procedures were commonly used in the participating schools. At the time of writing the report, expected progress in England is defined by the government as two full National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2. The pupil attainment information emerged from existing assessment procedures for school tracking purposes rather than any separate assessment specifically for the report. Any difference between September and July scores attained by the participating children may not have been solely due to an emphasis on Storytelling Schools but is likely also to be the consequence of a range of factors operating in the school.

3. Teachers' perception surveys

96 useable teacher perception surveys were submitted from seven schools reflecting on teachers' own practice and attitudes to writing in their classroom during the period of the project.

4. Interviews with teachers

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 teachers who had been trained in Storytelling Schools between 2013-14. All seven participating schools were visited. Interviews focused on the teachers' experiences of the training approaches that had been developed in the project workshops and any additional support received from Storytelling Schools teachers and trainers.

5. Interviews with children

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 children who had participated in the Storytelling Schools' project. Interviews focused on their experience, what supported their learning and what they found challenging.

6. Case study children

Three children from three different schools were filmed; telling a story, reading a story, reflecting on their learning experience and receiving assessment feedback from their teacher.

7. Written reflections by lead English coordinators

Written reflections were provided by four lead English coordinators in summer term 2014.

8. RAISEonline and Tower Hamlets attainment data

Data provided by RAISEonline October 2014¹³ and Primary School (KS2) Performance tables 2014 Tower Hamlets¹⁴ was used in addition to the data from the sample of children.

When the writing attainment data was collected

Data for writing attainment for each of the children was collected by schools at the end of summer term or beginning of autumn term, 2013 and then collected again at the end of summer term 2014. Other data collected included gender, receipt of FSM and EAL. Teachers submitted their pupils' progress in APS.

Age-related expected progress

National curriculum standards in England until 2014 are designed so that pupils are expected to make at least two levels of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This means that most pupils are expected to attain one full level of progress every two years.¹⁵ This is equivalent to 6 APS. In order to achieve this, teachers expect pupils to make 3 APS progress per year. Head teachers aim for 4 APS progress per year.

Control Group

In our report we have compared the performance of 7 schools against the Local Authority data for the same year. This provides a comparison in which demographic factors are reasonably balanced. In addition, the larger data set covering the Local Authority provides statistical power which can enable a more detailed analysis be made. On the other hand, a case could be made for using as control/comparison, data from one of the same schools obtained before the introduction of Storytelling Schools. This offers the advantage that variance caused by demographic factors is even more tightly controlled. However, this necessarily involves a smaller sample size and would therefore be more sensitive to random fluctuations. Indeed, when we inspected this data we noticed some fluctuations which seemed inconsistent with the overall profile of the other participating schools. Therefore, comparison with the Local Authority seemed more representative of the project.

National Curriculum and APS

Teachers submitted data using P scales and WA, WB and WB in the writing attainment data. For the purposes of this report these have been converted to make them compatible with APS and to show progression. There were alternative ways available to convert these scores e.g. Nasen <http://www.nasen.org.uk/uploads/publications/129.pdf>

¹³ RAISEonline <https://www.raiseonline.org/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2findex.aspx>

¹⁴ Primary School (key stage 2) Performance tables 2014 Tower Hamlets 211 Department for Education www.gov.uk/schools/performance

¹⁵ DfE: National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England, 2013 (provisional) http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18393/1/SFR34_2013_KS2_T_ext.pdf

Figure 2: This chart shows Average Point Scores used to assess children’s writing

Sublevels	APS
WC	1
WB	3
WA	5
P1	0
P2	0
P3	0
P4	1
P5	2
P6	3
P7	4
P8	5
1c	7
1b	9
1a	11
2c	13
2b	15
2a	17
3c	19
3b	21
3a	23
4c	25
4b	27
4a	29
5c	31
5b	33
5a	35

We acknowledge the limitations of the correspondence of P levels to APS points based on www.sppcs.org.uk/documents (What is Standard Progress, Roger Watson, Statistics for Education www.primaryprogresstoolkit.co.uk.)

Impact of Storytelling Schools on sample children’s attainment in writing

Summary of findings

1. Sample children in all year groups, on average, made at least expected progress with some year groups substantially exceeding expected progress.
2. Overall, two thirds of children made at least 4 APS progress with one quarter of children making 6 APS or more in one year
3. The proportion of children attaining 4 APS progress in individual year groups ranged from 57% to 82%
4. Boys and girls made similar progress in their writing attainment
5. Children with EAL and FSM, on average, made at least expected progress, in line

with the whole sample

6. Although a greater proportion of children with EAL made progress of 6 APS than did children without EAL this was not statistically significant
7. Two thirds of children with EAL exceeded expectations making 4 APS or more progress
8. Almost two thirds of children who receive FSM exceeded expectations and made progress of at least 4 APS in one academic year

Composition of sample children

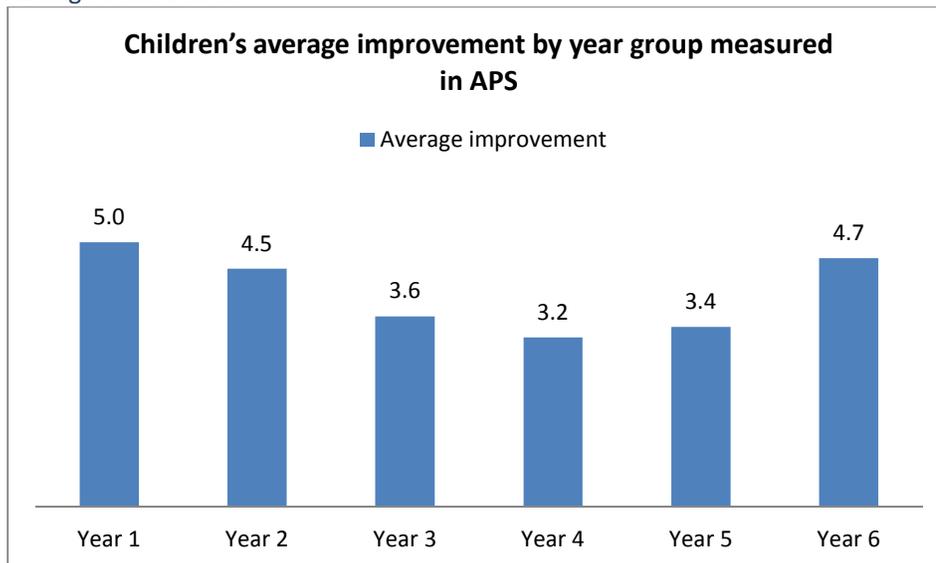
Figure 3: This chart shows Free School Meal and English as an additional language composition of sample children

	All Children	FSM	EAL
Boys	802	433	676
Girls	840	795	687
Total	1642	1228	1363

1. Children in all year groups, on average, made at least expected progress with some year groups substantially exceeding expected progress.

The pupil evidence collected shows that, on average, sample children participating in the Storytelling Schools project made at least expected progress of 3 APS in every year group and three year groups have exceeded it by at least 1 APS.

Figure 4: This chart shows average progress in attainment of children in writing measured in Average Point Scores

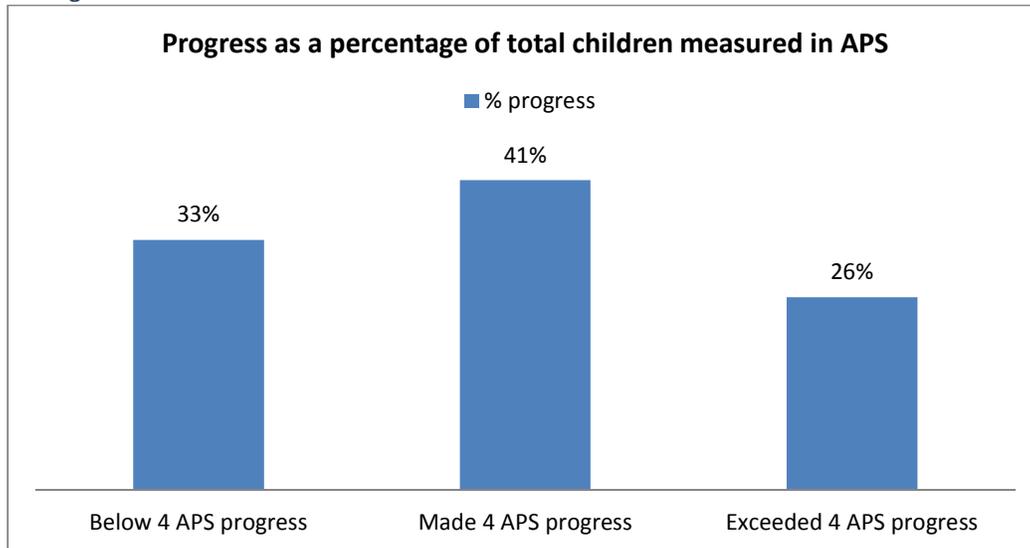


2. Overall, two thirds of children made at least 4 APS progress with one quarter of children making 6 APS or more in one year (double the expected progress)

The pupil evidence collected shows that 67% of all sample children across all year groups

made 4 or more APS progress in writing during one academic year of the research project. 26% of children made 6 or more APS progress during one academic year of the research project. This represents two years' expected progress made in one year for roughly a quarter of participating children.

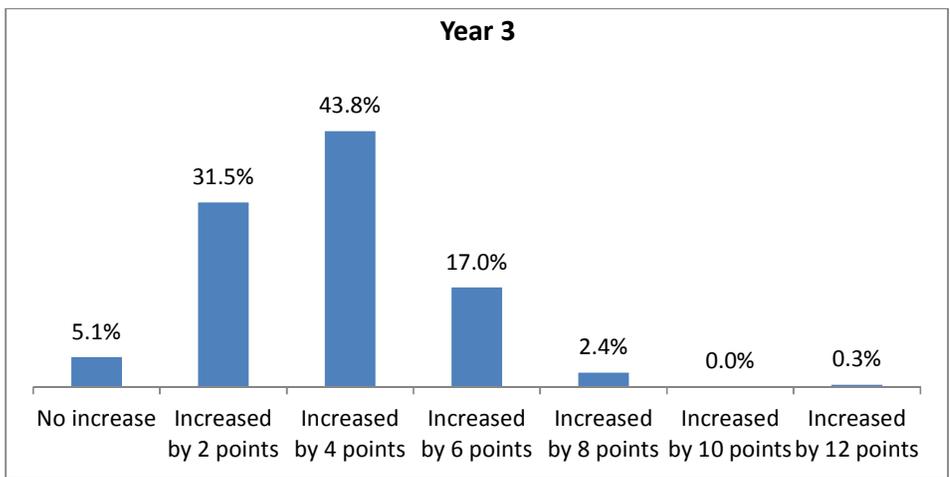
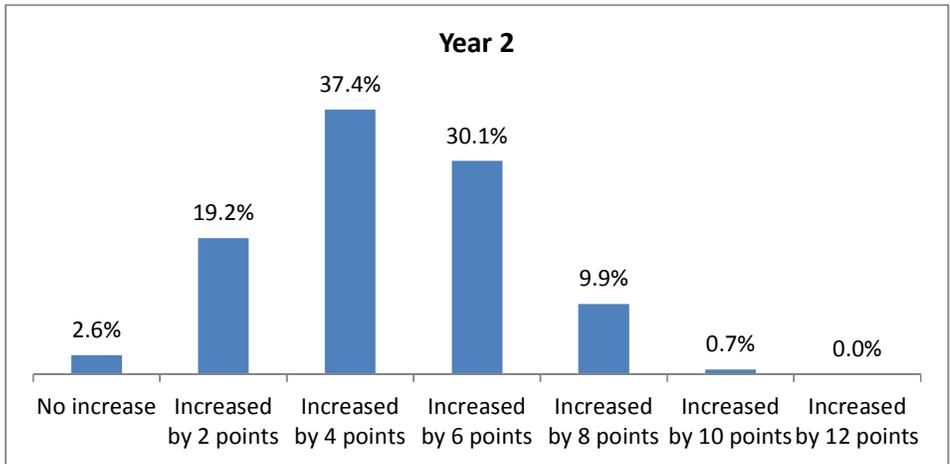
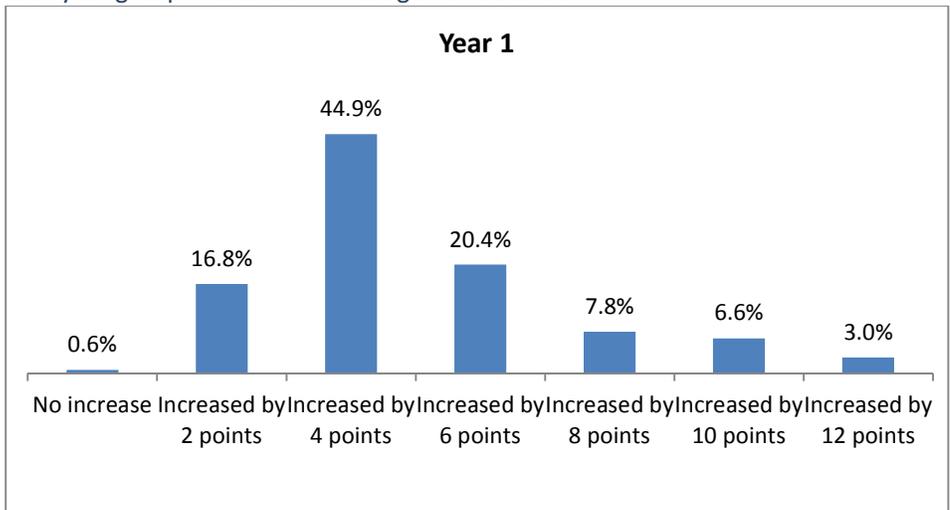
Figure 5: This chart shows the progress in attainment of children in writing measured in Average Point Scores

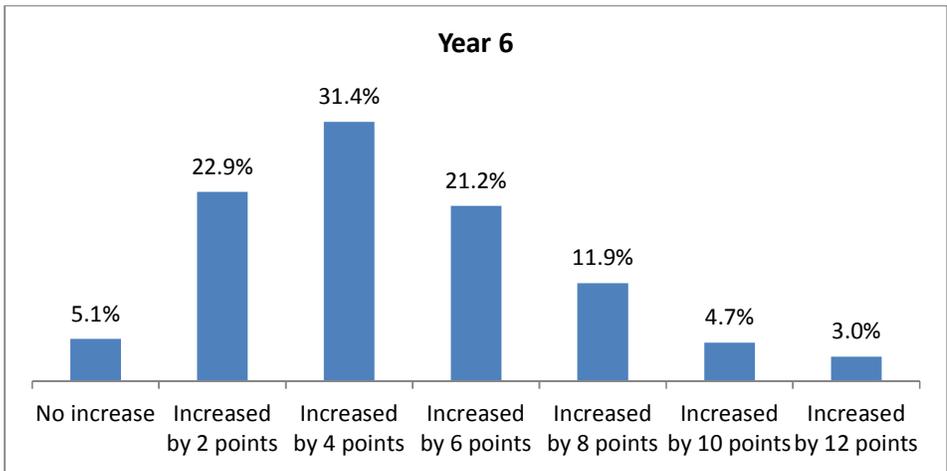
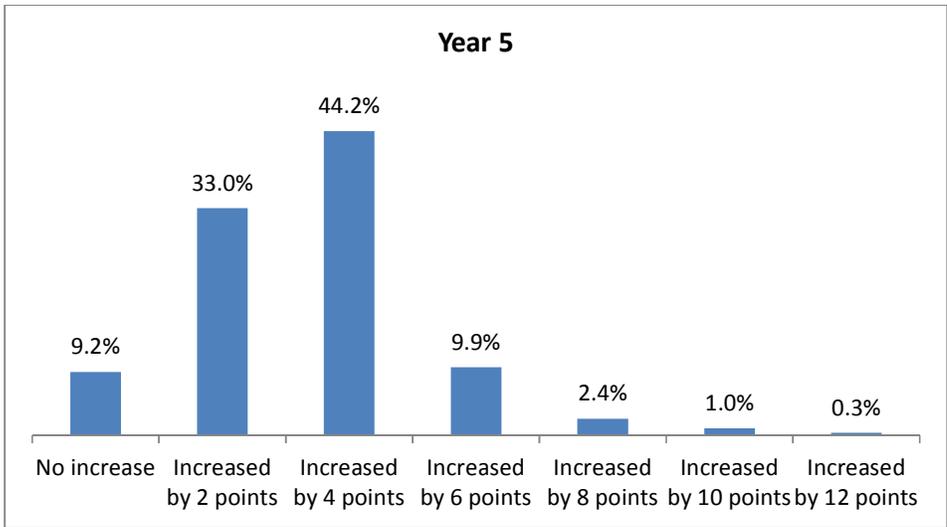
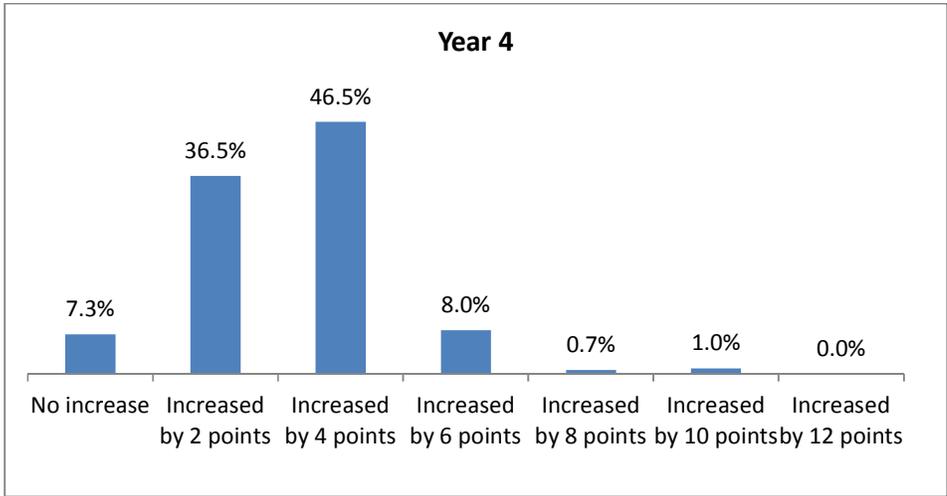


3. The proportion of children attaining 4 APS progress in individual year groups ranged from 57% to 82%

The pupil evidence collected shows that at least 57% of sample children in each year group made an average improvement in attainment of 4 APS or more. In Years 1, 2 and 6, between 72% and 83% of children made an average improvement in writing of 4 APS or more. It is worth noting that between 10% and 41% of children made an average improvement in writing of 6 APS or more.

Figure 6: These charts show the average progress in attainment in writing of all children in each year group measured in Average Point Scores

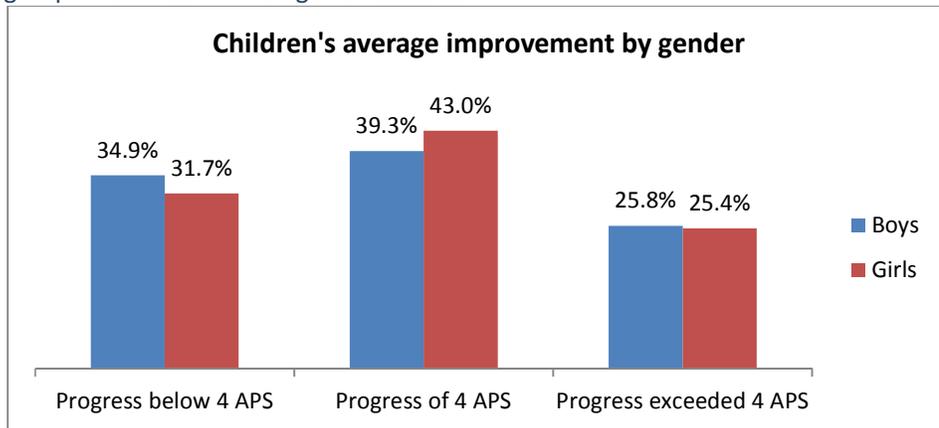




4. Boys and girls made similar progress in their writing attainment

The proportion of boys and girls in the data set was roughly equal, with 802 boys and 840 girls. The pupil evidence collected shows that similar percentages of boys and girls in the data set, 65.1% of boys and 68.4% of girls across all year groups, made an average of 4 APS or more progress in writing attainment during the year. Slightly more girls than boys made progress of 4 APS during the year (by 3.3%) but this is not a significant difference. Equal numbers of boys and girls exceeded progress of 4 APS (or made one whole level progress in one year). Both boys and girls appear to have benefited roughly equally from the approaches teachers deployed during the project.

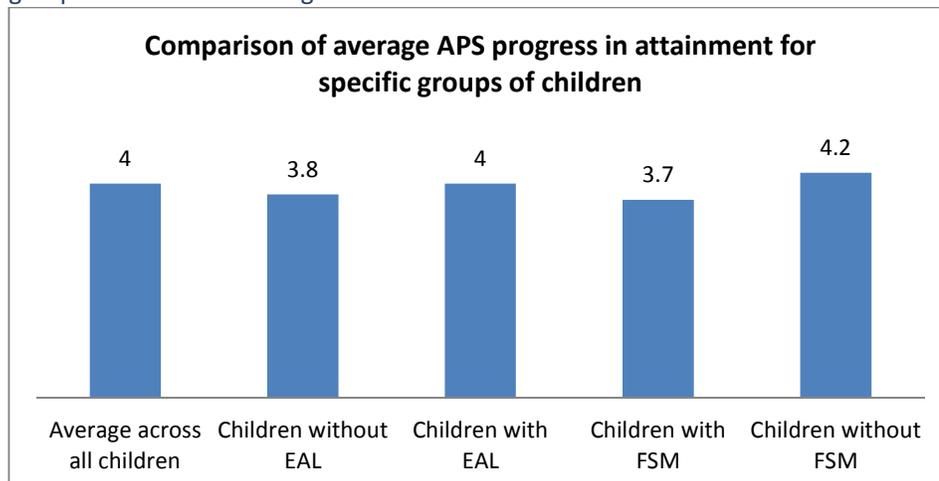
Figure 7: This chart compares the attainment in writing by boys and girls across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores



5. Children who have EAL and FSM, on average, made at least expected progress, in line with the whole sample

All groups of sample children, on average, made at least expected progress in one academic year. All groups of children made roughly the same progress in writing attainment. It is noteworthy that all groups of children, on average, exceeded expected progress in one academic year by more than half an APS (at least 0.7 APS). Children who have EAL made 1 full APS point more progress than is expected.

Figure 8: This chart compares the attainment in writing of children with English as an additional language, children who receive Free School Meals and all children across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores



a. Children for whom English is an additional language

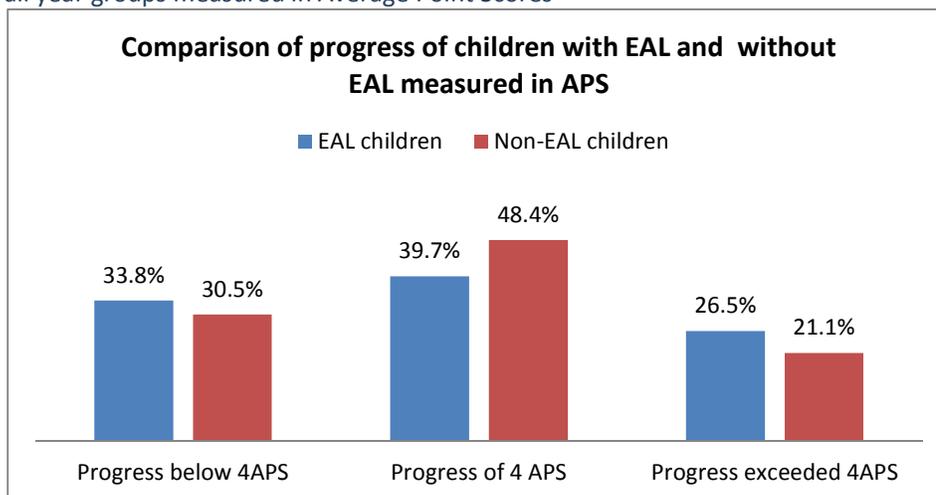
The proportion of children in the data set teachers reported had EAL was 83%.

Figure 9: This chart shows the proportion of children with English as an additional language

EAL	Number of children	% of total children
Girls with EAL	687	42%
Boys with EAL	676	41%
Non-EAL children	279	17%
Total	1642	100%

Sample children without EAL, on average, made similar progress of around 4 APS exceeding expectations. The proportion of EAL children who made progress of 4 APS points or more was 66.2% while amongst those without EAL it was 69.5%. This is, however not a statistically significant difference. Two thirds of children with EAL, on average, exceeded expectations making 4 APS or more progress. 6% more children with EAL, on average, made progress of 6 APS than children without EAL.

Figure 10: This chart compares the attainment in writing of children with English as an additional language and children who do not have English as an additional language across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores

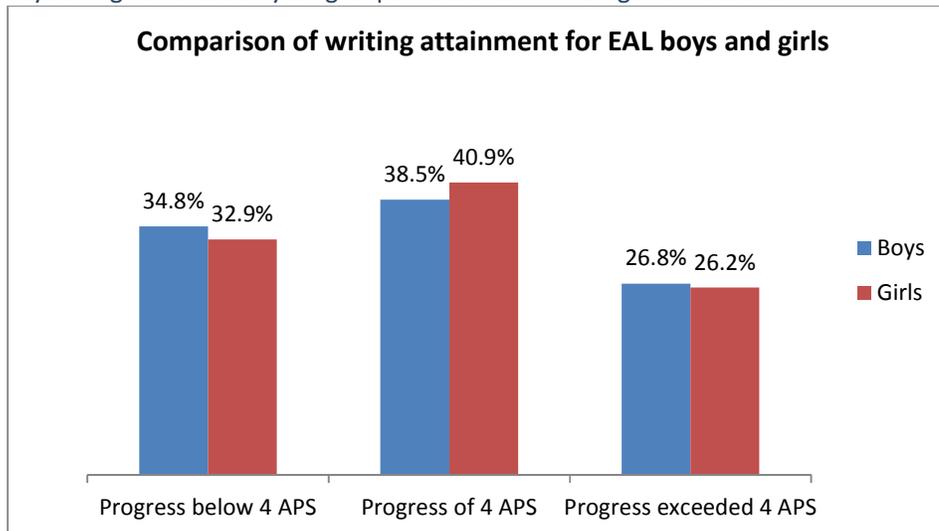


b. Girls and boys for whom English is an additional language

The proportion of boys and girls with EAL in the data set was roughly equal, with 676 boys and 687 girls.

The pupil evidence collected shows that similar percentages of boys and girls for whom EAL in the data set, 65.3% of boys and 67.1% of girls across all year groups, made an average of 4 APS or more progress in writing attainment during the year. Equal numbers of boys and girls with EAL, 26%, exceeded progress of 4 APS (or made one whole level progress in one year). Both boys and girls with EAL in the sample appear to have benefited equally from the approaches teachers deployed during the year. These results reflect the outcome for all boys and girls.

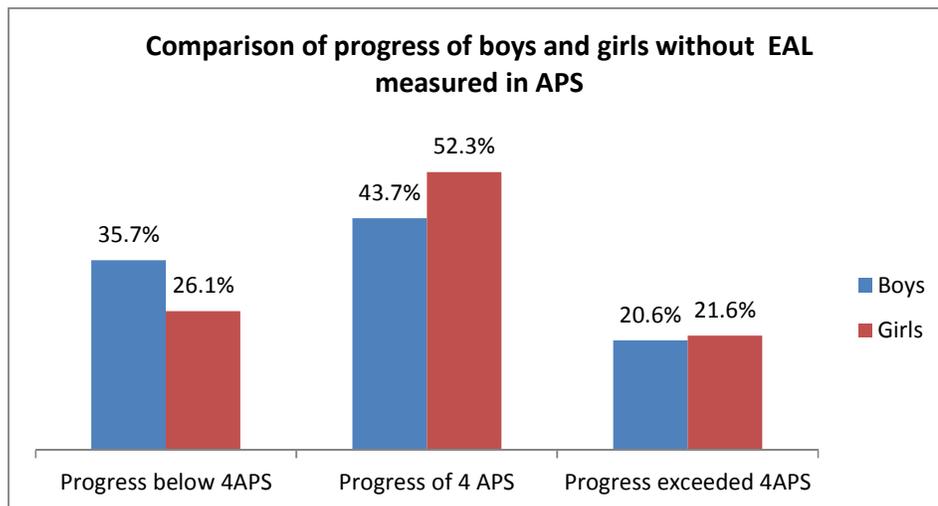
Figure 11: This chart compares the attainment in writing by English as an additional language boys and girls across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores



c. Girls and Boys who do not have English as an additional language

The pupil evidence collected shows that amongst those children in the sample without EAL nearly 10% more girls than boys made an average of 4 APS or more. 64.3% of boys and 73.9% of girls made an average of 4 APS or more. Similar numbers of boys and girls, around 21%, exceeded progress of 4 APS (or made one whole level progress in one year).

Figure 12: This chart compares the attainment in writing by non-English as an additional language boys and girls across all year groups measured in Average Point Scores



d. Children receiving Free School Meals

The proportion of children in the data set receiving FSM was 52%. This is almost double the national average for the proportion of pupils in primary and nursery schools who are eligible for FSM which is 28%.¹⁶

The proportion of boys and girls in the sample who receive FSM are roughly equal.

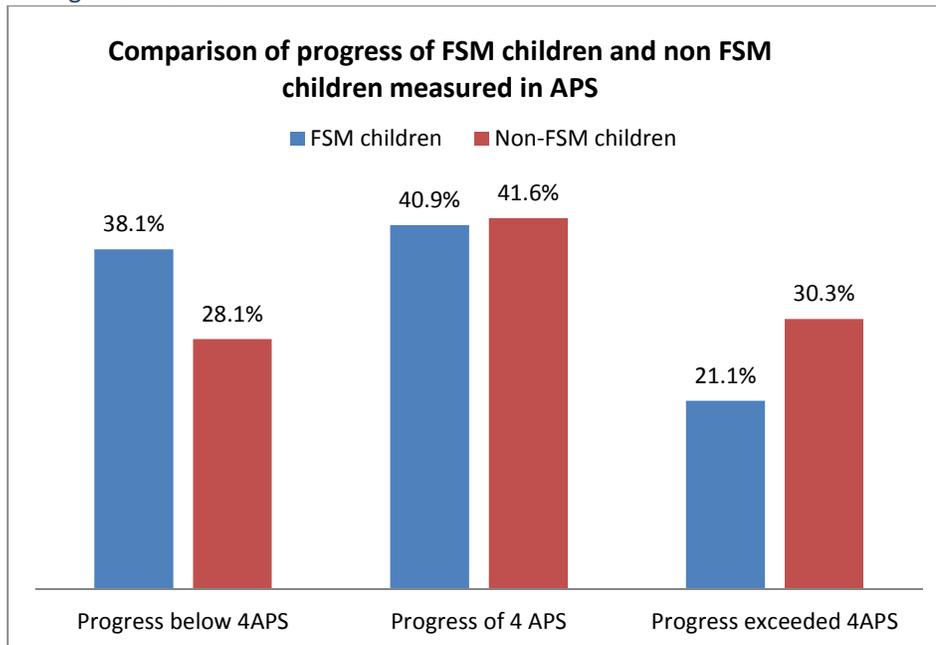
Figure 13: This chart shows the proportion of children who receive Free School Meals

FSM	Number of children	% of total children
Girls with FSM	414	25%
Boys with FSM	433	26%
Non-FSM children	795	48%
Total	1642	100%

Almost two thirds of sample children who receive FSM exceeded expectations and made progress of at least 4 APS in one academic year.

The pupil evidence collected shows that 62% of children who receive FSM exceeded expectations in writing attainment and made progress of at least 4 APS in one academic year. This compares with 71.9% of children who did not receive FSM. 10% more children who receive FSM made below expected progress of 2 APS in writing in one academic year than children who do not receive FSM.

Figure 14: This chart compares writing attainment of children who receive Free School Meals and children who do not receive Free School Meals across all year groups, measured in Average Point Scores



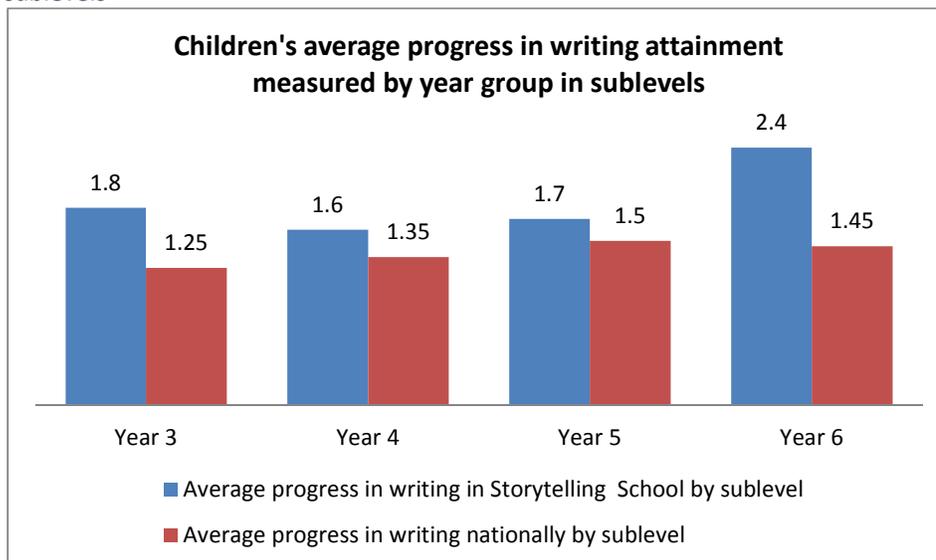
¹⁶ (DFE statistics England August 2011) www.poverty.org.uk/19/index.shtml

Comparison of progress of Storytelling Schools sample and national attainment in writing at Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 children participating in the Storytelling Schools project made better progress in their writing attainment compared with the national average. Actual average progress in writing in each year of Key Stage 2 was researched by the Department for Education¹⁷ in 2011. This research was measured in sublevels. Each sublevel can be readily converted into 2 APS for purposes of comparison with Storytelling Schools. Based on a sample of 70,000 pupils in 10 local authorities, average progress in writing in sublevels in each Key Stage 2 year group was measured over three years (2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10). Nationally, the research shows that average progress in writing was about 1.4 sublevels (or about 2.8 APS) per year in each KS2 year group. However, the table below shows that average progress in each sample year group participating in Storytelling Schools was above the national average. In year 6, progress was almost a whole sublevel above the national average (2 APS).

Our calculations show that sample children are making an average increase of around half a sublevel progress (or 1 APS) in writing more than the national average which may be significant for schools. Year 6 children in Storytelling Schools made nearly one whole sublevel of progress (or 2 APS) more than the national average which is a significant difference. In the Storytelling Schools sample the percentage of EAL children in Year 6 achieving L4+ in teacher assessment in writing in 2014 was 87% compared with the national figure of 82%. As the Storytelling Schools method becomes more established within all the participating schools it would not be unreasonable to expect even greater progress in Phase 2 of the roll-out.

Figure 15: This chart compares by year group the average progress in writing of children nationally with children participating in the Storytelling Schools project measured in sublevels



¹⁷ Department for Education (2011) How do pupils progress during Key Stages 2 and 3, Research Report RR096. <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR096.pdf>

Storytelling Schools' pupils' progress is represented in sublevels in this chart because the national data used is quoted in sublevels, not APS. Those wishing to convert sublevels to APS may double the sublevel number.

Comparison of Storytelling Schools and national attainment in writing 2014 using RAISEonline

Year 2

Actual average attainment in writing at the end of Year 2 is provided by RAISEOnline¹⁸ and released to schools in October 2014. RAISEonline provides statistics identifying attainment of Year 2 pupils. It records Year 2 writing results which are submitted through teacher assessment. It is a summative assessment.

Figure 16: This chart compares overall writing attainment in Average Point Scores in 2014 for Storytelling Schools sample and national Year 2 pupils at the end of 2014

National overall writing attainment in APS Year 2 in 2014	Storytelling Schools writing attainment in APS Year 2 in 2014
15.1	14.9

Figure 17: This chart compares the average attainment in writing of Storytelling Schools and national Year 2 pupils at the end of 2014

2014	National average attainment in APS at the end of Year 2	Storytelling Schools average attainment in APS at the end of Year 2
All Children	15.1	14.9
FSM	13.7	14.9
Non FSM	15.6	14.6
EAL	14.7	15.1
Non EAL	15.3	13.8
Boys	14.4	14.3
Girls	15.9	15.5

All Children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for all Storytelling Schools children in the sample was slightly lower than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 children scored an average attainment in writing of 14.9 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 was 15.1 APS. This indicates very little difference but it is interesting to note that Storytelling Schools are in an area of deprivation.

FSM children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for FSM Storytelling Schools children in the sample was more than 1 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 FSM children scored an average attainment in writing of 14.9 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 for FSM children was 13.7 APS.

¹⁸ <https://www.raiseonline.org/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2findex.aspx>

Non-FSM Children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for non-FSM Storytelling Schools children in the sample was 1 APS lower than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 non-FSM children scored an average attainment in writing of 14.6 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 for non-FSM children was 15.6 APS.

EAL children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for EAL Storytelling Schools children in the sample was 0.4 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 EAL children scored an average attainment in writing of 15.1 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 for EAL children was 14.7 APS.

Non-EAL children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for non-EAL Storytelling Schools children in the sample was 1.5 APS lower than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 non-EAL children scored an average attainment in writing of 13.8 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 for EAL children was 15.3 APS.

Boys

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for Storytelling Schools boys in the sample was 0.1 APS lower than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 boys scored an average attainment in writing of 14.3 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 for boys was 14.4 APS. This indicates very little difference.

Girls

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 2 in 2014 for Storytelling Schools girls in the sample was 0.4 APS lower than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 2 girls scored an average attainment in writing of 15.5 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 2 for girls was 15.5 APS.

Year 6

Actual average attainment in writing at the end of Year 6 is provided by RAISEonline and released to schools in October 2014. RAISEonline provides statistics identifying attainment of Year 6 pupils. It records Year 6 writing results which are submitted through teacher assessment. It is a summative assessment. Schools submit their teacher assessed levels by offering a 'best fit'.

Figure 18: This chart shows best fit submission of teacher assessment writing scores

APS	Sublevels
33	5a, b, c
27	4a, b, c
21	3a, b, c
15	2a,b, c

Figure 19: This chart compares overall writing attainment in Average Point Scores in 2014 for Storytelling Schools and national Year 6 pupils at the end of 2014

National overall writing attainment in APS Year 6 in 2014	Storytelling Schools Sample overall writing attainment in APS Year 6 in 2014
27.9	28.1

Figure 20: This chart compares the average attainment in writing of Storytelling Schools and national Year 6 pupils at the end of 2014

2014	National Average attainment in APS at the end of Year 6	Storytelling Schools Sample Average attainment in APS at the end of Year 6
All Children	27.9	28.1
Free School Meals	26.3	27.9
Non Free School Meals	28.6	28.3
English as an additional language	27.2	28.1
Non English as an additional language	28	28.1
Boys	27	27.1
Girls	28.7	29.2

All Children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for all Storytelling Schools children in the sample was slightly higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 children scored an average attainment in writing of 28.1 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 was 27.9 APS. This indicates very little difference but it is interesting to note that Storytelling Schools are in an area of deprivation.

FSM children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for FSM Storytelling Schools children in the sample was more than 1.5 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 FSM children scored an average attainment in writing of 27.9 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 for FSM children was 26.3 APS.

Non-FSM Children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for non-FSM Storytelling Schools children in the sample was 0.3 APS lower than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 non-FSM children scored an average attainment in writing of 28.3 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 for non-FSM children was 28.6 APS.

EAL children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for EAL Storytelling Schools children in the sample was 0.9 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 EAL children scored an average attainment in writing

of 28.1 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 for EAL children was 27.2 APS.

Non-EAL children

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for non-EAL Storytelling Schools children in the sample was 0.1 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 non-EAL children scored an average attainment in writing of 28.1 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 for EAL children was 28 APS.

Boys

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for Storytelling Schools boys in the sample was 0.1 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 boys scored an average attainment in writing of 27.1 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 for boys was 27 APS.

Girls

The average attainment in writing measured in APS at the end of Year 6 in 2014 for Storytelling Schools girls in the sample as 0.5 APS higher than the national average attainment. Storytelling Schools Year 6 girls scored an average attainment in writing of 29.2 APS while the national average attainment at the end of Year 6 for girls was 28.7 APS.

Comparison of Storytelling Schools and local attainment in writing 2014

Figure 21: This chart shows Tower Hamlets Performance Tables KS2 2014 attainment in writing

	% achieving Level 3 or below	% achieving Level 4+	% achieving Level 5+	Pupils making expected progress in writing. All Pupils (made at least 2 levels progress between KS1 and 2)	Number of years using Storytelling Schools
School 1	0	100	63	100	18 months
School 2	12	88	22	100	1 year
School 3	19	81	34	89	18 months
School 4	7	93	52	98	3 years
School 5	4	96	35	100	18 months
School 6	7	93	35	98	18 months
School 7	11	89	29	100	1 year
All Schools	8.5	91.4	38.5	98	
Local Authority average	13	87	32	94	
England	15	85	33	93	
Average State Funded Schools					

Adapted from Primary School (Key Stage 2) Performance tables 2014 Tower hamlets 211 Department for Education http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/download/pdf/211_ks2.pdf

The Primary School (KS2) Performance tables 2014 Tower Hamlets survey of children's attainment showed that overall the average percentage of children in Storytelling Schools achieving Level 4 or above in KS2 writing teacher assessment was 91.4% which was more than the local average of 87% and national average of 85%.¹⁹ Similarly, overall, the average percentage of children in Storytelling Schools achieving Level 5 or above in KS2 writing teacher assessment was 38.5% which was more than the local average of 32% and national average of 33%. This suggests that Storytelling Schools' methods are contributing to the children's success in writing attainment.

¹⁹ Primary School (key stage 2) Performance tables 2014 Tower Hamlets 211 Department for Education www.gov.uk/schools/performance

Impact of Storytelling Schools on children’s confidence and engagement in storytelling and writing

In order to find out how Storytelling Schools’ methods impacted on children’s confidence and engagement, children completed a writing perception survey in summer term 2014. A total of 647 children from Key Stage 1 and 2 provided suitable data. Reception children were not included in the survey. The survey provides some interesting indicators of how children responded to Storytelling Schools’ processes. A survey was conducted in autumn 2013. It showed some differences of a few percentage points in each question. However, the gap of time between the autumn 2013 and the summer 2014 surveys was so narrow due to the survey being conducted by some schools quite a long way into the autumn term that only summer 2014 results are used as a reliable indicator. Survey results from autumn 2013 are available on request and show some very small decreases in confidence and engagement which are difficult to interpret. We have decided to show the broader picture at the end of summer 2014 as a more reliable indicator.

Figure 22: This chart shows composition of participants in children’s writing perception survey

	Number of children	% of total
Boys	296	46%
Girls	351	54%
EAL	589	91%
FSM	351	54%

Key Findings

The findings below represent summer term 2014 after at least 1 full year and a maximum of 3 years of Storytelling Schools. Children’s summer 2014 surveys indicated:

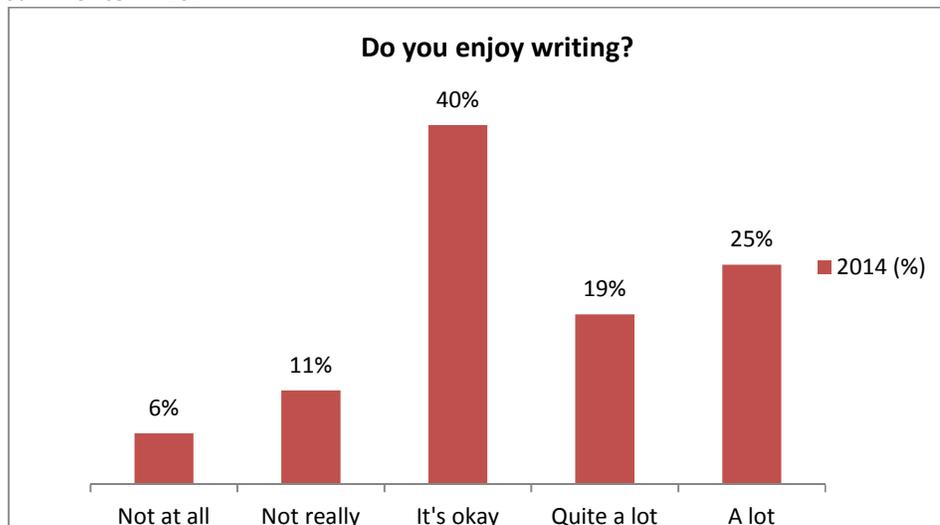
1. 84% of all children enjoyed writing and 40% said that they enjoyed writing quite a lot or a lot
2. 83% of EAL and 85% of FSM children enjoyed writing and more than a third enjoyed writing quite a lot or a lot
3. 77% of boys and 90% of girls enjoyed writing.
4. 18% more girls than boys said they enjoyed writing. Half the girls enjoyed writing quite a lot or a lot
5. 24% of boys approximately said they did not enjoy writing
6. 81% of children were positive about themselves as writers
7. More than one third of all children, EAL and FSM children identified themselves as quite good or very good writers
8. Nearly one fifth of all children, EAL and FSM children did not positively identify themselves as writers
9. 8% more girls than boys identified themselves as quite good or very good writers

10. Nearly a quarter of boys did not positively identify themselves as writers
11. Nearly three quarters of all children, EAL and FSM children liked storytelling
12. A quarter of the children did not like storytelling
13. 67% of boys and 79% girls liked storytelling though more girls than boys said they liked it
14. Nearly a third of boys and a fifth of girls did not like storytelling
15. Most children, EAL and FSM children were positive about themselves as storytellers
16. Nearly one third of children did not think they were good at storytelling
17. 78% of girls and 63% of boys were positive about themselves as storytellers
18. Nearly one quarter of girls and more than one third of boys were not positive about themselves as storytellers
19. 84% of children thought that storytelling had helped them to write
20. More than four fifths of EAL and FSM children thought that storytelling had helped them to write
21. 12% more boys than girls thought it had not helped them to write
22. Over half of the children told stories at home at least once a week
23. Nearly one quarter of children never told stories at home

1. Most children enjoyed writing

All Children

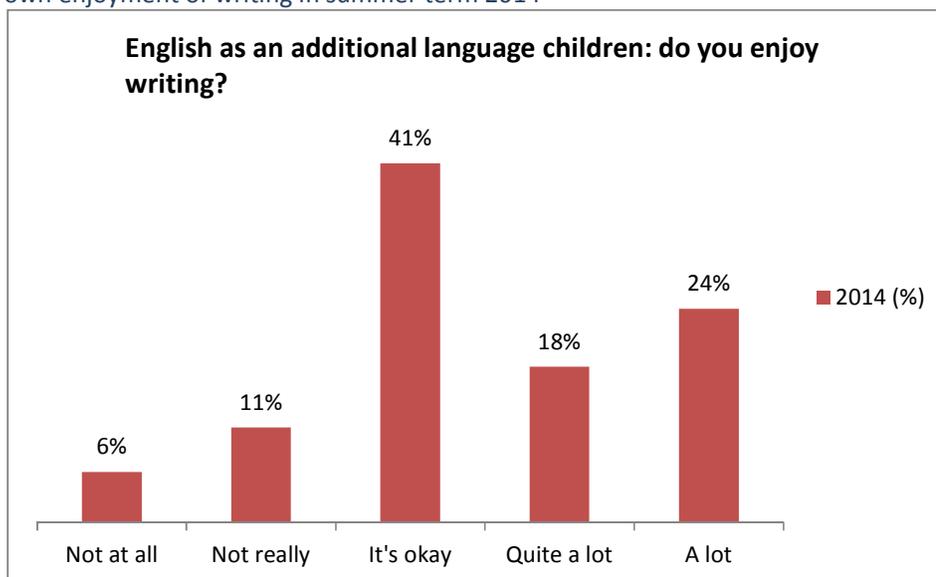
Figure 23: This chart shows all children's perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014



More than a third (44%) of children said that they enjoyed writing 'A lot' or 'Quite A lot' in summer term 2014. A further 40% of children said that writing was 'Okay.' Only 17% of

children said that they did not at all or not really enjoy writing.

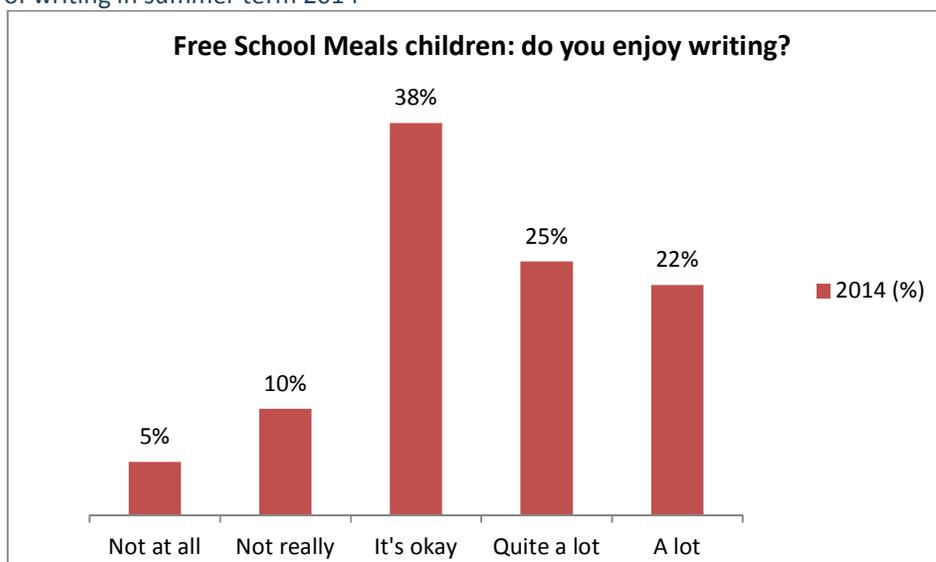
Figure 24: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014



More than a third (42%) of EAL children said that they enjoyed writing 'A lot' or 'Quite A lot' in summer term 2014. A further 41% of children said that writing was 'Okay.' Only 17% of children said that they did not at all or not really enjoy writing.

FSM

Figure 25: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014

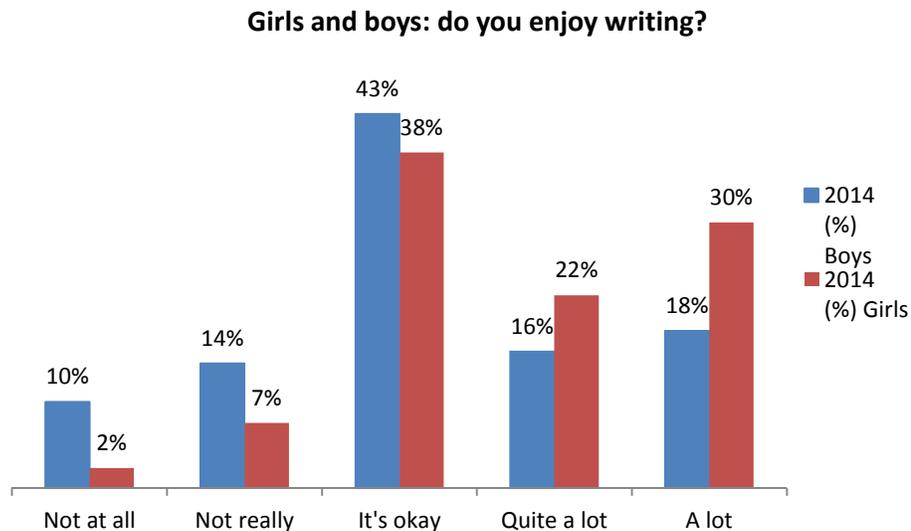


The proportion of FSM children who said they enjoyed writing 'Quite A lot' or 'A lot' in summer term was 47%. 85% of FSM children said writing was 'Okay' or they enjoyed writing 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot' The proportion of FSM children who said they did 'Not at all' or 'Not

really' enjoy writing was 15%. Only 15% of FSM children said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' enjoy writing.

Boys and Girls

Figure 26: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of their own enjoyment of writing in summer term 2014



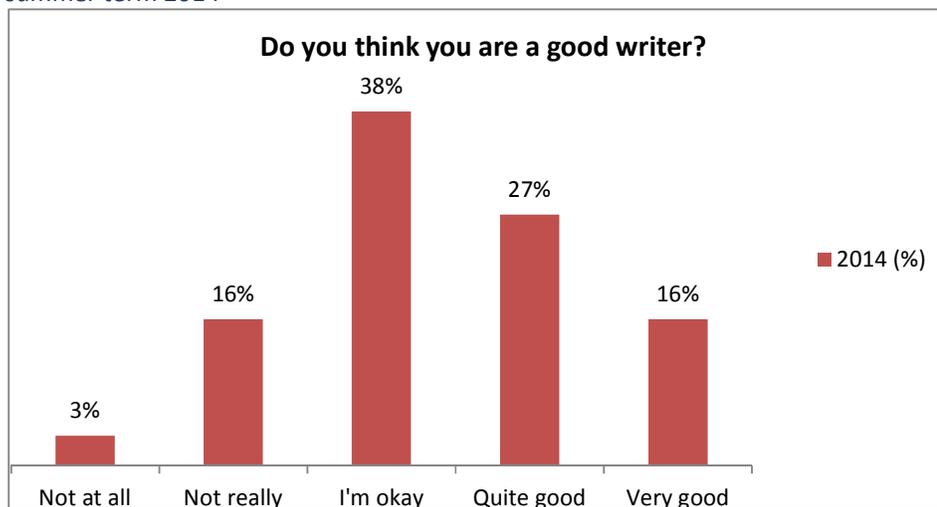
18% more girls said that they enjoyed writing 'Quite A lot' or 'A lot' in summer term than boys. 52% of girls and 34% of boys said that they enjoyed writing 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'. Only 9% of girls and 24% of boys said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' enjoy writing. 91% of girls and 76% of boys said that writing was 'Okay', they enjoyed it 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'.

2. Children were positive about themselves as writers

The evidence from children's perception surveys shows that most children perceive themselves as 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' at writing.

All Children

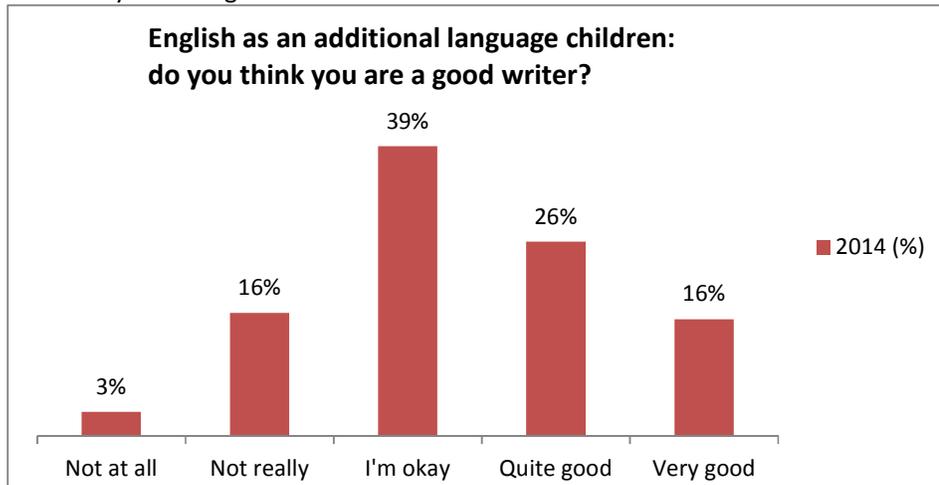
Figure 27: This chart shows all children's perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014



Overall, children were positive about themselves as writers and 81% of children said that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' writers in summer term 2014. 19% of children said that they were 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good writers. This represents nearly a fifth of the children sampled.

EAL

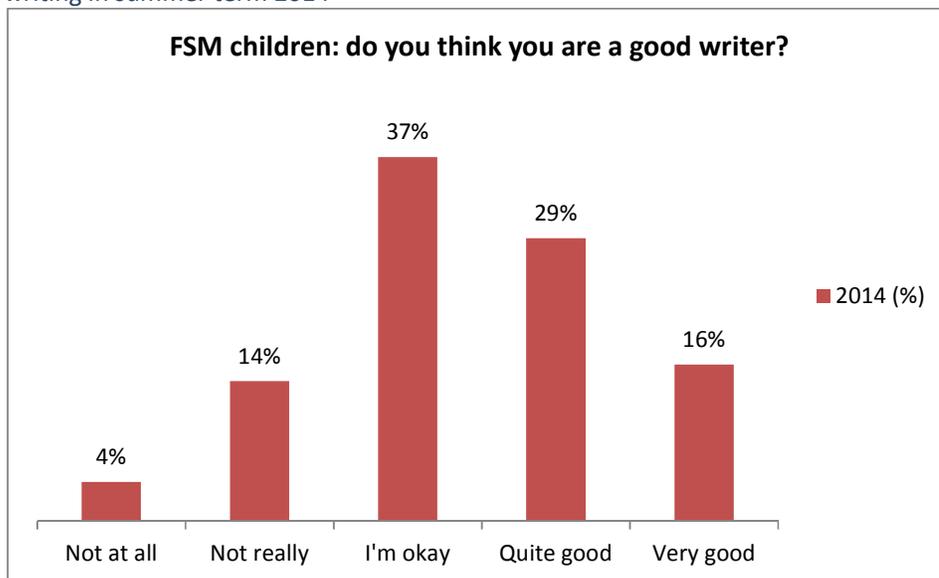
Figure 28: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014



Overall, EAL children were positive about themselves as writers and 81% of children said that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' writers in summer term. 19% of children said that they were 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good writers. This represents nearly a fifth of the children sampled.

Free School Meals

Figure 29: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014

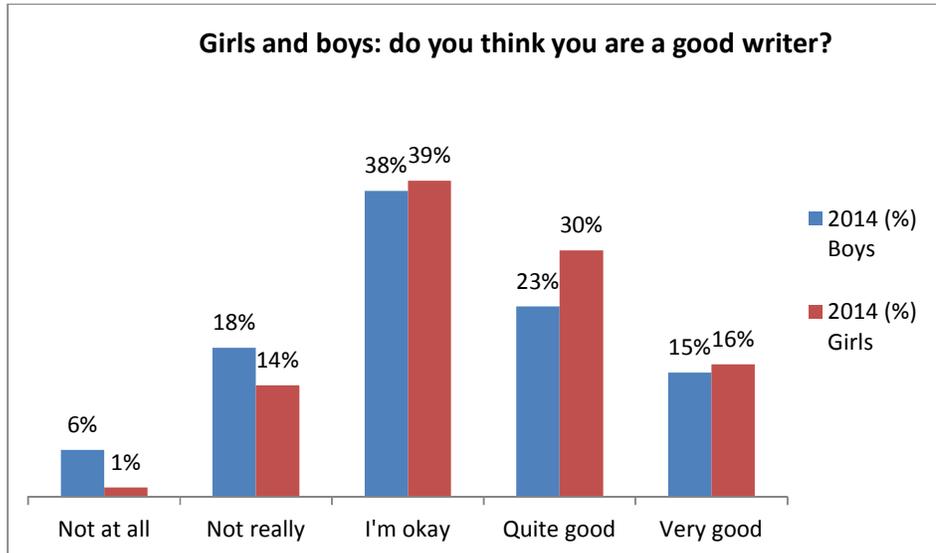


Overall, FSM children were positive about themselves as writers and 82% of children said

that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' writers in summer term. 18% of children said that they were 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good writers. This represents nearly a fifth of the children sampled.

Boys and Girls

Figure 30: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of their own ability in writing in summer term 2014



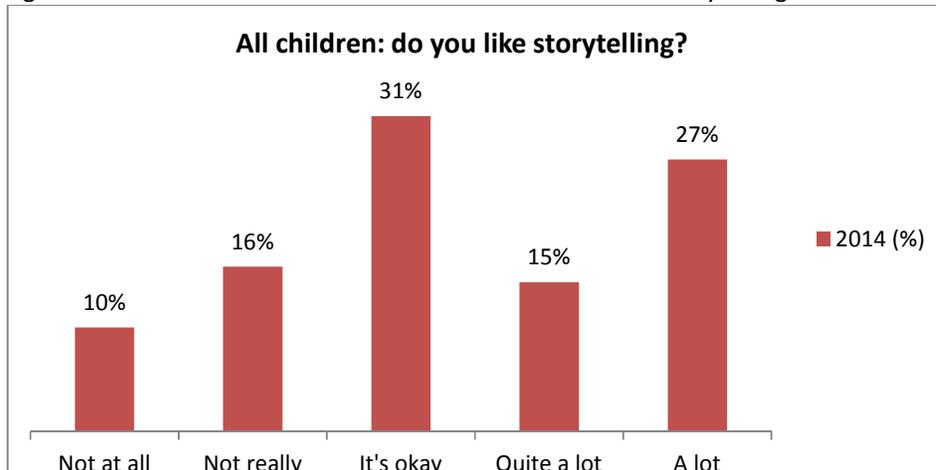
More than four fifths (85%) of girls and three quarters of boys (76%) identified themselves as 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' writers in summer term. 46% of girls and 38% of boys identified themselves as 'Quite good' or 'Very good' writers. Nearly a quarter of boys (24%) and 15% of girls said that they were either 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good writers. This suggests that there remains a proportion of boys who are not confident in their abilities as writers as well as a significant proportion of girls.

3. Most children expressed positive attitudes towards storytelling

The evidence from the children's perception survey shows that most children had a positive attitude towards storytelling.

All children

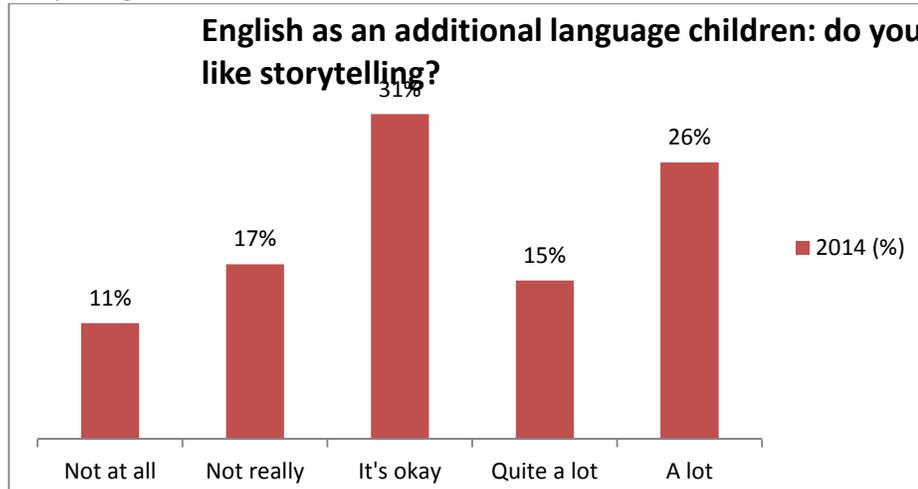
Figure 31: This chart shows all children's attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014



Children were positive about storytelling and 74% of children said that storytelling was 'Okay', or that they liked it 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot' in summer term. 42% of children said they liked storytelling 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'. A quarter of the children (26%) said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' like storytelling.

English as an additional language

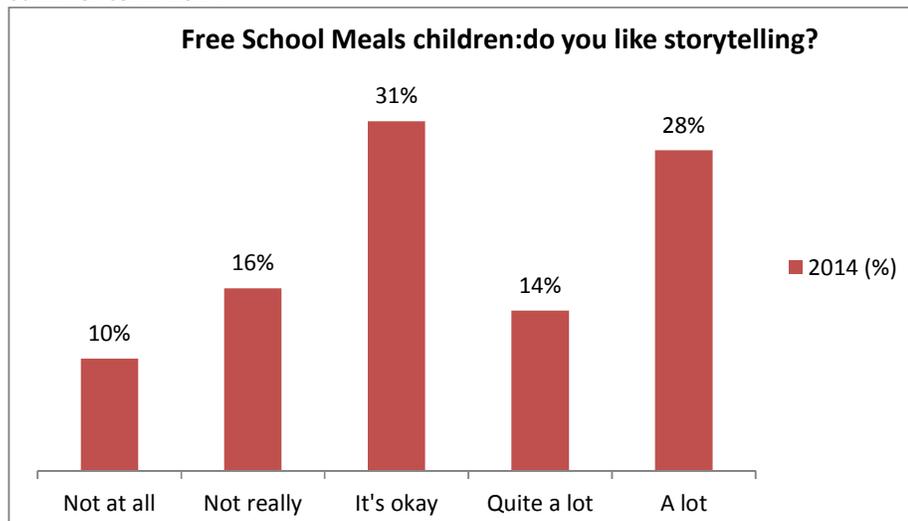
Figure 32: This chart shows English as an additional language children's attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014



EAL children were positive about storytelling and 72% EAL children said that storytelling was 'Okay', or that they liked it 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot' in summer term. 41% of EAL children said they liked storytelling 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'. A quarter of EAL children (28%) said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' like storytelling.

Free School Meals

Figure 33: This chart shows Free School Meals children's attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014

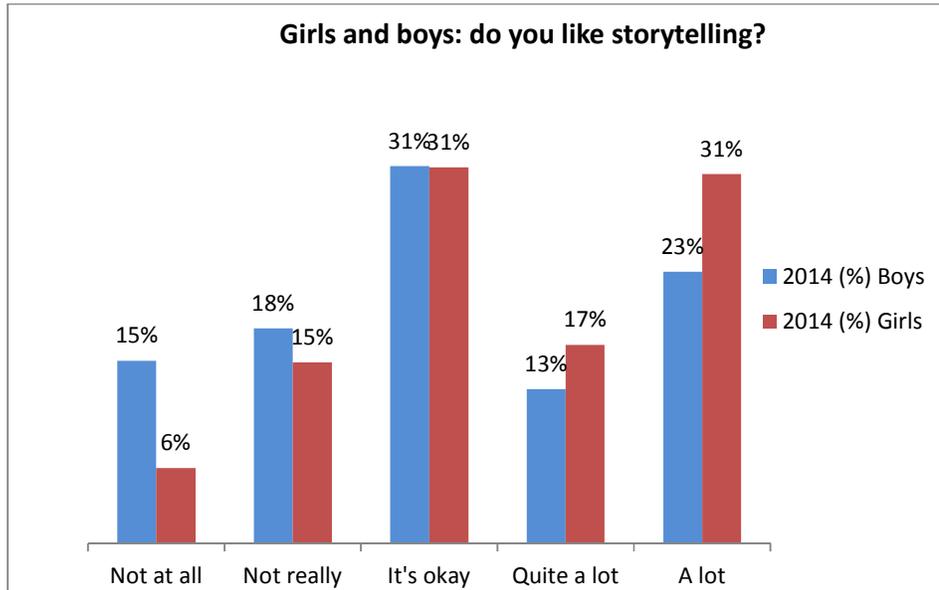


FSM children were positive about storytelling and 73% FSM children said that storytelling

was 'Okay', or that they liked it 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot' in summer term. 42% of FSM children said they liked storytelling 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'. A quarter of FSM children (26%) said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' like storytelling.

Boys and Girls

Figure 34: This chart shows all boys' and girls' attitudes towards storytelling in summer term 2014



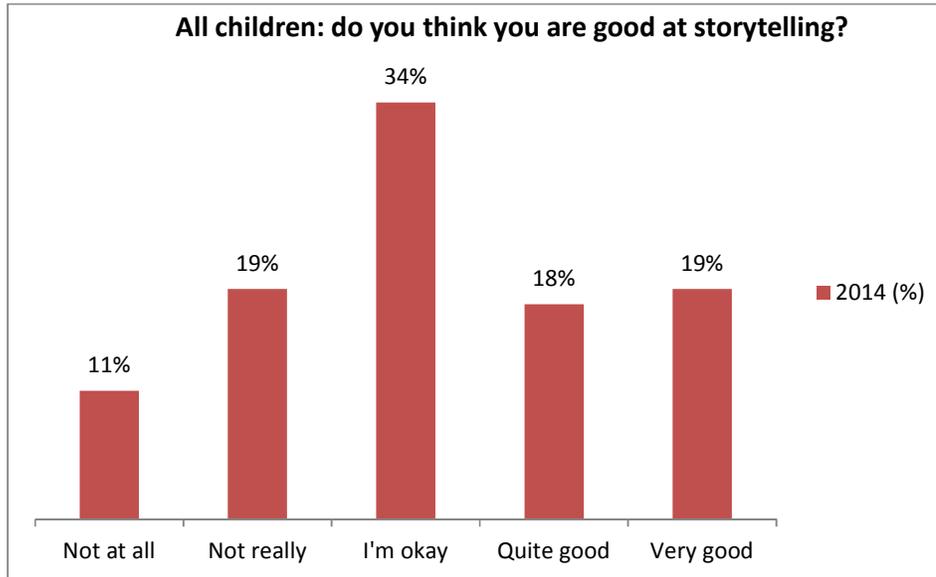
Most boys and girls said they liked storytelling, although 12% more girls than boys said they liked storytelling. In summer term, 67% of boys and 79% of girls said that storytelling was 'Okay', or that they liked it 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'. Around half of girls (48%) and a third of boys (36%) were positive about storytelling and said that they liked storytelling 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot'. More boys than girls said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' like storytelling. Nearly a third of boys (33%) and a fifth of girls (21%) said that they did 'Not at all' or 'Not really' like storytelling.

Most children were positive about their abilities in storytelling

The evidence from the children's perception survey shows that most children had a positive perception of their ability as storytellers.

All children

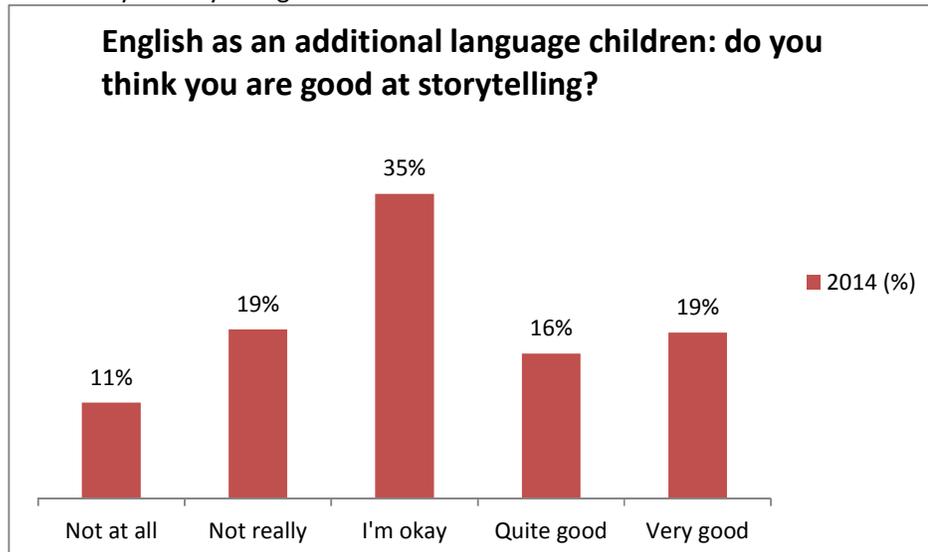
Figure 35: This chart shows all children's perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014



Overall, children were positive about themselves as storytellers. 71% of children said that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' at storytelling in summer term. 30% of children said that they were 'not at all' or 'not really' good at storytelling. This represents nearly one third of the children sampled.

English as an additional language

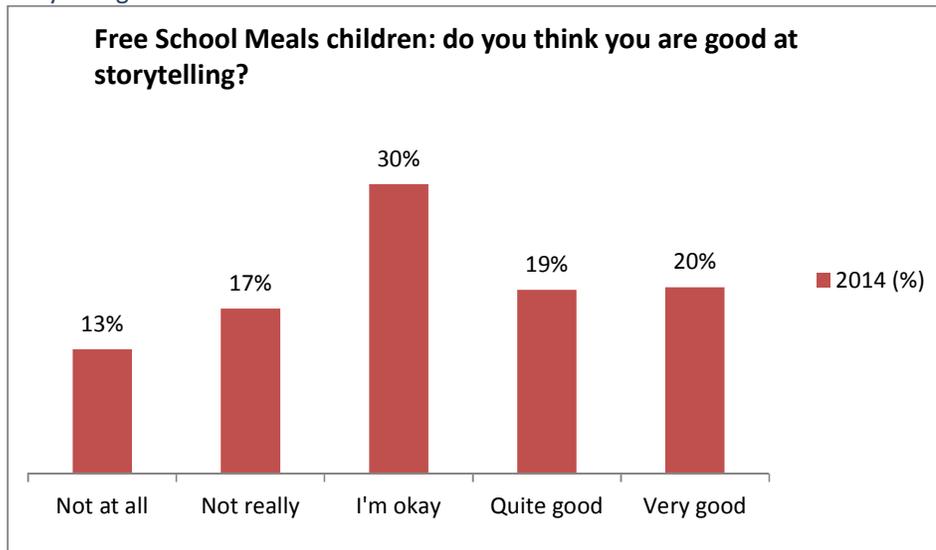
Figure 36: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014



Most EAL children were positive about themselves as storytellers and 70% EAL children said that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' at storytelling in summer term. Nearly one third of EAL children (30%) said that they were 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good at storytelling.

Free School Meals

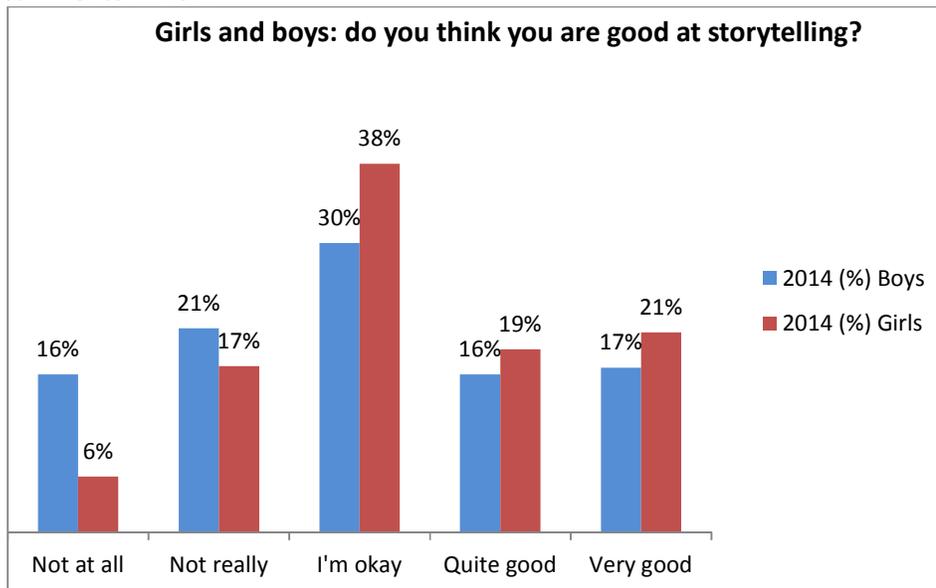
Figure 37: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014



Most FSM children were positive about themselves as storytellers and 69% FSM children said that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' at storytelling in summer term. Nearly one third of FSM children (30%) said that they were 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good at storytelling.

Boys and Girls

Figure 38: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of their own ability in storytelling in summer term 2014



More girls than boys were positive about themselves as storytellers. More than three quarters of girls (78%) and nearly two thirds of boys (63%) said that they were 'Okay', 'Quite good' or 'Very good' at storytelling in summer term. This represents a difference of 15%.

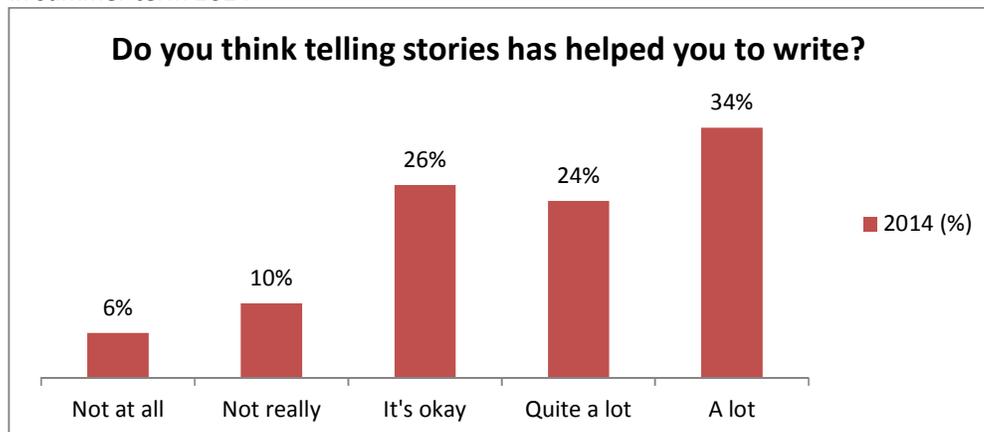
10% more girls than boys said that they were 'Quite good' or 'Very good' at storytelling. Nearly one quarter (23%) of girls and more than one third (37%) of boys said that they were 'Not at all' or 'Not really' good at storytelling.

Most children thought that telling stories had helped them to write

The majority of children thought that telling stories had helped them to write.

All children

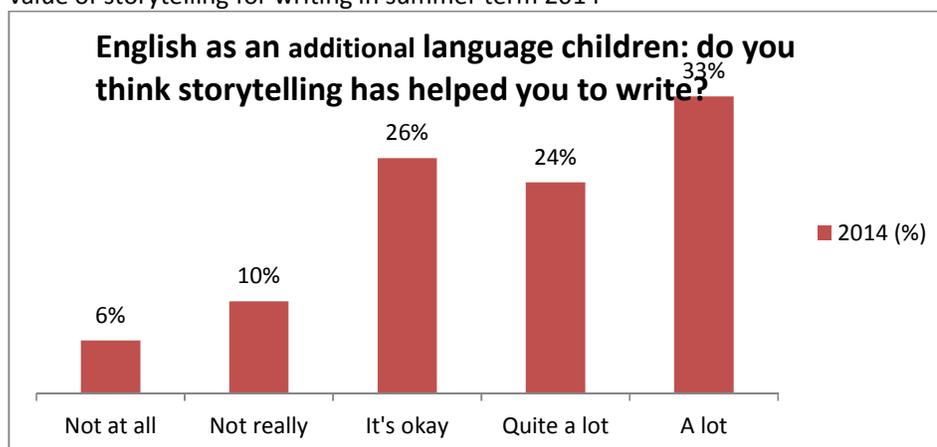
Figure 39: This chart shows all children's perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014



Overall, children were positive about the impact telling stories had on helping them to write. 84% of children said that telling stories had been 'Okay' or helped them to write 'Quite a lot' and 'A lot' in summer term. This represents more than four fifths of the children sampled. 16% of children thought that telling stories had 'Not at all' or 'Not really' helped them to write.

English as an additional language

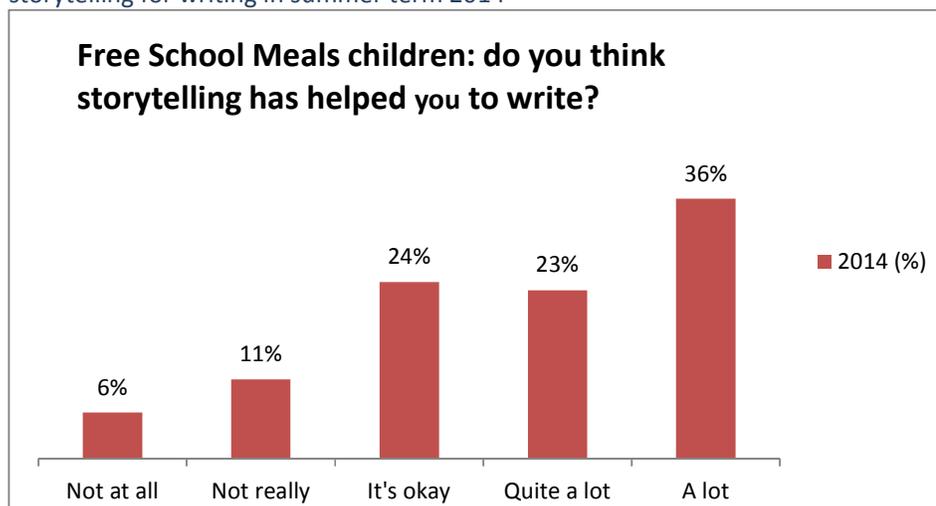
Figure 40: This chart shows English as an additional language children's perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014



The proportion of EAL children who said that telling stories had been 'Okay' or helped them to write 'Quite a lot' and 'A lot' in summer term was 83%. Only 16% of EAL children thought that telling stories had 'Not at all' or 'Not really' helped them to write.

Free School Meals

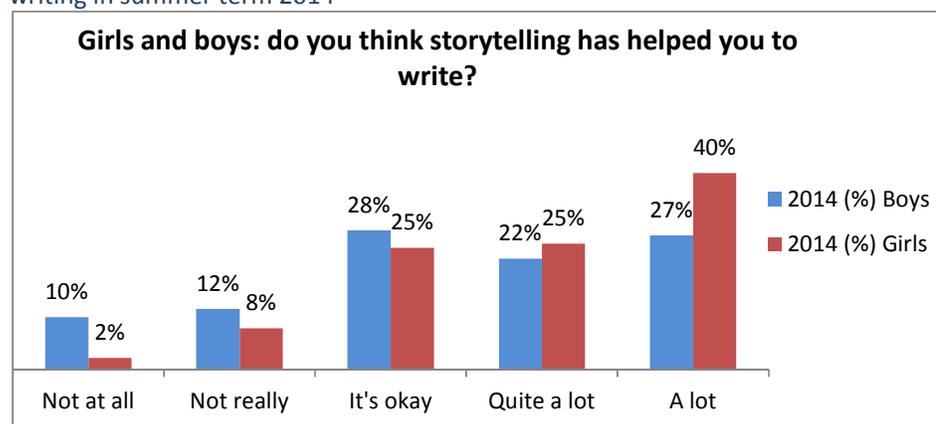
Figure 41: This chart shows Free School Meals children's perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014



The proportion of FSM children who said that telling stories had been 'Okay' or helped them to write 'Quite a lot' and 'A lot' in summer term was 83%. Only 17% of FSM children thought that telling stories had 'Not at all' or 'Not really' helped them to write.

Boys and Girls

Figure 42: This chart shows boys' and girls' perceptions of the value of storytelling for writing in summer term 2014



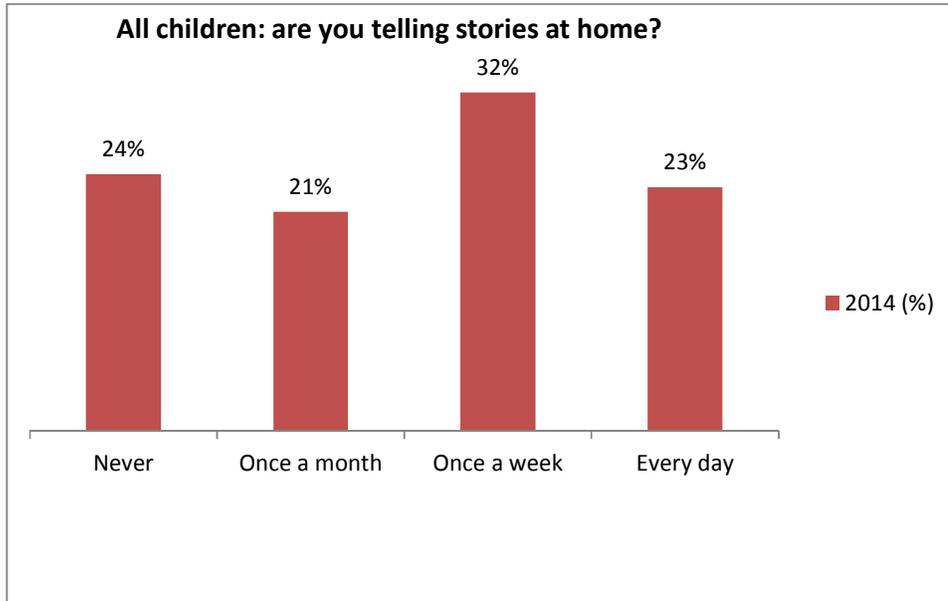
Most boys and girls said that storytelling helped them to write. Two thirds of girls (65%) and nearly half of boys (49%) said storytelling had helped them to write 'Quite a lot' or 'A lot' in summer term. 90% of girls and 77% of boys said that storytelling had been 'Okay' or helped them to write 'Quite a lot' and 'A lot'. 22% of boys and 10% of girls thought that storytelling had 'Not at all' or 'Not really' helped them to write.

Most children told stories at home

Most children told stories at home. Over half of the children (55%) told stories at home at least once a week and nearly one quarter of children (24%) never told stories at home in summer term 2014.

All children

Figure 43: This chart shows frequency of all children's telling stories at home in summer term 2014



How children respond to learning with Storytelling Schools

This chapter reports findings about children’s responses to learning using the Storytelling Schools’ processes.

Data Sample

In June and July 2014, after at least one year of learning with Storytelling Schools’ processes, 16 children were interviewed. The children were selected by the teachers and were drawn from Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Children from each participating school were interviewed.

Figure 44: This chart shows how many children from each year group were interviewed

Year group	Number of children
2	1
3	2
4	7
5	5
6	1
Total number of children interviewed	16

Key Findings

Children in interviews said:

1. They were positive about all aspects of Storytelling Schools discussed in the interview
2. Story mapping was one of the most useful Storytelling Schools’ methods
3. Their understanding of structure is supported by Storytelling Schools’ methods
4. Their memory is supported by Storytelling Schools’ methods
5. Collaborative learning underpins Storytelling Schools and children thought it supported their learning
6. Peer assessment in Storytelling Schools supported their learning
7. Shared writing was one of the most useful Storytelling Schools’ methods
8. Storytelling Schools supports development of their vocabulary
9. Storytelling Schools supports development of their sentence construction
10. Repetition of telling in Storytelling Schools helped them
11. They enjoyed Storytelling Schools’ processes
12. They had mixed responses about the effectiveness of differentiation
13. They did not make up their own stories as much as they would like
14. They benefitted from Storytelling Schools but some children said they could benefit differently if the process was adjusted
15. Whole school approaches to learning influence the way children engage with Storytelling Schools

Children said story mapping was one the most useful Storytelling Schools' methods

Children in every school identified story mapping as one of the two elements of Storytelling Schools that helped them the most. This was often the first element of Storytelling Schools offered when asked what helps them the most.

Children said that referring back to a visual image helped them with sequencing a story and supported their memory.

"We do storymaps and that helps you as well because when we have our storymaps, when we are practising to say it we can use our storymaps for the pictures to help us know what to say." Child, Year 3

"I think it's story mapping and stepping because story mapping we draw it in our books. I think it's helpful for me to remember and I could keep on looking back at it." Child, Year 4

What emerged from the interviews was that children valued the way story mapping and stepping the story helped them to understand structure of a story.

"With the mapping we understand the different parts of the story (the opening the middle and the end)" Child, Year 6

"It has (helped) because you understand how you tell a story by mapping it and explaining pictures and stuff" Child, Year 4

Children said their understanding of structure is supported by Storytelling Schools' methods

Children frequently referred to how Storytelling Schools' methods supported their understanding of story structure.

"I think it has helped me because when we do storytelling I get more confident at writing it...I think it's because when we do storytelling, the storytelling, it helps us get the confusion out of our minds. I think it's the parts which we're supposed to order like the beginning, middle and end." Child, Year 4

Children said their memory is supported by Storytelling Schools' methods

Children frequently commented on how Storytelling Schools' methods supported their memory. Writing requires children to orchestrate a complex range of skills and the children's comments suggest that Storytelling Schools helps them to manage the cognitive load.

"It (stepping) helps me remember the sequence of the story so I can use it in my own (writing)." Child, Year 4

"I think it's story mapping and stepping because story mapping we draw it in our books. I think it's helpful for me to remember and I could keep on looking back at it." Child, Year 4

Children said collaborative learning underpins Storytelling Schools and children thought it supported their learning

Children frequently referred to the way collaborating around each other's writing supported their own writing. They collaborated as a whole class and with partners. Collaboration with a partner was described as an important part of the Storytelling Schools process.

"Sometimes you can plan with your partner and map with your partner and you both understand what you are meant to do and how you are meant to do it and it helps you. It sets it out in your mind so you understand how you have to do it and what's happening and do different parts." Child, Year 6

"If you have no ideas in your head you can ask your partner friend if you have any ideas and he can tell you ideas. You can take some of their ideas and then you can put it into your story." Child, Year 4

"Some other children, they have different ideas from me and it helps me get more ideas." Child, Year 4

"If you write together, you learn what's ok to do and what's not." Child, Year 5

"If you collaborate a lot you'll know the answers and you won't have to go to your teacher" Child, Year 5

Children said whole class collaboration was valuable.

"The teacher does a whole class shared -write. It's not usually the teacher's ideas. It's actually the whole class contributing in it so we magpie those children's ideas and put it in our shared-write. It will help us with our writing because if we're like stuck on anything then we can just magpie something from it. It is displayed around the classroom with the success criteria." Child, Year 5

"Shared writing isn't for one individual person, it's for everyone so everyone can use those ideas not just one person so we can all use ideas, the whole class can take some ideas." Child, Year 4

Children said peer assessment in Storytelling Schools supported their learning

Peer assessment was frequently mentioned by children as supporting idea generation and revision. Talking about their writing with other children helped them develop as writers.

"Sometimes, every week, we change our partners so that we can use other children's ideas to help our writing become more powerful and amazing." Child, Y5

"I like peered marking because sometimes you might not realize something and your partner might realize it and they might spot some mistakes." Child, Y4

"Because you get to know what they like about it. If you're writing a story they can tell you what they are writing so you know what they're doing."

"It helps you understand how other people think of it, so say if you don't really enjoy some parts, other people might enjoy the parts you don't like."

Children, Year 6 and Year 4

Children said Storytelling Schools supports development of their vocabulary

Children frequently described the way their use of vocabulary was enhanced by Storytelling Schools' methods.

"It helps me write because it gives me new words when I write." Child, Year 4

"If we are doing a report, the teacher writes down technical vocabulary so we come up with ideas of technical words we can use in our writing to make it better...you can use words you don't normally use to make your writing better." Child, Year 5

"It helps me with the words because, like, if I write another story that's kind of similar to it then I can look at the story and say like 'this is a good word, and take it out of that story and write it in your story. If you write together you learn what's ok to do and what's not." Child, Year 5

"Our teacher always gives us some vocabulary boxes, so we can learn more vocabulary and we can use it in our stories." Child, Year 5

Children said shared writing was one the most useful Storytelling Schools' methods

Children said that when teachers taught shared writing it supported their learning. The children stated that it particularly helped them to develop their range of vocabulary that they could use in their own writing.

"If they (teacher) write down a sentence, they might add good vocabulary adjectives, connectives and we can make up our own sentence but we can steal their ideas that they have and all the vocabulary." Child, Year 3

It also helped them to improve the quality of their sentences. Participating in shared writing gave children a model of how to review and revise their writing.

"They help us before we write our paragraphs. They show us, they write a paragraph and that can help us with our good vocabulary. It's helpful because before we write ours we might be able to steal some ideas from it, like good sentences and to remember to read your sentences before you write a new sentence to check for any mistakes." Child, Year 3

Shared writing supported idea generation and the children valued this.

"You get ideas from the shared writing to your own story and then mix it up." Child, Year 4

"The whole class collaborate. He writes a version of it, like, other children's ideas. He does Shared Writing and tells us to go off and do it in our own words, just do it by ourselves but not copy it." Child, Year 5

"You can use the ideas...and innovate those ideas to make your own." Child, Year 5

Shared writing helped children to understand story structure

"Shared writing helps children understand and it gives examples of how to start your stories and end them and it shows how you could make your writing better." Child, Year 5

Shared writing provided a clear model of expectations for the children

“I find shared writing really useful because it helps us understand what’s going on in a story and what to do and what kind of things you’ve got to put in - suspense, connective, description, writing like that. Shared writing also helps us out because for the people that don’t really understand it, even though it don’t help them, sometimes they go back to the shared writing and write a bit more.” Child, Year 5

Children said Storytelling Schools supports development of their sentence construction

Children said that Storytelling Schools supported more sophisticated sentence construction; however, this was less frequently mentioned than the support Storytelling Schools provided for vocabulary and structure.

“It will help you if you put a little bit of expression, connectives and if you put some adjectives or nouns it can help you with your writing after you’ve done your storymap. So you can refer back to your storymap and imagine it in your head and then you can just write it down.” Child, Year 5

“Teacher helps me by giving me an example of what we are supposed to do and how we are supposed to structure it. They also help us with our time adverbials, adverbials, our relative clauses and embedded clauses. They write it on the whiteboard and they get ideas from us to put it in a sentence, so we can all write together and they put it into a sentence.” Child, Year 4

“It helps me use better words and better phrases.” Child, Year 4

Children said that repetition of telling in Storytelling Schools helped them

Storytelling Schools requires children to repeat the story they are learning orally. Children said that this helped them. This child identifies how with each repetition, the quality of language is developed and she regards this as a positive learning experience.

“You need to, like, express what you are going to say and if you do that, more than 5 times then it can help you with your writing and it will help you remember everything that you’ve said. Every time you’ve said the same story you can add a little bit more words into it, powerful words, connectives.” Child, Year 5

Whole school approaches to learning influence the way children engage with Storytelling Schools

In two schools, children referred to a whole school approach to learning. This approach influenced the way they learned writing in Storytelling Schools. In these schools, the idea of a growth-mindset²⁰ underpins the Storytelling Schools’ approach. It is linked into all their work so it affects the way they understand Storytelling Schools.

Child: “There’s two types of mindset: a fixed- mindset and a growth one. A growth one is when you say I don’t care if I get it wrong I’m still going to keep trying.”

²⁰ Dweck, C. (2006) *Mindset: How You Can Fulfil Your Potential* New York: Ballantine Books

Child: "A fixed-mindset is when you think you're perfect..."

Child: "I don't have to do this. I already know it. Bye bye."

Child: "It's better if you have a growth-mindset."

Child: "You keep trying."

Child: "You don't say I can't do it."

Child: "You say I can't do it yet."

Children, Year 5

Children linked growth-mindsets with Storytelling Schools

Child: "Sometimes you find it hard."

Child: "When you are talking to one another that is growth-mindset."

Child: "Because if you need ideas, you can ask your talk partner who can help you and if you have a fixed-mindset you're going to say I don't want you to help and when it comes to writing you say I don't know what to do and you start worrying and that." Children, Year 5

"Mostly everybody tries to have a growth-mindset. If you don't know what a growth-mindset is it's like you don't give up. A fixed-mindset is when you do give up if you can't do the work you always pick the easy challenge." Child, Y4

Children had mixed responses about the effectiveness of differentiation

Children mostly said that they thought Storytelling Schools benefitted all the children in the class, regardless of their ability at writing.

"It's kind of the same for everybody." Child, Y5

"It still helps the higher ones as well." Child, Y5

"I think it helps everyone the same. So some people are stuck on different things, but some people are stuck on some things but some people are stuck on other things so it helps everyone but in different stages. So if the teacher's mapping something and someone don't understand mapping then that helps the person who doesn't understand mapping but if someone don't understand how to say it out or write something then. The teacher will do shared writing and help other people stuck on shared writing to help everyone in different ways." Child, Year 6

Some children thought that Storytelling Schools benefitted some children more than others.

"It helps children more than others. If other children they know the meanings of those words they can use some other powerful words from other children and they could just magpie from each other." Child, Year 5

"Sometimes, people have already learned those words so they might not have needed to be told them again." Child, Year 4

"I think it actually helps some children more than it helps others because as everyone knows not everyone is in the same standard group and I think it especially helps ones

who are in the lower groups because like it gives them more ideas for what they are going to write in their stories and then when a teacher looks at their work they're like Wow! I can't believe that this person in such a low standard group actually wrote this much work." Child, Year 5

"They might look at your work and sometimes magpie the ideas you have come up with. I don't really take them (ideas). I like using my own ideas." Child, Year 5

Some children suggested that they felt they wanted to adjust the Storytelling Schools approach in their classroom. One child suggested she was at the point she didn't need the Storytelling School structure anymore and could write independently.

Child: *"I'd like you not to say the storytelling and we say it by ourselves so you (teachers) can see if the children need any improvements or not."*

Teacher: *"Do you feel you are at the point when you don't need the modelling anymore and you know what you are doing with the Storymap?"*

Child: *"Yeah."*

Teacher: *"But you know what you are doing with a Storymap?"*

Child: *"But when someone needs help, they might ask for help and then you can go over and help them."*

Children, Year 3

Children said that they enjoyed Storytelling Schools' methods

"I actually wouldn't change anything because it's fun the way. It is really good the way we are taught and the best thing about it is when we actually get to the writing because when we get to the writing, when the whole class is writing, it's so relaxing." Child, Year 5

"I would say that I enjoy it a lot because normally when it's literacy I never have a depressed face. It's always happy." Child Year 4

Children did not make up their own stories as much as they would have liked

Children suggested they would like to write more stories independently.

"Sometimes, yeah. We barely get the chance to. If I were to make up my own story it would probably be a thriller, an action horror or something like that." Child, Y5

"We sometimes write our own stories in class ... where we make it up but we have a certain theme and we have to base the story around that." Child, Year 4

"At home I do a lot of stories that are my own and at school we kind of change some stories and write our own." Child, Year 4

"I enjoy writing because I can write sometimes what I want. Because I don't like to be writing the same thing over and over." Child, Year 4

Teachers' experience of acquiring and embedding Storytelling Schools methods 1: interviews

"I feel confident to teach as a storyteller."

Teacher

"I was inspired. I believed in it. What I was being shown; I believed it would work."

Teacher

"Every single child is a writer in my classroom because every child can tell a story and every child can orally rehearse which then means every child becomes a writer because...if they've rehearsed it and they've memorized it, then they can write it."

Teacher

1. What helped teachers to learn Storytelling Schools methods?

Insets

Teachers valued training in staff meetings delivered by the Storytelling Schools team.

"We had staff meetings with a man called Chris who really brought it alive for us. We did lots of drama. We did lots of drawings. We did lots of discussion. Everybody really enjoyed those insets." Teacher

Working with a lead teacher in the school

Teachers liked working with the lead teacher in school who was being supported by the Storytelling Schools team

"She (lead teacher in school) has helped me to really understand and put into context everything we need to do on a daily basis... (through).informal conversations, discussions about what stories we are going to use. Every week we planned what we were going to use and what we were going to do." Teacher

Nannette Stormont being, at once, both a trainer and a practicing teacher was significant for teachers

Teachers particularly valued the support of Nannette Stormont who visited each school during the year to work alongside teachers. She helped them in a variety of ways

"She helped us to talk through the different stories we were using, and also what texts we could get out of those stories" Teacher

Relevant

They valued her because she worked with the teachers on lessons they were actually going to teach. Her advice had a real and immediate quality. One teacher described it as working with Nannette on *"stuff they were going to be doing."*

Motivating

Working with Nannette was motivating. Teachers described it as *"actually very exciting when you're talking about things like that and you think about all those stories you could use. It's quite exciting."*

Nanette's status as a practicing teacher was powerful factor for teachers.

"Nanette is a teacher, who's tried it, so I trusted her opinion." Teacher

"Because she's a class teacher now, I feel like she's doing it and it's working so I can do it and it can work." Teacher

Success

Teachers were reassured by Nanette's professional success in her own classroom. Nanette's own success resonates with the teachers. Nanette's evident belief in what she was doing was significant for teachers

"She's saying, 'I've raised the levels of my children and this is how I did it.'" Teacher

Identification

Teachers attributed Nanette's success as a trainer being partly because *"she comes at it from a teacher's point of view."* Teachers described her training sessions as *"real"* because *"she's feeding into her training things that she's doing and can work."* Teachers valued opportunities to ask Nanette question about application to the classroom and that Nanette being was able to *"answer as an expert herself."*

Showing not telling

Teachers valued Nanette *"showing'* teachers how to teach a lesson and demonstrating the materials they could use in their own lesson with their own class.

"She didn't just talk, she showed." Teacher

"She models teaching and as a teacher that's what you want to see." Teacher

Teachers than felt they could copy the lesson and the techniques demonstrated and this was particularly valuable when beginning to teach Storytelling Schools' methods. Teachers valued opportunities to ask Nanette questions about application to the classroom.

Training mornings

Training mornings for representative teachers from each participating school were held each half term. These were led by Chris Smith and Nanette Stormont. These were considered helpful by the teachers, especially if this training was reinforced with twilight training.

Twilight sessions

Twilight Insets in schools were considered helpful.

"I got the initial training and then what reinforced that training as a new process was then to have the Wednesday night twilight insets led by Chris and Nanette."
Teacher

Active training that positions teachers as children

Teachers appreciated training which positioned the teachers as the 'children' and enabled them to *"do exactly what we would have to do in the classroom."*

"The most important thing is we are getting a chance to do it. So she reads us a story then on our own we map it, talk about it with our partner then we did the stepping

as the children would do it. We learned through doing. I felt, then, confident getting back into my classroom and doing those steps because I'd done it successfully in my training." Teacher

"She models teaching and as a teacher that's what you want to see." Teacher

Teachers felt they could copy the lesson and the techniques demonstrated and this was particularly valuable when first teaching Storytelling Schools' methods.

Observation

Teachers considered observation of other teachers and other teachers observing their own lessons valuable.

"I did some observing in classes to get the feel of how that was implanted with the children and how the teachers retold stories, in terms of modelling, actions and reactions, body language. Facial expressions are a big part of the storytelling."
Teacher

Planning

Teachers valued assistance with planning. They liked planning lessons and sequences of lessons with colleagues who were able to help identify next steps.

"We've had lots of planning sessions where teams get together and are able to pick each other's brains." Teacher

Nanette's advice on planning was valued.

"We've also had Nanette in whose been able to plan with us and look through which books we're using, whether we can move things on, making sure there is pace and all of those things in our lessons." Teacher

Using the Storytelling Schools handbook was considered helpful for planning.

"It's very clear and if we are planning it is straightforward to transfer those ideas into your planning." Teacher

2. What were the main roles of the teacher in Storytelling Schools?

Teachers said that their main roles in Storytelling Schools included: engaging and motivating; modelling enthusiasm; modelling language; telling stories; differentiating; adapting the approaches to suit their children and their own style of teaching. Stepping and mapping consistently featured in teachers' responses to this question.

"My role is to always be a good storyteller. To delight in the stories that I tell."
Teacher

"How I act as a storyteller." Teacher

"Excite and engage them in telling stories." Teacher

"One of the key things is you have to learn the story yourself. To tell orally at the very start." Teacher

“To be a role model of being a storyteller...you naturally show your love for that story.” Teacher

“My main role has been to get it going in the classroom. It’s up to me to plan it in, to deliver it and to make it fun.” Teacher

“Putting my personal thing onto it, I suppose. Knowing my children.” Teacher

“Slightly altering those steps for children for ...SEN and low achievers.” Teacher

“(Mapping and stepping) needs to be done in different ways to support different learners. Once the class is up and running with it there might be just a few learners that you need to support in different ways or extend.” Teacher

“Modelling that language you might promote through the story. Getting them to kind of keep using that whether it is in little sentences or little games all the time and then feeding that into the shared writing.” Teacher

A reception teacher identified her role as empowering other adults in the classroom to tell stories and use the Storytelling Schools’ approaches. She described her role this way:

“To give confidence to the other adults in the classroom, so they can do the same. There’s lots of teachers who always take the idea I’m always the one who tells the story but actually there’s other people in the classroom who are brilliant at their jobs but don’t always have the confidence and all they need is the time spent on them and they can tell stories.” Reception Teacher

3. What do teachers mostly do?

Teachers said that the aspects of Storytelling Schools that they mostly do are mapping and telling.

“We do an awful lot of story mapping. story mapping and stepping are our biggest techniques that we use all of the time because they are so successful. Our children they can look at a storymap and just by looking at a storymap they know the story, they can tell the story without any support.” Teacher

4. What aspects of Storytelling Schools were most challenging for teachers?

Teachers identified repetition of Storytelling Schools’ approaches and the amount of time children need to transcribe their writing onto paper or screen as challenges. Revision of their writing was mentioned by only one teacher. One teacher said the sequence is repetitive but crucial and it was important to do things differently when appropriate but not to lose the rigor of the sequence.

“That sequence is very repetitive but it’s very crucial to understanding the story”
Teacher

“We spend four days not doing any writing so that is a bit of a restriction for children who need to be writing on a regular basis...even if you’re just writing a couple of sentences. You could have spent the whole week really getting engrossed in the story but you’ve not done any physical pen to paper stuff. Sometimes the process of getting to the deepening is a little bit long.” Teacher

One teacher identified as a challenge, *“Remembering the story when telling.”*

5. What did teachers think helped children the most?

Teachers frequently mentioned storymaps and story matrixes as significant planning supports for children’s writing and storytelling. They suggested that they provided frameworks, scaffolds and assistance with memory and the simultaneous multiple cognitive demands in writing. Shared writing was strongly identified as helpful to children.

Teachers said that structuring stories with the story matrix helped children plan more carefully, and consequently they wrote a lot more.

“The high abilities have already got the knowledge and the ideas and the storytelling and the excitement about writing but now they are writing better writing because they’ve got really clear structure and that’s why it’s good to keep repeating the story matrix.” Teacher

“Shared writing really, really helps... If they don’t see good writing modelled then they don’t know how to do it.” Teacher

Teachers were aware of the support different aspects of Storytelling Schools gave to children of different ability and attainment.

“Stepping element is good for all children but especially good for dyslexics.” Teacher

“The maps help them (lower ability group) a lot.” Teacher

“I would say it definitely benefits everybody. It has really benefitted in my class the second to lower group...because their writing has really taken off this year and what’s helped their writing is the language from storytelling. They’ve made a big jump.” Teacher

6. What aspects of their Storytelling Schools practice would teachers like to develop?

Teachers identified deepening exercises and learning stories as aspects they would like to develop.

“I’d like to see what other activities are out there and have a go at lots of different ones and bring a bit more variety.” Teacher

“Learning stories really well before I tell them myself.” Teacher

7. What restrictions on teaching and learning did teachers identify?

Teachers were overwhelmingly positive about Storytelling Schools’ methods. However, there was some thoughtful and professional critique about aspects that may need to be developed.

Teachers thought a tightly defined teaching and learning sequence can be restrictive.

“The only thing I would say is that there is a set way of doing it. You tell it and then you map it, then you step it, then you deepen. There’s a set way of almost following it.” Teacher

This teacher, acknowledged that if she took *“one of those things out then I suppose it wouldn’t work as well.”*

Teachers thought shared writing needs to be used skilfully in order to engage the children.

“My children get a bit frustrated if we spend too long on shared writing. It’s got its place definitely. I would never ever shared-write the whole text from beginning to end so they see what it looks like. We split our shared writing into parts. Our children just want to get started. They don’t want to be watching us.” Teacher

Teachers thought opportunities could be made for some children to spend more time inventing stories.

“The children in my class really enjoy inventing their own stories. One or two of children said, ‘We get a bit bored doing the same story again and again with you. Can we come and tell our own stories?’ And so we have tried that in different ways. One’s just giving them more freedom to invent a story more from scratch and less kind of scaffolded and then occasionally when I’ve got 15 minutes...one of them just comes up and tells a story and they love doing that. It made me realize that even though the storytelling process is very scaffolded and they’ve really got that language embedded, maybe, sometimes, we need to give them more freedom. They’ve got a lot of ideas. Sometimes, I think, they would prefer if you said you’ve got more freedom in what you innovate. Can you invent the whole story? Can they keep just one element from the beginning? I think perhaps we underestimated them as well. Some of them would like more freedom because they’ve got lots of things going on in their heads.” Teacher

Teachers thought transcription and composition could be more evenly balanced.

“I think when we started I felt that when you go through the speaking and the mapping, all that process, there’s not very much writing for the children to do and that might take up a whole week for them to do all those processes. Other people in the team were worried that they weren’t writing enough for their SATs. I felt there was a bit of conflict between practicing the oral side and the writing. There’s nothing but photos in their book for a week.” Teacher

“I don’t think if you just used storytelling you’d get enough secretarial skills in terms of the writing. You do get lots of skills because they are drawing pictures so they have got to be able to hold a pen. They’ve got to be able to control it enough to do the arrows and draw the different parts and lots of them do write alongside it but you always have to top everything up. You can never use one approach for everything and if you top it up with the right things and use storytelling as your main thing that you’re going to add to, it works.” Reception Teacher

8. Have training needs been met?

Teachers all responded positively to this question. They believed that the range of methods to support them provided by their schools and the Storytelling Schools team had met their training and development needs.

“Exceptionally well.” Teacher

9. How has Storytelling Schools impacted on the children?

Teachers believed that Storytelling Schools positively impacted on all their children whatever their ability and attainment.

"I think their confidence has grown because it's not a scary thing." Teacher

"(Storytelling Schools particularly helps) children who don't read, who lack creativity or a broad knowledge about life and things. Telling stories is like another new world to them. It gives them something to write about. If you don't share stories then they've got nothing to go with." Teacher

"Stepping element is good for dyslexics." Teacher

"(For the children who do read and can write the) biggest thing that helps them is the structuring." Teacher

"The high abilities have already got the knowledge and the ideas and the storytelling and the excitement about writing but now they are writing better because they've got really clear structure and that's why it's good to keep repeating the story matrix." Teacher

"They write better pieces than when they are doing it completely free because they've done so much." Teacher

Some teachers reported that boys are motivated by Storytelling Schools.

"My boys have a massive presence and they hated writing. They hated stories. They hated everything to do with it. You get out a book and they all sighed in desperation. Now, they're going around going, 'I want to make a storymap. I've got this idea for a story.'" Reception Teacher

Teachers said that Storytelling Schools supported low attainers.

"My little low boys who came up scoring low on Development Matters... they've got to the point now where they are confident and happy storytellers and they want to learn to write because they want to learn to write their stories down." Reception Teacher

Teachers' experience of acquiring and embedding Storytelling Schools' methods 2: surveys

This chapter reports findings about the way teachers' confidence to use the Storytelling Schools' methods developed during 2013-14 and, at the end of 2014, how confident they perceived themselves to be with specific aspects of Storytelling Schools. It reports what teachers thought were challenging aspects of Storytelling Schools and what aspects they thought worked well in their classrooms. This chapter reports how they were helped to acquire and embed the methods in their classrooms and what they perceived to be their training needs at the end of 2014. It also reports what the teachers perceived to be their main roles in the classroom.

Range of professional development provision for Storytelling Schools in 2013-14

Six morning workshops were held during the year. There was one each half term. Lead teachers from each of the seven participating schools attended the workshops. Nanette Stormont, an expert CPD provider in Storytelling Schools, visited each school, each term. She offered whole school training, demonstration lessons, planning meetings with year groups and supportive observation.

Data Sample

96 useable surveys were returned from the seven participating schools. Of these, 45 surveys completed in autumn term 2013 were used and 51 surveys completed in summer term 2014 were used. The gap of time between the autumn 2013 and the summer 2014 surveys was so narrow due to the survey being conducted by some schools quite a long way into the autumn term. Consequently, summer 2014 results are used as a reliable indicator. Survey results from autumn 2013 are available on request. 14 teachers were interviewed in June and July 2014. The teachers' length of service varied from 3 months of service to 24 years of service. The average length of service of participating teachers was 6.72 years in autumn 2013 and 7.72 years of service in summer term 2014. During 2013-14 all of the interviewed teachers had received training and support.

Key Findings

1. Teachers' confidence to use Storytelling Schools' approaches increased slightly during 2013-14
2. Teachers were most confident to teach the telling, stepping, mapping, shared writing and innovation aspects of Storytelling Schools in summer term 2014
3. Teachers were less confident to teach the invention, plot matrix and non-fiction aspects of Storytelling Schools at the end of the year
4. Teachers identified telling, mapping and stepping a story as the aspects of Storytelling Schools that worked most well in their classrooms
5. Factors that contributed to Storytelling Schools' success in the classroom were identified by teachers as structure, enjoyment, breaking down the story, expanding vocabulary and repetition
6. Teachers identified invention, innovation, stepping, non-fiction and shared writing as areas presenting most challenge in their classroom
7. The challenge in the classroom identified by teachers the most was 'time restriction'
8. Teachers identified non-fiction and invention as their most pressing training needs

at the beginning of 2013-14

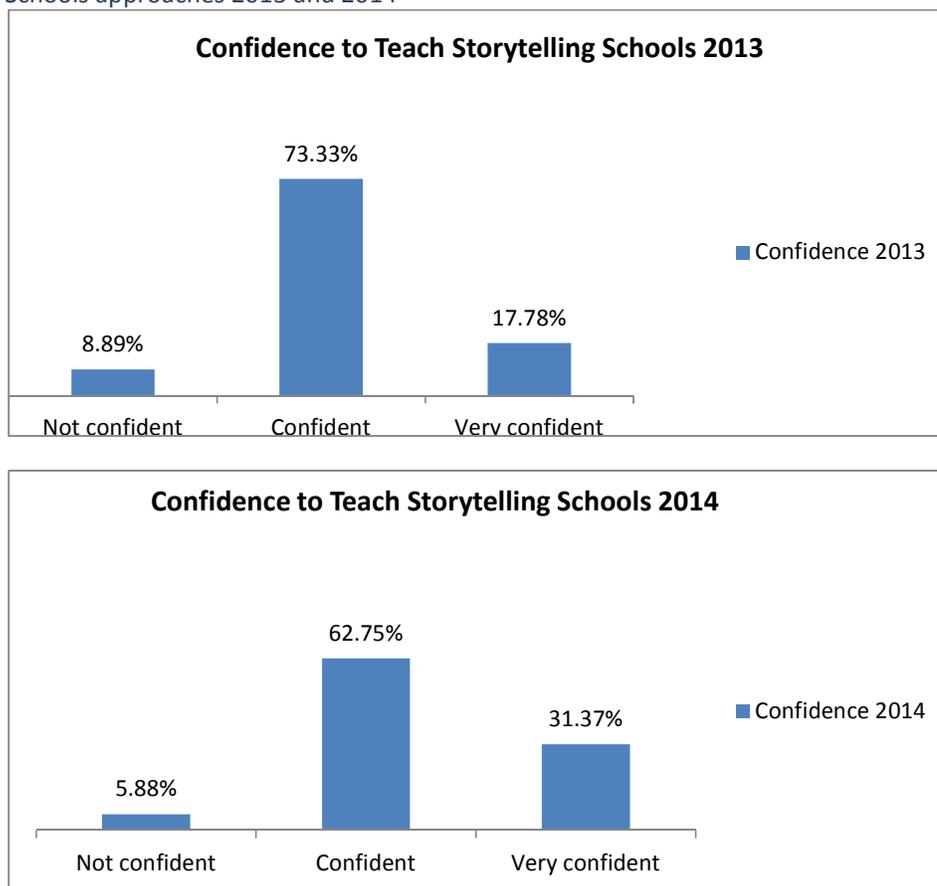
9. Teachers identified their main roles in the classroom as; modelling, enthusiastic writers and storytellers and providing good quality stories

1. Teachers' confidence to use Storytelling Schools' approaches increased slightly during 2013-14

The evidence collected from teacher surveys show that, overall, teachers' confidence to use Storytelling Schools' methods increased by summer term 2014.

The proportion of teachers who said they felt confident or very confident was 94% in summer 2014. The proportion of teachers who said they felt very confident increased by 13.5% rising from 17.78% in autumn term 2013 to 31.37% in summer 2014.

Figure 45: These two charts compare teachers' perceived confidence to teach Storytelling Schools approaches 2013 and 2014



2. Teachers were most confident to teach the telling, stepping, mapping, shared writing and innovation aspects of Storytelling Schools in summer term 2014

The evidence collected shows that teachers were most confident to teach 'telling a story', 'mapping a story', 'stepping a story', shared writing and innovation aspects of Storytelling Schools. 96% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach 'telling a story', 100% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach 'mapping a story', 96% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach 'stepping a story', 92% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach shared writing and 90% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach innovation.

Figure 46: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'telling a story' in summer term 2014

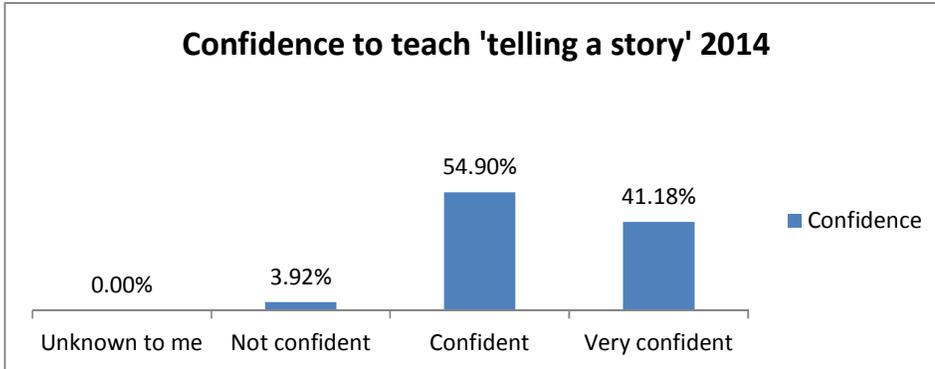


Figure 47: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'mapping a story' in summer term 2014

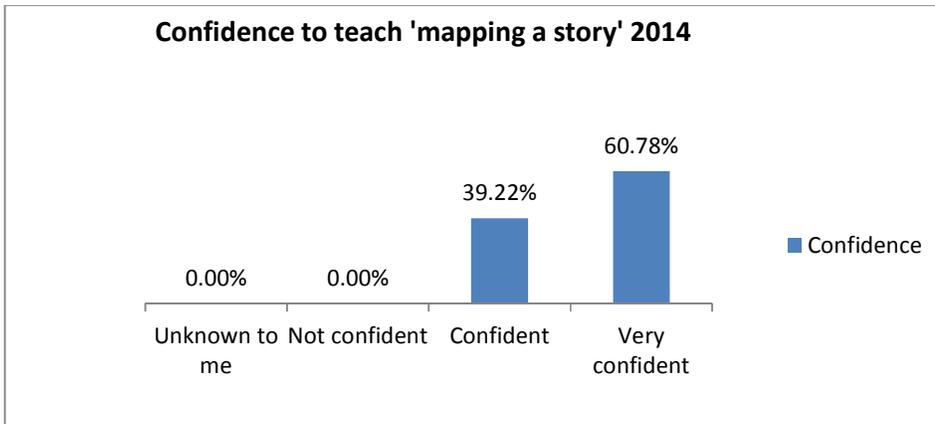


Figure 48: This chart shows teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'stepping a story' in summer term 2014

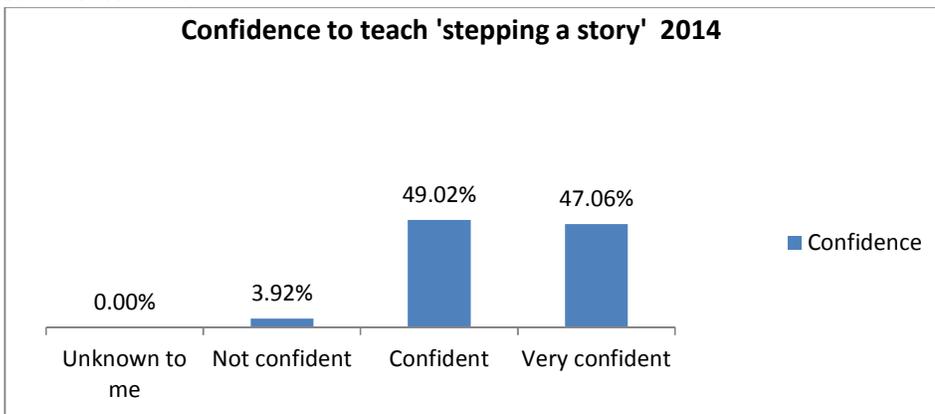


Figure 49: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'shared writing' in summer term 2014

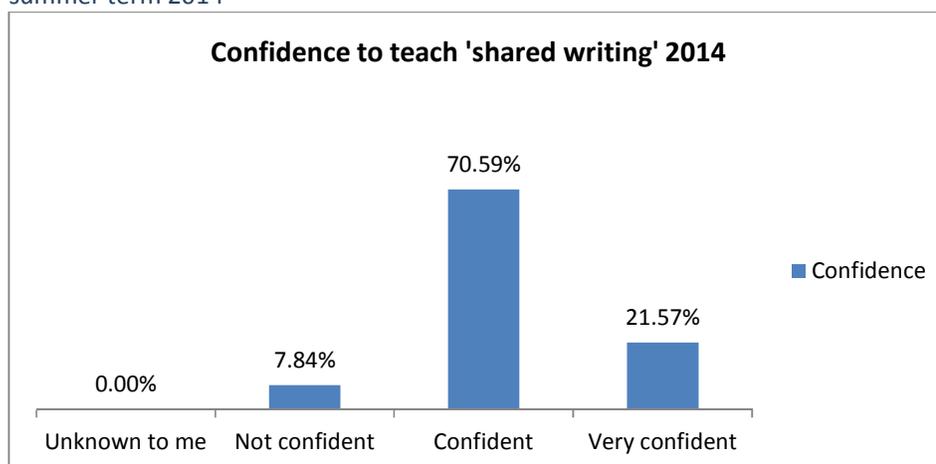
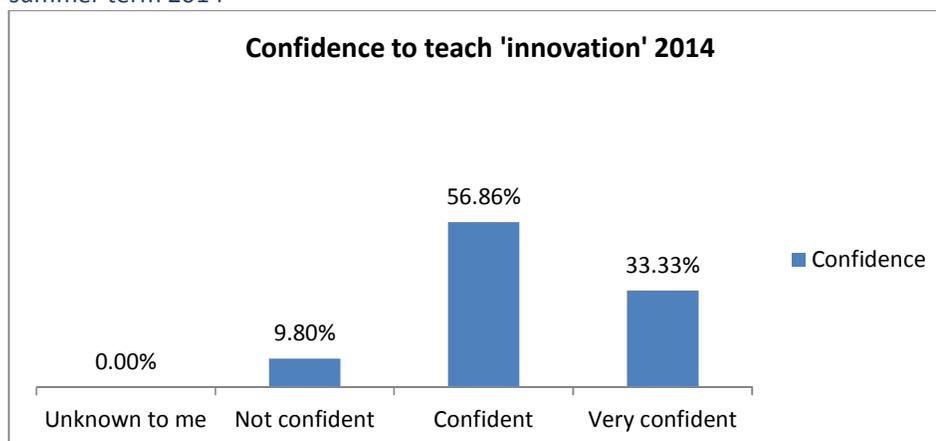


Figure 50: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'innovation' in summer term 2014



3. Teachers were less confident to teach the invention, plot matrix and non-fiction aspects of Storytelling Schools at the end of the year

The evidence collected shows that teachers were less confident to teach invention, plot matrix and non-fiction aspects of Storytelling Schools. 80% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach invention while 20% said they were not confident. 78% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach plot matrix while 22% said they were not confident. 82% of teachers said they felt confident or very confident to teach non-fiction while 18% said they were not confident.

Figure 51: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'invention' in summer term 2014

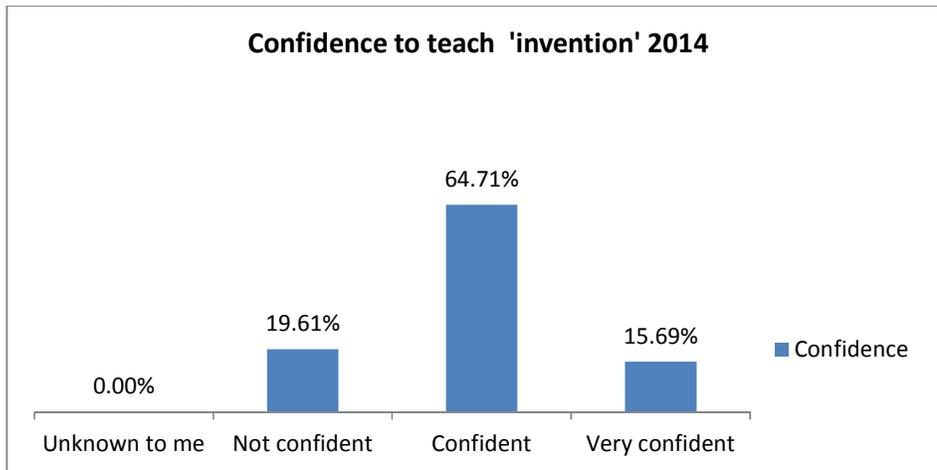


Figure 52: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'plot matrix' in summer term 2014

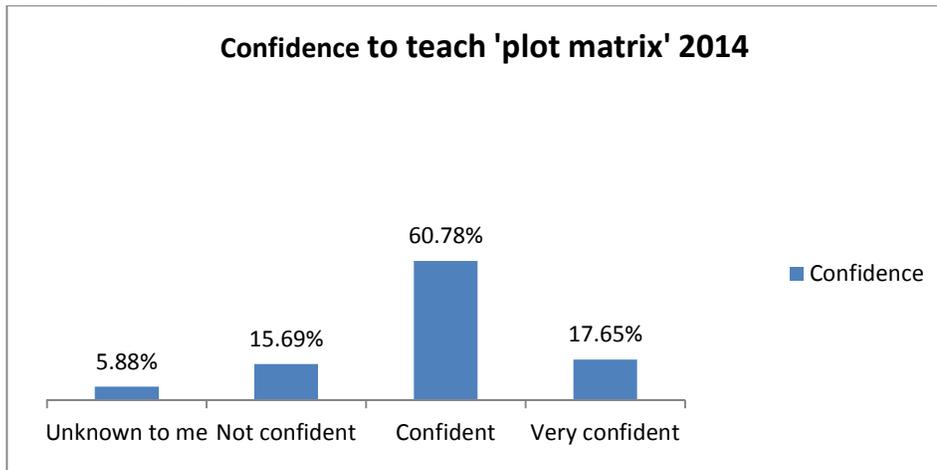
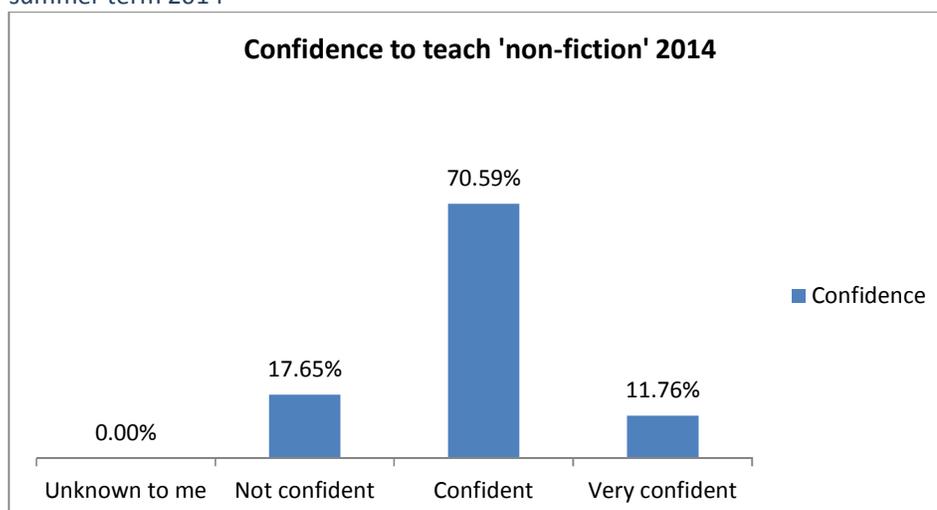


Figure 53: This chart shows the teachers' perceived confidence to teach 'non-fiction' in summer term 2014

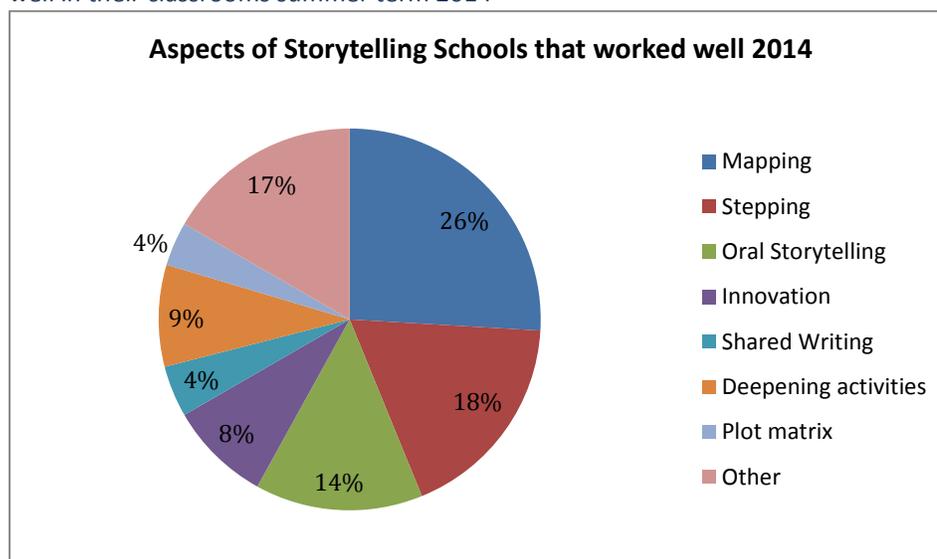


4. Teachers identified telling, mapping and stepping a story as the aspects of Storytelling Schools that worked most well in their classrooms.

Teachers identified telling, mapping and stepping as the most effective aspects of Storytelling Schools in their classrooms. 26% of the responses to the question 'What aspects of Storytelling Schools are working well in your classroom?' referred to mapping a story, 18% referred to stepping a story and 14% referred to telling a story. 9% of responses referred to deepening activities as working well in the classroom and 8% referred to innovation. 4% of responses referred to shared writing and 4% to plot matrix.

While teachers expressed confidence to teach shared writing and innovation, it does not appear to have been referred to as an aspect that is working particularly well in the classroom.

Figure 54: This chart shows the aspects of Storytelling Schools teachers identified as working well in their classrooms summer term 2014



Areas of challenge identified by different schools

School 1



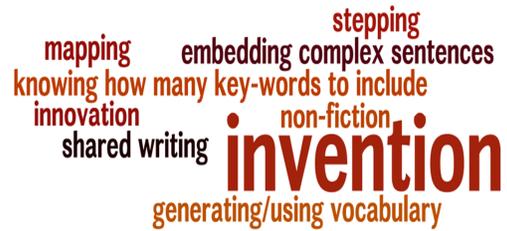
School 4



School 2



School 5



School 3



School 6



School 7



The challenge in the classroom identified by teachers the most times was ‘time restrictions’

Figure 55: This chart shows the challenges of delivering Storytelling Schools most frequently identified by teachers in 2014

Most frequently identified challenges 2014
Time restrictions
Children’s confidence
Teacher confidence
Keeping things fresh
Longer, more complex texts
Supporting children without telling them what to write
Sticking to the plot matrix (for all stories)
Adapting the activities for the class level and context
Children’s reluctance to engage
Children’s lack of knowledge/experience
Children’s reliance on shared writing ideas rather than their own
More practice needed

Other challenges teachers identified
No one way to do it
Pressure of SATs
Some children still can’t remember stories
Support to stop falling back into pattern of storytelling
Children lose focus in drama/deepening
Finding balance between engaging and meeting the Learning Intention
They slow the pace of learning
Difficult to think of actions and engage children in using them
It was harder for children to innovate non-fiction but they have definitely improved
Not enough teaching
Challenges that children of disadvantaged backgrounds face anyway
Organisation

Teachers identified non-fiction and invention as their most pressing training needs at the beginning of 2013-14

Teachers in different schools identified different training needs depending on their school situation. Invention, innovation, non-fiction, shared writing and plot matrix were consistently identified as aspects needing further training. This corresponds to the aspects they found challenging. There were more interesting responses. These included keeping it fresh, ‘tackling’ novels, using the outdoors, using Storytelling Schools in Reception and the Early Years.

Figure 56: This chart shows most frequently identified training needs of Storytelling Schools teachers in 2013

Most frequently identified training needs 2013
Non fiction
Invention
Innovation
Shared writing
Story mapping
Stepping a story
Plot matrix
Recap of all aspects
Storytelling approach
Observation of more experienced teachers
Support other staff members
Adapting for younger years
Deepening activities
Other

Other identified training needs 2013
How to assess writing
Training for Level 6
Putting approaches into practice
Reflection/discussion opportunities
How to use longer texts
Best ways of getting parents involved

Conclusion

The data collected in this evaluation suggests that Storytelling Schools' methods make a positive contribution to children's attainment in writing and children's enjoyment and engagement with writing. The roll-out Phase 1 of Storytelling Schools in Tower Hamlets, overall, has been successful with average attainment in writing at the end of KS2 better than the national and local averages. The reasons for this initial success may include some of the following factors.

The writing process

Storytelling Schools supports all three main components of the writing process: planning, translating and reviewing²¹. It provides a close scaffold for the planning stage where children must formulate writing goals and then generate and organise ideas to meet them in order to have the intended effect on the reader. By providing a model story that the children learn by heart and imitate, Storytelling Schools offers children a structure for innovating and then inventing their own story. Mapping the story visually provides a strong support for this. When children have to translate these ideas into sequences of words in grammatically correct sentences in story or non-fiction genres the vocabulary, phrases and sentence structures that they have learned during oral storytelling provide a scaffold. Finally, the process of reviewing and revising their writing is supported when they collaboratively engage in the oral storytelling process. Effectively, the children are able to 'read' over the story that they have composed when they say it aloud, and identify how far they have satisfied the intended writing goals.

Deploying the flexible tool of talk

Working through the writing process using the flexible tool of talk, offers children the opportunity to learn the skills in writing without having to engage in the costly and complex cognitive activity of using orthographic skills (handwriting and spelling) which for many children is not yet automated. The compartmentalisation of transcription and composition effort frees children to develop their use of word, sentence and text level skills.

Shaping the way children think about writing

Teachers using Storytelling Schools are shaping the way the children think about writing. Teachers speak about writing in a deliberate and focused way with specific learning intentions and outcomes for the children's thinking. The children hear what is said e.g. the story itself, the revisions to vocabulary, sentences and text structure and the questions teachers and other children ask. The children internalise what they hear and this becomes part of their own inner speech and the silent internal dialogue that is the experience of every writer. This shapes their thinking and their approach to writing.

Deploying orthographic skills separately

The repetition and retelling of the same story, leading to innovation and invention, is a model in writing that enables children to re-write orally first and then orthographically. Storytelling Schools is a method which teaches children how to reread (or retell in the first

²¹ Hayes, J. & Flowers, L. (1980) 'Identifying the Organisation of the Writing Processes' in Gregg, L. & Steinberg, E. (eds) *Cognitive processes in Writing*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. pp. 3-30

instance) and then identify discrepancies between the intended outcome of the text and the actual outcomes, detect errors or inadequacies at word, sentence and text level, and diagnose how they can be corrected or improved. This recursive modifying of the text for an intended audience is at the heart of writing and is a cognitively complex procedure. It makes heavy demands on the child's working memory which has little automaticity of spelling and handwriting from which to draw. Composing through talk first, with a 'present' audience, and then using spelling and handwriting skills is effective.

Distribution of cognitive load

Storytelling Schools enables teachers to confidently distribute the different parts of the writing process (planning, translating, revising, spelling and handwriting) in a way that supports the novice writer's limited working memory capacity and spreads cognitive load so that they can concentrate cognitive resources²² on separate aspects and then integrate them together. It is as if children can learn individual instruments before orchestrating them into a final piece of music for a performance. Children and teachers have responded positively to the way Storytelling Schools' methods help children to generate and organise ideas prior to writing on page or screen. They have identified value in the way these methods allow them to devote resources to formulating ideas, to evaluating and clarifying their thoughts and then revising the words, sentences and components of the text structure so that the actual text they write on the screen or page is closer to their intended writing outcome.

Incremental orchestration of complex skills

We see in Storytelling Schools' methods a way that teachers can help young writers to progressively master and integrate the various components of the writing process (planning, translating, revising, spelling and handwriting) at word, sentence and text level. Children's ability to do this occurs at different speeds.

Sustained dynamic revision

Revision is at the heart of learning to write and Storytelling Schools offers systematic retelling of children's texts and provides children with supportive checklists and exemplification through vocabulary banks, the story itself, shared writing and success criteria which are all intrinsic features of any Storytelling Schools 2-3 week writing unit.²³ Structured composition and retelling enables children to hone skills of adding, substituting, shifting, deleting, rearranging, and reorganising words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and text segments. It has the potential to help children address both surface and deep semantic revisions.²⁴ Storytelling Schools supports children's peer assessment in writing. It promotes increased self-disclosure of children's internal thinking processes about writing and, consequently, greater metacognitive awareness about how they write.

²² Chanquoy, L. (2001) 'How to make it easier for children to revise their writing. A study of text revision from 3rd to 5th grades', in *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 71: 15-41

²³ Topping 2009 Topping, K. (2009), 'Peer assessment' *Theory into Practice*, vol 48, no. 1, pp. 20-27

²⁴ Faigley, L. and Witte, S.P. (1984) 'Measuring the effects of revisions on text structure', in Beach, R. and Bridwell, L.S. (eds), *New Directions in Composing Research*, New York: Guilford Press pp. 95-108

Systematic collaborative oral rehearsal

Storytelling Schools is a highly organised and efficient model of oral rehearsal. The whole class is focused on rehearsing out loud the vocabulary, phrases and sentences that they are going to write. Working together as a class and in groups, the class becomes a community of writers in which children can generate and say out loud the ideas they will later, and separately, transform into transcribed written compositions. As they do this, children test out their ideas and borrow from what they hear other children and the teacher say. It is an ongoing, dynamic process in which children can shape and reshape their ideas. Storytelling Schools is a rigorously structured method of oral rehearsal in which teachers guide and model so that the children can make a journey from patterns of speech to patterns in writing.²⁵

Writing challenges specific to novice EAL writers

Storytelling Schools may also be successful because the method enables EAL children to focus on challenges that are common to EAL children. It lightens EAL children's cognitive load and allows them to focus in detail on composing orally before requiring them to deploy orthographic skills to put their stories on paper or screen. Lower achieving EAL writers find several features in writing more challenging than non EAL writers. These include use of modal verbs, subject verb agreement and verb tenses²⁶. EAL writers have difficulty using formulaic phrases (e.g. his best friend rather than his best of all friend). They also use prepositions less confidently than non EAL children and are more likely to use short clauses with information concentrated towards the end. They are less likely to use subordinators well to create complex sentences. Adverbials may not be used as efficiently. Cameron and Besser (2004) recommend that teachers pay explicit attention to these language features, especially for the less able EAL writers. In the Storytelling Schools' methods, EAL children learn to orally retell narrative stories and non-fiction texts that have sentences with all these language features. These features are then modelled by the teacher in shared writing.

EAL writers and genres in writing

EAL learners of all abilities find using a variety of genres challenging. Cameron and Besser (2004) recommend that EAL novice writers need to be helped to develop story setting, characters and plot and endings and they need to be helped to think about 'the imagined readers of their stories, what they might want to know and how this could be made interesting for them to read.'²⁷ While EAL children at KS2 can use the narrative genre quite confidently, they find non-fiction genres more challenging than non EAL children. Storytelling Schools systematically address this need.

Compatibility with National Curriculum (2013)

Teachers can recognise that Storytelling Schools readily supports them as they implement the National Curriculum for English Key Stages 1 and 2 in Writing (2013). Teachers are now required to teach children to form, articulate and communicate ideas and to organise them for a reader. Teachers must develop children's grasp of vocabulary, both range as well as understanding of nuances in meaning, and ability to use figurative language. Pupils need to

²⁵ Myhill, D. (2009) 'Writing aloud – the role of oral rehearsal' in Fisher, D., Myhill, D., Jones, S. & Larkin, S. (eds) Using Talk to Support Writing pp.64-79

²⁶ Cameron, L. & Besser, S.(2004)*Writing in English as an Additional Language at KS2* University of Leeds

²⁷ *ibid* p.10

control their speaking and writing consciously. Statutory requirements for writing composition in the new National Curriculum recommend a process that resonates with Storytelling Schools. Children in Year 2 are to plan or say aloud what they are going to write, write down ideas and new vocabulary, articulate their ideas sentence by sentence, evaluate their writing with peers and teacher and make revisions. They are to think aloud when they write and draft and reread. At Lower Key Stage 2 children are to discuss writing similar to that they are going to write and borrow from its structure, vocabulary and sentence structure. They are to compose and rehearse writing orally.²⁸ All of these National Curriculum recommendations and instructions can be achieved through Storytelling Schools' methods.

²⁸ DfE (2013) *English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2. National Curriculum in England* London: DfE pp. 21 &27

Appendices

Storytelling Schools Survey

June 2014

School _____

Child's Name _____

Boy or Girl _____

Year group _____



Circle the phrase that shows how you feel or tick the boxes

1. Do you enjoy writing?



not at all (1)



it's okay (2)



a lot (3)

2. Do you think you are a good writer?



not at all (1)



it's okay (2)



a lot (3)

3. Do you like storytelling?



not at all (1)



it's okay (2)



a lot (3)

4. Do you think you are good at Storytelling?



not at all (1)



I'm okay (2)



good (3)

5. Do you think telling stories has helped you to write?



not at all (1)



it's okay (2)



a lot (3)

6. What does the teacher do that helps you with storytelling and writing?

7. Are you telling stories at home?

never (1)

every day (2)

once a week (3)

Thank you

Storytelling Schools Survey

June 2014



School _____
 Child's Name _____ (Full Name)
 Boy or Girl _____
 Year group _____

Circle the phrase that shows how you feel or tick the boxes

1. Do you enjoy writing?

not at all (1)	not really (2)	it's okay (3)	quite a lot (4)	a lot (5)
Can you tell me more?				

2. Do you think you are a good writer?

not at all (1)	not really (2)	I'm okay (3)	quite good (4)	very good (5)
What do you think you are good at?				

3. Do you like storytelling?

not at all (1)	not really (2)	it's okay (3)	quite a lot (4)	a lot (5)
What do you think you are good at?				

4. Do you think you are good at storytelling?

not at all (1)	not really (2)	I'm okay (3)	quite good (4)	very good (5)
What do you think you are good at?				

5. Do you think telling stories has helped you to write?

not at all (1)	not really (2)	it's okay (3)	quite a lot (4)	a lot (5)
Can you tell me more?				

6. What does the teacher do that helps you with storytelling and writing?

--

7. Are you telling stories at home?

never (1)	once a month (2)	once a week (3)	every day (4)	
Can you say more? (When? Where? Who to?)				

Thank you



Storytelling Schools Teacher Survey

Name _____

Year group of your own class _____

School _____

Years of service or date qualified as a teacher _____

Years or months doing Storytelling Schools _____

1. How would you rate your own confidence to teach Storytelling Schools:

1 2 3

(1= very confident 2=confident 3= not confident)

2. How would you rate your confidence using the following Storytelling Schools' approaches:

(1= very confident 2=confident 3= not confident 4= unknown to me)

Tell a story orally	1	2	3	4
Mapping a story	1	2	3	4
Stepping a story	1	2	3	4
Innovation	1	2	3	4
Invention	1	2	3	4
Using the plot matrix	1	2	3	4
Shared writing	1	2	3	4
Non-fiction	1	2	3	4

3. What do you think are your most important further training needs?

4. Identify 3 aspects of Storytelling Schools that have worked well in your classroom

1	
2	
3	

Say why you think these have worked well

--

5. Identify 3 aspects of Storytelling Schools that have been challenging in your classroom

1	
2	
3	

Say why you think these have been challenging

--

6. What do you think are your main roles as a teacher in developing storytelling classrooms that support writing? Can you say why briefly?

--

Thank you

Storytelling Schools Coordinator Reflection 25th June 2014

**Note: To answer these questions, consider both training and support given both in Storytelling Schools' training and on a daily basis in school*

Development of the quality of teaching of Storytelling Schools' processes

1. What were the most effective Storytelling Schools teaching and learning strategies/processes that were developed in the classrooms? (Identify 2 or 3) Why? How was their success linked to training and ongoing support?

2. Were any Storytelling Schools strategies/processes not really 'taken on' in the classroom? Why? How is this linked to training?

How teachers in Storytelling Schools acquired and embedded processes of Storytelling Schools

3. What do your staff think was the most effective training and support that helped them to acquire, develop and embed Storytelling Schools strategies/processes? Why? What do you think?

Implications for teaching of storytelling and writing

4. Bearing the above questions and responses in mind, what do you think needs to be innovated/changed/maintained to ensure staff more readily implement the successful and challenging Storytelling Schools' strategies/processes next year? Why?

Implications for dissemination and training

5. What top 3 pieces of advice would you give to schools new to Storytelling Schools about training, supporting development and embedding of Storytelling Schools' strategies/processes? Why?

6. What have been your most important roles in helping staff to acquire, develop and embed Storytelling Schools' strategies/processes? WHY?

7. Anything else you think is helpful to know about

Storytelling Schools Case Study Three

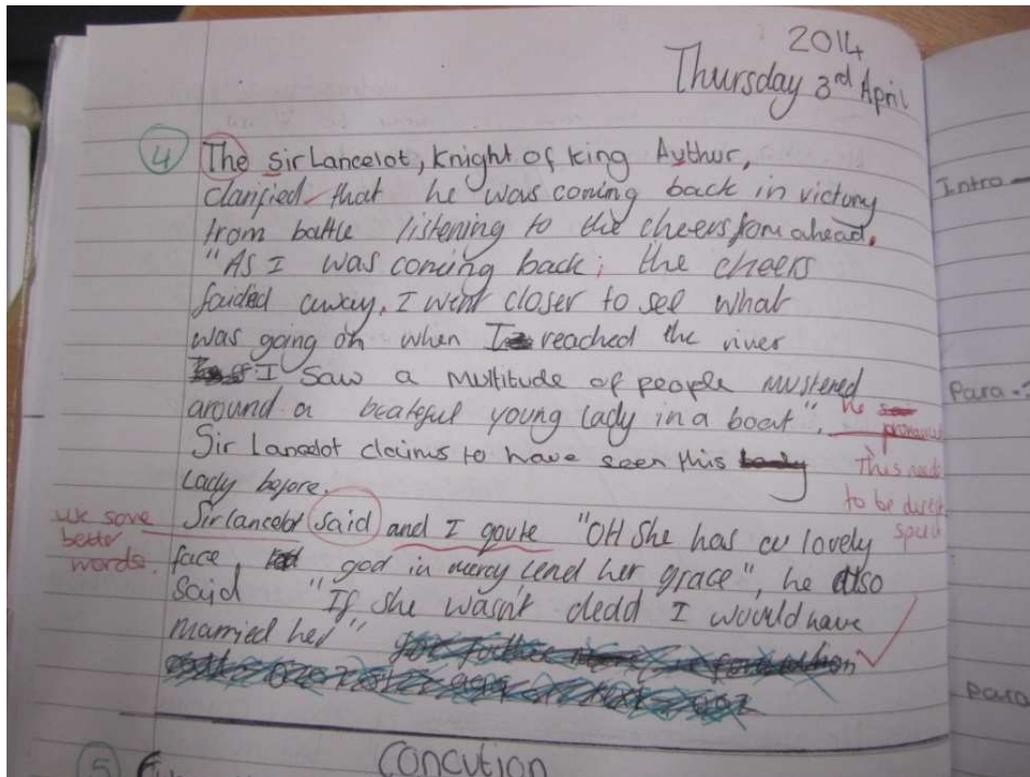
2013-14

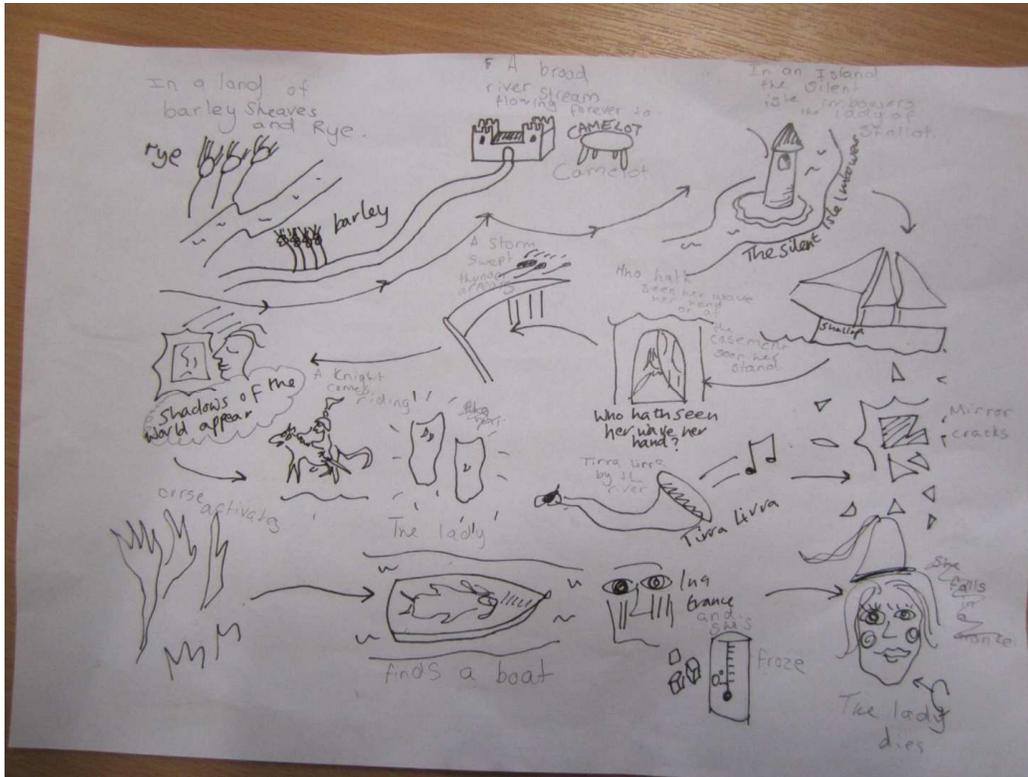
I am Yusuf.
Let me tell you my story...



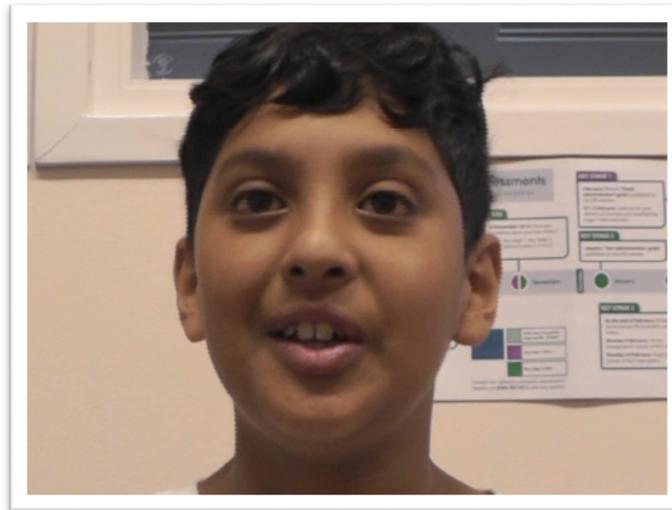
I am Yusuf and when I started Storytelling Schools I was at the beginning of Year 6. This is me towards the end of Year 6. I think I have made good progress this year and I am enjoying writing much more this year.

A. This is a piece of writing I did in spring term of Year 6. It is based on the Lady of Shalott and this is the storymap I made with my class.





B. I was able to use my storymap to tell my story of The Lady of Shalott. You can watch me tell this story if you like by going to the Storytelling Schools website <http://www.storytellingschools.com/evaluation-report/> and clicking on 'Yusuf tells his story, June, 2014.'



C. I was proud of my non-fiction writing about Captain Scott. You can hear me reading out my writing on the Storytelling Schools website <http://www.storytellingschools.com/evaluation-report/> and clicking on 'Yusuf reads his Captain Scott Writing, June 2014'. I am really enjoying using more complex language in my writing.

The Treacherous Journey

I looked up. Eternal, treacherous mountains dominated the sky above us. After everything, we'd been through, I couldn't believe there was more to come. We had very little hope. My only choice was to abandon three of my men, leaving them behind to camp under a weak, shattered boat, in hope of finding help from the Whaling Station on Elephant Island.

"If we do not act soon, the only thing that we will get is death! Death I tell you – death!"

All I had was the daunting feeling that we would never make it back alive.

The beautiful moonlight enclosed the sky as darkness plummeted. We took a variety of items with us: an axe, a compass, a watch, rope, matches and six meals stuffed in socks. Snow fell on the razor-sharp mountains. The only sound was the flapping wings of the albatross above. Suddenly, I heard a crack in the ice. My foot slipped. I had fallen, fallen so fast I could hardly breathe or think. I had fallen down a precipice. But all was not lost, I was still alive. I had gripped on to the cliff edge with my frostbitten fingers. I relentlessly clambered up the edge and made my way back up.

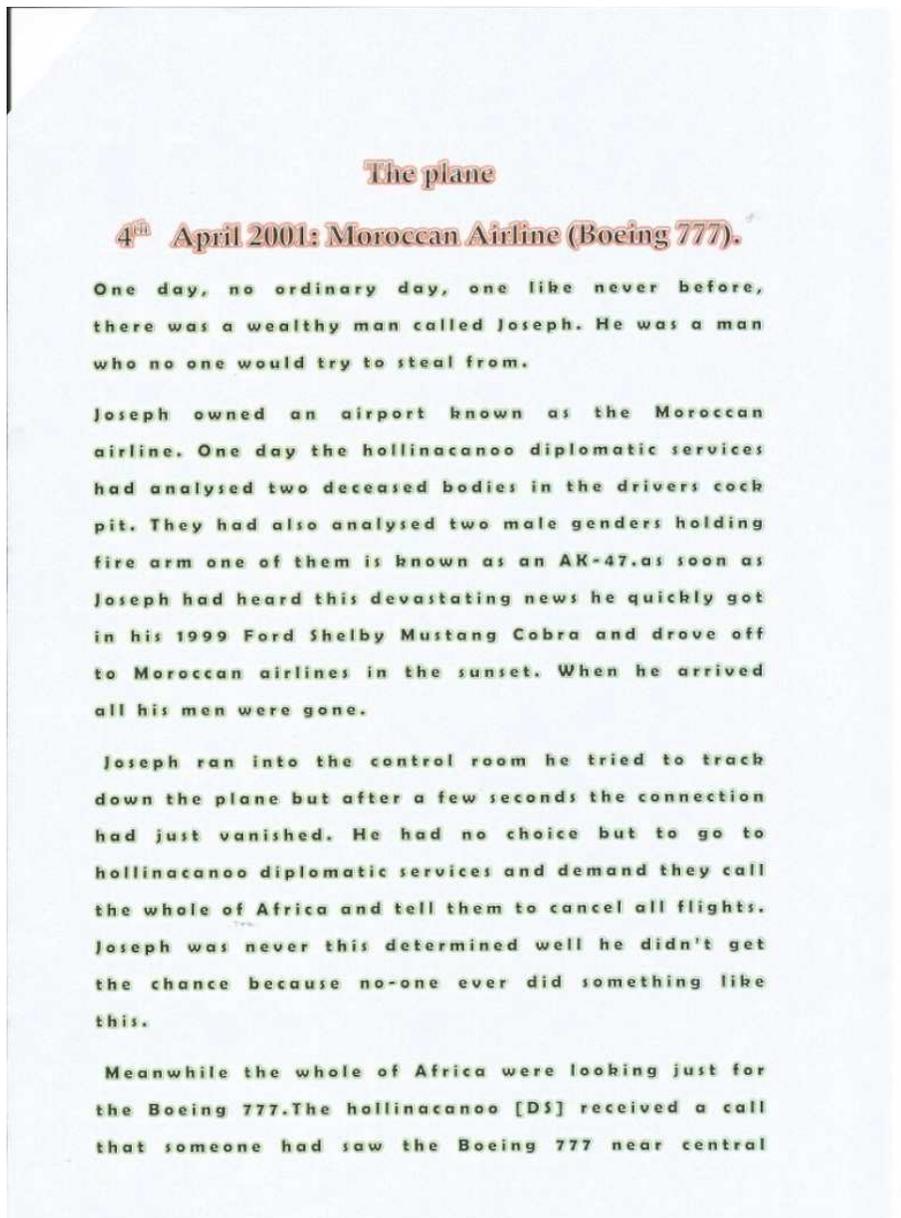
Persistently, we pressed on, despite the fact that every step we took was painful, exhausting. The thought of our need to survive pulled us through. We had been struggling for survival for two whole years: 15 months in pack ice, barely half an hour's sleep a night and a very scarce food supply! Just then, unexpectedly, Crean dropped to the floor. My poor comrade's leg was mangled with frostbite, had been for weeks. He could not take another step. The only choice was to amputate his foot or he would slow us down to the point of death. We couldn't let that happen. That was a painful night. I wish we could have done more for him.

As the sun rose the next morning we caught sight of the whaling station. We were flabbergasted to finally see land. This was eye-wateringly beautiful. The only thing we could do to get there was stupid, deadly but our only choice. We coiled the rope under our bottoms to form a human toboggan. It was an idiotic choice but at the same time amazing! It was the first fun we had had in two years. We reached the bottom we had turned into a human snowball! Our trousers were torn and ripped but we were alive. We had survived –luckily! It was a miracle!

D. I was proud of this piece in writing. I experimented with a variety of sentence openers and people say that some of the descriptive language is really beautiful. I think I have really progressed. My teacher asked me how I felt about Storytelling Schools' methods in Year 6, what I thought had helped me and how I had improved as a writer. You can listen to our assessment dialogue if you go to the Storytelling Schools website <http://www.storytellingschools.com/evaluation-report/> and clicking on 'Yusuf tells his teacher about his writing, June 2014' and 'Teacher talks to Yusuf about his writing, June 2014'.



E. My teacher said that she was impressed by how I had become much more enthusiastic about my writing since we started Storytelling Schools. This is a story I wrote at home on my own.



Kenya, as soon as Joseph heard this news he had set out in a P996 Z LAZER PLANE which is the fastest plane in Africa. He had caught site of the Boeing 777 he fired the engine missile tranquillizer which stops the engines of the plane fired at. His shot was successful but the Boeing 777 was falling down faster than the expected speed. He used the hook to keep the plane level but the Boeing was too heavy and was bringing the P996 Z LAZER PLANE down with it, so Joseph had no choice but to let the Boeing go and let all the passengers sink into the depth of the sea. 17 days later Joseph closed the Moroccan airlines permanently and replaced it with a shopping centre.

Author: Yusuf

Illustrator: Jahid



Storytelling Planning

Below is one example of a weekly planning sheet covering the beginning of a storytelling unit. Further examples of planning grids used by teachers working in the sample of schools covered by this report can be viewed on the Storytelling Schools website <http://www.storytellingschools.com/evaluation-report/>.

Framework/ NC Objectives to be covered this week:				
Introduce, read, look for magpie words, make a story map and step the story. Make and write instructions on how to make pumpkin pie.				
Vocabulary: Magpie Wall				
	Learning Intention	Success Criteria	Whole Class Teaching (Key questions, vocabulary, demonstrating, modelling, shared reading/writing etc.) Independent Learning with Differentiation for MA, A, LA & SEND (more able, average, lower ability and pupils with special educational needs & disabilities) Highlight Teacher and Teaching Assistant focus groups with specific teaching support for these groups	PLENARY (mini plenaries during the lesson)
M	Introduce, read and look for Magpie words in the book.	Choose magpie words in the book with the children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the book to the children Read the story – look for words for our magpie wall Discuss the pictures <p>In Mixed ability groups: Children retell the story using the books.</p>	Make a display of the story
T	To make a story map	WMG Story map <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pictures Arrows Connectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell the story to the children by using actions. Make a story map of the story with the children. <p>A: Children make their own story map MA: Use connectives LA: They sort pictures into a story map</p>	Put up as display and children use their story maps to retell the story.
W	To use their story maps to step the story of The Snail and the Whale.	WMG Stepping of the story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each part of the story is a step Remind yourself of the steps by using your storymap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retell the story by using the story map and using actions Teach children how to step the story. <p>In groups of 4 children steps the story in the hall.</p>	Choose the two best groups and they step the story to the class.
TH	To tell the story of the Snail and the Whale	WMG Telling of the story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember the story Use your story map to help you Speak in a loud voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach children the actions to the story Use the story maps to support them telling of their story <p>In Mixed ability groups: Children retell the story using their story maps.</p>	