Historically, the teaching of writing has been much less of a focus than the teaching of reading. However, just as we illustrated for reading, in order to teach writing effectively it is necessary to be aware of how children learn. We return to the evidence from case-studies of children (Chapter 3, "The development of reading") in order to look at writing development. This picture of development is followed by a large section on the teaching of writing and the different views that have been expressed in relation to the importance of creativity, expression and choice.

It is important to understand the typical stages of development that children pass through in their writing. This knowledge helps you to pitch your planning and interaction at an appropriate level for the children you are teaching. People who have already experienced such development as teachers and parents are in an advantageous position. However, teachers who are inexperienced need to grasp the fundamental aspects of such development. One of the reasons for this is that it heightens your awareness of what to look for when you have the opportunity to interact with young writers.

As we showed in Chapter 3, there are a number of in-depth case studies of individual children that can help in acquiring knowledge about children's development. Studies of individual children do not act as a blueprint for all children: one of the important things that such case studies show us is that children's experiences vary greatly. However, if we focus on certain key concepts and significant milestones, these can be applied to larger groups of children. These milestones are likely to happen at roughly the same age for many children but there will be significant numbers of children whose development is different. Once again the stages of development are based on our analysis of case studies of children's writing development which more frequently feature young children's development than older children.

Tables 11.1 to 11.3 illustrate the development of children's writing through the primary school.
The teaching of writing

In Chapter 3 on the development of reading we described how the pedagogy of reading teaching had been dominated by the ‘reading wars’. As far as writing is concerned, it is much more difficult to identify a central theme to the discussions about teaching. In part, this reflects the fact that writing continues to attract less attention than reading; less research is devoted to writing and there are fewer publications on the subject. Writing also seems to attract less attention in the media although standards of spelling and grammar and more recently the use of English are hit in the news. However, overall the disagreements in relation to the teaching of writing have tended to centre on the amount of creativity and self-expression that is desirable and how these should be balanced with the curriculum. As we work through a number of key moments in the history of the writing pedagogy we will see that this central point about creativity and skills will recur.

The first national curriculum for primary schools was the elementary code of 1862 (Table 11.4). Children were tested by inspectors, and this had a direct impact on the pay that teachers would receive. It was a system called payment by result. You can see that writing teaching at that time began with copying, in the early years, and progressed to writing from dictation.

Shayer points out that:

‘Imitation’ was not simply an isolated classroom exercise, but a whole way of thinking that was taken for granted by a great many teachers, if not by the vast majority, certainly until 1920 and even beyond. Briefly, the pupil (elementary or secondary) is always expected to imitate, copy, or reproduce. (1972: 10)

He goes on to give some examples from Nelson’s Picture Essays, 1907, of typical activities of the time:

‘Describe a cow; general appearance. Horns ... teeth ... hoofs ... tail. Food. Breeds. Uses.’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you can expect</th>
<th>What you can do to help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using information sources and writing to learn</td>
<td>Support the skills of note-taking and/or tabulating information, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will redraft composition as well as transcription elements</td>
<td>Help children to see the value of redrafting to improve the final product. Support their proof-reading skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to successfully control a range of text forms and have developed expertise in favourites</td>
<td>Encourage experimentation to find types of writing that they enjoy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of writing increasing</td>
<td>Help children to control the larger structural elements such as headings and paragraphs. Discuss differences between things like emails to friends and family as opposed to formal letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing understanding of levels of formality in writing</td>
<td>Help children to enjoy the wealth of information contained in dictionaries. Show them how to use standard adult dictionaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard spelling most of the time. Efficient use of dictionaries and spell checking</td>
<td>Encourage use of full range of punctuation. Enjoy spotting things like the 'grocer's apostrophe', e.g. apple's and pears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic punctuation secure. Aware of a range of other marks</td>
<td>Support handwriting with good quality pens and other implements. Encourage proper typing when using computer keyboard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

`Write on "Our Town" as follows: 1. Introduction — Name; Meaning; Situation; Population. 2. Appearance — General appearance, chief streets, buildings, parks, etc. 3. General Remarks — Principal trades and industries. Any historical facts, etc.'

(1972: 10)

The Story of a Shilling

Hints

Where and when was it born?
What did it look like?
Who was its first owner?
What did he do with it?
Invent some adventures for it, and tell what became of it in the end.

(J. H. Fowler, A First Course in Essay-Writing, 1902)

In the describe a cow activity we see a simple three-part structure offered. For the story of a shilling the stimulus is offered through a series of questions. Although this early history of writing is fascinating, our main historical interest in this chapter begins with the 1960s.
Creative writing

As a reaction against rather formal approaches, 'creative writing' flourished in the 1960s. One of the most famous texts from this time is Alex Clegg's book The Excitement of Writing. Clegg recognised the extensive use—and potentially damaging effect—of published English schemes. As an alternative he showed examples of children's writing taken from schools which are deliberately encouraging each child to draw sensitively on his own store of words and to delight in setting down his own ideas in a way which is personal to him and stimulating to those who read what he has written.

Protherough (1978) provided a very useful summary of the impact of creative writing and his paper also signalled some of the criticisms that were emerging. Overall he felt that the creative writing movement was an important one and that 'the emphasis on personal, imaginative writing [needed] to be maintained and extended' (1978: 18). But he felt the model had some weaknesses. One of these weaknesses was the restriction on the forms of writing that were used. The teacher provided a stimulus (such as a piece of music or visual art) which was followed by an immediate response, and this implied brief personal forms of writing such as a short descriptive sketch or a brief poem. The model did not encourage the writing of other forms such as argument, plays, or even short stories. Protherough recommended that the stimulated writing is to be seen not as the end-product, but as a stage in a process. Pupils need to be helped to develop their work, and to learn from each other as well as from the teacher.

As you will see later, the process approach took these ideas forward.

By the end of the 1970s, concerns were growing about the emphasis on 'feeling' in writing teaching and the fact that much of the creative stimuli required an immediate response which did not allow for suitable reworking or redrafting. Allen (1980) pointed out that too much focus on expressive writing could lead to a lack of emphasis on more 'abstract modes'. At this time it was suggested that the teaching of writing required tighter structures that were deemed to be missing from the creative writing ideas.

One of the influential thinkers of the period, James Britton, proposed that writing could be categorised into several key forms (Figure 11.1). Britton offers a scientific report as one example of transactional writing. He argued that this kind of writing 'may elicit the statement of other views, of counter-arguments or corroborations or modifications, and is thus part of a chain of interactions between people' (1970: 175). He contrasts this with poetic writing where the reader is invited to share a particular verbal construct. The sharing of the writer's thoughts in poetic writing does not 'elicit interaction' in the same way that transactional writing does.

Britton suggested that most of children's writing produced in the primary school is expressive writing. But it develops, through Britton's transitional categories, towards transactional and poetic forms as they gain greater experience and control over their writing. Britton argued that children's expressive writing needs to adapt to the more public writing of transactional and poetic forms. Transactional writing needs to be more explicit, for the unknown reader. Poetic writing on the other hand emphasises implicit meanings in order to create 'sounds, words, images, ideas, events, feelings'. At this time there was a feeling that expressive writing could and should be a foundation for other more abstract forms. However, overall, Allen maintains that the mid- to late 1970s were characterised by uncertainty and lack of consensus on approaches to the teaching of writing.

Developmental writing

The creative writing movement can be seen as linked with philosophies such as those of Rousseau who advocated that children's free expression was vital. But there was a lack of research evidence to support claims about children's 'natural' development. One of the reasons that in-depth case studies of individual children became important was that they documented children's natural development as language users. This kind of data was also collected from larger groups of children. Harsre et al. (1984) were able to extend our knowledge of children's writing by looking at 3- and 4-year-olds. Their conclusions signalled concern about the lack of 'uninterrupted' writing in most early years settings. One of the striking features of their work was the researchers' ability to focus on the positive features of early writing rather than the deficits: an extract from 'Lessons from Lattice'—a chapter from their book—is shown in Figure 11.2.

The researchers initially confessed to being more unsure about Lattice's writing than any of the other children they studied: she was developmentally the least experienced child that they encountered. The researchers asked Lattice to write her name and anything else that she could write; she was then asked to draw a picture of herself. By positively and actively searching for evidence of

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**Figure 11.1 Britton's categorisation of forms of writing.**

Lattice’s achievements they were able to understand her writing in great depth. The following is a list of some of the knowledge that Lattice had already acquired:

- Lattice was aware of how to use writing implements and paper.
- She understood and demonstrated the difference between writing and pictures.
- She switched between writing and drawing as a strategy to maintain the flow of her writing.
- Each new mark represented a new or different concept.

She had developed some knowledge of the importance of space in relation to text.
She was aware of the permanence of meaning in relation to written language.

Another important point that Harste et al. made is that judgements about children’s writing based on the final product do not give us enough information about their writing achievements. It is only by analysing the process of writing, in addition to the product, that valid information can be gathered.

The research evidence on children’s natural literacy development led to new theories on writing pedagogy. It was argued that as children seemed to develop to a large extent by using their own natural curiosity and ability, perhaps formal teaching should take account of this reality. The theories of ‘emergent literacy’ developed alongside approaches such as ‘developmental writing’. The use of the term ‘emergent literacy’ in education was popularised by Hall (1987) in his book *The Emergence of Literacy*. The basis of the philosophy is the notion of the child as an active and motivated learner who experiments with a wide range of written forms out of a sense of curiosity and a desire to learn. Hall described emergent literacy as follows:

> It implies that development takes place from within the child ... ‘emergence’ is a gradual process. For something to emerge there has to be something there in the first place. Where emergent literacy is concerned this means the fundamental abilities children have, and use, to make sense of the world ... things usually only emerge if the conditions are right. Where emergent literacy is concerned that means in contexts which support, facilitate enquiry, respect performance and provide opportunities for engagement in real literacy acts.

(Hall 1987: 9)

The theory of emergent literacy was very closely linked with the practice of developmental writing. The following list identifies some of the key features of developmental writing and was influenced by Browne’s (1996: 21) points that characterise such writing:

1. Builds on children’s literacy experience prior to coming to school.
2. Encourages independent writing from day one of the nursery.
3. Modelling is provided by physical resources and the actions of the teacher.
4. Transcription errors are dealt with after the meaning has been established. A smaller number of errors are corrected but each one in more detail.
5. Learning to write developmentally can be slow but the benefits in future motivation for writing are the result.
6. Writing tasks emphasise purpose and real reasons.
Children have time to develop pieces of writing in depth.
The confidence to take risks is encouraged.

Developmental writing differs from the creative writing of the 1960s and 1970s in two main ways. Both approaches share the recognition that children must be given opportunities to carry out uninterrupted writing which uses their previous knowledge and experience. However, with developmental writing there is a stronger expectation that the teacher will interact, particularly with individual children, in order to take learning forward. The second difference relates to the first in that the teacher’s interaction during developmental writing is based on a high level of knowledge about common developmental patterns in the children’s writing and this informs the focus of their interaction. With these clearer pictures of development came different and more realistic expectations of children’s learning.

The freedom of developmental writing was replaced in the early 1980s by a continuing recognition of the importance of children’s self-expression, but with the realisation that routines to support the process of writing were helpful.

The process approach to writing

The uncertainty of the 1970s was finally transformed by the process writing of the 1980s. The work of the New Zealander Donald Graves became very influential, culminating in international recognition for his work and great demand for him as a keynote speaker. Czerniewska (1992: 85) described Graves as ‘one of the most seductive writers in the history of writing pedagogy’. Graves’s approach to writing became known as the ‘process approach’ and had a significant influence on the teaching of writing in the UK. It is difficult to assess exactly how many schools and teachers took up the approach in the UK but, for example, the National Writing Project and the Language in the National Curriculum Project both involved many schools in the UK, and it is clear from their reports of practice that the process approach was influential.

Frank Smith was also very popular at the time and although his theories on reading have attracted some severe criticism, his theories on writing, particularly the separation between composition and transcription, have remained better intact.

It has been argued that writing is learned by writing, by reading, and by perceiving oneself as a writer. The practice of writing develops interest and with the help of a more able collaborator provides opportunity for discovering conventions relevant to what is being written . None of this can be taught. But also none of this implies that there is no role for a teacher. Teachers must play a central part if children are to become writers, ensuring that they are exposed to informative and stimulating demonstrations and helping and encouraging them to read and to write. Teachers are influential, as models as well as guides, as children explore and discover the worlds of writing – or decide that writing is something they will never voluntarily do inside school or out. (Smith, 1982: 201)

Smith expresses some of the key ideas of the process approach and particularly the notion of children being regarded as writers from the start. However, the idea of the teacher as primarily a demonstrator, as role model, and as an ‘encourager’ has received repeated criticism because of the perception that this does not involve direct instruction. Graves’s work (which fitted with Smith’s ideas) developed classroom routines which turned such theories into a practical reality for many teachers.

One of the fundamental principles of Graves’s process approach was downplayed in the UK. He was quite clear that children needed to be offered choices in their writing.

Children who are fed topics, story starters, lead sentences, even opening paragraphs as a steady diet for three or four years, rightfully panic when topics have to come from them . Writers who do not learn to choose topics wisely lose out on the strong link between voice and subject . The data show that writers who learn to choose topics well make the most significant growth in both information and skills at the point of best topic.

With best topic the child exercises strongest control, establishes ownership, and with ownership, pride in the piece. (Graves, 1983: 21)

This choice was not the restricted kind offered when a teacher has decided the form of writing. Graves advocated that children should select the topic and form of the writing. Graves’s most popular work Writing: Teachers and Children at Work is frequently cited as an account of the process approach. But as Wyse (1998) showed in Primary Writing, teachers in England used the process approach in quite different ways to those characterised by Graves.

The genre theorists

In the late 1980s the popularity and optimism of the process approach began to be attacked by a group of Australian academics called the ‘genre theorists’. The tide began to turn away from the importance of self-expression towards greater emphasis on skills and direct instruction. The three authors who perhaps have been referred to most in relation to genre theory are J. R. Martin, Frances Christie and Joan Rothery. One of the key texts from 1987 was The Place of Genre in Learning where these three authors put forward some of their ideas as a response to other authors in the book. They also offered some criticisms of the process approach.
In a section of Martin et al.'s chapter they examine the notion of 'freedom' during the process approach. They ask a series of important questions:

What is freedom? Is a progressive process writing classroom really free? Does allowing children to choose their own topics, biting one's tongue in conferences and encouraging ownership, actually encourage the development of children's writing abilities?

(Martin et al., 1987: 77)

To answer these questions the authors report on a school in the Australian Northern Territory with a large population of Aboriginal children. They claimed that over the course of the year the children had only written about one of four topics: (a) visiting friends and relatives; (b) going hunting for bush tucker; (c) sporting events; (d) movies or TV shows they had seen (ibid.: 77).

However, as Wyse (1993) showed, the process approach can have the opposite effect. The following is a snapshot of children's writing carried out during a writing workshop. It also gives a contextual background pointing to the origin of the idea and indication of the nature of teacher support given during a writing conference:

**Computer Games and How to Cheat.**

The two pupils came up with the idea. The teacher suggested a survey of other children in the school who might be able to offer ways of getting through the levels on computer games. The teacher also suggested a format for the writing work.

**A Book of Patterns.**

Self-generated idea with the teacher offering guidance on the amount of text that would be required and the nature of that text.

**Secret Messages.**

Various secret messages were included in the book which the reader had to work out. This was aimed at the younger children and involved a series of descriptions of unknown objects which the reader had to find around the school.

**Tools Mania.**

A flair for practical design technology projects resulted in one of the pair of pupils choosing this topic which involved writing a manual for the use of tools. Both pupils found the necessary expository writing a challenge.

**The New Girl.**

A survey of practical design technology projects carried out in one of the pair of pupils resulting in this text which included a means of exploring some of her own feelings when she first arrived.

**Football Magazine.**

The two boys used pop-art-style cartoons for their illustrations as a means of appealing to the younger children. The teacher gave some input on the balance of forms. The two boys used ideas from various professional magazines combining photographs with their own text.

**Information about Trains.**

Great interest in one of the school's information books which included an impressive pull-out section of a large drawing of a train. At this time the work in progress consisted of a large drawing of a train. The teacher had concerns that concentration on the drawing could become a strategy for avoiding writing.

**Football Story.**

The pupil worked unaided only requesting the teacher's support to check transcription.

**Kitten for Nicole.**

This was an advanced piece of narrative, the teacher made minor suggestions for improving the ending. Unfortunately the child decided she didn't like the text and started on a new one without publishing this.

**For Young Children.**

The two boys used pop-art-style cartoons for the illustrations as a means of appealing to the younger children. The teacher gave some input on the balance of forms. The two boys used ideas from various professional magazines combining photographs with their own text.

**A Book of Children's Games.**

Using a book from home the pupil chose her favourite games and transcribed them in her own words.

**A Book of Patterns.**

Self-generated idea with the teacher offering guidance on the amount of text that would be required and the nature of that text.
The Magic Coat
An expertly presented dual language story which had been written with help from the child’s mother for the Urdu script. The home computer had also been used to create borders and titles. The teacher’s role simply involved taking an interest in the progress.

Catchphrase
Pupil’s doodling had given the teacher an idea for an activity which involved devising catchphrases based on the television programme. This pupil decided to compile a book of her own catchphrases.

Chintu~tg
Originally two pupils had been encouraged to devise and sell a school magazine. This included market research around the school, design, word processing, editing other children’s contributions, selling, accounting, etc. This was a large-scale project and the original editors felt they would like to delegate the responsibility for the second issue to someone else, so two new editors took over.

Newspaper
The idea came from the two pupils but coincided fortuitously with a competition organised by the local paper encouraging students to design their own paper. The children asked various people around the school to offer stories. Layout became an important issue. The children brought in their own camera and took pictures to illustrate their text. BBC and Acorn computers were both used, necessitating understanding of two different word processors.

Modern Fairy Tale
The two pupils were struggling for an idea so the teacher suggested they contact another school to find out the kinds of books they liked with a view to writing one for them. The school was in a deprived area and had many more bilingual children than the two pupils were used to. They realised that their initial questionnaire would need modification if it was to be used again. The children at the other school expressed a preference for traditional stories so the two pupils decided to write a modern fairy tale. They were encouraged by the teacher to ask the opinion of bilingual peers on suitable subject matter and some information about India.

Joke Book
The two pupils surveyed the children in the school for good jokes. This was a popular title and had been done before in the course of the year.

Knight rider
A book based on the favourite television programme of the pupil.

It can be seen from this list that the children were involved in a large range of ideas and formats. Many of the ideas are firmly rooted in the children’s interests and culture. A significant proportion of the texts involved children collaborating in twos or threes as well as those children who wrote individually. The flexibility of the workshop allowed for a range of groupings that were influenced by the piece of writing concerned and the children’s social needs. This organisation also reflected the nature of language and literacy as a social phenomenon.

Writing workshop offers the potential for a much greater range of texts which are created using the children’s intrinsic motivation. Another major benefit is the opportunity for study in depth over a long period of time. Set written tasks often have a deadline, too often this can be to start and finish on the same day. Writing workshop the session is timetabled and the children decide on the task. This means that the children are thinking about their writing prior to the day itself. Often they will be working on texts at home (an important test of their interest in school activities) which they bring in to continue. Having the time to continue with a text for as long as it takes is an important principle. The result can be texts which are longer and written with more thought.

Martin et al.’s answer to the perceived problems of the process approach was didactic teaching on the structure and range of various genres that are available. For example, if a teacher were reading Little Red Riding Hood, they might refer to the stages of a genre. In the narrative genre it is suggested that these stages are ‘Orientation, Complication and Resolution’. Later in the chapter Martin et al. suggest that these could be added to: ‘Abstract/Orientation/Complication/Evaluation/Resolution/Coda’ (Chapter 5, ‘Working with texts’).

Their strong views on direct instruction are illustrated by a specific criticism of Graves’s (1983) work. They examine an extract from Graves’s seminal book:

Mr Sitka: What is this paper about, Anton?
Anton: Well, I’m not sure. At first I thought it was going to be about when we won the game in overtime with the penalty kick. But then I got going on how our team had won because we were in such good shape for overtime. You see, the other team hardly move at the end. Took me way back to our earlier practices when I hated the coach so much. Gosh, I don’t know what it’s about.

Mr Sitka: Where are you now in the draft?
Anton: Oh, I’ve just got the part down about when we won in overtime.

Mr Sitka: So, you’ve just got started then. Well, it’s probably too early to tell what it’s about. What did you figure to do with the next draft then?
The development of writing

The Primary National Strategy Framework

In spite of a number of serious criticisms (Barrs, 1991; Cairney, 1992), the views of the genre theorists proved to be influential. Consequently, genre theories were a dominant feature of the National Literary Strategy Framework for Teaching (DfEE, 1998). There was an equal emphasis on fiction and non-fiction that had been informed by the view that there was too much story writing happening in primary schools. The goals for written composition no longer emphasised personal choice, writing to interest and excite readers, finding a vehicle for expression, writing to explore cross-curricular themes, writing as art, but were much more about the analysis of genre structures. The importance of writing for real purposes and reasons in order to communicate meaning was replaced by an emphasis on textual analysis as the main stimulus for composition.

Building on genre theories, the work of Wray and Lewis (1997) had a significant influence on the writing pedagogy of the NLS. They identified a four-stage model:

1. Demonstration — The teacher ‘thinks aloud’ as they demonstrate the writing process. This includes mental processes that go through the head while writing as well as information and skills. Examples are shown to the children.
2. Joint activity — Teacher and child(ren) engage in shared writing. Children are encouraged to contribute as much as possible to the writing under the guidance of the teacher.
3. Supported activity — The teacher sets a task but continues to support children as they need help.
4. Individual activity — Children write independently with minimal support when required.

However, Wray and Lewis pointed out that:

"It is, arguably, equally as damaging to hold back learners by insisting they go through the same programme of support and practice as everyone else as it is to rush learners through such a programme when they need a more extensive programme of support."

This message was not heeded well enough, resulting in an approach to writing that at times became a mantra. The standards of writing over the period showed only modest gains, less than those for reading which were also modest, so it seems that more work needs to be done to better understand writing pedagogy.

The PNS Framework retains many of the features of the NLS approach, particularly the emphasis on analysis of text types, but with some additions. The dominant model consists of four phases:
1. Read and analyse features of the text type.
2. Explore the text type through a range of activities including oral ones.
3. The teacher demonstrates writing.
4. Children write the featured text type and evaluate their writing based on the teacher’s criteria.

One of the dangers of any well-specified approach is that it can become a rather inflexible model. There is also the important question of what evidence there is to support such an approach.

One of the characteristics of the more recent research on writing pedagogy is that much has been done by looking at non-fiction genres but less on the writing of fiction and very little on forms of writing such as poetry. Andrews et al.’s (2006) systematic review looked at the writing of argumentative non-fiction writing. Their main findings with regard to the context for writing teaching were that the following were important:

- A writing process model in which students are encouraged to plan, draft, edit and revise their writing.
- Self-motivation (personal target-setting as part of self-regulated strategy development).
- Some degree of cognitive reasoning training in addition to the natural cognitive development that takes place with maturation.
- Peer collaboration, thus modelling a dialogue that (it is hoped) will become internal and constitute ‘thought’.

(Andrews et al., 2006: 32)

They also suggested some specific interventions that were successful, including support to use the structures and devices that aid the composition of argumentative writing: the use of oral argument to inform the written argument; identification of explicit goals including the audience for the writing; teacher modelling; and the teacher coaching writing during the process. These lists of aspects which are part of effective pedagogy do in some ways relate to the PNS model but the research shows this is a much more complex and subtle picture. Andrews et al. also point out that the recommendations were not universally shared by the studies that they looked at. One of the limitations of these outcomes is that the recommendations for practice cannot be related to the writing of fiction or poetry. At the heart of these and other forms is the use of imagination, and the extent of the originality and quality of ideas are paramount concerns. But these are only measurable if children are actually given choices over the topic and form of their writing. The links between genre theories, structured teaching and individuality were explicitly addressed by Donovan and Smolkin (2002). Their study examined the use of scaffolding in a range of writing tasks including story writing and non-fiction writing. One of their key findings based on evidence that writers’ personal interests could result in improved writing was about the importance of author aim, which was explained as a keen sense of the audience for the writing linked with personal intentions and motives:

Author aim reintroduces individuality to the writing landscape, a point with which certain Systemic Functional linguists [the theoretical tradition to which the genre theorists were linked] were not particularly comfortable... we are not distressed by the idea of instructing children in form. We are, however, concerned that individuals, authors, and their aims receive so little focus in considerations of structure-based instruction.

(ibid.: 462)

There is very little evidence in the PNS that author aim is a central concern nor are children to be regularly encouraged to exercise individual choices. The question as to whether opportunities to make choices is important can, as we have shown, be addressed by research. However, this matter is also a question of values. You may feel that offering genuine choices periodically during a child’s early years and primary schooling is ethically necessary and that this could result in children being more motivated to write.

**Practice points**

- Improve your observation and interaction skills by increasing your knowledge of writing development.
- Make decisions on how and when you will offer choices.
- Use your observations to adjust your planning for writing so that children’s actual needs are met.

**Glossary**

Construct – in this context the word is a noun – as opposed to a verb – and means a specific way of thinking about something.

Pedagogy – approaches to teaching.

Transactional writing – concerned with getting things done, e.g. information, instructions, persuasion, etc.

**References**


**Annotated bibliography**


Offers conclusions on effective pedagogy for the teaching of written argument.


An extremely thorough and insightful account of one child's development.