

# PETAA Resources

## Pathway (PRP)

### **Teaching writing for purpose: Moving from modelled, to shared, to independent writing (across text types)**

This series of teaching writing staff meeting professional learning sessions guides school leaders in informing and extending their team's capability to teach the writing of a variety of genres and text types and their purposes in the primary classroom.

#### **AC v.9 related content descriptions**

AC9EFLY01, AC9EFLY03, AC9E1LY03, AC9E1LY06, AC9E2LY03, AC9E2LY05, AC9E2LY06, AC9E3LY03, AC9E3LE05, AC9E3LY06, AC9E4LY03, AC9E4LY06, AC9E5LY03, AC9E5LY04, AC9E5LY06, AC9E6LY06, AC9E6LA08, AC9E6LY07

#### **NSW Syllabus related codes**

ENE-CW-01, EN1-CWT-01, EN2-CWT-01, EN2-CWT-02, EN2-CWT-03, EN3-CWT-01

#### **Professional teaching standards**

2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4.

Participation in this series of staff meetings additionally addresses standards 6.2 and 6.3

#### **Learning goals**

- Understand the role of writing for purpose in the broader English literacy context, as described in the Australian Curriculum V.9.
- Understand how to teach writing for purpose in the context of a teaching and learning cycle.
- Unpack the language highlights relevant to each text type and genre.
- Become familiar with research of some experts in the field.
- Understand the role of model texts and modelled writing in the teaching and learning process.
- Develop a strategic and explicit approach to the teaching of writing for purpose.

## Staff Meeting 1: What do we mean by genre and writing for purpose?

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [this chapter excerpt from \*Put it in writing\*](#) by Joanne Rossbridge and Kathy Rushton, which provides an excellent introduction to what we mean by genre and its social purpose, as well as the critical role of language in teaching students about writing genres.
- In addition, teachers can watch the [“refresher” PETAA video](#) on what genre theory is.
- Provide [this table overview of genres](#), according to the categories of Imaginative, Informative and Persuasive texts used in the Australian Curriculum: English.

**Activity 1:** Have a group discussion about the pre-reading and any reactions to it. Depending on the level of experience in your staff, you could consider asking questions like:

1. How familiar were you already with genre theory?
2. How do you already use intentional choice of genre to teach writing in your classroom?
3. What genres do you have planned for this term or next? Which mentor text(s) are you using to exemplify that genre? (possibly display the [overview of genres table](#))
4. How confident are you with the purpose and language highlights/patterns for that genre?

**Activity 2:** Put your teachers into pairs or groups of 3, trying to match more experienced teachers with less experienced teachers. Give each pair/group a model text printed out on A4 or A3 paper (to save time, use [the models we have available for download here!](#)). Ask them to identify:

- Which genre (or at least text type/category) they think the text belongs to;
- What language features reinforce their thinking;
- Can they identify any text structures that reinforce their thinking?

Have the pairs/groups each briefly present back their text and findings to the group. Then discuss:

1. What was the value in this exercise? (It’s in essence what we will be asking students to do as part of our teaching and learning cycle)
2. How easy or hard did you find it?
3. What additional knowledge did you bring to the exercise that helped you? (Could be field-related, or grammar and language-related)

## Staff Meeting 2: Unpacking the teaching and learning cycle in relation to teaching writing for purpose (Part 1)

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [this chapter excerpt from \*Put it in writing\*](#) by Joanne Rossbridge and Kathy Rushton, which gives an overview of the teaching and learning cycle used consistently throughout this PETAA Resource Pathway.
- Teachers should bring 1 or 2 model texts they are currently using in the classroom.

- PL leader should bring butchers paper, post-its and pens.

**Activity 1 (Building the field):** Separate your teachers into small groups for discussion. Provide each group with butchers paper and pens.

1. Each group should write down all building the field / orienting activities they have used, or know of, one per post-it (e.g. excursions, reading books, watching videos, examining or creating diagrams).
2. Once each group has finished, have them write the 3 text types (imaginative, informative and persuasive) onto a separate piece of butchers paper and write out (or transfer post-its) to which text type particularly benefits from a field-building activity (multiple post-its will be needed for some activities where they work well in all 3 types).
3. Bring the group back together to compare and discuss their findings. Were any new activities discovered in the process?

**Activity 2 (Modelled writing):** All watch [this video on Teaching modelled writing](#) (36 minutes) together:

- *Pause the video at 4.51.* Have the group discuss the role and timing of modelled writing within the teaching and learning sequence and the writing process. Prompt questions could include:
  - Why do you feel modelled writing is a critical part of the teaching and learning cycle?
  - Are there particular text types or genres that you feel modelled writing is even more critical a part of the cycle? Why? What does it allow you to do with your students in relation to that genre?
- *Pause the video again at 15.32.* Ask the group to share whether they typically compose their own model texts, or use mentor/source texts as their models. Why? What are the benefits? What are the limitations or downsides of each?
- *Pause the video again at 23.18.* Which of these strategies do the teachers currently employ to make language features explicit during modelled writing? Do they use any others they find particularly successful?

Following the video, have teachers spend 10 minutes analysing one of the model texts they brought with them. Thinking back to what Joanne just covered in the video, how well do they think this text is actually addressing the language features, purpose, context and audience for the required genre? Can they identify any areas for improvement? If this was a sourced, not self-written text, are they now considering writing their own fit-for-purpose model text?

*You could choose to have teachers swap and analyse each other's texts, depending on the culture and experience within your own team's context.*

### Follow up activity:

- Have each teacher attempt to write their own model text for a unit of work they are currently teaching, or planning on teaching. Share amongst the group, including annotations and analysis on specific language feature choices relevant to the chosen genre.

### Extension activity:

- Have your team take PETAA's [Scaffolding using model texts](#) online course to support them in developing the skills and process to write their own model texts. Remember - [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) all have [free access to this course!](#) (Make sure you're logged in to self-enrol.)

### Staff Meeting 3: Unpacking the teaching and learning cycle in relation to teaching writing for purpose (Part 2)

#### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [PETAA Paper 196: The critical conversation about text. Joint construction](#) by Joanne Rossbridge and Kathy Rushton.
- Teachers should each bring 1 - 2 student samples of independent writing (if they have them). Alternatively, ask them to email them in advance, so you can compile in PPT and show on the screen.

**Activity 1 (Joint construction):** Video example of teacher in class demonstrating joint construction (13 minutes). [Watch the video as a group](#). Discuss the following questions either as you go, or at the end of the video:

- What do you notice about the teacher talk from Joanne Rossbridge throughout this video? What techniques and strategies is she employing throughout the joint construction process? (e.g. questioning, reframing, powering up/powering down)
- What is the genre of the text they are constructing? How does Joanne bring in genre to this process? (e.g. purpose, audience, writer, context)
- Do you see evidence of Joanne using the conversation to move students along the mode continuum as they orally discuss the text, before committing to written?

*If you have a large number of inexperienced teachers on your staff, it could be good to include a role play here, with either yourself, or a strong, experienced teacher, acting in the teacher role, and conducting a joint construction exercise with the group. If you pick a fun or possibly a contentious topic, this can be a great way to demonstrate the teacher skills and strategies required.*

**Activity 2 (Independent writing):** Video (37 minutes). [Watch the video as a group](#). (Provided you watched the modelled writing video, you can skip the video from 3.54-7.18 as there is repetition of information about the T&L cycle.) Discuss the following questions as a group:

- *Pause video at 18.35.* How do you currently check for students' preparedness for independent writing vs. supported writing tasks? Consider the most recent independent writing task that was undertaken in your classroom.
- *Pause video at 28.50.* Passion, interest and student agency in writing is often critical to success (particularly for students who do not naturally enjoy the writing process). How do you incorporate individual or groups of students' interest and agency into

independent writing activities? How can this be aligned with learning objectives and the chosen genre?

**Activity 3 (Independent writing):** Have the teachers each share in turn their student work samples they chose to bring. What age child did the work shown? What was the task prompt and learning objective? **Why did they choose to bring it?** What did they, as the teacher, learn from this independent writing task?

## Staff Meeting 4: Teaching the writing of imaginative text genres

### Requirements:

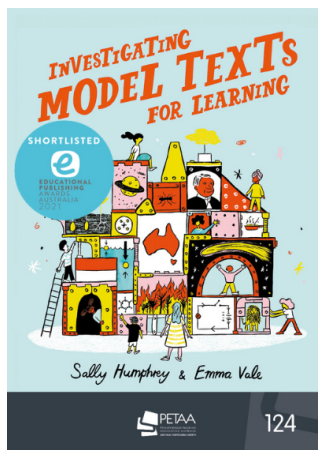
- Teachers should pre-read [this excerpt](#) from award-winning *A new literature companion for teachers, 3rd edition* by Lorraine McDonald.
- Teachers should pre-watch this short video by Brett Healey [Examining grammar choice in narrative writing](#).
- Teachers should bring along a preferred quality piece of literature they either currently use in their classroom, have done recently, or are planning to.

**Activity 1:** Watch this video, [Reading model texts as a bridge to writing](#) by Beverly Derewianka. Only watch from 1.20 - 9.52 (you can use the remainder of the video if you wish to in Staff Meeting 5 on informative texts). In the video, Bev highlights a couple of narrative texts she loves to use in the classroom, picking out specific grammatical, visual, and vocabulary features that make them worthwhile for investigation. Go around the group and ask them about the text they brought with them today - why do they love it? What makes it worthy of in-depth analysis and use in a literacy classroom?

**Activity 2:** Video (5 minutes) [Moving from explorers of text types to writers \(narrative writing\)](#). Watch this short case study example of a school supporting their students to transition from readers to writers of narrative texts. What were your thoughts on the Cambourne Condition of Learning chart, as applied in this context? What aspects of it resonated with you in your approach to teaching imaginative or narrative writing in the classroom? (Or other kinds of writing!)

**Activity 3: Conducting writing conferences** Skip to 1.24 in [this short video with Brett Healey](#) on steps to conferring with young writers. Using Brett's approach as a jumping point (and you can always read [Chapter 4 from Beverly Derewianka's Exploring how texts work 2nd edition](#), which is about Mr B and his process for teaching narratives in his Year 4 class if you'd like a further example!), discuss in pairs or small groups how you conduct writing conferences, particularly with regards to narrative, or other forms of imaginative, writing.

### Extension text:



For Staff sessions 4 - 6, schools wishing their teachers to have an in-depth knowledge of the language features, text structure and phases of different genres, should consider purchasing [Investigating model text for learning](#) by Sally Humphrey and Emma Vale. In addition to 35% discount off RRP for PETAA members, email us at [info@petaa.edu.au](mailto:info@petaa.edu.au) to enquire about bulk purchase discounts.

### Extension activities:

- If you liked the video above from Brett Healey, check out his full online course on [Creative writing: The link between grammar and imagination](#) (upper primary only). Remember - [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) all have [free access to this course!](#) (Make sure you're logged in to self-enrol.)
- For those wishing to dive in deeper to other genres of informative texts, we recommend the following resources: [PETAA paper 223: We're going on a Quest!](#) by Dr Lorraine (Lorri) Beveridge

## Staff Meeting 5: Teaching the writing of informative text genres

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [Chapter 5 from Beverly Derewianka's Exploring how texts work 2nd Edition](#) (pages numbered 57 - 63 are the most important section).
- Teachers can bring a recent, current or planned unit of work that uses an informative text genre as its model and potential writing assessment task. Alternatively, one sample/exemplar unit could be provided to teachers in advance, to use in this session.

**Activity 1:** Video (39 minutes). Watch this video on [Teaching writing: Informative texts](#) as a group. Questions you could discuss are:

- *Pause the video around 13.50* (you may choose to listen to Joanne on this slide before opening the discussion). When planning to teach informative texts, are these questions all ones that we ask ourselves? How do the responses to these questions shape or influence our planning? Considering the unit(s) that have been brought to this session, were all these questions considered in the planning for this? What would we change if using all of these considerations?



- *Pause the video again at 32.46.* Refer back to the pre-reading from *Exploring how texts work*. How did Rouba's modelling of an Information Report differ to Joanne's? What was similar? What parts of each process resonate for your students and your context?

**Activity 2:** Place teachers into pairs or groups of 3 based on same or similar year levels. Assign each group an informative Science or HASS model text ([using PETAA's model texts to save time](#)) and have them briefly plan out:

1. Field-building activities that would be needed in their classrooms considering the background knowledge of their students;
2. What language features and vocabulary would need to be explicitly taught considering both students' knowledge and the genre?
3. A written assessment task that could flow on from this model text (The Australian Curriculum codes with each model text will help to identify learning objectives for the assessment).

### Extension activities

For those wishing to dive in deeper to other genres of informative texts, we recommend the following resources:

- [PETAA paper 219: Exploring explanations: The how and why of things](#) by Katina Zammit.
- [PETAA Paper 218: Rocks in the head: Children and the language of geography](#) by Beverly Derewianka.
- Have a look through PETAA's [cross-curriculum teaching units](#) for a multitude of quality informative texts and how to use them in your classroom, including writing tasks and assessments! (Note: the link will take you to Science, but you can use the tabs to change subject.)

## Staff Meeting 6: Teaching the writing of persuasive text genres

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [PETAA Paper 178: Writing persuasive texts](#) by Penny Hutton.

**Activity 1:** Video (34 minutes). Watch the video [Teaching writing persuasive texts](#) as a group.

- *Pause the video at 5.14.* Persuasive texts are often considered the most "difficult" text type to teach. Which of the text genres on screen right now have the teachers used in their classrooms in the last 12 months? Or plan to in the next 12 months? What do they enjoy about using these text genres for writing in the classroom? What do they find challenging?
- *Pause the video at 8.07.* Meaningful contexts and purposes for writing - in pairs, or as a whole group, have the teachers consider what might be meaningful contexts and purposes for their students' contexts, in relation to persuasive writing. What other subjects areas naturally connect to these genres?

**Activity 2:** Place teachers into pairs or groups of 3 based on same or similar year levels. Assign each group an English or HPE persuasive model text ([using PETAA's model texts to save time](#)). English - Book reviews, Argument, Civic persuasion; HPE - Exposition) and have them briefly plan out:

1. Field-building activities that would be needed in their classrooms considering the background knowledge of their students;
2. What language features and vocabulary would need to be explicitly taught considering both students' knowledge and the genre?
3. A written assessment task that could flow on from this model text (The Australian Curriculum codes with each model text will help to identify learning objectives for the assessment).

**Alternative Activity 2:** Use the suggested assessment criteria [provided in this article](#) (taken from Penny Hutton's PETAA paper in the pre-reading), either use [PETAA's model texts](#) or provide your own unmarked student writing samples, and have the teachers in pairs or small groups identify which criteria would be suitable for this piece of writing, and how they feel the writing piece achieved when compared to the criteria. All groups feedback and compare and discuss their identified criteria and decisions.

### Extension activity:

- Take [Joanne Rossbridge's online course: Joint construction \(Persuasive texts\)](#) as a team to help tackle what is typically viewed as the most challenging text type to teach (this course caters more to upper primary teachers). Remember - [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) all have [free access to this course!](#) (Make sure you're logged in to self-enrol.)

## Where to next?

***We want to learn more about genre, language features and explore case studies of teaching different genres at different year levels.*** Then Beverly Derewianka's online course based on her seminal text *Exploring how texts work* can support all teachers in this. As always, [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) can [access the full course for free](#).

***We want more on the writing process, metalanguage and planning for explicit writing lessons.*** We're working on the next PETAA Resource Pathway on the writing process! But in the meantime, why not check out Professor Debra Myhill's [Using metalanguage to talk about writing course](#)? Once again, [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) can access the full course for free.

***We want to work with Joanne one-on-one for our school to receive coaching and training in this area.*** Reach out to [helen.carmody@petaa.edu.au](mailto:helen.carmody@petaa.edu.au) to discuss options and fees, as well as Joanne's availability.