

WRITING STORIES 5–14: WHAT MUST TEACHERS TEACH?

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SYNOPSIS

Concerns have been expressed about the teaching of writing, particularly the teaching of imaginative writing, in Scottish primary schools (AAP, 1993; SOEID, 1996). ‘English Language 5–14’ (SOED, 1991) provides a framework for the teaching of writing but there has been limited debate about the models it provides, and even less analysis of the teaching content and its potential to support the teaching of story writing. This paper argues that the definition of teaching content for imaginative writing in ‘English Language 5–14’ is problematic and that the definitions of process and context are not sufficiently coherent to provide a sound basis for planning and teaching story writing. It indicates how the writing criteria applied to National Tests of writing may compound these problems. It argues the need for a framework which clearly defines the specific teaching content of story writing which can be integrated with context and process and illustrates one possible model.

INTRODUCTION

The framework of guidance on writing in ‘English Language 5–14’ (SOED, 1991) and a National Test programme for the assessment of writing are now firmly established in Scottish primary schools. The secondary school picture is less consistent. Some have yet to introduce national testing and need to ‘accelerate the implementation of 5–14 curriculum and assessment guidelines’ (SOEID, 1996).

‘English Language 5–14’ was the first in the series of national curriculum guidelines to be published. There has been wide analysis and discussion of the general model provided by the guidelines (Adams, 1994) and some concern about their lack of acknowledgement of current debates on the teaching of reading and writing (Macdonald, 1994). The English Language guidelines, however, have not generated the theoretical and pedagogical analysis that has surrounded the publication of guidelines in other curricular areas (Carr, 1992; Bryce, 1993; Hanlon, 1993).

The Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) in its survey of English Language, conducted in 1992, reported on imaginative writing as an area of weakness in Scottish primary schools. The survey indicated that P5 children seemed to know what writing a story meant but they ‘seemed unaware of how to write an effective story, so that many rambled and included irrelevant details.’ (Napuk *et al.*, 1993). At the P7 stage, many of the stories written by pupils were ‘mundane and derivative, lacked coherent narrative structure, had a weak story-line and were laden with irrelevant detail’ (Napuk *et al.*, 1993).

More recent HMI reports indicate that the teaching of writing continues to be a matter of concern. The HMI report ‘Standards and Quality in Scottish Schools 1992–95’ identifies standards of attainment in talking, listening and reading in English language as key strengths in primary schools, but states that ‘Primary schools and education authorities need to improve standards in ... writing in “English Language 5–14”’ (SOEID, 1996).

In the light of this it is important that the curriculum guidance on the teaching of writing, particularly imaginative writing, offered in ‘English Language 5–14’ and the support it offers is subjected to theoretical analysis and reflection. A robust curriculum framework for the teaching of writing should enable teachers to define the purpose, content and progression of teaching and to make appropriate decisions

about how and when to integrate content, context, process or to focus on one aspect in particular.

Our analysis shows that the definition of teaching content for the writing curriculum in 'English Language 5–14' is problematic and that the definitions of process and context are not sufficiently coherent to provide a sound basis for planning and teaching. Moreover, it indicates how the criteria applied in the National Test for writing may compound these problems. It questions the extent to which 'English Language 5–14', rather than looking forward for analysis and development of a writing policy for the 1990s, looked backwards to ideas enshrined in the policies of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Although many of the arguments apply generally to the writing strands, for the purposes of this paper, analysis and discussion will focus on the Imaginative Writing strand and specifically on writing stories.

THE CONTEXT OF 5–14

The guidance in 'English Language 5–14' is set within the framework established by the consultation document 'Curriculum and Assessment in Scotland, A Policy for the 1990s' (SED, 1989). The policy was produced as a result of unease about curriculum progression, coherence, continuity and balance and the Government's wish to demonstrate an appropriate curriculum which could be seen to be assessed.

'English Language 5–14' sought:

to offer a framework clearly establishing the most important features of this curricular area;

to identify the aims of study, the ground to be covered, the way that learning should progress and how pupil's attainment should be monitored;

to provide attainment targets which represent progression in learning within the strand, each target demanding more complex or sophisticated knowledge, understanding or skills than the previous one. (SOED, 1991)

The implied intention is that 5–14 is to offer a clear, informed and up to date framework for the curriculum. Writing, along with talking, listening and reading is one of the four outcomes in 'English Language 5–14'. The writing outcome has seven strands: functional writing, personal writing, imaginative writing, punctuation and structure, spelling, handwriting and presentation, knowledge about language and 31 attainment targets progressing from levels A to E in each strand. Programmes of study give more detailed advice on possible work in the classroom.

The intention to institute a framework for National Testing was integral to the 5–14 programme (SED, 1987). External tests in reading, writing and mathematics administered at P4 and P7 were introduced. Later, the requirement for testing at predetermined stages was abandoned due to sustained opposition from teachers and from parents, who withdrew two thirds of the eligible pupils from the National Test trials in 1991 and 1992 (Brown, 1994). The current National Test programme established in 1992, requires teachers to test all children from P1 to S2 using externally derived test items and criteria only when the teacher's own assessment has indicated that the pupils attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has reached the next level of attainment.

The National Test framework for writing was devised by the 5–14 Assessment Unit which operated through a National Committee made up of teachers, advisors and college lecturers. Work to build up an item bank of tests was undertaken by a series of local groups whose brief was to devise tests that were related to typical writing tasks in the classroom. These groups worked to national marking criteria,

selecting those criteria which applied to specific tasks. It has not been made clear how the national criteria were derived. Initial trialling produced changes in the test items and wider implementation produced three successive changes in the respective weighting given to elements such as handwriting in determining the level a child had achieved.

UNDERPINNING ASSUMPTIONS AND INFLUENCES

The theoretical base of 'English Language 5–14' has not been made explicit. It has consistently been claimed that the advice given in 5–14 was based on best practice in schools. The Review and Development group (RDG1) responsible for preparing the guidelines on English language included personnel who were familiar with recent research, who had experience of work in classrooms and who were able to build on the substantial SCCC curriculum development initiatives, which were influenced by national and international perspectives.

Good practice in writing had previously been framed by three policy documents from the Committee On Primary Education (COPE). The first, 'Hand in Your Writing' (COPE, 1981), set out a 'major policy statement on writing in the primary school'. It presented a framework for teaching and assessment based on three elements: a developmental view of language use, the type of writing and some general characteristics of writing. Of several planned follow-up documents, two were produced: 'Mr Togs the Tailor' (COPE, 1982) presented a 'fully worked out example of one of the approaches to writing' and 'Responding to Writing' (COPE, 1986) explored 'the problems of assessing and responding to children's writing'.

It would seem reasonable to assume that 'Hand in Your Writing' framed the teaching, learning and content issues for the writing curriculum, 'Mr Togs the Tailor' exemplified aspects of these in practice and 'Responding to Writing' set out the assessment issues and approaches. All the documents came from the same source, COPE, made frequent reference to each other and implicitly offered a coherent view of what was to be taught, and how.

Three types of writing were identified in 'Hand In Your Writing' (COPE, 1981). These were based on the 'nature of the things that we experience'. It defined report writing as recall of experiences, stories as imagined experience and record writing as observed experience. Progression was defined by cross referencing the types of writing with developmental categories which reflected the perspective, purpose and audience awareness of the writer.

The 5–14 framework also identifies three types of writing, defined in terms of Functional, Personal and Imaginative writing strands. For Functional and Personal writing, the attainment targets set goals described in terms of purpose and topic. The Imaginative Writing attainment targets are described in terms of formats — stories, poems, and dialogue — and genre. Progression between the attainment target levels is described in terms of length, format, vocabulary and organisation of the writing. The programmes of study flesh out possible contexts and teaching techniques.

The definition of the types of writing in the COPE documents (1981; 1986) was in terms of the context that generates the writing. In 'English Language 5–14', the overriding distinction also seems to be the context in which the writing takes place — functional writing, within a context of practical activities, personal writing within a context of the child's feelings and imaginative writing within a context of imagined experience. The definitions rest on the activities from which the writing arose and the presumed motivation of the writer rather than a clear identification of what is essential and distinctive about each type of writing.

The attraction of using a framework that is couched in terms of experiences or context is that it may inform forward planning by highlighting the range of contexts in which children should write. However, it leaves the teacher unsupported in identifying

the teaching content — what is specifically important in these experiences. The absence of such a definition in ‘English Language 5–14’ can lead to confusion about the nature of the teaching content for each of the three types of writing. For example, the programme of study for level A, Personal Writing, suggests that ‘when pupils compose, their own stories may consist of a single sentence’. Does this mean that the teaching content of personal writing is about writing stories, and, if so, is Personal Writing a subset of Imaginative Writing? To what extent do different sets of teaching and assessment criteria apply? The National Test programme circumvents these problems by taking a pragmatic approach. It classifies test items into imaginative, imaginative/personal or functional writing, identifying relevant criteria on a separate marking sheet for each test item.

The reliance in both the COPE documents and in ‘English Language 5–14’ on contextual definitions, and the lack of a clear identification of what is distinctive about the nature of functional, personal and imaginative writing, inevitably provides a problematic base which leads to questions about the appropriate teaching content, balance and purpose of each strand.

PROBLEMATIC MODELS OF CONTENT FOR STORY WRITING

The Imaginative Writing strand identifies that children must learn to write stories, but does not clearly state the key elements of a story — that a story needs characters, a setting, a problem and a resolution. The attainment targets refer to these elements, but at different levels, implying an ‘add-on’ model of story writing in which children start by writing about simple actions or contexts (level A) and only later progress to characters, settings and plots. Yet common sense and theory indicate that children experience stories as whole entities (Meek, 1970). Young children are familiar with all the essential elements of a story right from the start and show this in their questions about stories, their play, their drawing and their re-telling of stories (Wolfe and Brice-Heath, 1992).

The National Test criteria reinforce this add-on model by suggesting that children convey ‘some sense of what happens’ at level A, ‘who is involved’ at level B and ‘the setting, scene, characters and sequence of events’ at level D. Although the programme of study identifies characters, plot, sequence and dialogue as aspects the teacher can discuss, it mentions ‘characters and plot’ at level A, ‘plot, character, dialogue and setting’ at level B and ‘the importance of character, setting the scene and action’ at level C. It does not identify appropriate content for discussions at particular levels. Yet to teach characterisation, for example, a teacher needs to know what children could know and learn about characters and how they are portrayed, and how their understanding may be evidenced at each level. Frameworks exist for teaching and assessment which indicate how teachers may enhance the children’s understanding and use of each element at different stages. (SCRE, 1995; Ellis and Friel, 1995; Ellis, Hughes and Keith; 1996).

In the absence of a definition and framework based on the key elements of story, the content of imaginative writing is defined by ‘English Language 5–14’ in linguistic terms. The attainment targets for Imaginative Writing mention the length of the story, types of format, organisation, vocabulary and literary conventions as indicators of attainment at various levels: stories are to be ‘brief’ for levels A–C and ‘reflect various genres’ for levels D–E. The linguistic elements of organisation and vocabulary are the only ones to run throughout levels A to E and, one must assume, are therefore key elements in defining progression. The programme of study contributes to the emphasis on linguistic content by referring to elements such as sequence ‘by looking at beginnings, middles and endings’, appropriate, flexible and varied vocabulary, present and past tense and first and third person narration as teaching content (SOED, 1991, p.46). The National Test criteria highlight the importance of

linking words; chronological sequence, sentence structure and paragraphing and overall shape and coherence. This emphasis on linguistic analysis and progression reflects the influence of linguistic research of the 1970s which analysed aspects such as sentence/clause length, subordination features, clause complexity and vocabulary to establish indices of syntactic and lexical development (Harpin, 1976). A linguistic approach was also advocated by 'Hand in your Writing' which derived four characteristics of writing: that it is explicit, coherent, structured and correct. It defined explicitness as 'the child's selection of words', with lexical development defining progression and the unit of analysis as the word. Coherence was defined as 'how the items relate to the theme and how this is shown at sentence level', with syntactic development defining progression and the unit of analysis being the sentence. Structure was defined more loosely as the 'overall shape' and discussed in terms of narrative sequence — beginning, middle and end — and the selection of items. The unit of analysis is the whole piece and the description was of developing and manipulating a chronological sequence of events. Correctness was defined in terms of writing conventions, 'such things as spelling and punctuation' (p. 26). The Appendix to 'Hand in Your Writing' cross referenced each of these categories against the developmental framework to derive a sequence showing lexical, syntactic and narrative progression.

A PROBLEMATIC BASIS FOR TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

However, whilst models of progression in grammatical complexity and vocabulary can inform teachers' discussions, they do not, by themselves, constitute a satisfactory framework for either the teaching or assessment of writing. They seek to describe aspects of the product, but not to identify teachable elements or detail the causal links between stages of development, nor did they set out to do this. They are rooted in an analytical framework designed to be applied after the writing has been produced. They risk defining the child's performance in negative terms, highlighting where the written product falls short of the adult model, but they cannot show what the child is struggling to do or say, nor how the task has been conceived or interpreted.

Teachers who look to the linguistic elements for specific content on which to base lessons find advice that may skew the teaching in inappropriate and unhelpful ways. Terms like 'appropriate vocabulary' can only be applied to the finished product. Used as a basis for teaching input before the story is written, they result in lessons which draw attention to 'general good words to use' rather than teaching input which highlights how word choice helps to refine and convey each writer's story.

Moreover, terms such as 'appropriate vocabulary' are so vague that, particularly when viewed against the advice offered in 'Hand in your Writing', the teaching issue may appear to be that children should be encouraged to use more adjectives and adverbs. The impression that these invariably promote effective writing may be re-inforced by some of the comments in the current National Test exemplar material which, for example, recommend that 'more detailed descriptive language could improve this piece'.

Yet the teaching issue may be that adjectives and adverbs often compensate for a weak noun or verb — compare the mundane 'he entered the room quietly' with 'he slithered/ crept/ padded/ tiptoed/ slid/ melted... into the room' — or that they can alter the tone and slow the pace of the story, which is why Graham Greene reputedly wanted to write a novel totally devoid of them.

Similarly, the emphasis on sequential structure leads many teachers to promote identification of the beginning, middle and the end of the story as a strategy for children to use in planning. Yet research indicates that such tasks can restrict the satisfaction or purpose young writers see in writing the story (Calkins, 1986). Moreover, identification of beginning, middle and end may illuminate the sequence of

production but not the key planning decisions, which are surely about the characters, the events, where the story takes place and what happens.

In assessment of writing, the linguistic criteria also appear to offer certainty, but often serve simply to cloud the issue of progression. One National Test criterion requires that 'There is some variety in sentence structure' (SOEID, 1996). Leaving aside the arguments that simple sentences may express complex ideas or that deliberate, repetitive use of the same structure can show a highly sophisticated understanding of language and language use, any meaningful assessment of the use of syntactic structures requires a knowledge of the relationship between context, genre, purpose and syntax. For example, story language frequently employs inverted structures such as 'Out popped the magic rabbit'. The child who writes this rather than 'The magic rabbit popped out' in the context of writing a story is less remarkable than one who uses a similar clause structure in, for example writing a report (Wilkinson, 1986; Perera, 1984).

To appreciate what syntactic analysis has to offer in terms of assessment, this level of detailed knowledge is required. Despite being referenced to particular strands, the National Test criteria are too vague in their use of linguistic criteria to offer teachers meaningful guidance on the developmental norms against which any particular piece of writing can be measured. Even were this possible, it is not clear how such assessments could feed into teaching. The abstract framework from which the elements are derived presents immediate problems in capitalising on what children are interested in and are keen to talk and think about.

CONTRADICTORY MODELS OF CONTEXT, PROCESS AND PRODUCT

A final problem with defining the framework of writing in terms of externally generated contexts, and of relying on a linguistic definition of the content is that it favours a model in which the written product is the central focus for teaching. The process of writing is interpreted as the process of transmitting ideas clearly for the reader.

The transmission model has a long history in the teaching of writing. It predates the Creative Writing movement (Clegg, 1965; Maybury, 1967) which, despite its emphasis on teachers creating contexts to engage children's interest and emotional commitment, promoted redrafting as a process whereby the child learned to transcribe the story clearly and produce an acceptable fair copy.

The transmission model has been challenged by the Writing Process approach advocated by Donald Graves (1983). For Graves, the process of writing is the process of becoming a writer, rather than of producing a written product. In this model, ownership and authorship are fundamental. The choice of topic rests with the writer who must learn that stories happen to those who tell them and that the process of writing serves a creative and not just a transmission function. The context which generates the topic is that of the writer's individual experiences and the purpose of writing is to discover and refine the unique stories each has to tell. The role of the teacher is to discuss and teach the writer's craft, model the writing process and show children how to use conferencing and redrafting to assist their thinking as much as to clarify the message for the reader. Learning to write is seen as a process of apprenticeship and the focus for teaching and assessment is on the child as a writer, from whom the end product cannot be divorced.

The Writing Process approach of Graves has been widely advocated and advice about conferencing and re-drafting has been confidently disseminated in Scotland and elsewhere (SCRE, 1995). However, the tensions between his approach and that of the transmission model with its focus on teacher generated contexts and redrafting in order to produce a fair copy, have remained largely unarticulated and unexplored.

'Hand in Your Writing' (1981) referred to the work of Graves, but did not acknowledge the very different purposes attributed to the process of drafting and

the significant shift in the definition of context to mean the context of the writer rather than the context of the writing. Moreover, 'Hand in Your Writing' advocated assessment of the written product in total isolation from the writer. Possibly this was in response to widespread criticisms that the Creative Writing approach led to writing that 'is often false, artificially stimulated and pumped up by the teacher' (DES, 1975, p.163). However, the effect of this decision was to emphasise further the view that writing is about creating a written product which can be judged in terms of the effectiveness with which it meets the expectations of the reader, rather than the extent to which it advances the understanding of the writer.

Communicating with others is, quite properly, an important function of writing. However, it is not the only purpose for writing. 'English Language 5–14' recognises that writing is a tool for learning and thinking. The first sentence in the rationale for the writing component states: 'Writing helps pupils to clarify their thoughts and experiences and to give them personal meaning. Through writing, pupils can define, order and understand ideas.' (p.44). Yet this statement is not exemplified as a teaching outcome in any of the 31 Attainment Targets or the programmes of study. Instead there is a reliance on the predetermined appropriate response and on the written product as the central element to be considered in teaching and learning about writing. The overriding message is that creating the written product is what teaching writing is fundamentally about.

The National Test also promotes a product driven, transmission model of writing. Writing tasks set the writing context, purpose and topic and are used to pre-determine the nature of an appropriate response. Given that the purposes of National Testing are necessarily more limited than the purposes of a curriculum, perhaps this is all a National Test can do.

However, the test material is presented as a teaching document with exemplar 'answers' and comments giving advice about 'next steps' and how each piece of writing could be improved. Moreover, the use, administration and marking of the National Tests has been the focus for widespread inservice training. If this has been at all effective, it must have been influential in emphasising the single, transmission purpose of writing that the test promotes. In a vacuum of wider debate about teaching writing as a tool for learning and distinctive content for teaching story writing, it is likely that teachers will teach to the test criteria.

Recent curriculum advice for Scottish teachers advocates Graves' Writing Process approach wholeheartedly (SCRE, 1995). However, it does so in the context of the basic transmission model portrayed in the 'English Language 5–14' attainment targets and the National Test criteria. Against this background, Graves' central message that the writing process is a tool for learning and thinking and that the focus for teaching should be on the writer rather than the writing is lost. In Scotland, the transmission model for writing remains the driving force behind curriculum policy.

TEACHING STORIES, CURRICULAR BALANCE AND THE NEED FOR RESEARCH

Stories and exposure to stories are crucial to children's success at school. The number of pre-school story experiences is a clear predictor of not only the rank order of achievement at 5 years old but also that at the age of 11 and 15 (Wells, 1986). The strongest explanations for why this may be so highlight the role of stories in developing complex cognition and the linguistic strategies that aid such cognition (Donaldson, 1993; Wells 1986). The Wells research, which has remained unchallenged for ten years and appears robust, would indicate that stories be accorded great emphasis in the reading and writing curriculum of primary aged children.

The lack of emphasis in 'English Language 5–14' attainment targets on the mental operations that underpin the various purposes for writing, coupled with teaching content which also fails to highlight this, means that it is easy for those responsible

for managing the curriculum to lose sight of the crucial role stories play in the linguistic and cognitive development of primary-aged children.

Anecdotal evidence from recent inservice courses in the West of Scotland suggests that an increasing number of schools are asking teachers to teach Functional Writing exclusively for one term, Imaginative Writing for another and Personal Writing for a third. In an effort to ensure balance, it is assumed that the three types of writing identified in 'English Language 5–14' should each be given the same curriculum time. The implication is that the balance of writing activities appropriate for a five year old child in P1 is similar to that appropriate for a fourteen year old in S2.

Teaching content that is defined in terms that relate to the interests and understandings of the learners rather than the product would encourage a more learner-centred concept of balance and enable such issues to be debated. A definition of stories that emphasised teachable craft content could highlight the use of writing as a tool for thinking and learning rather than the current sole emphasis on transmitting ideas in an unambiguous way. The attainment targets could provide examples of the different kinds of knowledge, thinking and analysis that must underpin different writing purposes, and they could recognise that story writing involves a different knowledge base and different thought processes, and needs different planning strategies from, for example report, persuasive or recount writing.

Moreover, such an approach would enable the writing context to be interpreted as the context of the child learning to write as well as the context in which the writing takes place. It would encourage debate about the extent to which the curriculum design provides opportunities for children to re-visit and reformulate old understandings as they develop emotional and social maturity. It would also emphasise a 'negotiated curriculum' (Wells, 1995) and the role of the teacher in evaluating and responding to the interests, knowledge, skills and previous experiences of the children in the class. The debate about teaching writing would widen to incorporate discussion of the needs of the learners and when and how to highlight the communicative, social or intellectual purposes of writing.

It is necessary to conduct research which can establish how the balance and focus of the writing curriculum are being interpreted across Scotland. Further research on teachers' aims in teaching story writing and on what and how they teach could, along with more theoretical analysis and debate, suggest some solutions to the difficulties and issues teachers undoubtedly face.

CONTENT, CONTEXT AND PROCESS

Teachers need a definition of content, context and process which enables them to focus on one aspect or integrate all three according to the learning needs of the pupils. The current definition of content, context and process in 'English Language 5–14' is problematic in several ways and these problems are compounded by the interpretation of the assessment issues and the criteria in the National Test programme. The content must be defined in terms that are teachable and address elements that are intellectually and emotionally interesting to children. This would allow the definition of context to be reframed in terms of the child's experience and understanding of writing and enable the process of becoming a writer to be addressed.

The social basis of story narratives has been well documented (Engel, 1995). Children know about and are interested in the key elements of story — characters, the settings they inhabit and what happens to them. This is what they have learned from their experience of stories and this is the child's context for understanding. It can also frame the craft content of story writing. These elements are sufficiently concrete for children to talk about and link to their experiences at school and home. The techniques, for example, that writers use to make the characters come alive — by portraying what they do, what they say, how they speak, what they look like, what

their lifestyles are like and who they choose for their friends — can all be discussed in terms of even the youngest child's life experiences. Awareness of these elements and understanding of how writers can and do use them as strategies for characterisation can be promoted through play and through discussion of stories the children have read and written as well as of people they know. A similar teaching approach could underpin the discussion of setting and plot. Acquiring an increasingly sophisticated understanding and mastery of these elements is what children need to learn and teachers need to teach. As experience, understanding and mastery of the content is developed, the children's context of understanding will expand along with their ability to master and use the writing process.

A framework for the curriculum which clearly identifies these elements and progression across them will enable informed discussion and wider agreement on how story writing can be taught and assessed, and allow the development of assessment criteria which can directly inform future teaching. It will support the child in becoming a writer, as well as in the process of producing convincing stories.

CONCLUSION

There is clearly a need for the issues surrounding the teaching of story writing to be debated more fully, but the debate must start from an analysis of principles and from an acknowledgement of what is problematic about the issues.

A curriculum framework should emphasise what the different types and purposes of writing could, and should, offer in terms of enhancing children's understanding. This requires more than contextual definitions and would contribute to an informed and learner-focused definition of the purpose, content and progression of teaching.

There are fundamental questions which have to be debated at every level of education. A teachable model of content, perhaps framed by the elements we have suggested might enable basic questions to be asked, researched and debated: What is the value of story writing to children? How do children learn about stories and to become story writers? How can progression in story writing be defined? This has to be informed by developmental models of writing, reading and thinking to develop an effective and workable model which can be applied in the classroom. A workable model that allows sufficiently deep and robust definitions of content, context, process and product will enable teachers to make decisions about what the current focus for learning for an individual or group should be and to plan in the longer term for balance, breadth, coherence, continuity and progression (SOED, 1993). Teachers will have a basis on which to decide whether to integrate content, context, process and product or to focus on one aspect in particular. Such a model would empower teachers to develop their own innovative approaches to teaching story writing which fit with the demands of the curriculum, their own context and the learning needs of the children they teach.

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