The Wilnecote School

Title:
Literacy Strategy

Member of leadership team with lead responsibility for oversight and update of policy	Mrs J. Marsland
Approved at SLT	
Policy approval at Governing Body	
Policy review cycle	
Policy review date	

Contents

The Wilnecote School Literacy Strategy

INTRODUCTION:

Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum.

Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. (EEF: Literacy guidance report; 2021)

Literacy skills provide access to and a foundation for success in school and for future life. It is a moral imperative that the staff at The Wilnecote School strive to improve the literacy skills of all our students.

Every department and every teacher has a crucial role to play in supporting the development of students' literacy skills.

We are committed to raising standards of literacy by ensuring our curriculum:

- engages students in specific activities that develop speaking and listening skills as well as activities that integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing
- develops reading, writing, speaking and listening skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects
- encourages students to work in sustained and practical ways, to learn about the art, craft and discipline of writing for specific purposes and audiences
- encourages students to redraft their own work in the light of feedback, moving beyond proofreading for errors to the reshaping of whole texts or parts of texts.'[1]

The National Curriculum demands that students are taught how to:

- 'make extended, independent contributions that develop ideas in depth'
- 'make purposeful presentations that allow them to speak with authority on significant subjects'
- 'engage with texts that challenge preconceptions and develop understanding beyond the personal and immediate'
- 'experiment with language and explore different ways of discovering and shaping their own meanings'
- 'use writing as a means of reflecting on and exploring a range of views and perspectives on the world.'[2]

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[1] 'English: curriculum opportunities', Secondary National Curriculum until 2014, Department for Education; updated 26 April 2012;

[2] www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199101/english/ks4/programme/opportunities.

Aims of this strategy:
The Wilnecote School is committed to raising standards of literacy across the curriculum and to close the gap between disadvantaged and other students. The December 2021 OFSTED monitoring visit stated "The school's approach to developing pupils' literacy, including improving reading, has been successfully embedded across the school."

This strategy aims to continue to support students to develop their literacy skills, especially the use of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar in writing, across the curriculum.

The Teaching of Literacy
All teachers at The Wilnecote School are responsible for teaching literacy. It is inherent in the Teacher Standards that all teachers should:

'Demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject' (DfE, 2011)

Objectives:
To develop core literacy skills in all student regardless of background so that they can:

- Access all areas of the curriculum
- Understand and access examination materials so that they are able to achieve their educational potential across the curriculum.
- Receive personalised support
- Express themselves clearly and play an active part in society

Roles and Responsibilities:

Leadership Team:

Assistant Headteacher Professional Growth:
- To lead on literacy across the curriculum.
- Develop whole school strategy.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy.
- Work with SLT and AB to create and develop resources for staff development and Tutor Time respectively.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the strategy across their cluster subjects
- To develop suitable resources and ensure CPD programme support developing both the literacy skills of staff and the delivery of high quality literacy support in the classroom.
- To share good practice within and between departments
- To provide opportunities for the development and implementation of the 'Literacy Tool
- Kit'.

Assistant Head Teacher Inclusion and SEND:

- To use all available data and work with feeder schools to identify those, who on entry, are below age related expectations and to implement a catch up programme.
- To work with the HOH to develop literacy material for use in Tutor Time.
- To engage parents in the literacy strategy.

English Department:
- To provide students the skills and knowledge and understanding required to read, write, listen and speak effectively.
- To use assessment data to identify curricular targets for individual students and cohorts as a whole; using this as a basis for future planning within the department and provide a literacy focus for other departments to work on.
- To support in the training of other staff in order for them to contribute towards raising literacy standards across the curriculum.
- Lead on the use of the Accelerated Reader programme.
- To lead on reading interventions for Y7.

SEN & Inclusion Department:
- Identify and monitor and support struggling readers as soon as they join The Wilnecote School
- To lead on the delivery of high-quality structured interventions. To ensure all students can read fluently and therefore access the curriculum.

All teachers across the curriculum:
- To contribute to the development of student's literacy skills in their subject area. To follow the school's Literacy Marking Policy.
- To actively support the vocabulary building program in KS3 by identifying synonyms, antonyms and derivative words in their subjects. Promote the use of Tier 2 vocabulary. Through the use of Ninja vocabulary and the setting of semantic maps every half term.
- Provide appropriate subject specific reading and extended writing opportunities.
- Promote students use of standard English in both written and spoken responses.
- To promote literacy through the planned LITT programme.

Parents:
- To encourage their children to use the range of skills and strategies they have been taught in school.
- To encourage their child to read for pleasure and to gain knowledge.

Students:

To take responsibility for their own learning by recognising their own literacy needs and make the improvements suggested by their teachers.

Governors:

To hold the SLT to account for the effective implementation and monitoring of impact of the strategy.

Literacy across the Curriculum

Teaching essential core literacy skills of spelling, the rules of punctuation and grammar, skimming texts for overall meaning, scanning for key points, speaking &listening.

This will require teachers to develop their understanding and delivery in five key areas:

Reading:

- *Exposing students to a wide range of high quality reading materials.*
- *Encouraging students to go beyond simple comprehension to explore 'why' and 'how' issues.*
- *Teaching the skills of scanning and skimming of texts to extract key information and overall meaning.*
- *Teach students how to infer and deduce meaning, recognising the writer's intentions.*
- *Modelling reading for pleasure during dedicated reading time.*

Writing:

- *Ensure that through marking and feedback they strengthen and develop students' literacy skills, especially the use of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.*
- *Ensure that students **respond** to literacy marking when completing ACTs.*
- *Model 'What a good one looks like' in order to show students explicitly how to write in an appropriate way for each subject, taking into consideration the audience, purpose, layout and level of formality required.*
- *How to use quotations selectively to support points and then link them to their own comments.*

Speaking & Listening:

- *Have high expectations of how they want students to respond during particular activities.*
- *Provide opportunities for students to give formal presentations.*
- *Model good practice.*
- *Give opportunities for students to articulate their responses before writing them (Talk for learning)*
- *Use listening activities to develop inference skills.*

Vocabulary Building:

- *Teachers have high expectations of the kind of language they expect students to use in lessons.*
- *Support students in mastering the vocabulary of academic success*
- *Ensure key words are displayed in their classrooms*
- *Encourage repeated expose to new words and their meanings, ensuring students know how to use them in an appropriate context.*
- *Schemes of work identify specific vocabulary to be used each lesson*
- *Staff actively support the vocabulary building program in KS3 by identifying synonyms, antonyms and derivative words in their subjects.*

Teacher Talk:

- *Ensuring that teacher talk encourages students to think harder.*
- *They speak less whilst encouraging the students to speak more.*
- *Teachers model the kind of language they expect students to use in their own discussions.*

The Learning Environment:

Classrooms and corridors should provide a rich source of vocabulary for students and should include the following:

- **Displays of key subject specific vocabulary** are consistent in all classrooms for a particular subject. These should be regularly explored with students to ensure they recognise and understand them. Staff should routinely explore the roots from which they are derived so that the meaning of similar words may be deduced. Staff should share strategies of how to remember how to spell key terms and details of whether they should be capitalized (e.g. Parliament in history lessons).
- **All subject areas should have a 'working wall' that displays of student work.** This should clearly demonstrate expectations in terms of layout and presentation and be annotated to illustrate what high quality work looks like.
- **Displays should be readable from a distance** and where possible have questions rather than statements as headings *(e.g. Why did Hitler rise to power?)*
- **Displays of connectives** that are routinely used should be routinely referred to (see tool kit for exemplar display/ desktop work mat (see page 13).
- **Glossaries** should be routinely used in lessons.
- **The environment of all classrooms** should be conducive to good literacy practice.

Lesson Planning:

All schemes of work and lesson plans should:

- Reference the specific literacy skills and key vocabulary being used.
- Consider the layout, structure, degree of formality & impersonality of any writing we ask students to undertake.
- Allow for extended writing opportunities where appropriate.
- Include how we explicitly teach the required reading skill (e.g. skimming, scanning, analysis, speed reading, research techniques)

Monitoring and Evaluation of Student Progress in Literacy Skills:

Students' work will be regularly marked in accordance with the whole school marking guidelines. This includes clear guidelines on a consistent approach to **marking for literacy.** Compliance with these guidelines will be monitored and evaluated using the following mechanisms:

- Sample work will be monitored by Heads of Department during regular work scrutinies.
- Student interviews with AH professional Growth.
- Observations during learning walks and the Deep Dive processes.
- Academic Board meetings where sample work will be reviewed from across the curriculum.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy:

This strategy will be regularly monitored and evaluated using the following mechanisms:

- Learning walks and lesson observations carried out by senior staff and other visiting colleagues such as the CAT Deep Dive Team.
- Sample work will be monitored by Senior Leaders.
- Data analysis using Go 4 School (KS3) Star reader and SIRA (KS4) to track student progress.
- Student interviews with AH for Professional Growth to assess student perceptions.
- Peer review at Academic Board of department innovation plans and samples of scheme of work.
- Deep Dives
- Governor visits.

Continuing Professional Development

For this strategy to be successful it essential that we support staff in building confidence in their own literacy skills. In order to achieve this the school will:

- Offer the opportunity for staff to join a 'Literacy development group' within school to share good practice and develop further ideas.
- Dedicate time on INSET days to assessing and developing staff literacy skills.
- Share good practice during twilight CPD sessions.
- Provide examples of good practice from departments within school and from other CAT schools.
- Facilitate visits to other schools to investigate good practice.
- Provide time to develop and enhance existing schemes of work to incorporate a literacy dimension.
- Dedicate meeting time to monitoring and reviewing current pr

Literacy Tool Kit

READ TO SUCCEED

I can…I will

R2S

Reading

Library Partnership to support all areas:
Book group (Manga?)
Reading events Eg: Take Me Out themed speed dating
Accelerated Reader
Displays, school screen slides, website & Warbler

Accelerated Reader:

Used to support & develop LA reading: All except Set 1 in Y 7 & 8; all except Set 1 & 2 in Y9.
HA to have more autonomy – Set 1 Y7 & 8; Set 1 & 2 Y9
All reading to be recorded by students in new R2S Record books
Enough Accelerated reader log ons for all Y7 – 9. This can then be used for all students to access Star Reader Assessments to gain reading ages.
Any under-achieving "Free-readers" can also be put back onto Accelerated Reader if required.
More non-fiction books to be made available if possible via librarian.
Tween section for Y7 & 8 to attract students more rather than children's section if possible via librarian.

Recording & rewarding reading:
Students to take more responsibility via R2S reading records.
5 books = bronze, 10 books = silver, 15 books = gold, 20 books = platinum
Library goody bag/ reading buddies with primaries as reward.

Supporting reading:
Reading with parents/ community/ buddies (primary schools)/ mentors.
Parental workshops re: reading.
Warbler reviews and recommendations (staff & students).

Book drop 'n' swap:
Second hand book area where students can take/ leave books. Charity shops, donations, unwanted English cupboard books…

Reading events (closely linked to library):
World Book day, National Poetry Day poet trees, Summer Reading Challenge, Staff #shelfie reading pics display.

Monitoring/ Measuring Impact:

Learning Walks, Student feedback,
Accelerated Reader data analysis
Book Trawls
Academic Board Meetings – HOD
feedback & involvement
Observations

Website

Reading Sites: Links to advice/ suggestions/ recommendations.
Support for parents & students: EAL, helping your child to read materials, expectations etc. BBC, Newsround, Guardian, Book Trust etc.

Remote access to Accelerated reader: Students can complete quizzes at home.

Publicity:
Library – events & achievements, how to join, opening times, Summer reading Challenge, World Book day etc.

Ninja promotion:: Who IS the ninja?

Twitter/ Facebook links

Instagrammar:
Literacy related gallery/ celebration – Accelerated Reader certificate winners/ top users, Ninjas of the month, individual/ group achievements in literacy (cross-department).

Writing

Display:
Working walls & vocabulary displays/ mats.
Warbler:
R2S page includes writing and student writers' contributions.
Instagrammar:
On walls &/or website – rewards & celebrates writing.
Literacy ambassadors/ learning mentors

Marking & Success criteria:
To include SPaG – additional codes on marking policy & copies in front of books.
Spelling: Use spelling grids system.
Training:
Up-skill staff in SPaG to develop consistent confidence & competence.
Support:
CA's SPaG surgery: weekly & obligatory for students selected by staff from any subject.

Tutor Time

Activities each week (instead of news quiz): PiXL
Games: Countdown, Wonky Donkey, Pictionary,

Scattegories, Hangman, Call my Bluff, Unbelievable Truth etc.

Formtimeideas.com: Literacy page
Readworks: Comprehensions
Literacy Shed: Films & activities
Challenges: Newspaper scavenger hunt, caption competitions etc.

Vocabulary Ninjas:
"Words unlock the doors to a world of understanding…You, too, can be a Vocabulary Ninja."

Semantic Mats: (See JM 100 day plan)
Used as homework by all departments min. once a half term. Start from Y7 only. Enable deeper understanding of vocabulary and investigative approach to its acquisition: "Vocabulary Ninja Skills" re: Tier 1-3 vocabulary.

Ninja environmental vocabulary:
Like Banksy: appears and no one know how it got there (Andy). Teasers online. Changes at least each half term – ceilings, loos, corridors, canteen etc.

Support in classrooms - Healthy literacy environment:
Word mats – SPaG Read to Succeed success toolkit in all departments.

Department- specific mats and working walls. Thematic consistency but not identical.

Resources filed centrally on One Drive for easy access.

Questioning/ verbal modelling of Tier 2 vocabulary.

Other support:
PiXL Vocabulary app/ other websites access – support for parents.

SEEC method – Close Vocab Gap

12 Areas of literacy every teacher should know (Barton, 2013)

Teacher Talk:

- Be aware of what works in teacher talk and what doesn't: thereby talking less, giving better explanations, asking better questions and resisting some of the clichés of teacher talk (always relying on hands up, asking closed questions, not giving thinking time, commenting on each answer)
- Understanding the difference between social, exploratory and presentational talk.
- Talking activities are structured and use a variety of groupings (pairs, same sex, friendship groups, by ability, by interest, random).

Reading:

- Teachers should know how to use layout and language to make texts accessible in handouts and presentations.
- Provide assessment criteria and models of appropriate text types.
- Set objectives for talk and provide language models (e.g. the level of formality required, key words and phrases to use)
- Use a range of strategies to support students' reading (word banks, displays, paired reading, reading aloud, glossaries, talking about the texts before reading them)

Writing:

- Being able to write accurate, clear English, and knowing the essential ingredients in well written prose.
- Be clear and explicit about the conventions of the writing you expect from students (e.g. audience and purpose, layout, key words and phrases, level of formality required)
- Knowing approaches for actively teaching writing skills - such as shared composition, modelling the writing process and judicious use of writing frames.
- Knowing strategies for helping students to spell key words accurately and knowing how to respond to their incorrect spellings.
- Assessing students' work in a way that builds their competence and confidence as writers in your subject.

What classroom practice should look like:	Methods of delivery:	What success looks like:
Teacher Talk: *Encourages students to think harder. They speak less whilst encouraging the students to speak more.*	• *The teacher adopts a no hands up style of questioning, that uses more 'How?' and 'Why?' questions.* • *They avoid answering their own questions* • *Allow students thinking time and rehearsal time.*	*Students spend 80% of the time engaged learning whilst teachers spend 20% talking.* *Students are able to rehearse answers and become more confident articulating responses.*
Reading: *Exposes students to a wide range of high quality reading materials. Students are encouraged to go beyond simple comprehension to explore 'why' and 'how' issues.*	• *Teach the skills of skimming and scanning* • *Handouts are well laid out, key words at the top.* • *Use of big picture questions, 'how?' 'why?'* • *Exposure to a wide range of reading materials.*	*Students are able to transfer core literacy skills of reading across all subject areas.*
Writing: *Students are shown explicitly how to write in an appropriate way for each subject.*	• *Collaborative writing (innovating a piece of writing as it is called in primary schools) where teachers and students build up an example using appropriate key words, connectives and writing style.* • *Use of connective place mats (appendix 1) to encourage the use of complex sentences.* • *Use of model answer WAGOLL*	*The quality, quantity and presentation of students writing improves across all subject areas.*
Speaking & Listening: *Teachers have high expectations of how they want students to respond during particular activities.*	• *Teachers model the style of language used for group discussions*	*The school becomes a place where*
Vocabulary Building: *Teachers have high expectations of the kind of language they expect students to use in lessons.*	• *Explicit instruction in the use of key terms* • *The teacher models the use of a wide vocabulary, giving definitions of unfamiliar words.* • *Exposure to a wide range of reading materials.* • *Encouraging learners to draw connections between what they know and words they are unfamiliar with.*	*All students regardless of background or ability are encouraged to use a wide vocabulary, including subject specific key terms.*

Literacy Tool Kit

20 Whole School Literacy Ingredients (Barton, 2013)

Classrooms and Corridors Check List	✓
Key words for the subject are on display	
Annotated examples of what high quality work looks like	
Displays are readable from a distance, with questions rather than statements e.g. "Why did Hitler rise to power?"	
Lessons are planned with literacy in mind(i.e. have a specific literacy objective)	

Teacher Talk	✓
Use fewer 'What?' questions and more 'Why?' and 'How?' questions	
Give time for oral rehearsal of answers e.g. allow them to discuss with a partner before responding aloud.	
Give thinking time	
Increase the use of no hands up	

Reading	✓
Explicitly teach the reading skills you need in your subject (e.g. skimming to establish the gist of the text, scanning to find key information, analysis, speed reading and research skills)	
Handouts are attractive and accessible, taking into account the reading age of the students.	
Key words are at the start of the handout.	
Handouts include 'big picture' questions, or a statement that allows the student to understand why they are reading it.	
Questions about a text go beyond simple comprehension and explore 'Why' and 'How' issues.	

Writing	✓
Students see their teachers modelling how to write the first paragraph of an essay/evaluation/description. (This is collaborative writing and can have a **huge impact**)	
The essential connectives of writing are taught (see appendix 1)	
Students are encouraged to use short sentences at the start and end of a paragraph, with longer sentences in the middle.	

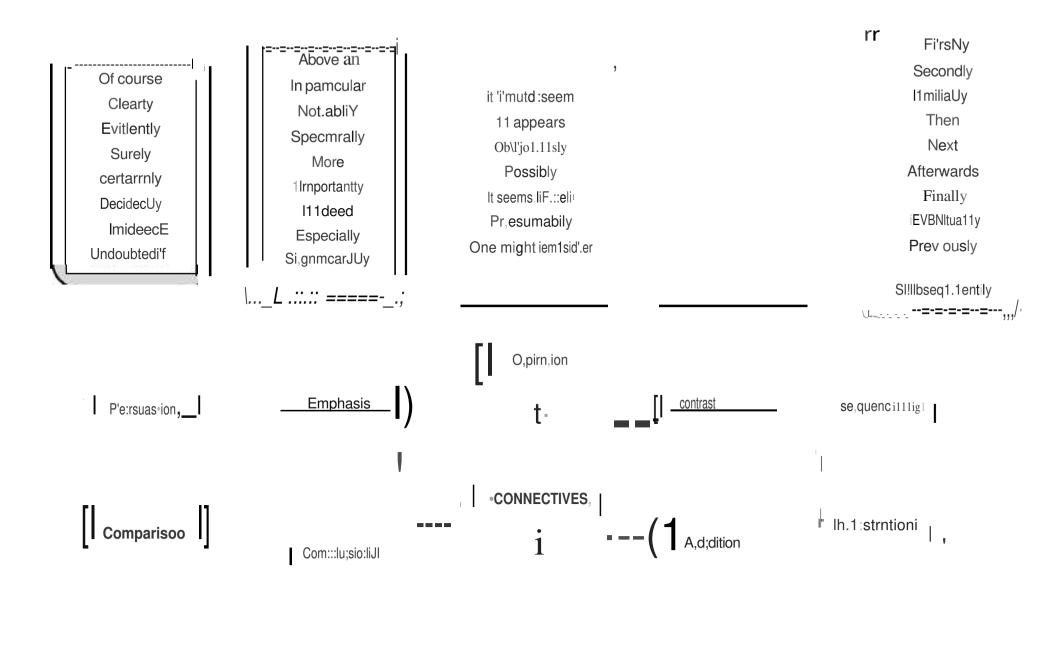| Speaking & Listening	✓
Students are asked questions based on 'How?' and 'Why?' rather than just 'What?'	
Teachers model the kind of language they expect in group discussions and answers (key vocabulary/key connectives).	

Vocabulary Building	✓
Teacher explicitly teaches the key words in their subject, aiming to repeat it four times with a clear explanation.	
Key words are given to students as homework, put in their planner, made into Tutor Time quizzes, so they are the expected discourse of all students, not just those from privileged backgrounds.	

Evaluating the essential writing elements for your subject

Consider the points in the table below, which is the easiest to teach? Which do students struggle with the most? What is the best advice you could give a student about writing in your subject?
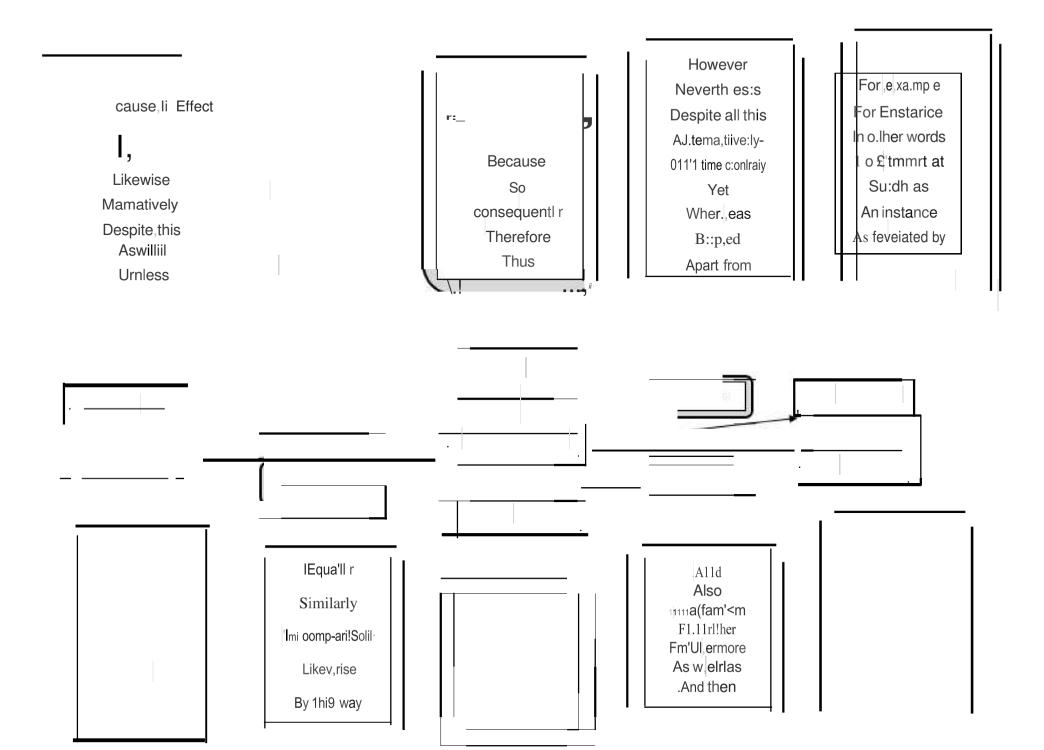
Convention:	Relevant questions:	Hardest aspect to teach?	Best advice to give to students?
Layout	• Are there any conventions about layout - e.g. use of paragraphs, bullet points, headlines, sub-headings, bold, italic, quotations? • Do your students know them?		
Structure	Is the text chronological (telling a story from start to finish)? If not how should it be structured? Do the big ideas come first? Or the arguments for then the arguments against? Is an introduction needed? A conclusion? How should these sound?		
Formality	• How formal should the text be: should students use 'isn't' and 'don't'? • Should they use abbreviations like 'etc.'? • Should they use technical words? • Are polysyllabic words generally better than monosyllabic words ('suggest' rather than 'say', 'disappointing' rather than 'bad'?		
Impersonality	• Should students avoid using 'I'? • Should they use the passive voice ('Potassium was added to the test tube' rather than 'I added Potassium to the test tube') • Should a personal opinion be included at the end? • Is the pronoun 'we' generally more advisable than using 'I'?		
Vocabulary	• What kinds of words should students use? • Which are the ones used by experts in your subjects? • How do the students know these? • Where do they see them? • How do they access them if you are off sick? • Can you help the students spell key words accurately? (visual/auditory/mnemonics)?		

Convention:	Key elements of writing in your subject?
Layout	
Structure	
Formality	
Impersonality	
Vocabulary	

Layout	

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Literacy Top Tips

Literacy Top Tops are updated regularly and shared with all staff. The Top Tips can also be found in the Literacy folder within the Wilnecote Training shared area.

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    https://www.gov.uk/government/ publications/teachers-standards

Ofsted. (2013). *Improving literacy in secondary schools; a shared responsibility.* Manchester: Ofsted.

Further Reading:

1. **The Literacy Leader's Toolkit: Raising Standards Across the Curriculum 11-19** by Graham Tyrer (Author), Patrick Taylor. Publisher: Bloomsbury Education (20 Jun. 2013).

2. **The Secret of Literacy: Making the implicit, explicit** by **David Didau.** Publisher: Independent Thinking Press an imprint of Crown House Publishing (15 May 2014)

3. **The Matthew Effect: How Advantage Begets Further Advantage** by Daniel Rigney. Publisher: Columbia University Press (23 Mar. 2010).

4. **Closing the Vocabulary** Gap by Alex Quigley Publisher: Routledge; 1 edition (6 April 2018).

5. **Teaching Secondary Students to Write Effectively**, published by the What Works Clearinghouse (2017)

6. **Accountable Talk: Instructional dialogue that builds the mind** by Lauren Resnick, Christa Asterhan and Sherice Clarke.

7. **Ending the Reading Wars: Reading Acquisition from Novice to Expert**, by Anne Castles, Kathleen Rastle, and Kate Nation.

8. '**What is Disciplinary Literacy and Why Does it Matter?**' by Timothy and Cynthia Shanahan (2012).

Useful Websites:

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4