A (DEVELOPING) FRAMEWORK FOR METALINGUISTIC TALK (v4)

This framework captures some of the 'repertoires' of talk explored during the Metatalk about Writing project. These repertoires of talk about writing are concerned with developing learners' understanding of the relationship between authorial choice and rhetorical effect, and with helping learners to think about the choices they make in their own writing. The repertoires described and exemplified below, and underpinning pedagogical principles, may support teachers to promote talk about writing in the classroom. This framework is described as 'developing' because research is ongoing, and because repertoires of talk about writing are not limited to those presented below.

- *Whole class talk about model texts: teacher talk moves*
- *Metalinguistic modelling: a typology*
- *Writing conversations*
- *Modelling metalinguistic talk and writing conversations*
- *General Principles*

For further information about the related research, see:

Metatalk for Writing | Centre for Research in Language and Literacies | University of Exeter

WHOLE CLASS TALK ABOUT MODEL TEXTS: TEACHER TALK MOVES

Guiding Principles

Whole class talk about model texts stimulates (metalinguistic) thinking, supporting learners to explore, verbalise and develop understanding about the relationship between writerly choice and rhetorical effect. Model texts can act as springboards for learners' own writing, both as scaffolds and stimulus.

Teacher Talk Moves

Whole class talk about model texts is characterised by a range of 'talk moves' that invite learners' speculative or intuitive responses, open up discussion about linguistic choice and effect, and verbalise the relationship between language and meaning.

Talk Move		Explanation	Examples
Framing Questions Framing questions drive the dialogue by inviting learners to respond to a text or explore an authorial choice. These questions draw differently on learners' understandings and vary in the extent to which they scaffold thinking.	**Initiating**	Initiates thinking about effects or meaning	*What is your reaction to this piece?* *What is your impression of the character?* *How do you think this writer wants you to feel?*
	Connecting	Prompts learners to make a connection between impressions/effects/meaning and authorial choice	*Which words or phrases contribute to the impression that…?* *What is it in the text that make you think that?* *Is there anything particular in the text that creates that effect for you?*
	Focusing	Steers the talk toward the learning focus, drawing attention to a specific authorial choice and inviting learners to comment on its effect	*How does the noun phrase contribute to that impression?* *What does the physical description of the man suggest about his character?* *How do the verb choices create the impression that the character is nervous?* *How do the minor sentences create tension in the opening?*

	Posing alternatives	Invites learners to consider an alternative authorial choice and how this might alter effect/ meaning, supporting learners to recognise how different choices create different effects	*How would our impression of the character change if the author had used lots of adjectives to pre-modify the noun?* *What if the story were written in 1st person?* *How would the effect change if we used this verb instead?* *What would the effect be if we changed the verb to 'stomped'?*
Responsive Talk Moves Responsive talk moves help to open, sustain and advance the dialogue, often prompting learners to develop their responses.	**Elaborating**	Prompts learners to elaborate on their response	*What else does that say about the atmosphere?* *Can you tell me more about that…?*
	Justifying	Using 'how' and 'why' questions to prompt explanation or justification	*How does that choice contribute to the impression that…?* *Why do you think the character seems evil?*
	Reformulation	A statement or question that reformulates a learner response: to demonstrate engagement with the idea, seek clarity, and verbalise the contribution for others	*You're saying that the verb creates a sense of urgency?* *So you think the character seems nervous?*
	Verbalisation	The teacher verbalises the relationship between the language choice under focus and its effect	*The sequence of minor sentences works here to heighten tension for the reader.* *The verb suggests that the character is moving quickly and maybe trying to avoid being seen.*

METALINGUISTIC MODELLING: A TYPOLOGY

Guiding Principles

- Teacher-led metalinguistic modelling makes explicit authorial decision-making, supporting learners to think about and develop control of their own writing choices.

- Metalinguistic modelling is an essential pedagogical step in teaching sequences that support writerly independence. For example, metalinguistic modelling can be used to 'bridge' whole class talk about model texts and related writing tasks.

- Metalinguistic modelling involves teachers making explicit their thinking about writing intentions, language choices, and intended effects. In doing so, teachers might share already completed writing or they might write 'live' during the lesson; teachers might also incorporate 'dialogic modelling', in which teacher and learners discuss the teacher's choices, or generate text together.

A Typology		Explanation	Example
Modelling Writing Teachers model writing and authorial decision-making.	**Live modelling**	Teacher makes explicit their metalinguistic thinking as they model writing 'live'	*I will show you…I might write something like, <u>the grotesque</u>… because I want to create a sense that the scene is unpleasant…*
	Retrospective modelling	Teacher makes explicit their metalinguistic thinking as they reflect on/explain previously written text	*I picked that word <u>crash</u> because I wanted to show how much damage he was doing, but also because of the sound of <u>crash</u> as well, so I like the sound of the word too, so that's why I picked that verb.*
Dialogic Modelling	**Exploratory talk**	Teacher-student dialogue about the teacher's choices	*T: Is there anything you want to ask me about my choice?* *P: Why have you chosen the word 'unforgiving'?*

	Generative talk	Teacher leads class in co-constructing/ developing written texts	*T: The air was…?* *P: Thick* *P: Sharp* *T: Ok, good, that adds to the impression we're trying to create of…*
	Simulated thinking	Teacher simulates thinking about narrative world and language choices	*I want you to see your character arriving…what will the reader see, what will show what the character is thinking or feeling?*

WRITING CONVERSATIONS

Guiding Principles

- Writing conversations provide spaces for learners to share, verbalise and reflect on their own writing choices. Writing conversations may support learners to generate and refine ideas, intentions and language choices, and may help learners to better recognise the effects of their writerly decisions.
- Writing conversations may usefully precede or follow a writing task, or be used at intervals in the writing process to support reflection and revision.
- Writing conversations may take place between teacher and learner, between peers, or as a whole class.

Talk Moves

Teachers and learners draw on a range of talk moves during writing conversations that invite learner-writers to explore and verbalise their authorial choices and intentions.

Talk Moves	Explanation	Examples
Initiating questions	Questions about writing intentions, choices, and features that learner-writers are pleased with.	*What were your intentions for this piece?* *What writing choices did you make?* *What features are you proud of?*
Elaborating questions	Questions which probe the learner-writer's choices.	***Why*** *did you use this word to describe the setting?* *What sort of character do you want the knight to be?* ***How*** *did you show this?* *In this description, what were you trying to suggest about the character?* *So why do you think the short sentence works well there?'* *I'm interested to see that you changed the noun here – why?*

Verbalisation	The **reader** verbalises language choice and its effect, demonstrating engagement with the written text.	*The verb 'racing' creates a sense of urgency and panic.* *The verb 'plodding' describes how the boy was walking, to show that he wasn't keen to go to school.*
Development	Questions that prompt the learner-writer to consider alternatives or developments.	*Could you use a different word here, like…* *How could you make the character seem more dangerous?*

MODELLING METALINGUISTIC TALK AND WRITING CONVERSATIONS

Guiding Principles

- By modelling metalinguistic talk, teachers make explicit ways of talking about writing choices.
- Modelling writing conversations supports learners to engage with and respond to the writing of others.
- This modelling is a bridging mechanism in learning sequences. For example, teachers might model metalinguistic talk to 'bridge' individual writing and peer writing conversations, to prepare learners to talk together about their writing, independent of the teacher.
- To model talk, teachers can use prompts and talk scaffolds, lead live demonstration of writing conversations and/ or foster explicit consideration of the 'talk moves' that encourage verbalisation and reader-writer dialogue.

Scaffolding reader-writer dialogue	**Guiding questions and sentence starters** In pairs, take it in turns to share and explain your choices: *What word choices did you use and what impression did they give?* You should also respond to your peer's work and explanation, perhaps by making a comment or asking a question e.g.: *I like your choice of ….* *Why this contrast?* *What impression do you think this word creates?*
	Prompts/example responses to support discussion of word choice <u>*Ask the writer*</u>: what would happen if you changed this word for another word? <u>*Ask the reader*</u>: What did you think about this word choice? <u>*Verbalise*</u>: I chose the word 'wolf' to show that the dog is fierce and wild. **Prompts/example responses to support discussion of sentence structure**

	Ask the writer: When I read this sentence, I see…was that your intention? _Ask the reader_: Do you think this sentence is effective in getting the reader to imagine…? _Verbalise_: I structured my sentence this way because I wanted my reader to imagine the polar bear emerging from the mountains…
Modelling writing conversations	• _Teacher asks for a volunteer to read their writing_ • _Drawing on talk moves for writing conversations (above), encourage students to prepare questions and responses_ • _Teacher invites the class to ask questions, whilst scaffolding the discussion and noting questions/ responses on the board_ • _Teacher then invites the class to comment on the dialogue itself, drawing explicit attention to the questions asked/responses_

General principles for promoting metalinguistic talk:

- Talk, in various forms, is a mechanism that may mediate learning about writing. Talk may support learning transfer between model texts and writing, and between writing and analysis of model texts.
- It is the _planned_ sequencing and _responsive_ use of talk about writing repertoires that may support and mediate understanding, progression, and independence.
- Dialogic and motivational writing environments provide extended opportunities to write, scaffolded as necessary, and spaces for learners to think about, reflect on and talk about writing.