

The New Zealand Curriculum

Update



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Welcome to *The New Zealand Curriculum Update*

Curriculum Updates support school leaders and teachers as they work to design and review their school curriculum in line with the New Zealand Curriculum and with current knowledge and understandings about effective classroom teaching.

Curriculum Updates are published in the *Education Gazette* and are available online at:

http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/curriculum_updates

This Update introduces the new Writing Hub on Literacy Online.

You can find it at:

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Teacher-needs/Writing-hub>



The Writing Hub: Supporting writing in years 1–8

The Writing Hub is a “one-stop shop” providing teachers of students in years 1–8 with a broad range of support for teaching writing across the curriculum.

The hub was developed in response to research findings that many New Zealand teachers need support to help their students achieve the appropriate levels in writing as set out in *The New Zealand Curriculum Reading and Writing Standards* and in *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. The hub's resources include practical information, a planning tool, teacher support materials (TSMs), assessment support, and links to other useful resources.

As students move through primary schooling, they meet with increasingly complex tasks and texts. From day one, they need to make the expected progress in writing. Students in years 1–3 must build the foundation skills they require for further learning. In years 4–8, they have to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can use their

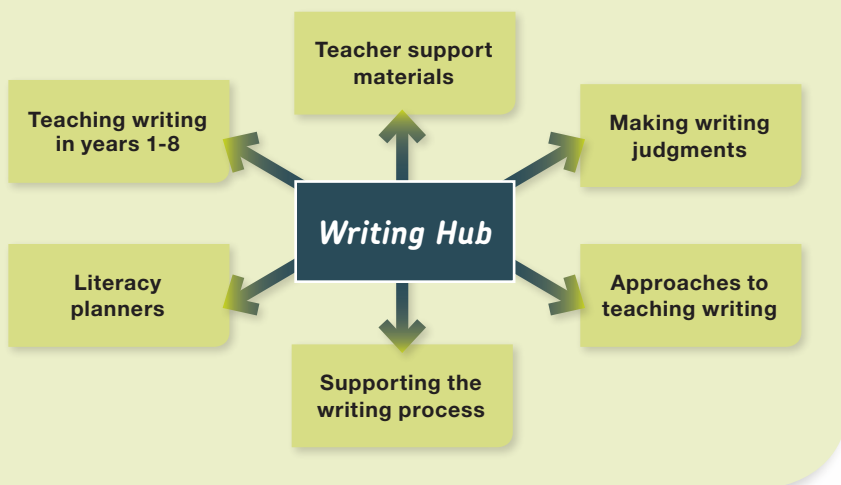
writing to meet the demands of the curriculum. By year 8, they need to be confident, self-regulated writers.

Research has also shown that effective teachers can make the difference for students who are not yet making expected progress in their writing. With strategic and focused teaching, students can make greater than expected progress in a single year.

The resources found on the Writing Hub will support you to plan effectively, to strengthen your teaching knowledge and skills (particularly for teaching writing across the curriculum), to increase your students' rate of progress in writing, and to make precise judgments about students' writing at levels 5–8.

What's on the Writing Hub?

The hub has six sections:



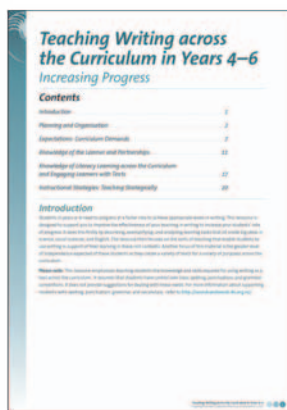
Teaching writing in years 1–8

This section provides a wealth of practical information that will help you support your students to use writing as an integral part of their learning across all areas of the curriculum. There are three sets of materials:

- **Teaching Writing in Years 1–3: Building a Strong Foundation**
- **Teaching Writing across the Curriculum in Years 4–6: Increasing Progress**
- **Teaching Writing in Years 7–8: Accelerating Progress**

These resources will help you to:

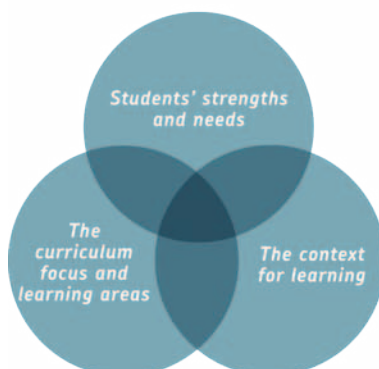
- understand the writing demands and expectations across the curriculum in years 1–8
- identify your students' particular learning needs
- plan deliberate acts of teaching to accelerate your students' progress
- use writing for a variety of purposes across the curriculum
- maximise writing opportunities in your classroom
- assess your students' progress in writing
- build your own knowledge of text features and purposes.



Research with teachers identified three main “drivers” when planning for teaching writing. These are shown in the following diagram.

Because these drivers are interconnected, every learning task and activity that you plan for your students will include all three, no matter which driver you start with.

The resources in this section of the hub include case studies, each at a different year level and showing one of these drivers as a starting point for planning. The case studies will help you to identify the writing demands relating to the big ideas of a particular curriculum topic and to plan strategies for helping your students meet these demands.



> CASE STUDY

Science, year 6 – Understanding a unique environment (native bush and stream)

Starting point for planning

The planning started with the learning context: a three-day school camp near a stand of native bush and a stream.



Big ideas

The main focus for learning (from the science curriculum, level 4: Living World – Ecology) was how living things are suited to their particular habitat and how they respond to environmental changes.

Learning tasks

The teacher planned a range of tasks to help the students develop their understanding of the big ideas and of the processes scientists use to gather and record information. Working independently and in groups, the students used their writing to:

- record information in science notebooks
- describe after close observation, attributes of plants and animals, using specialised scientific vocabulary
- organise field notes into classification and comparison tables
- explain how specific attributes enable animals and plants to survive and thrive in their environment
- suggest actions that could be taken to ensure the sustainability of this environment.

Approaches to teaching writing and Supporting the writing process

These two sections have links to existing material on the Literacy Online website from *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4* and *5–8*.

Teacher support materials

The TSMs complement the year 4–8 resources in Teaching Writing in Years 1–8 by giving detailed guidance on teaching writing within specific learning areas. These materials will help you support your students to develop the knowledge and skills required for such writing.

There are six sets of TSMs – two each at curriculum levels 2, 3, and 4.

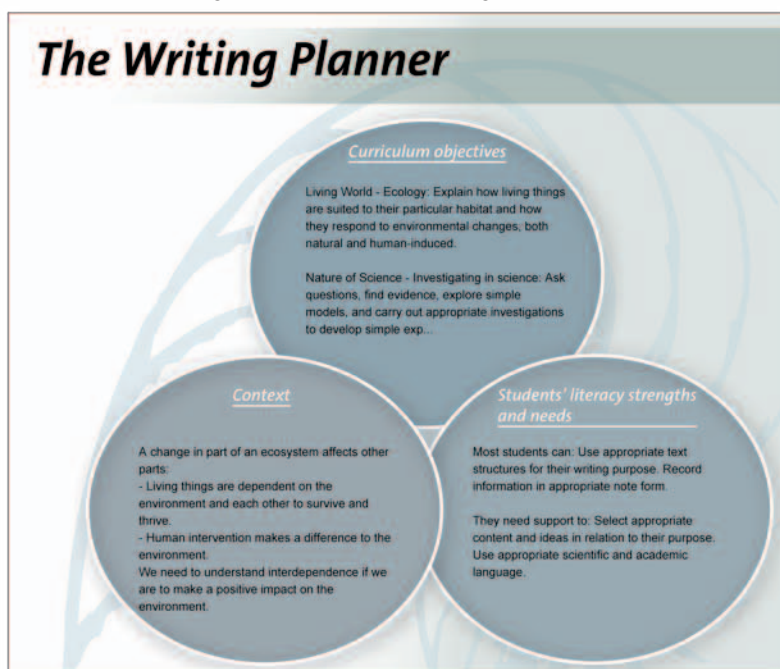


See page 4 of this Update for a closer look at one TSM.

Literacy planners

This section of the hub contains an interactive planner, called the Writing Planner, adapted from the Social Inquiry Planning Tool. The planner will help you to identify the writing demands of planned learning tasks and the teaching required for specific groups of students. It can be used to plan your teaching of writing in all curriculum contexts, including English.

This section of the hub also includes an exemplar for teaching writing in a science curriculum context (Living World – ecology). Completed plans can be stored in your account* on the Writing Hub and shared with colleagues.



* Individual teacher account: Each teacher will be able to create an account, plan and save their lesson plans, and then share them with others.

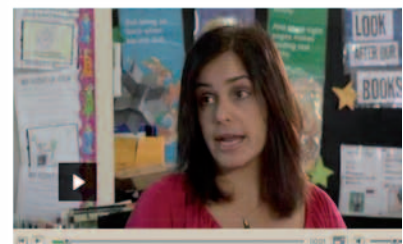
Making writing judgments

This section will help you to differentiate between expectations for students' writing at years 5 and 6 and at years 7 and 8. It includes case studies (with video) in which two teachers show how they plan for teaching writing in social sciences (years 5 and 6) and science (years 7 and 8) and how they make judgments against the National Standards through analysis of their students' writing responses. The teachers describe:

- the needs of their students
- their planning, including the teaching context and the writing focus
- their deliberate acts of teaching
- their judgments about their students' writing in relation to the National Standards.

The teachers explain how their judgments are based on close analysis of students' writing, with detailed attention to features of the writing that demonstrate whether the students are meeting the expected standard. Annotated samples of the students' work provide further evidence to support the teachers' judgments.

For example, Kelly, the year 5–6 teacher, shows how she evaluates stories that her students have written as part of a social sciences study of how moving from place to place affects individuals and communities. She discusses particular features of her students' writing that meet curriculum expectations at year 5 and at year 6 and shows how she differentiates between these.



Martin, the year 7–8 teacher, discusses how preparing for a science fair provides several authentic writing tasks, such as using science diaries to record research questions and observations. He describes what he looks for in the students' journals to differentiate between writing at year 7 and at year 8.



Using the TSMs

The TSMs on the Writing Hub use texts from the Ministry of Education's instructional series to support students' writing and learning at curriculum levels 2, 3, and 4. They provide practical and detailed guidance on how to develop your students' ability to use writing as a tool for their learning in all curriculum areas.

Writing in science, level 3: Interdependence

This set of TSMs shows how you could use two texts with themes relating to the concept of interdependence to support your students' curriculum learning and develop their writing skills. The texts are:

- "The Man in the Outside Office", Connected 2 2010
- "Pukeki Robins", School Journal, Part 2 Number 1, 2011



Teacher Support Materials
Supporting writing that meets curriculum demands

Texts that support the theme of interdependence

Connected 2 2010 – "The Man in the Outside Office" (article)
Relevant themes:

- Living things are dependent on the environment and each other to survive and thrive.
- Human intervention makes a difference to the environment.

School Journal, Part 2 Number 1, 2011 – "Pukeki Robins" (article)
Relevant themes:

- Human intervention makes a difference to the environment.
- We need to understand interdependence if we are to make a positive impact on the environment.

Texts	Text features and structure	Supporting strategies
Connected 2 2010 – "The Man in the Outside Office"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct speech as quotations that speak to the audience • Non-continuous sequence • Mix of present and past tenses • Variety of past verb forms: "The marks had been made", "It was in his best patch", "He's on his part" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the students' prior knowledge – make links to what they know about descriptions. • Direct the students to the text and explain that you are going to show them how this author describes. For example, "He saw golden eagles and giant vultures and heard wolves that prowled around the villages trying to snatch little goats."

1. lists texts with related themes
2. analyses the features and structures of the texts in detail
3. gives a range of practical strategies to help your students transfer their new knowledge about the features and structures of texts to their own writing
4. identifies the writing demands of the three learning processes of building knowledge, investigating, and developing understanding
5. includes a series of prompts to help you plan ways to support your students to meet these demands

Teacher Support Materials
Supporting writing that meets curriculum demands

2. Investigating

Support the students to understand how descriptions are often used to develop explanations. They will become aware that questions (and hypotheses) are developed because something has been noticed – as observed and described by them – and that these questions will inform and direct their ongoing research process. By identifying, recording, and ordering key questions related to the big ideas about interdependence within a particular environment, they will be able to direct their investigation.

Writing demands	Prompts to support planning
<p>The writing demands of investigating include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing questions using precise language • refining the language in their questions as the students work towards a hypothesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do my students know how to ask useful and key questions? • Do they know the difference between asking questions and hypothesising? • What do they need to know about ordering questions? • What modelling will support their understanding?

6 Task: Students make sense of ideas and information

Students Possible responses to the task	Teacher Possible deliberate acts of teaching						
<p>Students record observations, questions, and hypotheses.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Observations</th> <th>Questions</th> <th>Hypotheses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pukeki live in the forest.</td> <td>What is it like?</td> <td>I think there</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Observations	Questions	Hypotheses	Pukeki live in the forest.	What is it like?	I think there	<p>Model the initial observation on page 1 of the Connected article and the possible questions and hypotheses of the scientists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation: The marks were made by chisel-shaped teeth not rounded teeth. • Hypothesis: Possibility of rounded teeth.
Observations	Questions	Hypotheses					
Pukeki live in the forest.	What is it like?	I think there					

6. for each learning process, suggests writing tasks relating to the big ideas of the curriculum
7. gives examples of student responses, reflecting each student's learning and ability to meet the demands of the curriculum
8. includes examples of the deliberate acts of teaching – directing, modelling, telling, prompting, explaining, questioning, and giving feedback – that will help you to support your students' curriculum learning and to develop their ability and skills in writing.

I liked the idea of different ways to approach the writing task – [such as] using writing to show their critical thinking [or] identifying and writing about bias. Really great for my kids. I could pick this up and run with it tomorrow.

Quite often we are told to "do things". This [material] is showing us – not just telling us what to do.

Great student responses – they heighten my expectations for my kids and give me an exemplar of this sort of writing.

This resource provides a helpful focus on writing to meet curriculum demands.

Teachers involved in the review of the draft TSM

Guiding questions He pātai

- How do the three aspects of planning influence how I design my learning tasks? How might the Writing Hub support me in this?
- How do I currently identify the writing demands within learning tasks? How might the Writing Hub support me in this?
- How can I use resources from the Writing Hub to identify whether my students are meeting the writing demands of the curriculum at the expected level and to plan writing tasks that will improve their progress?
- How can we as a school use the resources on the Writing Hub to help our students achieve the expected level for writing at curriculum level 4 by the end of year 8?

You can find references and useful resources for this Update in the online version at http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/curriculum_updates

The New Zealand Curriculum

Update

> Useful resources

Useful resources

School Journal teacher support materials: www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

The National Standards illustrations online: <http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Student-needs/National-Standards-Reading-and-Writing/National-Standards-illustrations>

Ministry of Education (2003). *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*. Wellington: Learning Media.

pages 78–87	Deliberate acts of teaching
pages 102–109	Approaches to writing
pages 119–120	A focus on purpose
pages 136–137	Creating texts
pages 142–143	Case study

Ministry of Education (2006). *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5–8*. Wellington: Learning Media.

pages 111–119	Approaches to writing
pages 115 and 117	Case studies
page 123	A focus on purpose

Ministry of Education (2008). *The English Language Learning Progressions*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education (2009). *The New Zealand Curriculum Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education (2010). *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. Wellington: Learning Media.