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SUMMER 2023



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PROJECT LAND DISCIPLINARY WRITING



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Welcome Message

Welcome to our fourth Project L Edition of Lydiate Learning Together! In this edition we will be taking a detailed look into the many successes we have had this academic year across the Lydiate Learning Trust, with a particular focus on the innovative and impactful ways Project L is encouraging our students to thrive. I would like to personally issue an enormous thank you to everyone at Deyes High and Childwall Sport and Science Academy for their determination to ensure our students are consistently provided with the best diet they could hope for. Empowering them to take on any challenge and future endeavour.

With the incredible success of our first full year of face-to-face reading of our Literary Canon now fully behind us, this academic year has been all about finessing and perfecting our approach across the trust to make sure that Reading for Pleasure flourishes as a key feature of our school day. So much is this the case that in both of our schools it is now commonplace to hear students discussing what has been happening to their favourite fictional characters over lunch or as they walk down our corridors to lessons.

To build on this we have now turned our attention across LLT to a clear focus on Disciplinary Writing and the importance of developing writing stamina and efficacy as key skills for our students. National statistics show that only 69% of UK students met the expected standard in writing in 2022. Due to the significant impact of Covid -19, this has dropped from 78% in 2019. Our priority now is to support our students to build writing stamina and also writing clarity as they look to prepare for future careers. Breaking down the art of writing has enabled practitioners to have a granular approach to teaching handwriting, spelling, planning and sentence formation as integral building blocks of a wider picture around extended writing. As such, our students have produced some fantastic work really highlighting the effect such practice has had on their learning.

In addition to this we have fully embraced the extracurricular competitions and activities available to our students with some exciting developments in both schools. A huge thank you to Meggan Pye and the fantastic student writers involved in the Top of The Term Newsletter for their efforts bringing student relevant material to a wide audience across the Trust. This edition is bursting with fantastic examples of how Literacy is flourishing across all aspects of the Lydiate Learning Trust.

Suzanne Pountain, Executive Director of School Improvement



Project L and Disciplinary Writing

At Deyes, our wonderful staff base has helped to create a hub of activity around developing literacy for our students over this past academic year. In Project L reading lessons focused on our Literary Canon, students have been engrossed in stories of Presidential Candidacy in the USA, survival in the fictional dystopia of Panem and displacement and immigration as children are forced to flee destruction and war in Syria to name a few!

Student voice has revealed just how much our Reading lessons are having a significant impact on how they view the habit of Reading for Pleasure with one Year 9 student remarking “It is my favourite lesson in the school day, I never used to read much but now I am reading the Maze Runner series at home.”

Such dedication and engagement from our students have led us to move forward with Project L and begin to focus on developing extended writing alongside their reading practice. To facilitate this our CPDL drive since January has been to adopt a granular approach to teaching writing across our disciplines, underpinned in research from Alex Quigley’s Closing the Writing Gap.

7 STEPS to CLOSE THE WRITING GAP

[STEP 1]	Train teachers in the art and science of writing	
[STEP 2]	Take advantage of talk and the rhetorical roots of writing	
[STEP 3]	Explicitly teach and model the stages of the writing process	
[STEP 4]	Offer pupils the gift of grammar, so that they can make informed writing choices	
[STEP 5]	Concentrate on crafting great sentences	
[STEP 6]	Prioritise disciplinary writing	
[STEP 7]	Plan for focused feedback and assess writing excellence	

Closing the Writing Gap PRIORITISATION ACTIVITY



What approaches to improving writing should we prioritise?
What support factors are required to ensure this priority is successful e.g. CPD sessions?

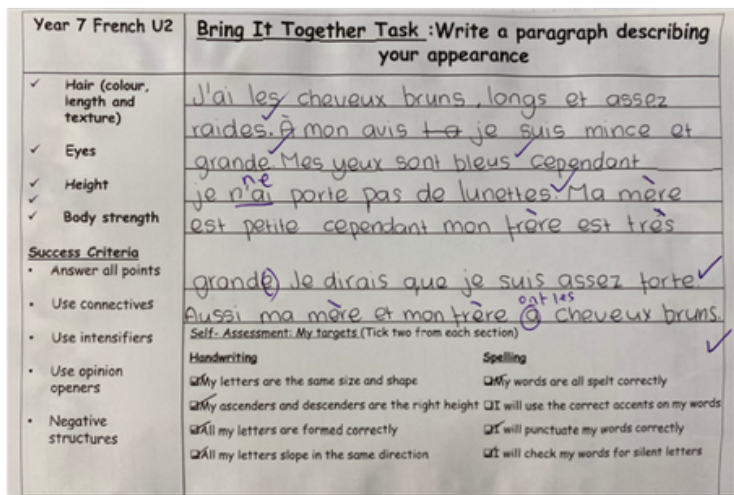
Improve pupils' handwriting fluency	Refine the teaching and learning of grammar	Modelling writing in the classroom
Enhance pupils' ability to edit & revise their writing	Focus on the craft of sentence composition	Systematic assessment of writing
Secure spelling accuracy	Establish writing in the subject disciplines	Sustained professional development on teaching writing





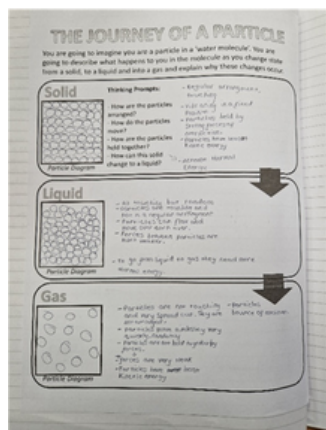
Project L and Disciplinary Writing

Our first step as a school was to revisit the skill of transcription through handwriting and review how our students approach it. We found that students were at times embarrassed by their handwriting and that it would often become a barrier to them writing established extended pieces. Our Big Handwrite in January aimed to address this by giving students time and space to reflect on their handwriting across our subjects and set themselves three achievable targets which could then be reviewed once a half term. From this our students were able to produce fantastic classwork thoughtfully self-assessing their clarity and legibility.



Our students have also been able to self-assess their spelling and categorise the words that they often spell incorrectly into clearly defined areas that can be worked upon and improved. Students organised their spelling errors into Vowel Clusters, Consonant Doubling, Morpheme Patterns or Homophones, allowing them to prioritise one area that required the most development.

Our second focus of Executive Function encouraged students to consider how much time they spend planning, editing and reviewing before they begin their pieces of extended writing. The aim behind this was to ensure that students were equipped with the correct vocabulary, prior knowledge, subject content and paragraphing structure to be able to complete a piece of extended writing without losing stamina or creativity. Our second Big Write really highlighted the positive effect this had on our students' writing.





Project L and Disciplinary Writing

DEYES HIGH SCHOOL

The Big Handwrite!

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The Big Handwrite helps our students reflect on their handwriting skills while setting targets to further improve and challenge themselves!

Our third Big Write will examine carefully how students can now take the positive strides they have made in reviewing their writing so far and bring everything together to make creative and effective sentences.

We recognise the importance of enabling our students to have a range of writing forms for the varied writing scenarios our students are preparing for in adult life, as such we are ensuring they can adapt their writing to meet the needs of any given situation.

To summarise, our Project L drive on Reading for Pleasure and Disciplinary Writing has this academic year helped us to ensure that students not only have literacy embedded as a habitual part of their school experience but that they also develop the creative initiative and flair to be able to take their reading and writing skills on to new heights through consistent reflection and evaluation.

Sean Martin, Lead Practitioner in English



Top of the Term Student Newspaper



Over the last year, our Top of the Term news team have been working hard on bringing relevant, useful and enjoyable newspaper articles to the students of Deyes High and our wider community. The paper was initially set up to give students a voice, to speak about matters that were important to them and to allow them to take ownership of information that was distributed around school. They meet once a week and work on all elements of the production process for a school newspaper: from research and journalism; to creation and tech use; to editing and publication. The paper is released at the end of each term in paper copy, via Synergy and on the school website for all to read. It is fantastic to see such a committed group of students get passionate about having their say!

In general, the student paper covers topics that are relevant at the time (such as war zones that are being missed out of mainstream news, how mental health can affect young people and the development of new medicines to help serious diseases) as well as the reports on news local to our school like our Top of the Term Sport Report and the Student Success @ Deyes sections. We have permanent features relating to obscure animals, recommended reads and fun quizzes/competitions for all students to get involved in, all coordinated by our fab student team.

Earlier in the year, the Top of the Term news team took part in the BBC Young Reporter Competition, where they had just one day to complete all steps of the production process, in order to share their stories with the BBC. The given topic was 'My World and Me' and our students rose to the challenge. They may get the opportunity to have their stories aired on Newsround, The One Show and on BBC Radio. The winners are announced in June, so watch this space.

[Click here](#) to watch our interview with project leader Miss Pye, Teacher of English