

# Research underpinning Stage 6 Literacy in context – Writing resources

Student literacy skills are the responsibility of every teacher, *'All teachers are responsible for facilitating students' literacy learning – not just teachers of subject English.'* Wing Jan and Taylor, 2020. Beginning with writing support first was reinforced in the article by Hochman and Duffy, 'Effective Writing Instruction; Time for a Revolution', 2015. Additionally, the article highlighted that, *'Writing should not be taught in isolation from content – writing will enhance their student's ability to understand subject matter.'* Therefore, it is important that students are learning literacy skills in context, that is, with the subject material from the syllabuses. Further supported as, *'Subject teachers can use content of their subject to teach literacy in context.'* Wing Jan and Taylor, 2020. This idea was also reflected in the article 'One sentence at a time' by Hochman and Wexler, 2017. Ultimately, this sits well with Stage 6 where there is essential content. Therefore, literacy activities provided in these Stage 6 Literacy in context – Writing resources require the use of the essential content of each specific subject.

The Stage 6 resources include activities that, 'Improve student writing through subject vocabulary'. This first section was influenced by the ideas of Alex Quigley. Quigley's writing outlines that knowledge and understanding of the words used in subjects is crucial for students to effectively engage with the curriculum. Providing a structured and systematic approach to supporting students as they build their subject vocabulary was adapted from Quigley's Select, Explain, Explore, and Consolidate (SEEC) model. Further, the article by Quigley reveals that studies support the idea that vocabulary is one of the significant factors in students achieving effective subject outcomes. Therefore, vocabulary is an ideal place to begin the journey of improving student writing and this is reflected in the resources.

'Effective Writing Instruction; Time for a Revolution', Hochman and Duffy, 2015 explained that:

Although grammar and spelling are important components of writing, effective writing must also include skills necessary for accuracy, precision, summarization, content, and structure. In almost every type of coursework or career, people have to inform, explain, and provide their reasoning in writing.

This informs the second set of the Stage 6 resources, 'Improve student writing through planning for writing'. Reflecting the article, activities have been provided that support students to write about the texts that they read. With the resources the students summarise and note take. '*Taught correctly, summarizing and note taking can result in large gains in student achievement in both reading and writing*', Hochman and Duffy, 2015. Additionally, in the resources, teachers consider regular opportunities for their students to write. Furthermore, scaffolds and strategies are provided to support students to engage with effective note-taking and to practise their own writing skills.

'The Writing Revolution' Hochman and Wexler, 2017, describes six principles to consider when teaching to improve student writing:

- need explicit instruction
- sentences are the building blocks of all writing
- use curriculum content for writing instruction to be powerful
- curriculum content drives the rigor of the writing activities
- grammar is best taught in the context of student writing
- planning and revising are the most important aspects of good writing.

These ideas informed the third section of the resources, 'Improve student writing through writing and feedback'. Initially students use the activities in the resources to 'build the field' of their knowledge by taking notes and summarising. Then they are supported with scaffolds and by being explicitly taught what the writing product looks like. Students are then provided with an opportunity to write. '*The more students know about a topic before they write the better they will be able to write about it*', Hochman and Wexler, 2017. Other key ideas, from Hochman and Wexler, include that all teachers must be teachers of writing and that providing explicit instruction and quality feedback is essential. Therefore, explicit instruction and quality feedback pathways have been incorporated into these Stage 6 Literacy in context, writing resources.

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