

Developing Extended Writing (D.E.W.)

- These give suggestions for encouraging creative writing with a given theme.
- Word banks from the back of Words One are used with the D.E.W. 1-12.
- Word banks from the covers of Words Four are used with the D.E.W. 13-24.
- Space for use instead of a Words Paper is given before the lines on which the student writes; alternatively, this space could be used to draw maps or pictures etc.
- Topic-related words are added into the vocabulary at the bottom of the page.
- D.E.W. 20-24 may be used separately or in sequence to enable students to learn to plan and complete pieces of extended writing.
- Use of some of the word banks on Words Four gives students an introduction in how to use a thesaurus.
- The Developing Extended Writing exercises could be set for homework, not necessarily needing adult support.
- Please use these as examples to inspire you to tailor-make creative writing exercises for your students.

Certificates

- It is suggested that a certificate is awarded to a student when they are proficient at using and are ready to move up to the next Words level. This rewards and stimulates effort.
- 'Independent Writer of the Week' certificates celebrate an individual's effort in the group context, and may be given for any subject area in which Independent Writer has been used to aid written work.

How to get the best from Independent Writer

Since every teacher has their own individual approach and every student is unique, variations on the broad suggestions enclosed are to be welcomed and encouraged.

Words One, Two, Three, Four

- Words are listed in alphabetical order, giving a mini-dictionary for students to work with.
- The back of Words One contains several word banks, listing useful vocabulary, which may still be referred to by those on Words Two, Three and Four.
- The covers of Words Four similarly list several word banks and may be used to introduce the student to skills necessary for using a thesaurus.
- Word banks list words in alphabetical order, except where it makes sense to list them sequentially.

Getting started: Assessment Record Sheets

- When beginning to use Independent Writer with a student, the Assessment Record Sheets should be used to find out which of the Words level is the most appropriate.
- For most educators, the primary aim of the Assessment Record Sheets is to record how well the words are read by the student.
- As a rough guide, a student should know about 30 words from Words One to be ready to use it independently. Initially it is better to err on the side of caution and not place students at too high a level.
- An effective method to help students to familiarise themselves with the words available on that level is to ask students to find a word and write it down.
- A further development is for students to write the word first before finding and checking it, strengthening their spelling skills.
- Saying the word as part of a sentence enables the educator to check the student's comprehension and develops language skills.
- It is also important for students to be able to read a word without having heard it first. Words can be pointed out for students to read out loud.
- A successful way to build up the number of words a student can easily find is to give 5 individual words to work on at a time.
- These methods work well in group situations as well as one-to-one. Initially groups will need a facilitator, but, with practice, can become self-sufficient, only requiring assistance when problems arise.
- The Assessment Record Sheets can be updated through use of the above exercises, recording a student's progress and ensuring that the appropriate Words level is being used.
- Once most of the words on one level are easily read, the student is ready to move to the next level.

Words Paper

- Words which do not appear on the Words level at which the student is working may be written on the Words Paper.
- Students may attempt any spellings of which they are unsure on the Words Paper.
- The attempted spelling should be praised as far as it is correct.
- The correct spelling is written next to the attempt. This can either be done by the student self-checking if the word is on the Words level, or by an adult.
- Special vocabulary for the current piece of writing may be written in the spaces at the bottom of the Words Paper.
- Use of the Words Paper means that Independent Writer can help with written work across the curriculum areas.
- The Words Paper should be attached to the relevant piece of work as a record.

Skills Sheets

- These enable students to become familiar with the process of using the Words levels and the Words Paper.
- They provide practise in sentence-writing and the correct use of punctuation.
- Each Skills Sheet stands alone and is linked to a specific Words level.
- Skills Sheets 1-10 are for use with Words One and Two, and Sheets 11-24 with Words Three and Four.
- The Skills Sheets could be set as homework exercises with the need for adult support.
- Please use these as examples to inspire you to tailor-make activities to develop your students' writing.