

Cawston Primary School



School Plan 2011-12



Mission Statement:

We provide a safe and supportive community
where all children succeed.

Our Motto:

We strive for our personal best.

Rationale for the 2011-12 School Plan

For the past two years, we have sought to answer the following question in the work we have done with our School Plan:

“Will a school-wide focus on writing increase the writing achievement of all our students?”

As a Learning Community, we recognize that, after two years of focus on Writing:

1. Staff has a better understanding of the writing process at all age levels. We have studied the research and learned how to best teach writing from people with expertise in this area;
2. We are more cognizant of writing, and writing is more often the topic of our professional conversations than it used to be;
3. Writing is a much more subjective subject to evaluate than reading and math, even with provincially- developed evaluation tools;
4. It is critical that children of all ages and at all levels of achievement have direct, structured instruction in writing, in order to progress into higher levels. A Grade 3 student fully meeting expectations in writing can move toward the exceeding level with very specific writing instruction;
5. There is a significant correlation between writing achievement and receptive/expressive language skills. Knowing this, we have made a particular effort to provide language enriched activities and lessons for our students.

We have studied our school writing data extensively to look for trends and changes in direction. We have noted that every year, our Grade 3 students seem to struggle with writing but there is always a substantial improvement in achievement levels by the end of Grade 4.

Over this past year, we developed a Scope and Sequence Writing Chart, based on the provincial Prescribed Learning Outcomes. Having the entire Kindergarten to Grade 4 Writing Curriculum on a chart allows us to continually monitor where we are in relation to the outcomes which are to be taught at each grade level. In addition, it assists teachers in planning for and teaching students who are not yet meeting grade level writing outcomes, clearly delineating what still needs to be learned.

As our Learning Community discussed the direction of our 2011-12 School Plan, we made a decision to continue to focus on writing achievement. Our students' writing achievement has increased, but overall, writing remains our weakest area. This year, we want to especially focus on our reluctant, poor and/or weak writers. We want to study what we can do to best help these children, while continuing to build our skill and expertise in teaching writing to all our students. Our question will remain the same; our staff development, teaching and student learning activities will reflect what we have learned over the past two years, and what we still need to do to further increase the writing achievement of all our students.

All data related to Numeracy, Culture/Climate and the Reading area of Literacy is attached to the 2011-12 School Plan as an Addendum. We continually monitor this data. This year, we are also adding data related to the Speaking and Listening Skills of our students.

Our Question:

Will a school-wide focus on Writing increase the writing achievement of all our students?

Note: "Writing" is used to mean all aspects of written language.

Writing Data:

1. Students fully meeting or exceeding expectations in writing by end of Grade 4 using BC Performance Standards in Writing: (percentage of students fully meeting or exceeding expectations)

	<u>2006</u>		<u>2007</u>		<u>2008</u>		<u>2009</u>		<u>2010</u>
Grade 1	46%	→	54%	→	59%	→	74%	→	50%
Grade 2	63%	→	49%	→	44%	→	46%	→	51%
Grade 3	46%	→	43%	→	41%	→	44%	→	44%
Grade 4	69%	→	77%	→	52%	→	62%	→	63%

Grade Group Data: Students fully meeting or exceeding expectations in writing using BC Performance Standards in Writing:

Grade 1 June 2006	-----	Grade 4 June 2009
46%		62%
Grade 1 June 2007	-----	Grade 4 June 2010
54%		63%

2. Students approaching, fully meeting or exceeding expectations in writing by end of Grade 4 using BC Performance Standards in Writing: (percentage of students approaching, fully meeting or exceeding expectations)

	<u>2008</u>		<u>2009</u>		<u>2010</u>
Grade 1	83%	→	89%	→	71%
Grade 2	88%	→	78%	→	85%
Grade 3	78%	→	78%	→	76%
Grade 4	90%	→	95%	→	99%

3. First Nations students fully meeting or exceeding expectations in writing by end of Grade 4 using BC Performance Standards in Writing: (percentage of students fully meeting or exceeding expectations)

	<u>2006</u>		<u>2007</u>		<u>2008</u>		<u>2009</u>		<u>2010</u>
Grade 1	mask	→	mask	→	mask	→	36% (11)	→	14% (7)
Grade 2	42%	→	mask	→	0% (8)	→	0% (6)	→	23% (14)
Grade 3	50%	→	29% (17)	→	40% (10)	→	13% (8)	→	0% (6)
Grade 4	mask	→	86% (7)	→	46% (13)	→	50% (12)	→	40% (10)

4. Grade 4 students meeting or exceeding expectations in writing based on FSA results:
(Percentage of students writing the FSA who were fully meeting or exceeding expectations)

<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	
91%	76%	62%	53%	62%	
	District	88%	57%	64%	68%
	Province	90%	77%	68%	69%

5. First Nations Grade 4 students meeting or exceeding expectations in writing based on FSA results:
(Percentage of First Nations students writing the FSA who were fully meeting or exceeding expectations)

<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	
mask	57% (4)	50% (14)	58% (11)	mask	
	District	81% (13)	58% (36)	72% (23)	63% (19)
	Province	79%	52%		54%

6. Ministry Satisfaction Survey Results: Grade 4 Parent Survey
Are you satisfied with the development of your child's writing skills at school?
(percentage of parents reporting "all of the time" or "many times")

<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	
79%	75%	81%	77%	63%	
		District	83%	72%	68%
		Province	65%	62%	

Strategies and Activities:

The following list of strategies and activities is the plan we have determined should help us make positive changes in the writing achievement of our students. However, we are aware, that as we explore our topic in depth, changes in our strategies and activities may be needed. As with all working documents, we will adjust our plans accordingly.

Our planned strategies and activities fall into five general areas:

1. Staff Development:

- School Planning Day - Monday, August 29
 - revise our Scope & Sequence Chart, Dolch list & word families as needed.
 - review spelling programs used in school.
 - discussion - planning for teaching writing conventions.
- Pro D Day - Tuesday, August 30
 - Resource Sharing - staff will meet as whole group and grade partners to discuss programs, ideas and resources used for teaching writing.
- Staff Development - staff will purchase book to be used to guide study at Staff Development meetings.
Book title to be announced. (J.Keyes, L. Thiel)
- Staff Development - study of Writing as a Response to Reading - Adrienne Gear. (J.Martin)
- Staff Development - study of the Writing Portion of Miriam Trehearne book. (K. Brunton)
- Study, co-plan and team teach with grade level partners.
- Participate in professional development activities with a writing and/or language focus within and outside district as available.
- All staff will accept leadership roles by selecting specific areas of the Plan to be responsible for.

2. Data:

- Review data for student achievement in Reading, Writing, Listening/Speaking & Math at end of each term. (L. Thiel)
- Continue to follow progress of grade group "true" cohorts. (L. Thiel)
- Include data for Listening & Speaking achievement (from June report cards) in our School Plan Addendum. (L. Thiel)
- Collect Term 1 and 3 writing sample and rubric in student assessment file.

3. Teaching and School Organization:

- Do October and June grade wide writes and use the information for planning. (organized by K. Brunton)
- Assess student writing using the BC Performance Standards and the Okanagan Mainline Regional Literacy group rubrics as well as the Kindergarten Writing Curriculum.
- Have a grade wide Writing block each day in the timetable, as we already do for Reading. This will allow for team teaching and Learning Assistance support between classrooms at the same grade level.
- All classes make a commitment to have writing lesson each day.
- Begin each Staff Meeting by demonstrating an activity designed to build fine motor skills. (J.Keyes, J.Martin)
- Staff will utilize some Learning Assistance time to support students with difficulties in Writing. (G. Doi)
- Staff will consider team teaching Writing lessons with buddy classes or grade level partners.
- Staff will provide as many language enriching activities as possible (eg. drum workshop, concerts, performances, story tellers, local experts, etc.).
- When appropriate, teach students to use assistive writing technology. (Kurzweil) (M. Fairbrother, G. Doi, K. Brunton)
- Staff will teach writing for different purposes and writing in different genres.
- Staff will teach printing and handwriting skills as set out in Scope & Sequence.

4. Students & Writing:

- One week per term, staff will develop and plan a school wide theme (eg. frogs). The purpose will be to build language skills and have all students learn the common vocabulary. The theme will be used in writing activities. Consider making bins with activities, books and props to support the theme. (G. Doi, S. Kruger)
- The Librarian will make theme displays in library. One week a term the display will be related to the school wide theme being studied. At other times, Librarian will set out a display of different themed books (eg. sports, animal, author). Staff will use the morning announcements and other ideas to generate enthusiasm for reading the books in that theme. The purpose of the Library display is to build language skills and vocabulary and provide ideas for writing. (Librarian)
- Each class will have buddy class. Staff will make a point to alternate buddy activities between reading and writing. Buddy writing activities may include buddy journals, big buddies scribe, ABAB writing, etc.
- We will continue our Writing Display Wall in the hallway (picture frames). Note whose writing is being displayed each month in our school newsletter and on morning announcements to emphasize its importance. (B. Bews, M. Webster)

5. Resources:

- Buy classroom games which build fine motor skills (eg. Pick up Sticks, Jacks, Jenga, etc.). (T. Nunes, J. Martin)
- Purchase writing focused resources for staff and professional library. (M. Lucich, Librarian)

Note:

Over the course of this year, our Staff is also exploring the extent to which student self-regulation affects achievement and what we, as teachers, can do to help students become better at self-regulating. All staff will attend a presentation on Self-Regulation by Stuart Shanker, a world-renowned expert in the area of self-regulation. This workshop will be on August 31, 2011, and all staff have committed to using a Professional Development Day to attend this workshop. Our staff is considering making self-regulation the focus of our 2012-13 School Plan.