

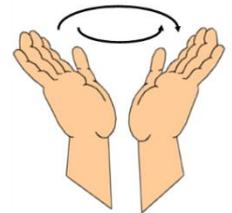
## The Talk for Writing approach ©

The [Talk for Writing](#)© approach, developed by Pie Corbett, supports children’s language development through repetition which connects a text’s narrative to actions, props and visuals. The approach can be used to support oral language development which underpins the story making process, leading into children’s writing. The principles can be applied to fiction and non-fiction texts.

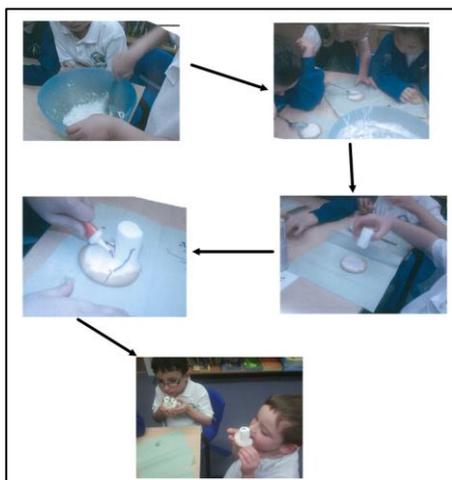
### Stage 1: Imitation – becoming familiar with a text

1. Select a text with a repetitive structure, e.g. ‘The Little Red Hen’, which will support the skills of imitation through repetition. Read this text a number of times with the children.

2. Begin to retell the text with actions/ signs, using the actions/ signs to support each of the key events within the text, e.g. ‘Once upon a time’ could be acting out opening and closing a book. **If you’re using Makaton or British Sign Language within your environment, it is recommended that you use these signs.** Retell the text a number of times using the actions.

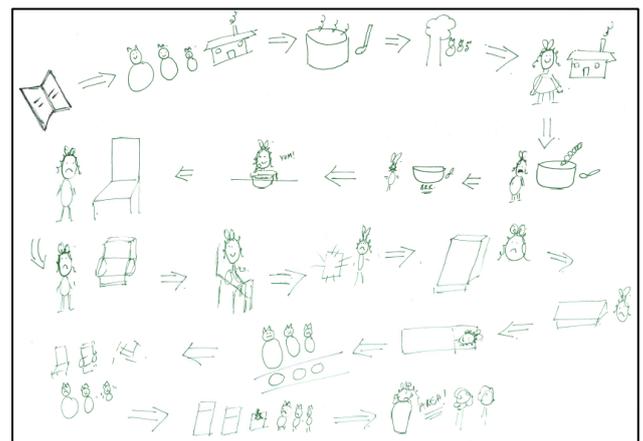


3. Create a visual map of the text using visuals and/ or props. Depending on the children’s stage of development this can be co-constructed with the children, or constructed by the children individually or in small groups. This should be a large map which the children contribute to. Each action/ sign should have a correlating visual/ prop, e.g. ‘Once upon a time’ could be a picture of a book. Retell the text a number of times using the actions and visuals/ props. Children can develop their retell skills independently, in pairs and small groups using the story-map/ text-map and actions/signs. Display the map in an area where children can access this independently.



*Text-map – Icing Biscuits*

In this example the children have iced biscuits, taking photographs of each stage. The children then used the photographs to retell each part of the recipe, in order.



*Story-map – ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears’*

In this example the story of ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears’ has been used as the stimulus, using visuals for each key event.

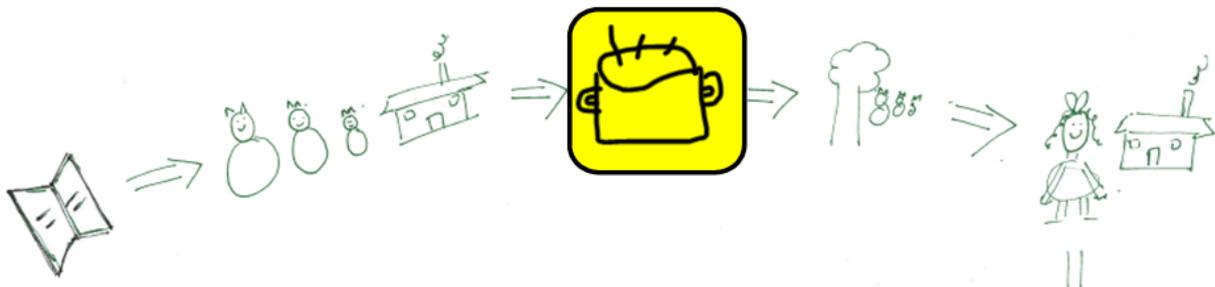
## Stage 2: Innovation – making changes to a familiar text:

When children begin to innovate, substitutions are the simplest form of innovation which children can be supported to make. As children's narrative skills develop, alterations can become increasingly ambitious, with independent innovations such as addition, alteration, change of viewpoint and reusing the basic story pattern.

### Innovation: A focus on substitution

Once children are familiar and confident with retelling a text using the stages within imitation, changes can be made to aspects of the text to begin their own independent applications. This would be modelled initially before being developed in groups and independently. There are a number of innovations which can be made. Substitution is a simple innovation which can be made, using the steps below.

1. Using the familiar text from **Stage 1: Imitation**, make substitutions to the text e.g. instead of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' it may be 'Nessie and the three Whales', or instead of making porridge the bears may have made soup. Depending on the children's stage of development, you may wish to focus on one simple substitution, e.g. the 'who' of the main character, or a number of substitutions, e.g. the 'who' of the characters and the 'where' this took place.
2. For each of the changes, a new visual/ prop should be used as well as a new action/ sign. In the example below the porridge has been changed to soup. In the example below a sticky note has been placed on top of the substitution and a new image drawn on top. This allows for any number of changes to be made, following the sequential structure of the familiar text developed in the imitation stage.



3. Retell the story with substitution a number of times using the visuals/ props and actions/ signs.

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