

# Non-fiction writing

## SCAFFOLDS

### CONTENTS

<b>UNIT 1</b>	Newspaper reports	<b>6</b>
<b>UNIT 2</b>	Newspaper and magazine articles	<b>17</b>
<b>UNIT 3</b>	Instructions	<b>29</b>
<b>UNIT 4</b>	Reports – Historical texts	<b>41</b>
<b>UNIT 5</b>	Explanation 1	<b>54</b>
<b>UNIT 6</b>	Explanation 2	<b>66</b>
<b>UNIT 7</b>	Advertisements	<b>78</b>
<b>UNIT 8</b>	Discussion texts	<b>91</b>
<b>UNIT 9</b>	Editorials	<b>105</b>

# Non-fiction writing scaffolds for Year 4

## INTRODUCTION

**Non-fiction Writing Scaffolds for Year 4** is intended for use in schools to help teach children how to write effectively in a variety of non-fiction genres. It improves children's ability to organise their writing so that it has purpose by familiarising them with a system of planning which they can apply to any title. As they work through the units, the children assemble a portfolio of non-fiction texts containing genre-specific vocabulary and writing features. The chosen text types correspond with those in the Literacy Framework's text-level objectives.

Many non-fiction texts are essentially cross-curricular. Thus the ability to write specifically and purposefully about a subject will benefit other areas of study.

Each unit includes information and activities on at least one sentence-level objective. Therefore the book also enhances the children's knowledge of grammar, punctuation and style.

### THE PROGRAMME CONTAINS:

#### a teachers' book comprising:

- notes for teachers on the genres
- a bibliography for each genre
- copies of exemplar texts with teaching notes
- guidance on how to develop grammar and punctuation skills in children's writing
- guidance on how to write in the particular genre and on specific features of each non-fiction text.

#### a resource book of photocopiable material comprising:

- illustrated versions of the exemplar texts especially produced for children
- notes for the children on understanding the grammar and punctuation (optional reference material)
- photocopiable activity sheets to reinforce the grammar and punctuation (optional)
- notes and tips for the children on writing non-fiction texts (optional reference material)
- differentiated scaffolds which give the children choices and guide them through the course of the text they are about to write
- vocabulary banks for them to use and add to.

### HOW TO USE THE PROGRAMME

- 1 After examining texts in the target genre, read and discuss the exemplar text with the children, using the notes in the margin to highlight the examples of the unit's teaching point and writing feature. The children should follow the text using their own illustrated version from the resource book.
- 2 Next, read through and explain the 'Understanding the grammar and punctuation' section of the unit. The children can do the activities together, either orally or using whiteboards, or independently on paper.
- 3 Then explain the 'Helpful hints' and 'Writing features' sections of the unit to the children.
- 4 Read through the scaffolds with the children. Then give them the differentiated word banks and ask them to record their own vocabulary suggestions in the space provided.
- 5 Give the children time to plan, write and edit their non-fiction text. Each child can then store the best copies in a writing folder.

### NOTES

When using the scaffolds, give the children strict time limits to plan and write each of the sections. This will give them practice in writing timed non-fiction texts as preparation for the Key Stage 2 writing test.

However, the system is entirely flexible. The activities in each unit, from reading the exemplar to composing their own text using the scaffolds, can be used in shared or guided time, with the children working collaboratively or individually.

The order of activities for each unit corresponds exactly with the sequence for the teaching of writing outlined in Grammar for Writing (DfEE 0107/200). First the model can be discussed and its grammatical and thematic features interrogated during shared reading. Next the grammar and punctuation activities can be undertaken to reinforce the children's understanding of the relevant sentence-level objectives. The helpful hints section, scaffolds, and vocabulary banks support the teacher and children in shared writing sessions and in subsequent guided and independent writing.

The method works well with children of all abilities and with bilingual pupils, as it offers the security of a detailed framework and a bank of appropriate vocabulary together with the challenge of a grammar and writing features component for each unit.

The units fulfil the text-level and sentence-level requirements of the NLS Framework for Year 4 and revise components from Year 3. The following units may be used specifically in literacy lessons or they may be linked with work in other curriculum areas and used accordingly.

## TERM 1

### UNIT 1

**Genre:** newspaper report: sports event (T16; T17; T18; T20)

**Grammar:** verbs and verb tenses (S2)

**Punctuation:** direct speech (Yr3 revision)

**Writing features:** headlines, style, verb tense and language (T24)

### UNIT 2

**Genre:** newspaper/magazine article: holiday travel (T16; T17; T19; T20; T21)

**Grammar:** powerful verbs; adverbs (S3)

**Punctuation:** commas (revision: lists, direct speech)

**Writing features:** headlines, presentation, content, language and layout (T24)

### UNIT 3

**Genre:** instructions: how to make a mobile of flying owls (T22)

**Grammar:** imperative verbs (S4)

**Punctuation:** organisational devices, such as numbered and bulleted lists (T22)

**Writing features:** layout, chronological order, the use of labelled diagrams (T25; T26)

## TERM 2

### UNIT 4

**Genre:** report: notes and final text on Henry VIII (T15)

**Grammar:** adjectives: comparative and superlative (S1)

**Punctuation:** apostrophes: singular and plural possession (S2)

**Writing features:** orientation, chronology, time connectives (T21; T22)

### UNIT 5

**Genre:** explanation text: electricity (T20)

**Grammar:** verb tense (revision: Term 1)

**Punctuation:** subheadings, organisational devices, such as numbered and bulleted lists

**Writing features:** opening statements, logical and chronological order, technical information, diagrams (T24; T25)

### UNIT 6

**Genre:** explanation text: making glass bottles (T20)

**Grammar:** paragraphs and link phrases

**Punctuation:** connectives (S4)

**Writing features:** opening statements, presentation, sequential order, sequential connectives, tone (T24; T25)

## TERM 3

### UNIT 7

**Genre:** Advertisements (T18; T19)

**Grammar:** different types of adjectives (revision: Term 2)

**Punctuation:** exclamation marks, dashes, colons, bullet points (S2)

**Writing features:** layout, symbols, speech bubbles, illustrations (T25)

### UNIT 8

**Genre:** discussion text: letters to the press about school uniform (T16)

**Grammar:** connectives (S4)

**Punctuation:** setting out formal letters

**Writing features:** presentation of point of view, language used (T23)

### UNIT 9

**Genre:** editorial: tabloid and broadsheet presentation of viewpoint on a traffic issue (T16; T17; T18)

**Grammar:** connectives (S4)

**Punctuation:** the use of inverted commas when quoting

**Writing features:** presentation, verb tense, style, emotive language (T23)

# JP LIFTS THE CUP!

## How did they do it? Read on!

By Matt Jones

Last Saturday, in biting, blustery conditions, on freshly-marked netball courts, the annual local tournament was won by John Parsons School, with an astounding total of 96 points. The school now reigns as this season's area champion.

This title – Worthshire Champions – is always a prized one, and must have brought special pleasure after the school's catastrophic sporting year. Their newly-appointed young, female, sports teacher, Miss Crumble, has been experiencing obvious difficulties: joint last in the under-11 football tournament in April; half a team left trampled underfoot at most of the winter's cross-country meetings; the worst ever display of catching at July's rounders tournament; a cricket team that clearly relished the taste of duck; and then there was netball. Those scores haven't been worth adding up!

However, all this changed on Saturday when the netball team beat all comers. Girls who didn't seem to be able to see the net all season were suddenly firing balls home with pinpoint accuracy; passing was fast



**The John Parsons School team hold up the Worthshire Champions cup**

and flowing; footwork was sure; and teamwork was brilliant. What had happened?

“Miss Crumble was employed as a sports teacher!” boomed Mr Rankle, the headmaster, to the local press. “She knew what was expected of her. My governors and I value sport. I simply explained to Miss Crumble the importance of today. The hosts never come last, and I didn't want to become the butt of the other heads' jokes.”

For her part, Emma Crumble looked exhausted. “It's mainly relief I feel,” she said. “I've been at school all hours coaching these girls. If they'd lost today, I dread to think what I'd have lost!”

# Understanding the grammar and punctuation

## Verbs

Every sentence or clause must contain a verb.

The verb is either the 'doing' word:

*The school now reigns as this season's area champion.*

or the 'being' word:

*This title is always a prized one.*

Note – not every verb is just one word.

*What had happened?*

*must have brought special pleasure*

## Verb tenses

Tense means time. The tenses are:

Present – Past – Future

It is the verb that tells us which tense the sentence is in.

*The school now reigns as this season's area champion.* (present tense)

This describes what is happening now.

*a cricket team that clearly relished the taste of duck* (past tense)

This describes what happened last summer.

*And we will win again next year.* (future tense)

This describes what will happen next year.

## Punctuating direct speech

Direct speech means quoting the exact words spoken. These words must be put inside inverted commas (often called quotation marks or speech marks).

The first spoken word in a sentence always begins with a capital letter, wherever it comes in the reporting sentence.

*She said, "It's mainly relief I feel."*

Spoken words and unspoken words must be kept apart.

A comma usually does this job.

*She said, "It's mainly relief I feel."*

But other punctuation marks may be used.

*"Miss Crumble was employed as a sports teacher!" boomed Mr Rankle.*

Here an exclamation mark keeps the different sections apart.

*"Have you forgotten that you were employed as a sports teacher, Miss Crumble?" asked Mr Rankle.*

Here a question mark keeps the different sections apart.

## Verbs and verb tenses

A verb is a 'doing' or 'being' word. It places the event in time. That time (or verb tense) can be past, present or future.

Read these sentences and decide which word is the verb. Circle it.

1. *The team raced to an early lead!*
2. *The shooter threw ball after ball through the net.*
3. *She scored almost every single time.*
4. *In the final match, the score was 21–0 at half-time.*
5. *Understandably, the opponents lost their will and their energy.*
6. *The excitement was almost unbearable for the spectators.*
7. *Even the head looked pleased for once!*
8. *He smirked nastily at all the other gloomy heads.*
9. *Finally, John Parsons' captain lifted the cup in victory.*
10. *As for Miss Crumble, she was just relieved.*



All these verbs are in the past tense.

On the back of this sheet, rewrite the sentences putting the verbs into the present tense.

For example:

1. *The team races to an early lead!*

### EXTENSION TASK

Put all the sentences above into the future tense. For example:

1. *The team will race to an early lead!*

## Direct speech

Put the missing punctuation in the sentences below. Use these examples to help you.

*“We’ll be back next year,” said one parent, “and I just hope we do as well.”*  
*“Phew!” gasped Miss Crumble. “I’m glad that’s over.”*

- 1. have you time for a chat called mr rankle*
- 2. er yes of course replied emma nervously*
- 3. things are not going well said the head icily do you have an explanation*
- 4. i i i don’t know gulped emma but I think things will get better*
- 5. things will get better exploded mr rankle how do you think they could get worse*
- 6. we could have been last on our own she whispered trying not to burst into tears and we did once score a goal*
- 7. it was disallowed shouted mr rankle you haven’t even taught them the rules properly*
- 8. miss crumble continued mr rankle the netball tournament is your only chance to do well*
- 9. ill do extra coaching promised emma and im sure well get some balls through the net this time*
- 10. practise practise practise miss crumble its your only hope*

### EXTENSION TASK

Write ten sentences, each containing speech, for a conversation between these two characters after the tournament.

# Helpful hints for writing a newspaper sports report

- ◆ You need an attention-grabbing headline. This shouldn't be too long, and must make the readers want to read your article – otherwise, the editor will ask another sports writer next time!
- ◆ You may decide to have a subheading. This should be just below the headline in slightly smaller font. It should give a little more detail, or perhaps ask a question that the article is going to answer.
- ◆ Headlines and subheadings do not have to be complete sentences; you just write enough for readers to know what you mean.
- ◆ Now comes the name of the reporter, perhaps including details of who he/she is. For instance:

*By Davinda Singh, Chief Athletics Writer*
- ◆ In the first paragraph, you must give the main facts about the event, especially the final result!
- ◆ The events have already happened, so make sure that verbs are in the past tense.
- ◆ In the following paragraphs, you will have time for more detail, depending on how much space your editor has allowed you. Think about what else sports fans want to know: how certain individuals played; games leading up to this event; the form of a certain team/player this season.
- ◆ Newspaper writers can never afford to waste space, so keep your readers interested as well as informed. Do this by making the language vivid, using descriptions that suit the sport. For example:

*One ace after another flashed over the net. In only 15 minutes, his opponent had lost heart and the first set.*
- ◆ Sometimes descriptions are exaggerated, but this is usual in sports articles and creates the right effect. For instance, in the next example, the spectators weren't really struck dumb, but the imagery emphasises the speed of the girl.

*Everyone watching was struck dumb: this girl was a running star of the future.*
- ◆ Readers do enjoy hearing what someone had to say, and the more important the person, the bigger the scoop.
- ◆ It is important to finish the report well. Mentioning future results, or giving a final quote can make a good ending.