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INTRODUCTION

About the series

Active Writers is a new and exciting literacy series, which aims to provide children with the tools to become more competent and confident writers.

This is done by using a structured approach, thus inviting learners to:

- Review what they know about a text genre
- Learn about the writing devices used
- Practise the language skills needed
- Apply their learning in a writing task.

Active Writers expects greater independence of thought of the children. It includes resources to ensure children can assess their own progress in collaboration with their teacher and therefore:

- Self-Assessment is required
- Teacher-pupil discussion is prompted
- Teacher assessment is catered for
- A signed record is produced.

There are 5 books with CDs in the **Active Writers** series:

- Year 2 (Ages 6-7)
- Year 3 (Ages 7-8)
- Year 4 (Ages 8-9)
- Year 5 (Ages 9-10)
- Year 6 (Ages 10-11)

Each book is divided into three broad text categories:

- Narrative
- Non-fiction
- Poetry.

There are 12 fully planned lessons, each accompanied by an exemplar text in a different genre. Many of these texts which are original extracts from well known authors, with 6 lesson plans for Narrative, 4 for Non-fiction and 2 for Poetry.

The lesson explores the writing style and key features of the exemplar text and provides class, partner and independent work support.

The language skills needed for the text type are identified, explained and practised in the activities on the two 'Practice in Writing Skills' sheets. Differentiation is also catered for.

Children are then ready for the writing task.

Guide notes are provided together with differentiated help and a writing framework supplied for less confident writers.

At the end of the task, children will assess their finished piece. The self-assessment sheet itemises the features the children should have included. The clear tick-box format helps the children to identify what they might have overlooked and asks for written comments about what they might do to improve their next writing in this genre.

The same sheet leaves space for the teacher's comments and also asks both children and teacher to 'sign' confirmation that they have discussed the writing features.

About this book

This book is for **Year 6** children.

Lesson plan

Use the lesson as early work. Begin by asking the children to define the genre. Return to the definition in later weeks. Ask the children if they need to amend their definition.

Exemplar text

An exemplar text is supplied with each lesson plan. Texts will cover a variety of genres to give children experience of a wide range of texts.

Writing skills practice

Use the practice pages for emphasis on the writing skills identified in the exemplar text. Most of the class should complete Sections A and B; less able children will do Section A only; the most able will progress to the end of the pages. In general class reading, point out examples of the writing devices.

Writing task

This is the culmination of the lesson: children applying what they have learned in their writing feature. Encourage the children to use the guide to plan and do initial drafts, before their final editing results in a polished version.

Self-assessment sheet

Encourage the children to think carefully about their answers

and comments. Make sure your discussion with the children over their writing is meaningful, offering positive advice about where they can improve and asking them to view the signatures as important evidence of their work. Keep the sheet as filed evidence of the learner's progress.

- A differentiated writing frame for a lower level of ability
- The exemplar texts
- Answers and additional resources.

Using the CD

Each book includes a CD for easy use on the Interactive Whiteboard. The CD contains:

Sample lesson plan

Title of the text	
Genre and definition	
Lesson objective This indicates the focus of the lesson and is a reminder of the need to view the text as a writer.	
Warm up activity This part should be done first, with the purpose of orientating the children with the exemplar text, its genre and some key writing characteristics.	Features This is a reference tool. It guides the teacher, provides answers, and can be displayed for the children's reference during 'Independent writing'.
Writing investigation Ask the children: This part is addressed to the children. It frequently encourages partner discussion and written recording as the children examine the text's style and writing techniques.	Independent writing Ask the children: This is the main part of the lesson. It involves further examination of the exemplar text – for example, how the writer has sketched characters – and asks for similar writing from the children.
Differentiation This part provides extension and support work for children with those needs. It links to tasks in 'Independent writing'.	
Plenary This offers opportunities for self and peer assessment of the independent writing and reinforces understanding of the writing features.	

Loveliest of trees

Poetry: Finding a voice

Definition: "A poem that expresses powerfully the writer's thoughts and feelings about a particular issue."

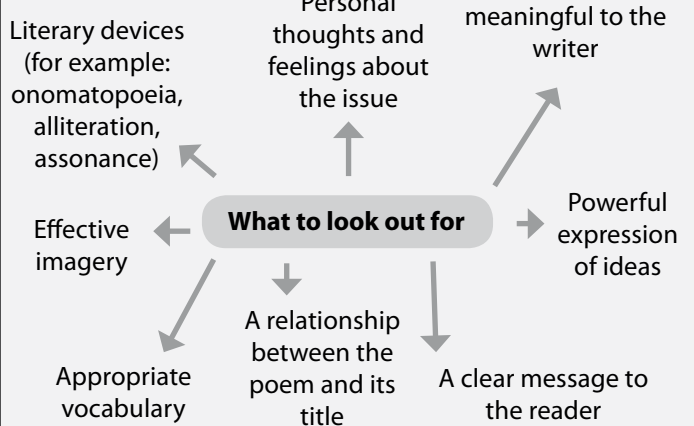
Lesson objective

To recognise that writers may use poetry to express their thoughts about subjects important to them.

Warm up activity

- Ask the children to explain to a partner what the reading technique of scanning is. (Looking over a text very quickly.) Agree on a class definition.
- Display the exemplar poem for a minute or two for the children to scan. Afterwards, with the poem removed, can they write down one word that they noticed?
- When the children hold up their words, invite them to look around. Talk about the words being held up. Ask: *Are they all on the same theme? Which ones relate to nature? Which words relate to a person?* Point out where children have made the same choice.

Features



Writing investigation

Ask the children:

- Re-read the poem. Investigate the language in Verses 1 and 2. What alliteration is used? (*bloom, bough; wearing white; seventy springs score*)
- What age is three score years and ten? (Seventy.)
- How important is pattern generally to this poem? (Verses have the same number of lines.) Is there rhyme? Is there a rhyme pattern? Support your answers with textual references. (There is this rhyme pattern: AABB.)

Independent writing

Ask the children:

- Take turns with a partner to read verses aloud to each other. Discuss the punctuation and sentence construction. (Only commas and full stops are used. Each verse consists of one sentence.)
- What are verses 1 and 3 about? (What can be seen from the woodland ride in spring.) What is Verse 2 about? (The length of the poet's life and how many more times he can see this scene.) Which word in Verse 2 emphasise the poet's realisation that he ought to use every spring he has left? (*only*)
- In your own words, write a paragraph explaining the issue addressed in this poem and summarising the writer's view about living his life and being aware of nature. Which lines best sum up Housman's message to the reader? (The poem's final three lines.)

Differentiation

- More confident writers may work completely independently and write a new verse to insert between Verses 2 and 3.
- Less confident writers may discuss the poem and their answers with a partner before writing.

Plenary

Read aloud the unseen Verse 1 for the children to sketch the image brought to mind. Share pictures. Do they show blossoming trees, a wide pathway (*ride*), snow? Afterwards examine the text to see how Housman creates his images. (A superlative adjective opens the poem; alliteration (*bloom, bough*); personification (*Wearing*.) Share the children's summaries of the writer's attitude to nature from the 'Independent task'. Agree that he focuses on one season and place in this poem, but is probably concerned about nature generally and the need to appreciate our environment.

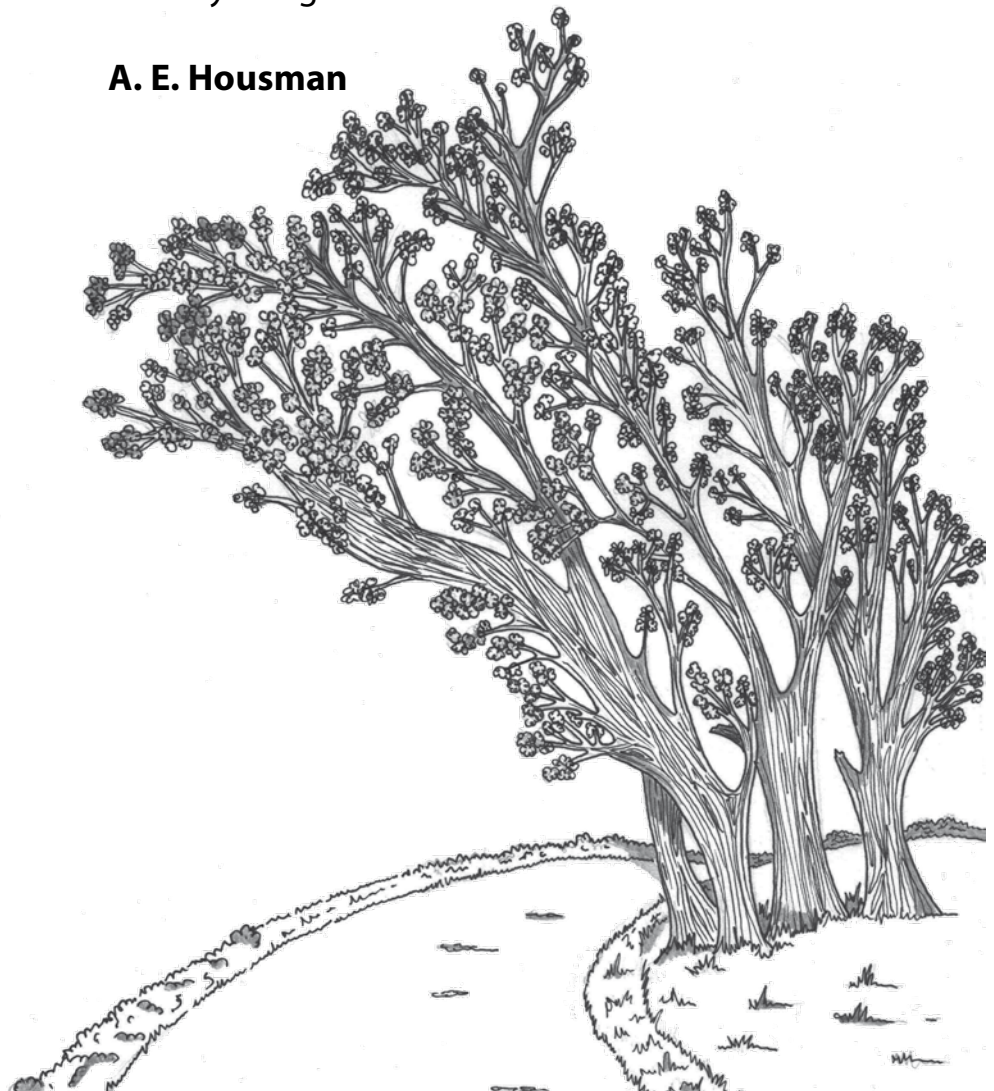
Loveliest of trees

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

A. E. Housman



Practice in Writing Skills 1

Alliteration and assonance

Alliteration is the use of the same phoneme (unit of sound) to begin adjacent or closely connected words.
firmly fixed; majestic and mighty; gnawing the nodes
Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in adjacent or closely connected words.
between the trees; ime cries; hop-scotch

Section A

Underline the alliteration in each sentence. The first sentence is done for you.

The winter woodland stretched ahead.

Pines pushed and pulled me.

Birch swung and swayed in the wind.

A carpet of leaves covered the floor.

Underline the use of assonance in each sentence. The first sentence is done for you.

Birch trees swayed and waved in the wind.

The line of pine trees formed a path.

Deer roamed near me as I strolled.

A rabbit flashed, dashing forward.

A swift hop left the hunter's pot defeated.

Re-read the exemplar poem. Choose eight to ten places to add a word that will create assonance or alliteration with a word already in the poem. Read your new poem to a partner. How many of your examples can they identify?

Section B

Add to or alter these sentences in order to use either alliteration or assonance. Use at least three examples of each, indicating which you have used. The first one is done for you.

The forest stretches for miles.

The forest stretches in lines for miles. Assonance

Tall trees stand.

I tread with care.

A deer roams free.

Trees shed their load.

Leaves drop to the ground.

The wood lives on.

Practice in Writing Skills 2

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the use of words that echo sounds associated with their meaning.
The cage door clanged open and the snake hissed its presence.

Section A

Choose one onomatopoeic verb from the box that you think best describes the sound by each of the following. The first one is done for you.

crunch	rumble	drone
rustle	twang	splinter
gurgle	slap	crack
screech	cheep	plop
cackle	trill	bump

the noise of newly-hatched birds: *cheep*

a guitar string being plucked:

an egg-shell being walked on:

a sudden bolt of thunder:

a pebble being dropped into a pond:

dry autumn leaves being blown about:

water running down the plug hole:

a door with a rusty hinge being opened:

a whale hitting its tail down on the surface

of the water:

Section B

Write sentences using each of these onomatopoeic words appropriately in a sentence.

trill

cackle

rumble

crunch

burst

roar

gush

Read two pages of your current reading book.

Identify six to eight uses of onomatopoeia.

Quote the phrases involved and underline the onomatopoeic words.