Modelling writing

The *I* and the *why*
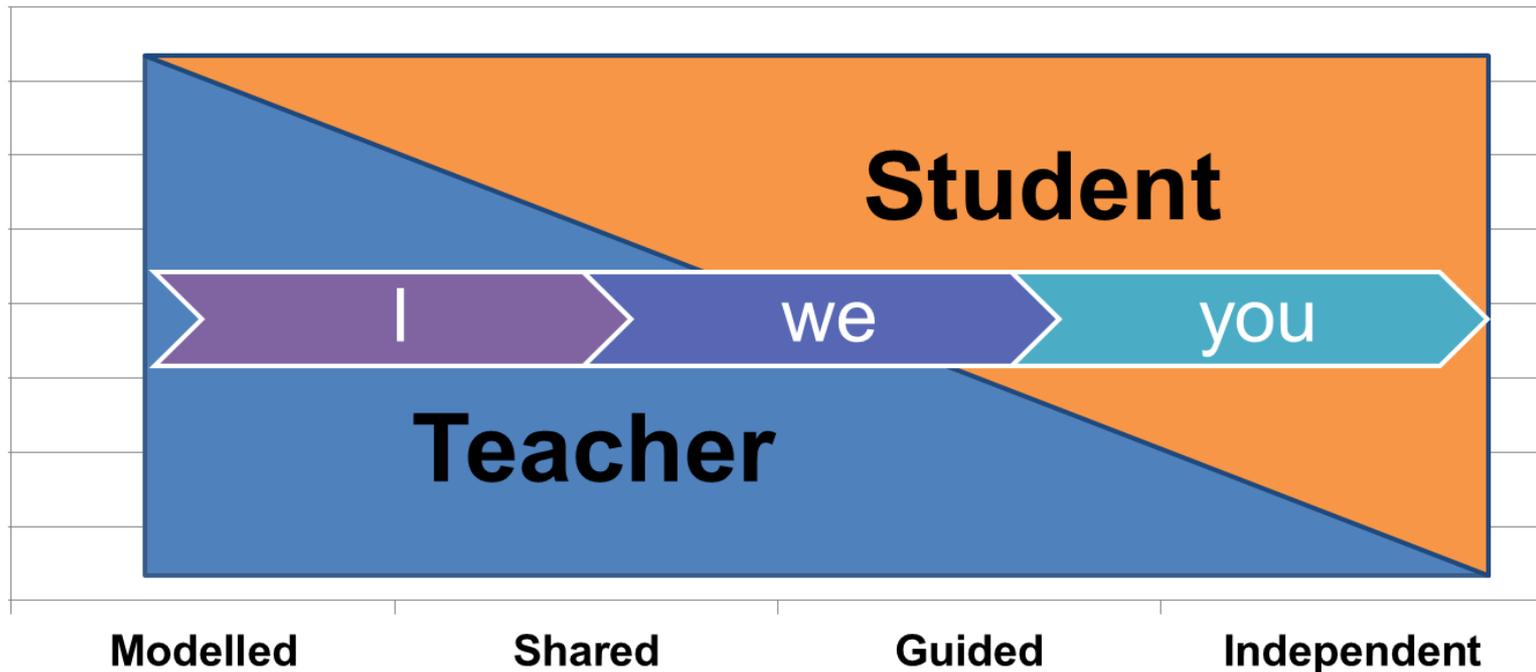
HIAS English Team
August 2022
Final version

- We want our students to *think* like writers.

- However, we need to teach them how to do this!

"Providing examples of thinking is useful, but effective modelling includes an explanation of why teachers are doing what they are doing, so that students understand how the teacher was thinking, not just what the teacher was thinking."

(Fisher Frey, Hattie, 2017)

Levels of teacher control in teaching writing

Amount of Input/Ownership

Teacher-led

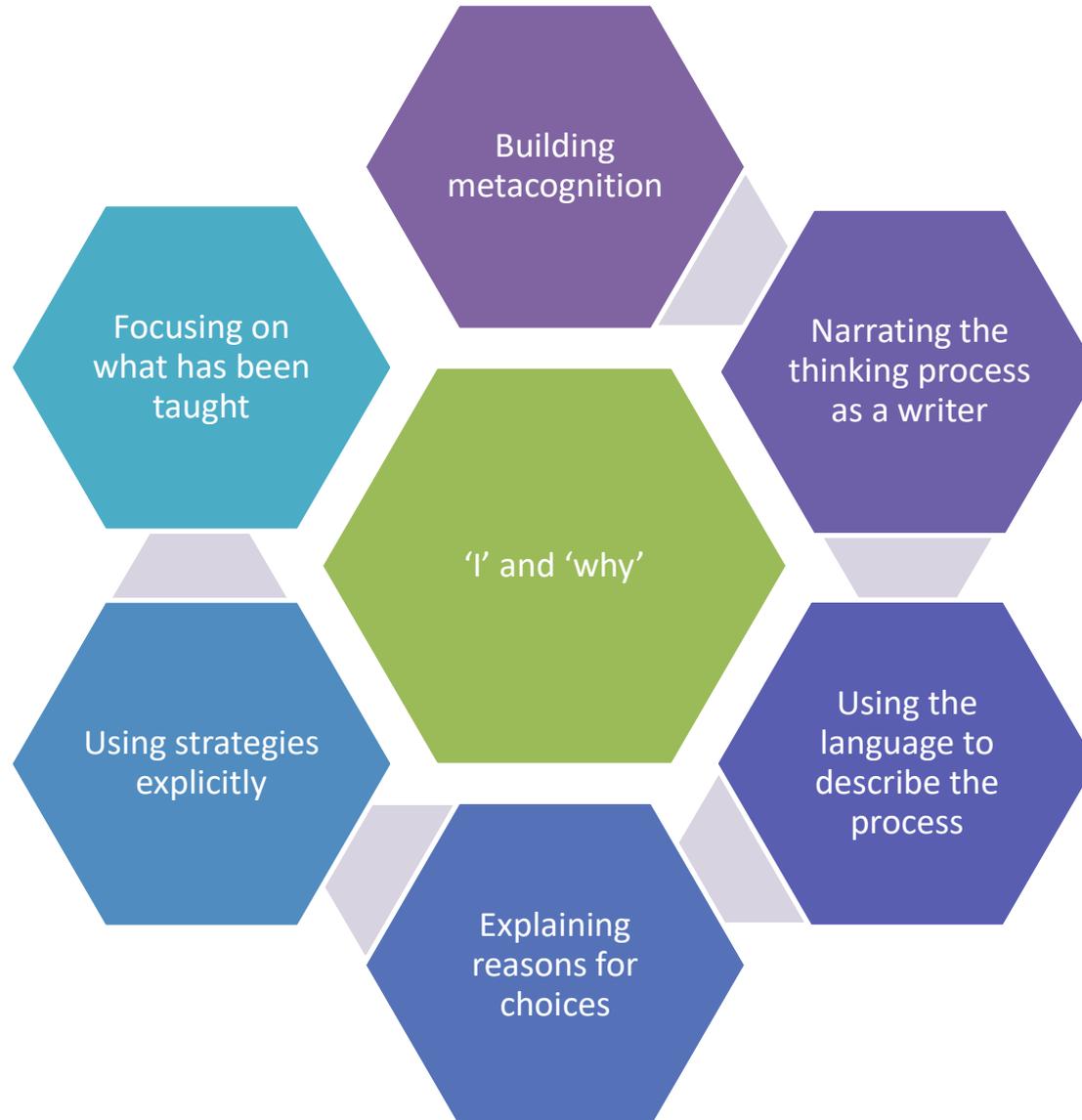| Teaching strategy	Key principles	Advantages
Modelled Writing Demonstration and commentary	Teacher as the expert, demonstrates the writing process. Teacher articulates the process and emphasises specific teaching points.	Provides an opportunity for students to understand the choices a writer makes during the writing process.
Shared Writing Scribing – significantly guided and shaped by the teacher	**Teacher involves the students** in composition, asking for their ideas and structuring discussion. Teacher refines ideas before scribing.	Allows students to focus on composition without worrying about transcription. Offers opportunities to be active participants in the composition process.

Increasing student independence

Teaching Strategy	Key Principles	Advantages
Shared Writing Supported composition	Used during or after shared writing. **Students work in pairs** to discuss choices. Objective is precisely structured.	Enables immediate assessment of understanding. Revises and consolidates shared work.
Guided Writing – split input Informed by assessment	Students are grouped on the basis of ability and need Teacher analyses writing and prioritises a focus	Teaching is tailored to the specific needs of the group Builds confidence and encourages students to become active participants in writing conferences

Where does modelling fit into the teaching sequence?

- Use modelling when…
  - students have had an explanation of the concept or process
  - students have seen examples of what is to be demonstrated
  - students have worked on different elements of the task/key skills in isolation and need to know how to pull them together
  - students know what needs to be included and need to be shown how to word their thinking
  - students have completed a task and you want to demonstrate how to improve a piece of writing

A teacher who is modelling writing is…

- Building metacognition
- Narrating the thinking process as a writer
- Using the language to describe the process
- Explaining reasons for choices
- Using strategies explicitly
- Focusing on what has been taught
- 'I' and 'why'

The challenges of modelling

- Where do you pitch it?

- How much do you model at once?

- What part of the text do you model?

- How many times?

- Too much to take in?

- What happens if you dry up?

- Do you rehearse?

Remember…

- Show that the struggle is real!

- It doesn't have to be (shouldn't be) perfect

- Keep it brief

- Check understanding

Gradually releasing control

- Teacher demonstrates and narrates; students listen and watch
  - Now I want to… because… so I think I will say…
- Teacher demonstrates and narrates, pausing to ask for contributions; students contribute ideas and words
  - Now I want to… because… which of these two words do you think I should use?
  - Now I want to… can you think of how I can say that? Why do you think that would be better
- Teacher demonstrates and narrates, pausing to ask for identifications; students name what the teacher is doing
  - Did you notice? What did I do there?
  - Can you see what kind of sentence I used here?
- Teacher demonstrates and narrates, pausing to ask for explanations; studentren explain why the teacher does something
  - Did you notice that I used… Why do you think I did that?

Next steps

- Teacher asks students for guidance and captures their contributions, correcting and polishing as they go; students prompt and contribute
  - What do you think we should put now? Hmm… that sounds a bit too… maybe we should just…
- Teacher scribes for the students, asking them to correct and polish as they go; students critique and hone each others' contributions
  - What should we put next? What do you think of that idea? Does anyone want to suggest a way to improve that? Does that sound better?
- Teacher scribes for the studentren, asking them to remember the usual prompts; students provide the commentary around the process
  - What do I always ask at this point? What do I need to think about now?

Silent teacher

- Work through a task slowly under the visualiser without commentary

- students narrate what the teacher is demonstrating as if they are the teacher and explain reasons – whispering to a partner in real time

- Brilliant for rehearsing procedures and approaches to extended tasks – the culmination of repeated modelling and shared work-throughs

Teach to the top; use scaffolding so students can get there

- Model <u>high expectations</u> all the time
- Ensure that you know in your own mind the steps the students need to go through in order to achieve the expectations (and the students's starting points)
- Scaffolding can mean…
  - a task plan
  - a rehearsed routine
  - breaking the task down into chunks
  - increased repetition and practice
  - resources to support working memory
  - partially completed tasks
  - managing the focus

HIAS English Team

The HIAS English team offer a wide range of high-quality services to support schools in improving outcomes for learners, including courses, bespoke consultancy and inhouse training.

For further details referring to English, please contact the team leader:
- Emma Tarrant: emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk

For secondary-specific English queries, please contact:
- Joanna Kenyon: joanna.kenyon@hants.gov.uk

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following email:

htlcdev@hants.gov.uk

Upcoming courses

Keep up-to-date with our learning opportunities for each subject through our Upcoming Course pages linked below. To browse the full catalogue of learning offers, visit our new Learning Zone. Full details of how to access the site to make a booking are provided here.

- • English
- • Maths
- • Science
- • Geography
- • RE
- • History
- • Leadership
- • Computing
- • Art
- • D&T
- • Assessment
- • Support Staff
- • SEN