

KS2 Assessment Update - GDS

Recent STA Moderator Training focused on one particular statement from ‘working at greater depth within the expected standard’:

Managing shifts between levels of formality through selecting vocabulary precisely and by manipulating grammatical structures

The following materials were used to support this training and exemplify this statement. Throughout the training the STA clarified that:

- shifts in formality should be seen within single pieces of writing and on more than one occasion within that piece
- shifts in formality are not always required in writing and would not be expected in every piece



Standards
& Testing
Agency

‘To meet the requirements for greater depth, the shifts need to be *within single pieces of writing, in more than one piece of writing, and on more than one occasion within those pieces of writing.*

The following 4 examples are single pieces of writing – from different pupils - credited as demonstrating evidence for the statement: ***managing shifts between levels of formality through selecting vocabulary precisely and by manipulating grammatical structures.***

Each piece is accompanied by an STA commentary to support your understanding.

1. **Pig Palaver! (newspaper report)**
2. **Billy’s Story (extended narrative with inserts)**
This document contains two short extracts – the full documents is available upon request.
3. **The Creation of the Chelegonaffe (narrative)**
4. **Beecher Woods (promotional leaflet)**

1. Pig Palaver!!! (newspaper report)

Bacon News

PIG PALAVER!!!

On Monday 6th June, 2016, the Three Little Pigs were taken into court for the supposed murder of the Big Bad Wolf; however, the one question is: were they really to blame?



The Three Little Pigs being hanged

Portchop and Sausage (two of the three pigs) both claim to have had their hay and straw houses blown down by Mr. Wolf earlier that day, whereas Mr. Wolf claimed differently - he claimed to have had chronic asthma so could not have ransacked the houses. Citizens of Leicestershire (Portchop, Sausage and Bacon's hometown) have mixed feelings about the event.

"They wouldn't have survived if they hadn't boiled him, even though they were committing murder!" protested Goldilocks.

"Poor Wofy! C'mon, he wasn't doin' nothin'!" commented the late Mr. Wolf's firm friend, Little Red Riding Hood.

Similar to various quotes, the pigs' version of events goes like this: the pigs were relaxing in Bacon's brick house, after having their homes blown down by Mr. Wolf, when Portchop spotted a silhouette in the small yard.

Suspiciously, the silhouette was highly tall, it had scrappy tufts of fur sprouting from its jagged ears and a long, dog-like snout. It was later discovered that the shadow was the malicious Big Bad Wolf, surreptitiously attempting to knock the third house over with his yodel yuffs. Once he found that

the house was well-structured, he sneakily crept down the chimney, oblivious to the fact that there was a bubbling black cauldron, as jet black as a dark cat at night at the bottom.

"Portchop, Sausage and Bacon were in the know and purposely put the cauldron there!" insisted Mr. Wolf as he was sizzling and sizzling in agony.



(See above)

Further quotes remain to be seen and the Three Little Pigs will either be free or taken to jail. Meanwhile, they are being held in court with a plea every and a trial looming ahead.



1. Pig Palavar (newspaper report)

Commentary:

- An appropriately formal style is used to present the more serious business of the impending trial. This is achieved through the use of agentless passives (*were taken into court; It was later discovered that; will either be set free or taken to jail; are being held in court*) and the perfect form of verbs, sometimes combined with a modal verb (*claim to have had their ...houses blown down by Mr Wolf, claimed to have had chronic asthma; could not have vandalised*).
- Appropriately formal vocabulary choices reflect the subject matter (*Citizens of Leicestershire; committing murder; malevolent; surreptitiously attempting; oblivious to the fact that; plea for mercy*). In contrast, witness comments (typically incorporating characters from other traditional tales such as Goldilocks and Little Red Riding Hood) use contracted forms (*wouldn't; hadn't; C'mon; doin' nothin'*), non-Standard English (*wasn't doin' nothin'*), and diminutives (*Wolfy*), adding an element of humour through the unlikely characterisation of these familiar 'heroines'.
- Occasional, but controlled, glimpses of informality, such as the question directed at the reader in the opening paragraph (*were they really to blame?*); and use of the present tense to describe past events (the historic present) to introduce the pigs' side of the story (*the pigs' version of events goes like this:*) hint at the humorous intention that underpins the whole report.



2. Billy's Story (extended narrative with inserts)

Extract 1

"Have you found the decorations yet, Christine?" Grandpa asked me as I searched the loft, "When you have, tell me."

I stepped over balls of dust, rolling in the air from the air vents. "Almost. I'll pass them down!" I called down to him.

"Be careful of the loose board," he warned me.

The junk in the loft was unreal. It all looked alive: the floor boards complained as I walked over them; the water tank grumbled and groaned; the window forbade me from looking through. I found the Christmas things and then something caught my eye. A shiny, oak chest was calling to me so I carefully placed down the objects and tiptoed over it. Even though I felt guilty about interrupting its slumber, I carefully pried the lid open and there was an explosion of dust in my face.

"This can't have been open for decades. It looks ancient!" I wondered aloud. Inside was a picture of a young man in an army uniform and a diary, possibly from his sister. I jumped into the armchair, which creaked beneath me, and began to read.

2nd January 1915

Dear Diary

I feel just awful. Why did I have to go and give our Billy that feather? I have no idea what was I thinking! Mother will be furious with me if she finds out...

I only gave it to him because Tommy Edwards said that he was going to enlist. I felt so proud of him, I just wanted everyone to feel proud of Billy, too.

Now he has disappeared, just like Freddie did, and I'm the one left with all their chores to do - as well as my own!

Mother still cries at night although she had told all the neighbours that she wanted them to go and 'do their bit'.

I just hope this war is over soon, that I soon get chance to tell Billy that I should never have given him the feather and that Mother never finds out it was all my fault...

Suddenly, Nan called me to come for tea. I placed the diary and photo into the chest and ran to the ladder. In my haste, I forgot all about the loose floorboard and I was plummeting into the floor...



Extract 2

"Alright mate?" I asked Tommy, noticing the despondent look on his face.

"Not particularly, but then how can I be?" he responded with a dejected shrug of the shoulders. "We better write back to the folks!" He dug out his notebook and I decided I may as well write my 'last letter' to Mother and Amelia to tell them the news. Before I went over, I had a few minutes to write my final diary entry. I had to be honest as I couldn't in my letter because I didn't want to concern everyone at home...

Dear Mother and Amelia,

Thank you for the scarf that you sent me. I so admire your knit work. I hope that you are well since the last time you wrote to me.

I may not be writing again anytime soon, because the order has come through. I do not wish for you to mourn for me, just think of it as doing my duty for King and Country. It's going to be an exciting battle and the Germans have been lively recently. The hot sector we are in is becoming hotter with every day and my SMLE rifle is shining like Amelia's hair against the sun. If I believe that you will not cry for me, I can go over with a good heart and a smile on my lips. If I am to receive an unearthly fate, I just hope that it is swift. Give all my love to Amelia and tell her that I love her dearly. Just mention to her that it was not due to her that I am here. We were planning it and her feather didn't convince me. Have you heard about Freddy? Do please tell him that I hope that his arm wound recovers. This letter is only short but it may possibly be my final words to you. You will always be in my heart and mind until I die. I hope to make it out but if not, these are my words of farewell. Pray for me tonight and always I shall die a happy man in

Love to you all, your loving son,

Billy xxx

Dear Diary,

I can't believe it! I am to go over the top! Damn this war! Why did I come here? I knew from the moment I stepped off the train that I shan't survive and now, my worst nightmares have come true!

The other chaps and I blame the government for this! If they hadn't made this alliance with Belgium and France, then put up those posters that are lying to everyone and the conscription, forcing people to go! That was the final straw! I'm not fighting for our stupid country! Why should I? I don't care in the slightest if I get shot and labelled as a coward.

The officer is an idiot! He tries to make us think that we will get out and beat the Fritz! Yeah right! About five officers have died and the ones that survive only come back with about 1-3 men!

The Germans are as much to blame as everyone else! If they hadn't shot that Arch Duke Ferdinand bloke, then Belgium wouldn't have declared war on the Fritz and then we wouldn't have got involved and I wouldn't be here!

I shall have to fight though! I can't bring shame on my family. If only I could see them one more time in person... I would tell Amelia it wasn't her fault, that she was not to blame, her white feather didn't push me even though that was why we went on the day we did. And if I could give Mother one last hug then I would have re-paid my debts!

I have to go in one hour so I may as well savour it! Tommy and I are suddenly questioning the war and our options! We could shoot ourselves in the foot and go home! I must suggest that to him. I mean, the pain would be torture but it is better than being killed! We could go back to England and not have to come back! Genius! Well, on that joyful note, I must go and talk to Tommy and get ourselves out of this!

At precisely 17:01, we were lined up to go up the ladder to go into No Mans' Land. I decided to focus my mind on something else to take my thoughts off the possibilities... There were two men less than there was this morning because two



2. Billy's Story (extended narrative with inserts)

Commentary:

- This intricately structured story consists of an enveloping narrative set in the present day, and a flashback narrative set during World War 1. The piece as a whole is interspersed with letters and diary entries, which both initiate and support the flashback narrative. Although the piece comprises a number of different texts, each is integrated into the main narrative. This creates cohesion and demonstrates the writer's ability to manage shifts in levels of formality appropriate to the period, the narrative voice, and to purpose and audience.
- The present day narrative, which opens and concludes the short story, uses an appropriate level of informality: sentence fragments (*Almost*), contracted forms (*This can't have been open for decades; I'll pass them down!*), a discourse marker, an 'imprecise' verb and a demonstrative pronoun (*Well, let's get you an ice pack and start decorating this Christmas tree!*), which convincingly recreate spoken language in the easy dialogue between the narrator (Christine) and her grandpa.
- The short diary extract that triggers the flashback signals a shift in time through the more formal 'Mother', in contrast with the less formal 'Grandpa' and 'Nan' of the present day narrative. Elsewhere, the informality appropriate to a diary entry (*I feel just awful; our Billy; go and 'do their bit'*) is interspersed with vocabulary choices appropriate to the WW1 period (*enlist; chores*).
- The dramatic transition to the flashback narrative is introduced (as is the present-day narrative) by dialogue. The cheery banter between Billy and the young recruits typically deploys non-standard and informal vocabulary (*Race yer up, Billy; You may not wanna do that; You alright, mate?*), which is juxtaposed later on with the more formal language of the captain (*Stand at ease. Attention!*)
- The level of formality in Billy's letters shifts according to his mood and circumstances. The letter on page 4, written while he is still at training camp, is relatively informal. It is upbeat and light-hearted as he reassures his mother and sister of his wellbeing (*Bet you are surprised; the huts are cosy enough; new pair of boots which fit just fine; Likely to be going to France soon; I am all trained up; don't go blaming yourself; Hoping that you've forgiven me*). His final letter, written before he goes 'over the top', is more sombre in tone and this is generally reflected in the more formal vocabulary and grammatical structures used: *I so admire your knit work; I hope that you are well; I do not wish for you to mourn for me; it was not due to her that I am here; it may possibly be my final words; You will always be in my heart*.
- The diary entry set alongside the final letter deploys a more informal style as befitting its purpose and audience: *can't believe it; Damn this war! Beat the Fritz. Yeah right! Genius! Well, on that joyful note...*) in contrast with the more euphemistic language he reserves for his mother and sister in his letter (*Germans have been lively; The hot sector; an unearthly fate*).



3. The Creation of the Chelegonaffe (narrative)

"They've taken the sheep, they've taken the sheep!"

That's Old Bess, another flock of sheep must have been taken; they're a nightmare, those wolves.

Flocks of sheep have been taken for about a month now; the village is in uproar: children are starving, the hunting dogs are tiring early, even the cats are starting to feel despair. For a week, I have been wondering how to stop these wolves; I now have a plan, and I think it will work... I am the village doctor, so am not that bad at making potions; my plan is to make a potion to create an animal, a powerful animal, a guardian that will protect the village, the flocks and the herds. I just need to persuade two other men that this plan will work.

I put on my shabby coat and walked out of the door. The sunlight sparkled on the cobbled street, shining through the windows and down the alleyway; to a visitor this village would appear normal, but to me it is full of despair.

"Hey, Sammy, Bob, you there?" I called over a wall, "Yes, doctor," came the reply. I went through a gate, into a small, square garden. "Meet me at the black cave, tonight," I said. "We're going to brew a potion to protect the village, and our livestock."

"Will it work?"

"I think so."

Bob and Sammy looked uncertainly at each other.

"OK," said Bob, "what time?"

"Eleven."

At five to eleven that night I walked up to the black cave, carrying a cauldron, a firelighter and some potion ingredients. "Maybe it will work, maybe it will work," I kept muttering under my breath.

When I got to the cave I placed the cauldron on the floor and lit a fire underneath it. I went down to the stream and filled a waterproof bag with freezing water; I carried it back up to the cave and poured the contents into the cauldron. Everything was ready.

Minutes later, I heard the sound of two pairs of footsteps echoing off the track: "Hey, doctor, you there?"



"Yes, Sammy, Bob; quickly, come in - we need to start."

Sammy and Bob entered the cave, while I emptied the potion ingredients onto the floor.

"Quickly, make a circle around the cauldron," I said, "and now we start the chant..."

"Lizard's scale for the dragon wings." I picked up the scale and dropped it into the potion; the potion turned emerald green, and the others began to copy me.

"Bluebell flower for the sapphire of the wings."

The potion turned purple.

"Key from the ash tree for the giant elephant head."

The potion turned grey.

"The sting of a bee for the great golden tusks."

The potion turned yellow.

"The tiger eye stone for the nose breath of fire."

The potion turned red.

"A cupful of lava for the red dragon's tail."

The potion became the colour and thickness of mud.

"Come out of the depths," I ordered. "Do your duty." The potion started to bubble...

The bubbles grew ever bigger, finally bursting and letting off a disgusting stench.

Then, suddenly, out of the depths of the cauldron, rose the strange creature. It shook its huge elephant head and stared down at me with colossal brown eyes.

"Go, protect our village, our herds and our flocks; become our guardian, mighty Chelegonaffe," I cried. The Chelegonaffe blinked its giant eyes and flew up into the sky.

The children loved the magical Chelegonaffe and fed him carrots and brandy. He protected our village extremely well and from that day on the villagers were happy, well fed and slept soundly at night; he was the soul of the village.



3. The Creation of the Chelegonaffe (narrative)

Commentary:

- The immediacy of the opening dialogue plunges the reader directly into the midst of the villagers' plight, effectively replicating everyday speech through the use of contracted forms and repetition. The opening narrative comment (*That's Old Bess... they're a nightmare, those wolves*) maintains a degree of informality, albeit juxtaposed with an element of semi-formality (*must have been taken*) hinting at the gravity of the situation.
- The confiding voice of the narrator, who goes on to introduce himself as the village doctor, invites the reader not only to share the village's dilemma, but also to trust that the narrator may have a solution to it. The transition to a more formal style (*sheep have been taken; the village is in uproar; the hunting dogs are tiring early; starting to feel despair*) resonates with the narrator's education and status in the village, in contrast with the distraught villagers and the other two men, Sammy and Bob.
- Precise selection of evocative vocabulary (*a guardian that will protect the village; the sound of two pairs of footsteps echoing off the track; a disgusting stench*) and use of more formal grammatical structures (*to a visitor this village would appear normal, but to me it is full of despair; out of the depths of the cauldron, rose the strange creature*) evoke an unfamiliar setting, seemingly distant both in terms of time and place, which is reinforced throughout the narrative.
- As the preparations for the doctor's plan are made, informal dialogue once more imitates the patterns of speech and creates a sense of urgency with its use of ellipsis, sentence fragments and discourse markers (*Hey, Sammy, Bob, you there? ... "Will it work?" "I think so." ... "OK...what time?" "Eleven."*). In contrast, the repetitive structure of the chant, suggesting a tone of solemn concentration, uses a more formal style, as does the doctor's greeting of the Chelegonaffe where his language reflects the more antiquated mood established earlier (*"Go, protect our village, our herds and our flocks; become our guardian, mighty Chelegonaffe"*). These more formal grammatical structures and almost biblical vocabulary are entirely appropriate to this story of a mythical creature, created to save the village and its livestock.



4. Beecher Woods (promotional leaflet)

Beecher Woods

Do you love physical activities? Do you love physical exercise? Do you need a place where you can personally challenge yourself and conquer your fears? Are you in need of somewhere where you can create everlasting memories?

Well stop right there! Beecher Woods has it all and more!

Brazil Breakout

Brazil Breakout is a highly popular activity; a wide range of physical and mental skills are required to encounter a variety of obstacles, one of which is 'the wall'. In this thrilling activity, teamwork is the main factor, but bravery is also needed as some fears may be conquered most dramatically.



If you love a challenge - however difficult - then you will most certainly love the 'low ropes' that are dotted around the forest; they will test your agility and willingness to keep going. There is a variety of low ropes such as the 'criss-cross'; this activity can be quite amusing as you have to try and cross from one platform to another - of course, when you arrive at the cross-over, it gets decidedly harder...

The Trail

Encountering many different games and obstacles, the Trail is ideal for those who are a little less adventurous: activities include the 'Giant's footsteps', 'Five rows' and 'Labyrinth'. All are aimed at families and groups who are in search of a relaxed and enjoyable day out. With experienced staff as guides, the Trail is a delightfully rewarding activity for children and adults.

Rafting

Beecher Woods is the perfect venue for rafting: the large lake, warmed by the sun, has a number of jetties dotted around the border to wait on whilst being given instructions by the staff. It goes without saying that you are provided with a life-jacket which will keep you afloat should you fall in. Whilst aboard the raft, groups take part in a number of activities, including a perilous race for the grand title of 'Last Man Home'. Finally, a refreshing swim in the lake caps off an adventurous (and wet) day on the water.



Puzzle Tree

An element of trust is involved with this activity as - although there are experienced staff in charge - your friends are responsible for keeping you safe. As you ascend the 55 foot tree, the 'be-lowers' must make sure there is no slack on the rope. The foot and hand holes are colour co-ordinated according to their difficulty - when the final hand hole is touched, the sense of reward is astounding; the views are amazing too.



The Puzzle Tree is excellent for conquering fears. It goes without saying that this is a must!

Nerve-racking and fun!

There are a number more activities hidden among the trees in Beecher Woods, but if you love physical and personal challenges, then I think you can find them for yourself - don't you?



4. Beecher Woods (promotional leaflet)

Commentary:

- Formal and informal vocabulary and grammatical structures combine to appeal to different audiences: individuals seeking a new challenge; groups in need of team-building skills; and families simply looking for a fun-filled day out.
- The opening section uses a highly informal style, addressing the reader directly. The use of the second person 'you', the repetitive use of rhetorical questions, and the peremptory *Well stop right there!* all but demand that the reader take notice.
- The next section, *Brazil Breakout*, shifts to a slightly more formal style as the challenges of the first activity are described (*physical and mental skills are required; bravery is also needed as some fears may be conquered*). This is juxtaposed with the more informal vocabulary and structures of the second paragraph (*If you love a challenge – however difficult – then you will most certainly love the 'low ropes' that are dotted around the forest; willingness to keep going; of course, when you arrive*) to provide reassurance and encouragement for potential participants.
- Levels of formality continue to shift, managing the provision of detailed information with the continuing need for both reassurance and enticement. More formal structures, using passives and modals (*...whilst being given instructions by the staff; you are provided with a life-jacket which will keep you afloat should you fall in; An element of trust is involved with this activity; must make sure there is no slack on the rope*) are integrated with less formal vocabulary (*dotted around the border; this is a must!*), adverbs that modify and soften (*a little less adventurous; quite amusing; delightfully rewarding*), idiomatic usage (*it goes without saying*) and parenthetical asides (*an adventurous [and wet] day on the water*).
- The leaflet concludes with an appropriately informal appeal to the reader (*if you love...then I think you can...for yourself – don't you?*).

