Unit 2A Writing stories: communicating information using text

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children learn to use words to communicate messages and recognise that ICT lets them correct and improve their work, as they are working or at a later date. Children will also have opportunities to discuss their experiences of using ICT.

Children will be able to apply what they have learnt in this unit when: writing stories with a clear sequence of events in a sustained style; using and punctuating a range of sentence types; commenting on the features which distinguish texts such as narrative, information and poetry.

They will also be able to use these skills when: producing creative writing in English; producing accounts of their work in science and geography; describing sequences of events in history.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit assumes that children:
- can enter text using a word bank or concept keyboard
- can use the correct mouse buttons
- can write simple sentences
- can spell their own frequently used words
- can use full stops and capital letters
- can understand common rhyming phonic blends.

TECHNICAL VOCABULARY

- shift
- spacebar
- return/enter
- insert
- backspace
- delete

RESOURCES

- word processor
- examples of older children's word processing
- text files
- printed sheets showing pictures with empty speech bubbles
- published children's books

EXPECTATIONS

at the end of this unit

most children will: use a word processor to produce sentences that communicate meaning

some children will not have made so much progress and will: enter words into a word processor

some children will have progressed further and will: use a word processor to produce sentences that communicate meaning; refine sentences by adding words and making corrections; alter sentences in the light of comments

QCA

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES	POINTS TO NOTE
SETTING THE SCENE			
CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN		CHILDREN	
• **key idea:** that there are differences between handwritten and word-processed text	◆ Show the children examples of work created by older children using a word processor. Ask the class to discuss how the work is different from handwritten work, *eg it is easy to read, there are no spelling mistakes, the corrections cannot be seen, the author can't be identified just by looking at it.* Discuss which is easier to read. Discuss who reads their work, *eg teachers, peers, parents.*	• recognise some of the features of word-processed text	Children could list the people that they write for, and the audiences that read different texts, such as posters and cinema advertisements.
SHORT FOCUSED TASKS			
• **key idea:** that text can be entered and corrected • **technique:** to use the backspace key to make corrections	◆ Discuss how labels describe what things are. Ask the class to brainstorm in order to choose objects in the classroom that could be labelled. Ask the children to take it in turns to type a label, which has been set at a suitably large font size. Ask them to correct any mistakes as they type, using the backspace key.	• enter and correct text	This activity is not necessary if children have entered text earlier.
• **key idea:** the importance of spaces between words • **technique:** to type in text, including spaces between words, and to use the shift key	◆ Read out sentences to the children but leave out the pauses between words. Discuss with the children if they understood what was read and if it sounded odd. ◆ Demonstrate to the class how to use the spacebar to create a space and how to use the shift key to make a capital letter. Give the children an opportunity to write a simple sentence and ask them to type the sentence.	• understand that spaces need to be placed between words • press the spacebar once to create spaces and do not hold it down	This activity is not necessary if children have entered text earlier. Remind children that they use their fingers to create spaces between words in their handwritten work.
• **key idea:** the difference between running text (text wrap) and text with line breaks • **technique:** to use the return/enter key to insert line breaks	◆ Enter a poem with repeated rhyme as a piece of prose with no line breaks. Discuss the difference between the way poetry and prose are presented and demonstrate how to use the return/enter key to make line breaks. Divide the class into pairs and ask them to insert line breaks in the poem. Print out the children's work and compare it with the original version.	• identify where the return/enter key has been used in text and why • use the return/enter key where appropriate	Children should work on a copy of the teacher's pre-prepared file. Children who find the work difficult could be given a copy of the original poem for support. Once they are familiar with the return/enter key, children tend to use it when it is not needed.
• **key idea:** that ICT can be used to rearrange text to make it easier to read • **technique:** to use the return/enter key to insert line breaks	◆ Demonstrate how to turn a string of ten items from a shopping list into a horizontal list by using the return/enter key.	• understand that words can be moved down the screen	Explain to the class that if text disappears off the screen it is not lost forever.
• **technique:** to enter text with spaces and use the shift key to type capital letters	◆ Print out a set of pictures with empty speech bubbles. Discuss how speech bubbles can be used to illustrate direct speech. Remind the class how to enter text and demonstrate the use of the shift key. Divide the children into pairs and give each pair a picture. Ask the children to discuss what might be being said, and use the word processor to type the speech. Ask the children to print their work, cut it out and stick it onto the speech bubbles.	• create sentences using a word processor	
• **key idea:** that ICT can be used to improve text and make a message clearer • **technique:** to delete and insert text to improve readability	◆ Enter an extract from a familiar children's book but replace the full stops with the word 'and'. Discuss the extract with the class and explain that the repeated use of 'and' makes it repetitive and difficult to read. Demonstrate how to delete an 'and', insert a full stop and change the following letter to upper case. Divide the class into pairs and ask them to edit the prepared text. Ask them to print out their work and compare it with the original version.	• recognise that text can be edited to improve it • recognise that changes can be made at a later stage	Children should work on a copy of the teacher's pre-prepared file. Children who find the work difficult could be given a copy of the original extract for support. Children who are confident using full stops and capital letters could be encouraged to use connectives, such as 'then' and 'meanwhile'.
INTEGRATED TASK			
• to use ICT appropriately to communicate ideas through text	◆ Explain to the class that they will be using the techniques they have learnt to produce their own books. Ask the class to recall what they have learnt so far. ◆ Show the class a picture book, or use masking tape to cover the text in a familiar story. Ask the children to produce the text for a page of the story. Remind them about: the importance of readability; when to and when not to use the return/enter key; checking and correcting spelling; using full stops and capital letters. Ask the children to prepare their text on screen.	• develop their text on screen • use appropriate techniques to ensure that their writing is clear, well presented and error-free	Encourage children to get their ideas on screen quickly and to make corrections later; they shouldn't type from a handwritten draft. This will help them appreciate that ICT can help them develop their writing and is not just a presentation tool. This activity could be extended by preparing a set of web pages, or a multimedia presentation, and asking the children to prepare the text. This provides opportunities for children to share their work with those in other schools.