



Writing at Marsden Infant and Nursery School

Why writing matters

- Proficiency in writing is a key skill throughout school and life. Pupils who find it difficult to express their ideas in writing are likely to struggle across the curriculum
- Writing offers pupils opportunities to express attitudes, opinions, judgements and ideas.
- Writing helps thinking and learning.
- Writing has wider benefits. Communication is important in developing social relationships. Much of our communication is written, including emails and social media.
- Writing promotes creativity through imaginary worlds (fiction) and well-being by giving opportunity to reflect and make sense of their experiences in life (e.g. stories, poetry, diaries)

The development from spoken language to written language

- The value of talk in children's mastery of language is as important for writing and it is for reading
- Talk helps pupils to build their understanding of written language and how sentences are formed
- Writing is not talk written down. Learning to write involves developing control of language which is different from everyday conversational speech
- Teachers must support pupils to make links between talking and writing and to continue to one to support the other.

What writing means for reading

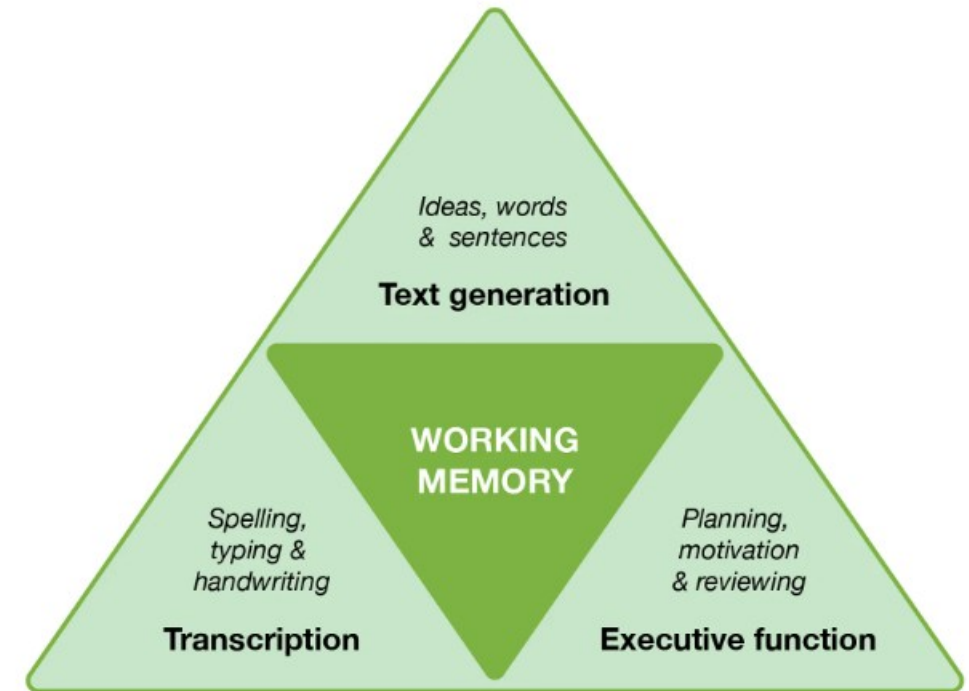
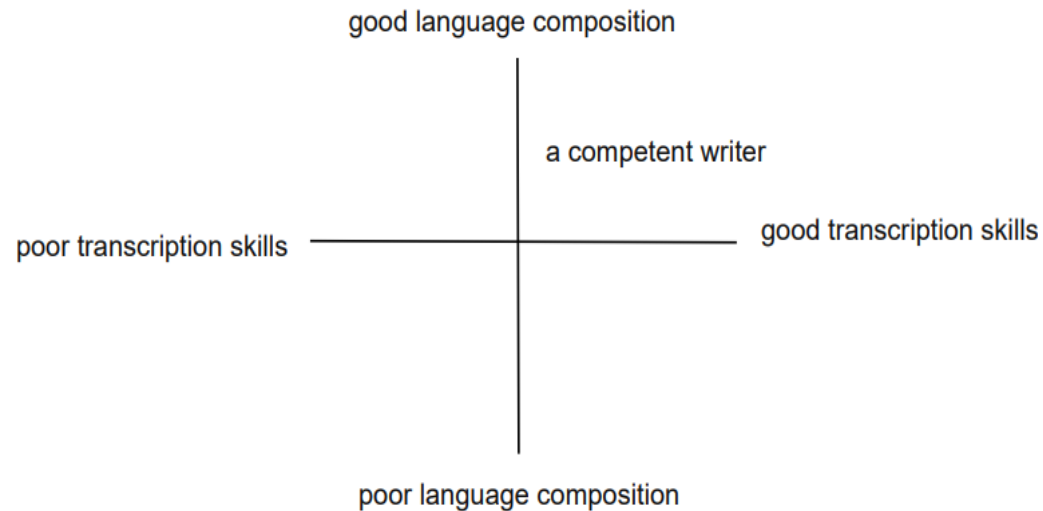
- Reading enhances pupils' grasp of writing - those who read more are able to draw on a wider range of approaches to writing
- Learning to write has benefits for pupils' reading – helping them understand better what they have read. Familiarity with complex sentences structures gained from writing lessons can support comprehension
- Pupils show a greater understanding of text ideas when they write summaries or notes about it, and respond to questions in writing
- Improved spelling is also correlated with faster reading speeds. Every word a pupil can spell becomes a word they can read.
- Teachers will want to use the interdependence of reading and writing to support teaching. However this must not come at the expense of pupils' enjoyment of reading. Too often pupils are asked to analyse a text or respond to a story with their own story.
- “If the reading in English lessons is merely transactional, undertaken only because it leads to writing or illustrates how a language feature works, the short-term goals are in danger of jeopardising the longer-term benefits of sustained reading” The Reading Framework

The Simple View of Writing

- The national curriculum reflects the Simple View of Writing

Figure 10: Based on 'The Simple View of Writing'

Figure 1: An illustration of the simple view of writing



- The programmes of study for writing in Key Stage 1 and 2 are divided into transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them into speech and writing). It is essential that teaching develops competence in these two dimensions.

Why writing is challenging

- Beginner writers are required to hold the pen correctly, form letters legibly, combine them to make words before they can even think about using those words to express ideas.
- Composition is challenging in its own right, it has been suggested that planning, composing and rewriting a text is twice as mentally demanding as reading a complex text.
- Managing pupils' cognitive load

Ofsted's 2022 research review in English noted²²: Pupils need sufficient capacity in their working memory to plan, compose and review effectively. This requires transcription skills to be secure... Once children are fluent in word reading, they are able to focus on comprehending what they read. Similarly, fluency in transcription frees up working memory to focus on composing writing.

Sequenced teaching gives pupils the best chance of mastering the written language, and of understanding the writing process and models to support their writing.

Motivation

- Motivation is both a driver and an outcome of learning. It makes a difference to the writing pupils produce
- One of the greatest influences on motivation is pupil's self-belief.
- To achieve they need to be:
- Taught effectively, with timely, supportive and constructive feedback
- Given opportunities to develop competency over time
- Give tasks that match the knowledge and skills they have been taught

*If their knowledge and skills are insufficient for an activity, it is likely to cause frustration. This maybe a particular challenge for pupils with SEND

Research indications that young people can enjoy writing and be more motivated to write if they can make choices about it. However, while providing choice can be motivational it can also create additional pressure, particularly for those with SEND.

The Importance of Reception

- Government has set a milestone of 75% of children reaching a GLD by 2028
- Measured through 12 ELG across 3 Prime Areas
 - Communication and Language,
 - Personal, Social and emotional development,
 - Physical development
- 3 ELG focus on literacy, word reading, comprehension and writing (ELG writing must be achieved)
- The emphasis in Reception should be on building the foundations for it: transcription and composition. This means keeping things simple and doing things well.
- Teachers should plan for regular teaching and practice (daily) handwriting
- Writing depends on language – Develop children's skills in communication and language, including the ability to speak in sentences, compose orally
- Adults are effective at modelling high-quality language and questioning sensitively
- Majority of composition to be oral through simple sentences, preparing the ground for writing sentences later and for punctuation them accurately with a capital letter and full-stop.
- Ofsted recommends providing sufficient high quality opportunities for children to practise using foundational knowledge and skills and warns against introducing complex tasks too early. Practise transcription and oral composition skills
- Pencils and paper are available across the classroom – so children can 'write' during play
- Recognise all children will play at writing – Regular explicit handwriting instruction in addition to phonics to be included as first steps towards thinking of themselves as people who can write
- Increased opportunity to develop body strength and co-ordination as well as fine motor skills
- Dictation to practise the transcription they are taught
- A good phonics programme that will teach children to recognise letters and spell words.
- An agreed, whole-school approach to teaching handwriting

Making judgements against the early learning goals for writing.

Writing ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others
- **In summary to meet the early learning goal for writing:**
- Sentences and phrases can be transcribed (from dictation) rather than independently composed
- Sentences and phrases can be simple rather than extended
- Sentences and phrases must be readable, but may contain some mistakes in letter formation
- Sentences and phrases do not need to contain punctuation (including capital letters)
- Not all words need to be spelt correctly.

To support writing in reception

Fine Motor Skills ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutler
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing

To support writing in reception, it is important to develop

- Gross and fine motor skills to develop strength, co-ordination and positional awareness
- Core strength, stability, balance and spatial awareness
- Fine motor control and precision

Making a strong start in Nursery

Children should be able to:

- Enjoy drawing freely. Add some marks to their drawings, which they give meaning to. For example “That says mummy”. Make marks on their picture to stand for their name.
- Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can:
 - spot and suggest rhymes
 - count or clap syllables in a word
 - recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother
- Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing
- Write some or all of their name

Development Matters Birth to 5 years

Handwriting

Nursery

Early mark making

Progression			
First Pre-Writing Shapes			
			
			
Second Pre-Writing Shapes with Flow			
			

TYPICAL PENCIL GRASP DEVELOPMENT FOR HANDWRITING

18 months: Pincer Grasp
2-3 years: Reflex Tripod Grasp
3-4 years: Dynamic Tripod Grasp
4-5 years: Dynamic Tripod Grasp



Pinch and Flip



How to Help with Pencil Grip

How To Use: The Pencil Grip, The Pencil Grip, The Pencil Grip, The Pencil Grip, The Pencil Grip.




Reception

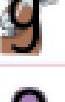
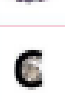
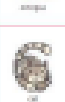
Reception – Year 1

In line with the Little Wandle scheme, children are taught to form letters using the Little Wandle ditties.

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Grapheme and movement	Pencil grip	Reinforcement phase	Reinforcement phase
 j	 j	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (j)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (j)
 v	 v	For your head, make a loop. (v)	For your head, make a loop. (v)
 w	 w	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (w)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (w)
 x	 x	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (x)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (x)
 y	 y	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (y)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (y)
 z	 z	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (z)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (z)

Autism 2

Grapheme and movement	Pencil grip	Reinforcement phase	Reinforcement phase
 d	 d	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (d)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (d)
 g	 g	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (g)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (g)
 o	 o	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (o)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (o)
 c	 c	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (c)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (c)
 k	 k	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (k)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (k)
 ck	 ck	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (ck)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (ck)
 e	 e	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (e)	Roll your finger over the top of your head and make a loop. (e)

Handwriting

Year 1

Having learned the Little Wandle handwriting scheme in Reception, children in year 1 move onto grouping the letters in letter families to help embed handwriting formation for both lower case and upper case letters

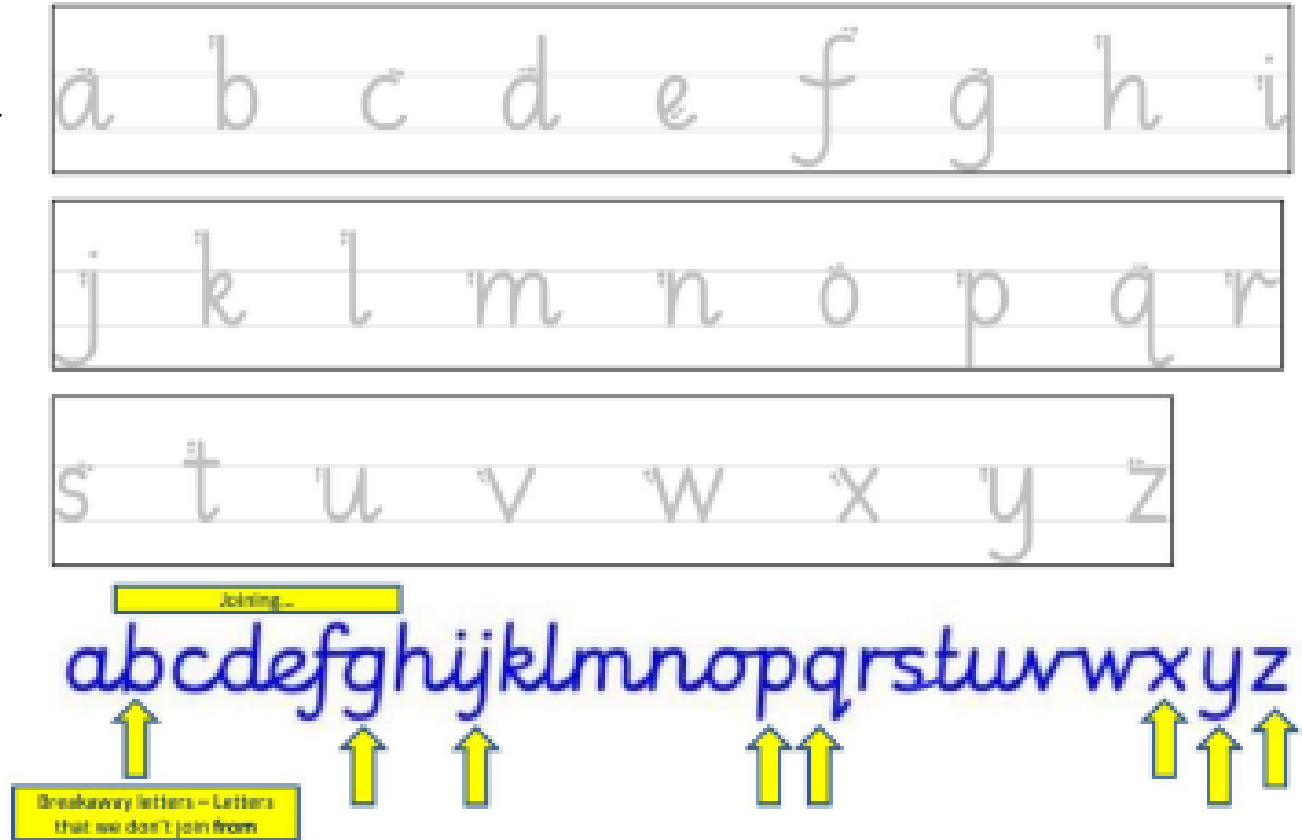
	'down the lollipop' letter family	l i t j f u y T I
	'curl around the cat' letter family	c o a d g q e s
	'over the rainbow' letter family	r n m h b p
	'zig-zag' letter family	k v w z x
Numbers	1 7 4 0 2 3 6 9 5 8	

	'down the lollipop' letter family	L J F E H U N M K
	'curl around the cat' letter family	C O Q S G
	'over the rainbow' letter family	D P B R
	'zig-zag' letter family	V W Z A X Y

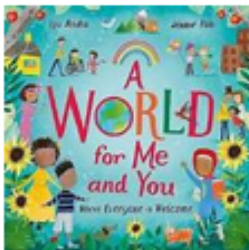
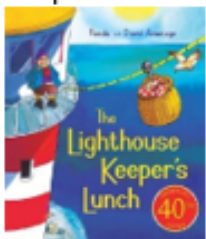
Handwriting

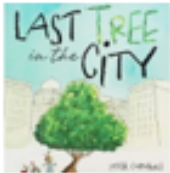
Year 2

- As the children begin to learn joins in Year 2, they follow the Nelson handwriting scheme. Class teachers refer to a Nelson handwriting book when planning and teaching lessons (lasting around 20 minutes). Handwriting lessons take place at least once a week.
- Handwriting practise should also take place as a quick retrieval activity preceding an English lesson, where needed.



Book and Text Overviews

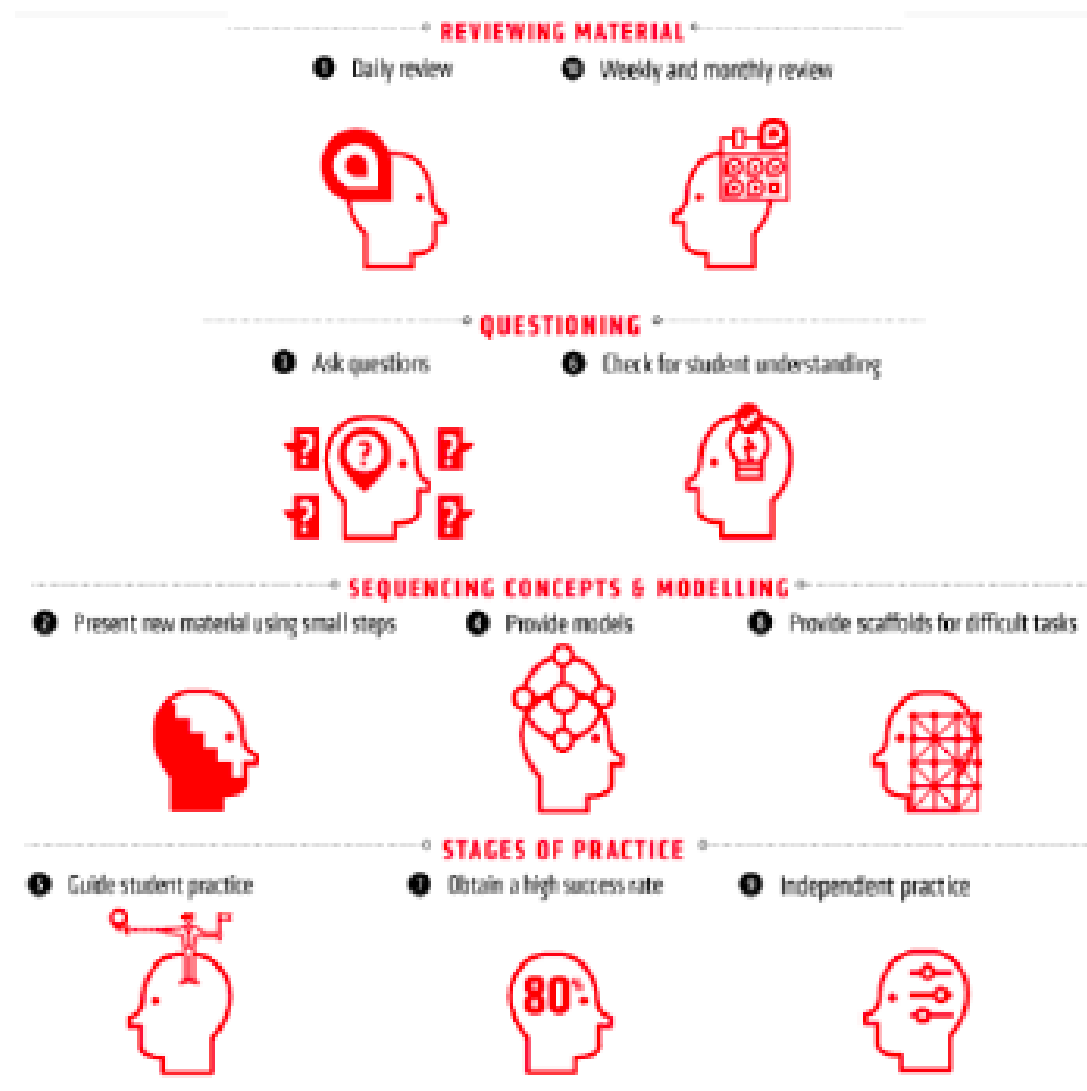
Year 1	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Me, Myself and I		Fairy Tales		Oh I do like to be beside the seaside	
Texts	 	 	 	 	  	 
Composition	Plan writing: Say out loud what they are going to write about.	Drafting and writing: Compose a sentence orally before writing.	Sequence sentences to form short narratives.	Re-read what they have written to check that it makes sense.	Discuss what they have written with the teacher or other pupils.	Read aloud their writing clearly enough to be heard by their peers and the teacher.
Possible Genres	Label a skeleton Write speech bubbles. Poetry List poems	Sentences – about character Sentences about setting	Write simple sentences describing a character Setting description	Short narrative Instruction	Description of a sea animal.	Postcard Recount
Punctuation and Grammar	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Present tense verbs Commas in a list Subordinating conjunctions including 'and'	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Capital letters for names. Noun phrases Coordinating conjunctions	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Capital letters for names. Progressive form of verbs (was walking) Introduce inverted commas	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Capital letters for places. Question marks (did you know...?) Adverbials (first, next, after that) Capital letter for first person 'I'	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Present tense verbs Coordinating conjunctions Subordinating conjunctions Apostrophes for possession.	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Past tense verbs Noun phrases Apostrophes for contraction Inverted commas

Year 2	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Our Town, Our Village	Great Fire of London	Food Glorious Food	Intrepid Explorers	Out of Africa	
Texts	  	  	  	   	  	  
Writing genres	Setting description Character description Alternative story Alternative settings Letter Writing	Recount – Diary Recipes - Making bread Narrative	Instruction Autobiography	Retelling of real events Biography	Non-Chronological Report Fact File Narrative Diaries	Non-fiction –Fact File Who am I Riddles
SPAG	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Noun phrases Inverted commas Past or present tense Subordinating conjunctions	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Adverbials (first, next, after that) Subordinating conjunctions Exclamation sentences	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Write command sentences. 'Bossy' verbs Adverbials (first, next, after that) Commas in a list Progressive form of verbs (was travelling)	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Past tense verbs. Coordinating conjunctions. Adverbials (first, next, after that) Exclamation sentences	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Formation of nouns using suffixes -ness, -er and by compounding Suffixes -er and -est for adjectives Past and present tense including progressive	Use capital letters and full stops. Use finger spaces between words. Apostrophes for contraction Apostrophes for singular possession Past and present tense including progressive

Lesson Structure

- Retrieval
- Questioning throughout
- Present new material in small steps
- Model
- Scaffold
- Guidance
- Independent learning

Rosenshine's 'Principles of Instruction' is 'a guide for professional learning', rather than 'a tick list for accountability'.



Unit Plan Structure

Before you begin:

Decide on your writing outcome
(no more than 2 per half term)

Use the toolkits to look at skills required for the outcome.
Consider displaying this on your working wall from week 1 and refer to it constantly.



In the first lesson, introduce key vocabulary from the knowledge organisers.

Word Detective

Word	What it means	Checked meaning

Learning sequence:

VIPERS

(based on a high-quality class text or poem related to topic)

This should be around 20 minutes, however it might sometimes be appropriate for your writing activity to be based on a reading skill.

WAGOLL written with the class (with teacher verbalising process) where appropriate within sequence and displayed on working wall

Series of lessons following the toolkit and linked to high quality text
(in small steps, building up to the outcome)

The learning intentions should be related to year group expectations in reading or writing.

Retrieval

Use retrieval as an opportunity to fill gaps from previous year groups

Model the skill

Practise

for example, writing sentences

Independent

Guide

for example, using skill in a paragraph.

Final outcome

1 week allotted to write, edit, redraft and publish

Year 1 examples

Why do you think there is a suitcase on the first page of the book?

Who do you think it might belong to?



I think there is a suitcase because ...

It might belong to ...



Why does the boy think the penguin is lost?



The boy thinks the penguin is lost because ...

How does the penguin feel?

sad

lonely

What did the boy do to help him find his home?

Why did he ask them?



Why do you think he felt disappointed?

I think he felt disappointed because ...

What can you find out about penguins? Draw or write in the empty bubbles.



Use and to join two ideas to use in a sentences

orange beak	and	black and white feathers



He asked the Lost and Found Office because ...



He asked the birds because ...



He asked his duck because ...

What could he do to help the penguin?

He could ...

Does my writing make sense?

- Do my sentences make sense?
- Have I left any words out?
- Have I written the most important information about penguins?
- Is the information easy to understand?
- Have I used and to join any ideas?



Conjunctions Game

The boy took the penguin to the South Pole

and
but
because
so that



What would you pack?



I would pack	to	
A woolly hat		keep me warm.

Year 2 examples

Word Detective

Word	What I think it means	Checked meaning

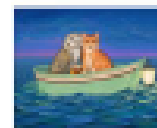
What are the cat and the pupcat thinking?



Why do you think they decided to sail away?

Where do you think they might find a ring?

What else could they use instead of a ring?



I think they decided to sail away because ...

They might find a ring ...

They could use a ...

Paint a picture with noun phrases

noun	a whale
adjective(s)	a young whale
with	a young whale with gleaming skin

noun	
adjective(s)	
with	

noun	
adjective(s)	
with	

noun	
adjective(s)	
with	

Powerful verbs

What were they doing?



Building sentences

Noun phrase	Powerful verb	What?
A young whale with gleaming skin	spouted	a jet of water.

Building sentences

Noun phrase	Powerful verb	What?		
A young whale with gleaming skin	spouted	a jet of water	as	it swam by the boat.
			when	
			and	
			but	

What did they see?

Name the nouns



What do you think they felt when they finally reached the island?



I think they felt ... because ...

They might also have felt ...

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Add an adjective



noun	palm trees
adjective(s)	swaying palm trees

noun	
adjective(s)	

noun	
adjective(s)	

Vocabulary

Improving young children's vocabulary is a high priority, particularly when teaching students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are more likely to have a less extensive vocabulary (this has been identified as one of our barriers to children's learning)

There is limited evidence about how best to improve vocabulary, but the existing evidence suggests that the following should be considered:

- Provide children with a rich language environment (implicit approaches) as well as directly extending children's vocabulary (explicit approaches)
- Carefully selecting high-frequency words for explicit teaching (figure 1)
- Developing the number of words children know (breadth) and their understanding of relationships between words and the contexts in which words can be used (depth): and
- Providing multiple opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary.

Tier 3

Subject specific vocabulary
e.g. '*photosynthesis*' in Science.

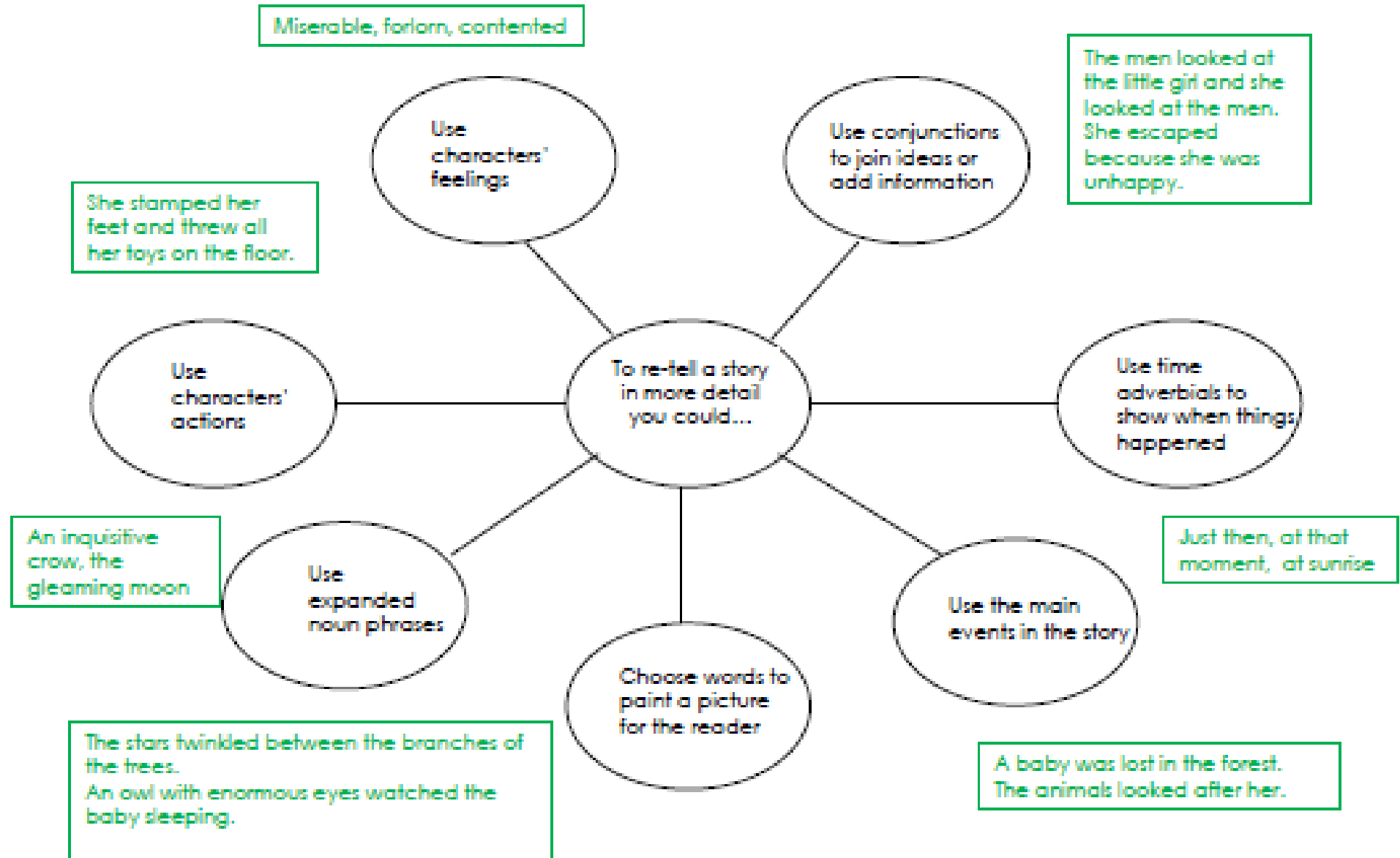
Tier 2

High-frequency words found in
many different subject disciplines
e.g. examine, authority and establish.

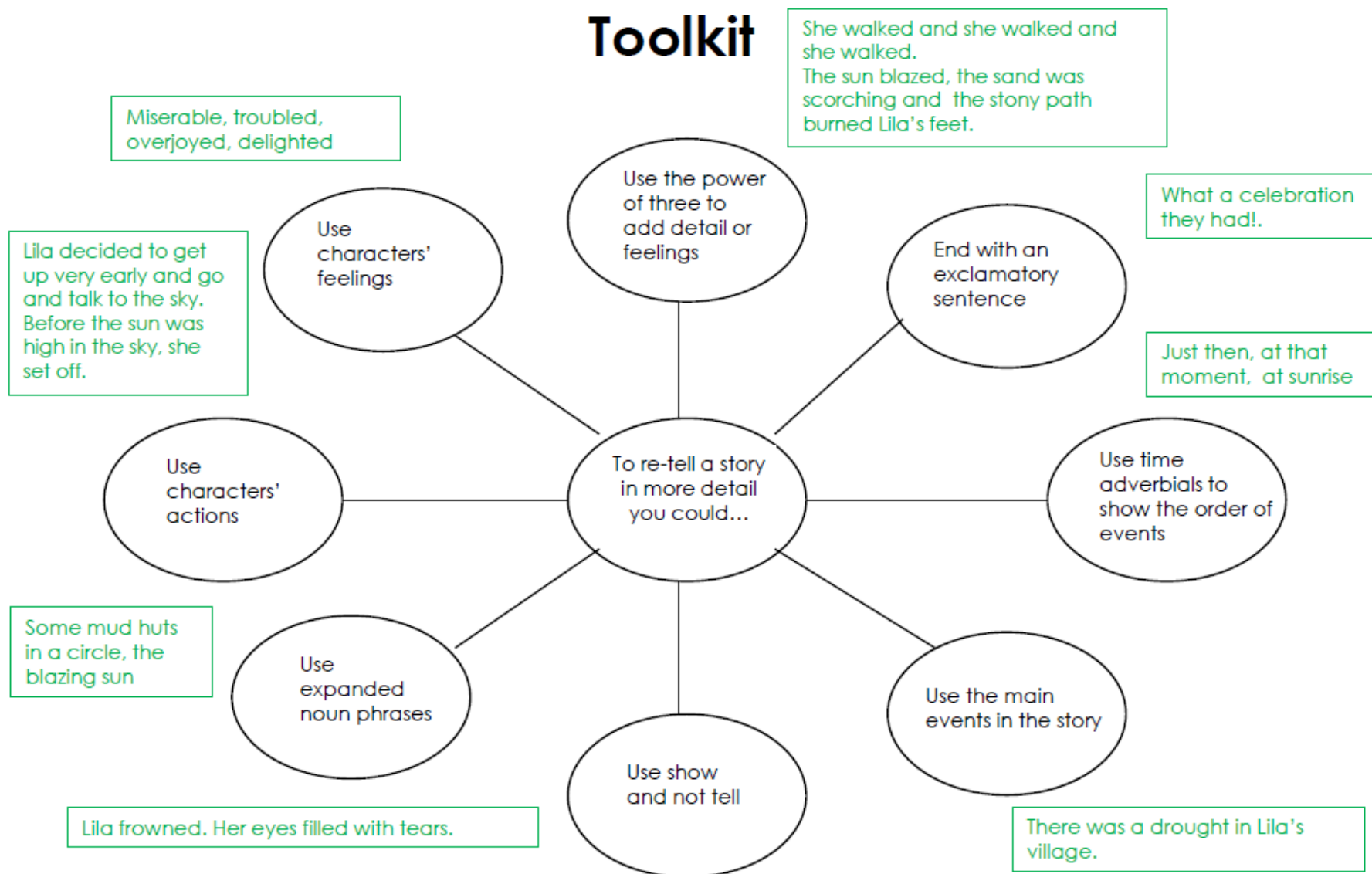
Tier 1

Words of everyday speech,
familiar to most students.

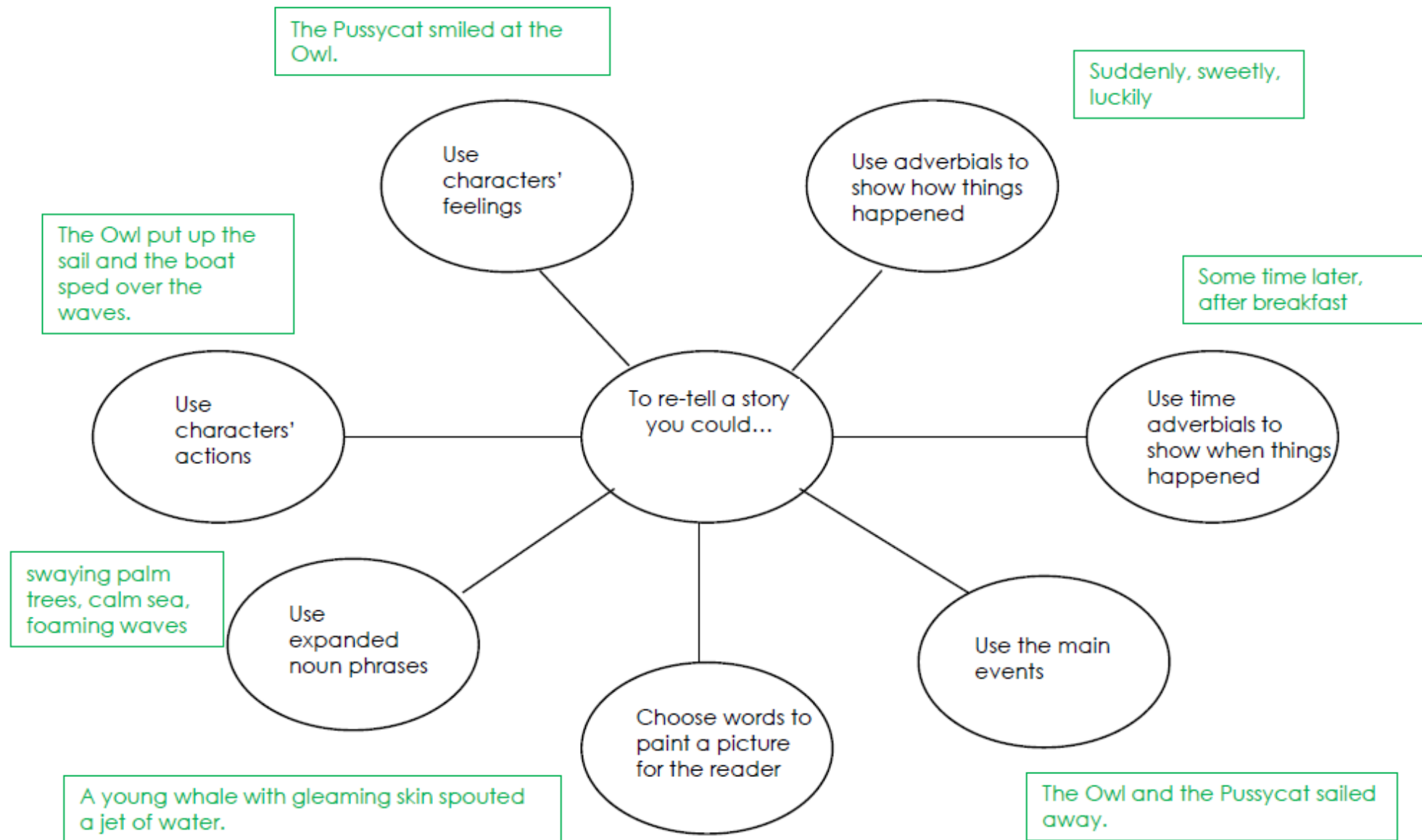
Toolkit



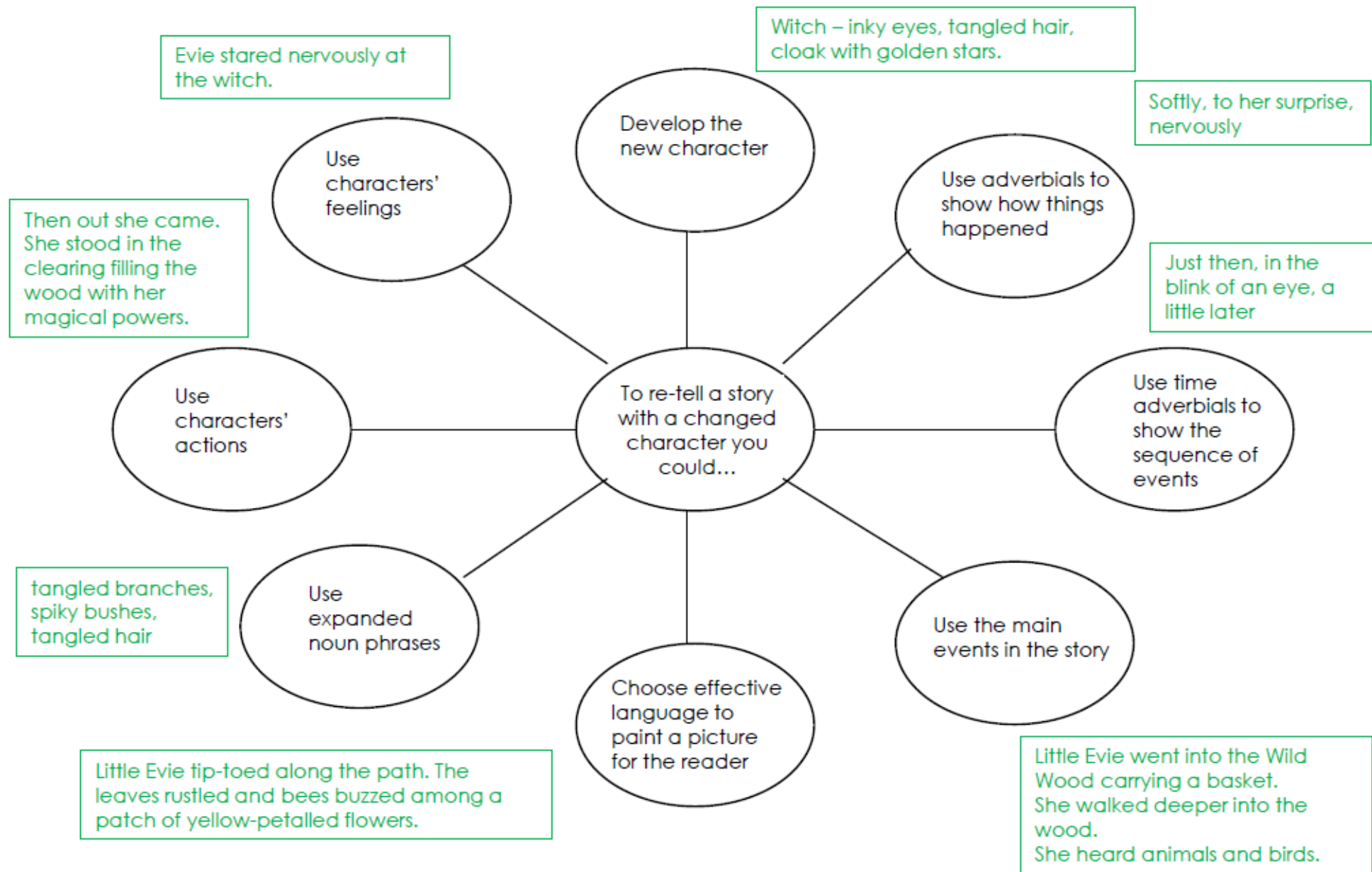
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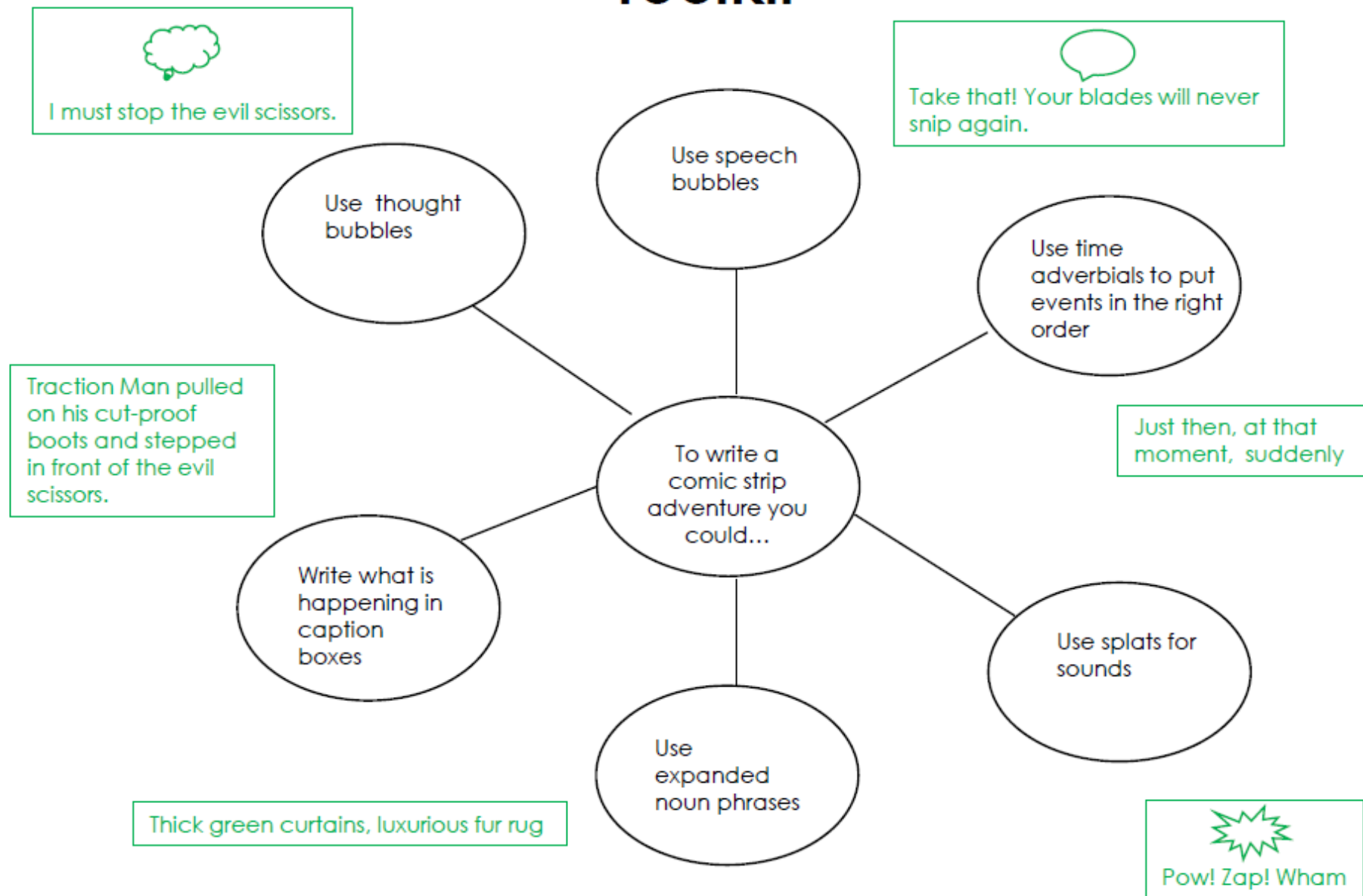
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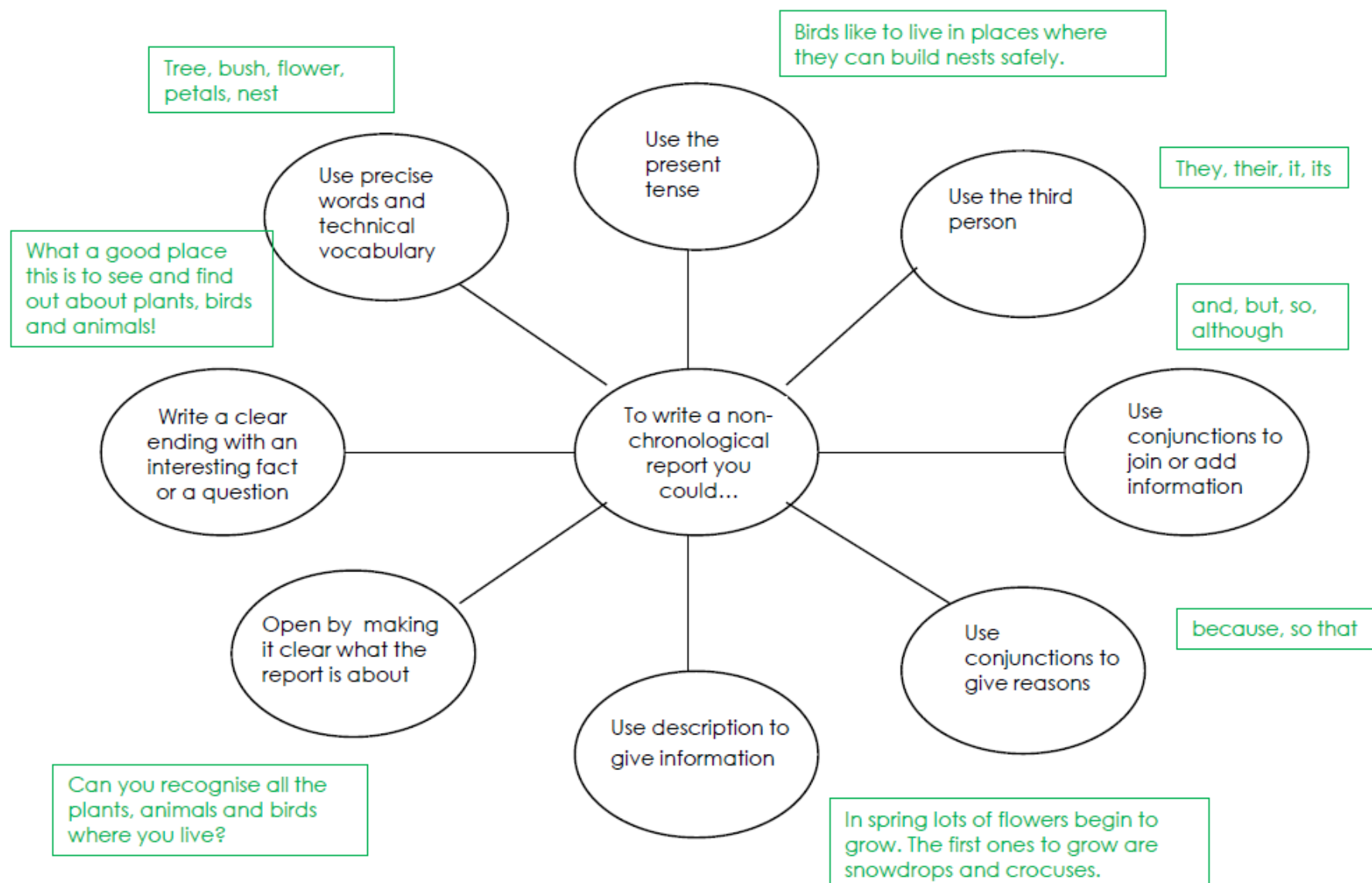
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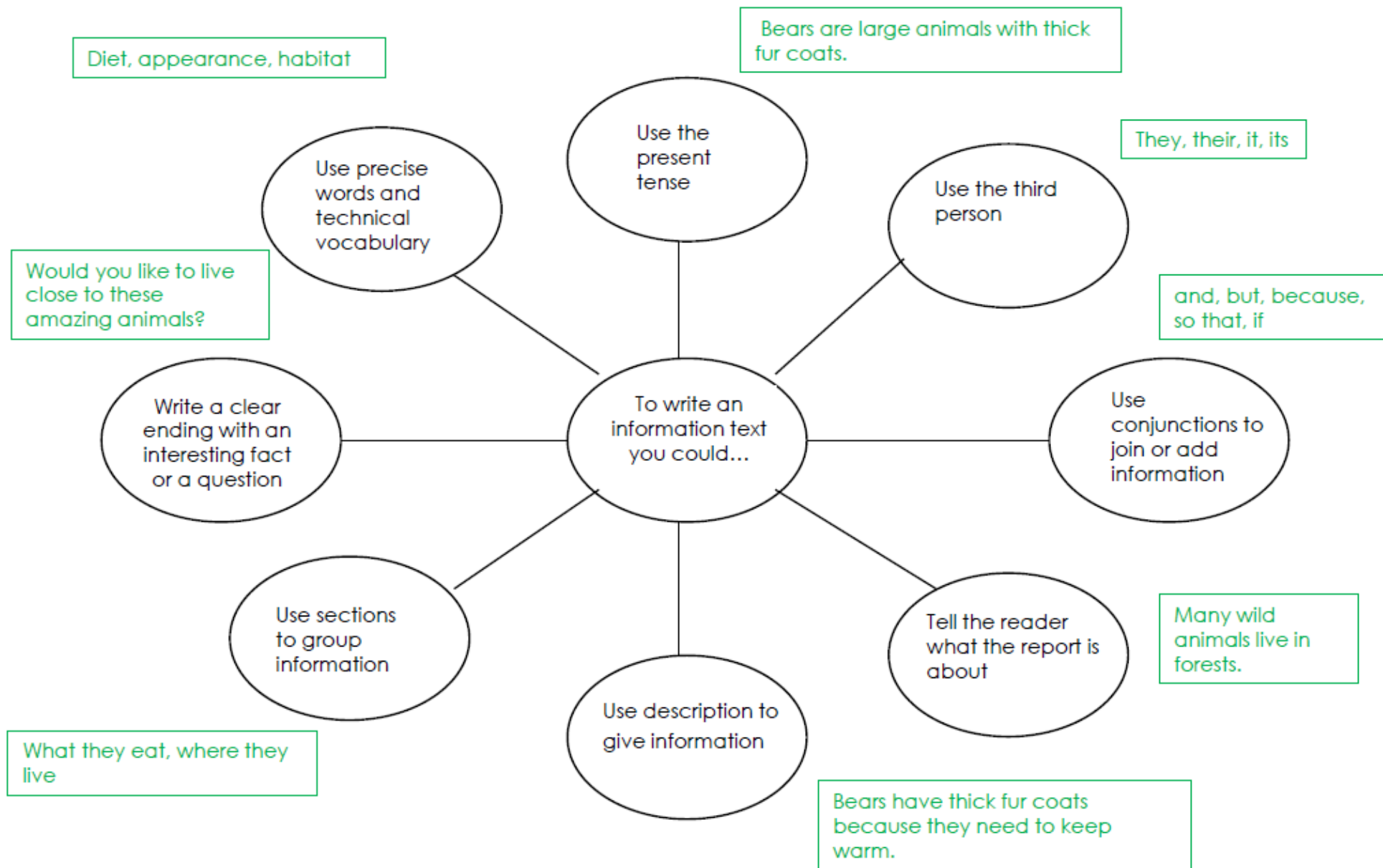
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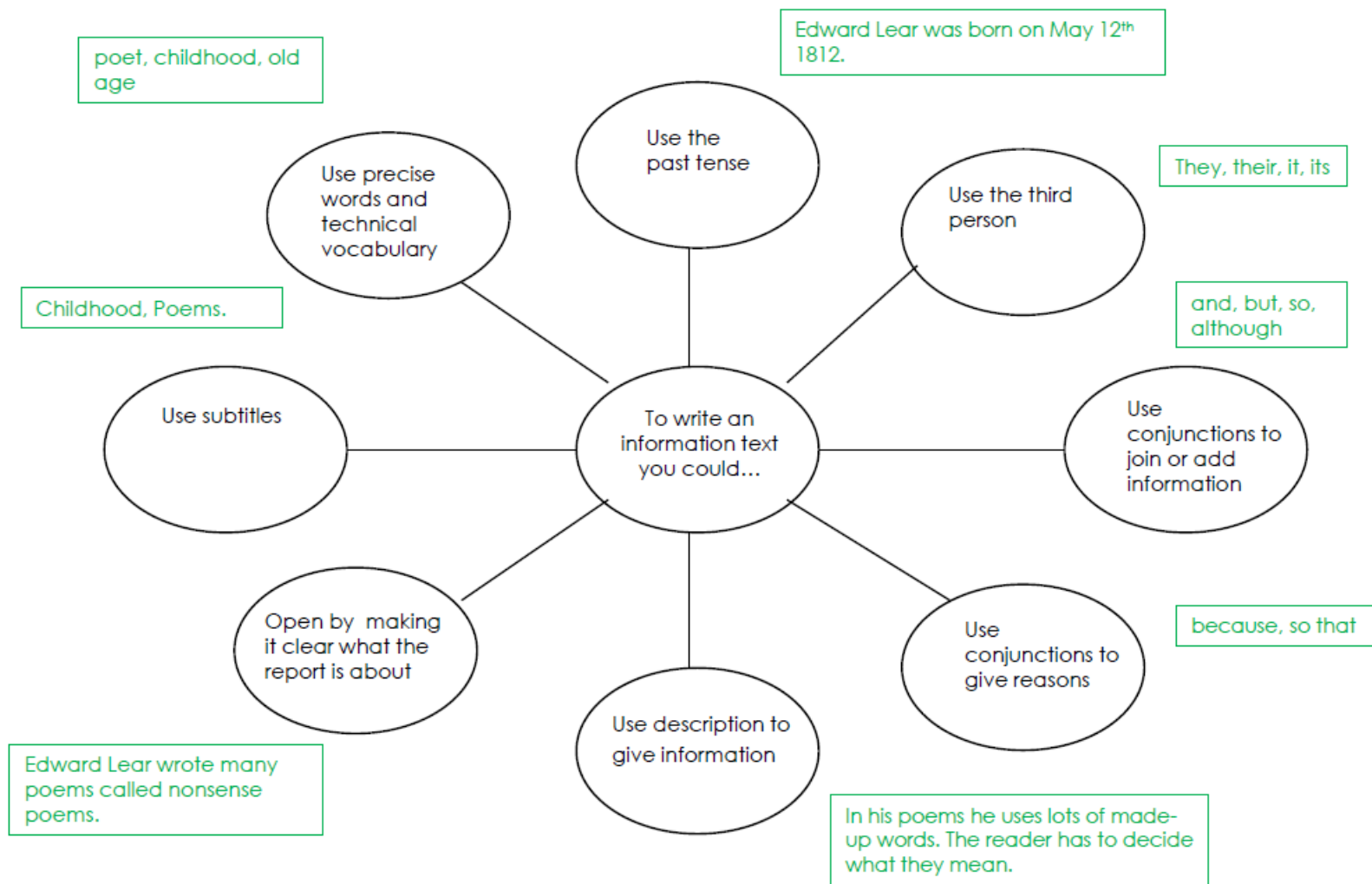
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