

Final Report: Collaborative Creative Writing with High School Boys

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Abstract

For six weeks at the beginning of the school year in 2010, Form Five (14-16 years old) students from Westlake Boys' High School in Auckland, New Zealand participated in a creative writing project. The students were required to complete three writing tasks; the first independently, the second collaboratively, and the final piece independently for their IGCSE English Language coursework. Both qualitative data, in the form of survey and interviews, and quantitative data, in the form of a rubric of judgement criteria were applied to the written work to compare the boys' writing before and after working collaboratively in class. The aim was to research whether collaborative writing with a peer made the boys more powerful, prolific and confident writers. Results from the quantitative data indicate that the action did increase the volume of writing, the power and effect of the writing, and the confidence of the boys. The qualitative data supports these findings, but also highlights a negative change in boys' attitudes to writing and the action itself.

Introduction

In the world we live in collaboration is evident everywhere we look. In schools, although collaboration clearly takes place in the classroom, we formally assess students individually. An investigation whether a more structured approach to collaboration would improve boys' writing, and whether the collaborative writing experience would have a positive impact on their writing as an individual is relevant and pertinent in today's educational climate.

Boys, particularly of lower ability, do not always have the confidence to play around and experiment with their writing. There can be an aversion to "making mistakes" or it "being messy", resulting in them writing very little. The aim of this action research is to determine whether writing with a partner will increase confidence and encourage the necessary playing with words and sentences that is needed to improve boys' writing.

When prompted, boys can often articulate what they are thinking verbally. These prompts often come from the teacher. A more student focused approach in the classroom may encourage prompts from the students. To investigate whether there is a strong link between

discussion of ideas, and the consequent development, there is hope that this action will encourage the boys to become more articulate in their writing. This is especially the case when there is a marked difference between oral and written communication; boys are able to often explain verbally but cannot communicate this in their writing.

This action of collaborative writing is designed to enhance the *social nature* of learning. Boys can learn from one another, and they enjoy working together. It may seem clichéd, but students tend to do better when they are enjoying what they are doing. Indeed, there is a considerable amount of research to link engagement with achievement. There is evidence to suggest the power of collaborative reading groups to improve their reading confidence and ability (J. Klingner & S.Vaughn, 1998); it is possible therefore that a collaborative approach to writing may have similar results in writing ability.

Key themes in literature around this topic are the participants' attitudes, preferences, perceptions and beliefs about writing. Research has found that negative attitudes to writing tended to be attributed to "lack of interest or perceived value, and not to a lack of self confidence" (Hensen, 2001). It is for this reason that writing should have a clear context; a specific audience and purpose. Boys respond more effectively to tasks when they can see the reason, and therefore the value in them.

In the adult world we work collaboratively, and it is a realistic proposition that students should learn how to do this. Allowing and encouraging students to work together in a safe, structured environment may also benefit them as lifelong learners, as well as in the short term as writers. It has been shown that "there is a significant link between pupils' attitudes to writing and their competence in writing" in younger students (O'Brien, A. & Neal, I. 2007) and that these attitudes are positively affected by creating a collaborative atmosphere in the classroom and encouraging students to work together.

There are however possible problems that may occur if we approach collaboration purely as a teaching strategy. Literature suggests that teachers can get overly caught up in the practical application of collaboration (James A Reither and Douglas Vipond, 1989). It takes careful planning to establish effective collaborative tasks and there are several different strands to working collaboratively in the classroom; co-authoring, peer editing, knowledge making. In order for these strands to work together there needs to be trust established between the

participants and the teacher. In a classroom context students and teachers learn, teach and support one another.

Much of the research that has been carried out previously concerns itself with primary school students and college students (university). Most of the literature reviewed deals with both genders, and so this research is focused on boys aged fourteen to sixteen in a high school context. It aims to build on existing research by looking specifically at the following research question:

To what extent does collaborative creative writing with their peers help boys to become powerful, confident, prolific writers?

For the purpose of this research, it is necessary to define the criteria. ‘Powerful’ is judged to address how the students crafted their language choices for effect and meaning. This takes into consideration their range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and their ability to fulfil the requirements of the tasks. Understanding of audience and purpose here by the students is very important. Tasks need to have a clear context.

‘Confident’ is judged based on their confidence and ability to play with language and to make and correct errors. The originality and creativity of their ideas within the parameters of the tasks they are given is also considered. This is a very important part of the collaboration process as the boys discuss, edit and correct their writing with a partner.

Finally, ‘prolific’: this is initially one of the easiest terms to define as it is possible to look at how much the boys wrote. How the boys deal with word limits is assessed, but there is the need to add more to this criterion to look at how much care they take in their writing. Quality and quantity are important, not one or the other.

Two more categories are added to underpin these three original judgement criteria; accuracy and collaboration. While accuracy is implicit within the existing criteria, it needs to be explicit as it is important in the context of this specific classroom as students are working towards IGCSE Language coursework. A collaboration criterion is added to help judge how well students work together in these tasks.

The research will take place at Westlake Boys’ High School which is situated on the North Shore of Auckland in New Zealand. It is traditional and progressive in its outlook and has earned a proud record for academic, sporting and cultural achievement. This research will

take place with boys aged between fourteen and sixteen in Form Five preparing for IGCSEs in English Language and Literature in November 2010.

Westlake is a state funded school of 2200 students with a dual pathway that offers the New Zealand NCEA qualifications and the Cambridge International Examinations. The school is very proud of its academic streaming and approximately the top 30% of students follow the Cambridge programme. This specific class are the sixth stream out of fifteen in English. The majority of the class are strong in more practical and mathematical subjects and struggle with English. Of a class of twenty-nine, fifteen have English as a second language. The research was led by Mrs Judy-Ann Arbuthnot, teacher in charge of Cambridge English and second in charge of the English Faculty.

An action research approach will be taken as this encourages self-reflection on a teacher's practice in the classroom. The model is appropriate and relevant as it allows a practitioner to question behaviour through process and understanding. The action research approach is open-ended in the sense that a teacher reflects on process, understanding and outcomes, and then reacts and changes practice appropriately and continually. The method allows the research to have a clear localised context, therefore allowing the teacher to discover relevant information for their classroom and their school (J. Whitehead, 1998).

Kemmis' Action Research Model (1985) which follows the steps of plan, act, observe and reflect, will be used in planning and carrying out this research into boys' writing.

Research Methods

Qualitative and quantitative data is collected from students in the form of pre and post surveys, interviews, examples of written work and video recording of students discussing their collaborative tasks.

The definitions of action research determine that a teacher should reflect on their own practice and behaviour in the classroom in a realistic and relevant context. The group of participants chosen, typically, have writing as an area of weakness. The requirements of the IGCSE English Language coursework are a portfolio of three 500-800 word pieces of writing. The action allows the class and the teacher to work towards a *real* assessment that will contribute to their IGCSE result at the beginning of the school year in hope that it will

encourage more positive attitudes towards writing, increased confidence, a powerful use of language and higher attainment levels.

The action that is implemented in this project requires the boys to write three creative pieces of writing. The first is a descriptive piece in which they have to create a sense of 'being there'. This is a written task that has been used at this level for the past three years. The boys complete this task independently after pre-teaching activities are carried out in the classroom.

The second writing task is carried out with a writing partner. The writing partners are chosen at random. Students are given photographs of characters and asked to develop a detailed background for the character. They then have to pair with another student who has a different photograph. The writing pairs are asked to develop a narrative in which the two characters' paths cross. This short story task is the main collaborative writing task.

To allow a comparison to be made, the final task is carried out individually. The task is very similar to task two in that students are given images of characters, and then asked to develop a narrative which included both characters (see appendix A for all writing tasks).

Prior to these writing tasks a survey is completed using www.surveymonkey.com to illicit students' attitudes, preferences, perceptions and beliefs towards writing. After the action has been completed a post-action survey is also completed by all participants (See appendix B for survey questions).

In order to gain more detailed insight to the students' responses to the action, two smaller focus groups of four students have been set up to discuss their writing and their responses to the action.

To assess the students' writing before, during and after the collaborative writing action an assessment rubric is developed which allows the work to be judged on a scale of one to five on the following judgement criteria: prolific, powerful, confident, accurate, collaborative. A copy of this rubric is available in appendix C. The final criterion, collaborative, is only relevant to task two.

Discussion of Results

In my discussion of results students are referred to by initial where necessary.

To judge the power of the writing, judgement criteria from the rubric is applied to the participants' written work before and after the collaborative writing. It is possible to see a positive change in the power of their writing. The general trend is that the boys do become more aware of the effect their language can have on a reader and begin to craft their writing more effectively. Most students move up one or two bands within the criteria as they begin to consider their language choices with more care. One student whose writing did not become more powerful is already one of the more capable writers in the class prior to the action. G began the year with high levels of attainment in creative writing in Form Four.

The language choices in general show developing vocabularies, and an increased awareness of the effect different sentence structures can have on the meaning of a text.

The pre and post action surveys are particularly important in assessing the participants' confidence. What is most striking is that prior to the writing tasks only 8.3% felt confident about writing. After the action had been completed this increases to 31.3%. The boys feel more confident, and this is supported, to some extent, in the analysis of their written work.

In comparison to the 'powerful' criteria, 75% move up the 'confidence' scale by one or two points. Following the collaborative writing project there is evidence of more originality in the writing, and less reliance on cliché. Students appear to play more with their language and to take risks. It is evident in the classroom that they have more confidence to ask their peers about their ideas and writing, and the teacher is no longer the main focus for feedback. In the initial survey teachers are considered the main person the participants felt comfortable sharing their work with, and the person they would prefer to offer feedback. An element of trust has been established within the classroom between peers to enable the shift to occur. It is only fair to say however, that some participants still find it difficult to share their work with others, including teachers.

The area where most change is evident is in the participants' ability to become more prolific. Every student writes more and meets the word limit demands of the task after the collaborative action. Some students move three points up the scale when their individual work, prior to and after the action, is compared.

The criterion for "prolific" does not merely address the amount the participants write; it also looks at their ability to be clear and concise, and the amount of care taken in the tasks. There is a distinction here to be made between students writing more and those students who wrote

more of a higher quality when it came to language choices and effect. Only 20% of the students score 5 on the prolific criteria on the rubric suggesting that some difficulty remains in writing of good quality for a sustained length; quality and quantity is what every English teacher would like to see.

In using the rubric to assess their written work, it is apparent that after the action the majority of boys do become more powerful, confident and prolific. Their attitudes however show a slightly different picture.

The surveys are important in judging changes in the boys' attitudes. Worryingly, after the collaborative action 18.8% either 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' that writing is important. At the other end of the scale there is a smaller change from 79.1% to 72.5% agreeing that writing is important. There has been a great deal of focus on creative writing in the classroom over the six-week period, and this may have had a detrimental effect on their attitudes. From the survey it is evident that the majority of boys feel the classroom is the place for writing, and at present, other than homework tasks, writing does not take place at home for fun or enjoyment.

There are some interesting comments about writing on the initial surveys. R says: "Whenever I am feeling sad, angry about things, I write. It makes me feel better when I let my feelings out onto paper. A relieving feeling." L realises that "writing is important. It's something you have to do, so you might as well enjoy it."

On the other hand, B believes that "writing is not important. You don't necessarily have to be smart to write a story. You just have an imagination." This is a view echoed in other student discussions witnessed in the classroom. Some students clearly feel that imagination and creativity are an obstacle in this particular writing task. Because the collaborative pairs are decided randomly there are three groups where this is a particular issue. These students are also quiet and reserved, sometimes to the point of secretive, and this affects their ability to discuss and share ideas.

Although changes in attitudes to writing are evident, the most interesting responses come to the action itself. After the collaboration more students prefer working alone than with others (a change from 41.7% to 75%). Students report the difficulty in coming to a consensus of opinion and the amount of time that is required to work together. Some participants also comment on the domination of one partner over the other in the task.

Responses are not all negative, however. Participants report that it helped when someone reads what they have written, and that they enjoy being able to discuss ideas to develop them more fully. Comments in this vein support the points made in the introduction of this report with regards to the social nature of learning, and the importance of verbal communication in supporting writing. Participants who enjoy the discussion and sharing aspects of the action also report a change in confidence. R says, “It gave me great confidence towards writing”, while J reports that the collaboration allows him “to see some ideas from a more unusual perspective.”

Many of the participants would have preferred to choose who they worked with. This may help the element of trust that is required in collaboration to enable it to work effectively. That said, the qualitative data of the surveys does not entirely match the quantitative data gleaned from the writing by applying the rubric. Both sets of data are useful in determining the success of the action.

Conclusion

Because of the conflict in the data there are some interesting conclusions to be made. The individual writing tasks completed after the collaborative action are, in the most part, more powerful, prolific and confident. Participants write more and show improvements in the structure and cohesion of their work. Tasks are completed with language choices being made judiciously for effect, and there is an increase in the range of vocabulary and sentence structures. The writing is more original and less clichéd; more risks are taken by the participants and there is more willingness to play around with language and to make changes if necessary.

In the classroom, a positive working atmosphere is evident. Participants are supportive and are learning from one another. It is evident in their discussions that there is an element of evaluation and justification of language choices. In the two discussions recorded there is evidence of peer editing and correction. The participants discuss the technicalities of language, such as tenses and paragraphs, while building on narrative ideas for their work. Throughout these non-confrontational discussions, the participants use tentative and inclusive

language such as “shall we move this”, “maybe this isn’t relevant” and “do we really need to use that sentence”.

The participants’ maturity in approach is worth mentioning. There are no issues where students refused to work together, and although they may not have ‘liked’ who they worked with, each collaborative pair produces a piece of creative writing that fulfils the IGCSE English Language coursework assessment criteria. In each lesson, students work together to make changes to improve and develop their work. Participants are aware that the project’s aim is to improve on their own individual writing, and to achieve marks that will affect their IGCSE English Language coursework mark. This perhaps is a big enough motivation for the students to get as much out of the process as possible.

Students no longer look to the teacher for immediate feedback, and instead feel more comfortable and confident in approaching a peer. This has not replaced teacher feedback, but instead provides other opportunities for students. Trust is an essential part to this action. The action is carried out at the beginning of the school year and has established a sense of responsibility and collaboration which has continued in the past few months. Many of the criticisms from the students arise from not being able to choose a friend to work with. Perhaps if the collaborative action had taken place later in the year, there would have been a greater level of trust between participants, and therefore more enjoyment and thus, more change.

Ironically, despite the shift in attitudes towards writing, and the very clear negative attitudes towards the action itself, the boys’ writing has improved. They may not have *liked* the action, but it does appear to have improved their writing.

One consideration to make is the genre of writing task: creative writing is used as part of this action as it is relevant and specific to the context of this classroom and school. It would be interesting to see if the results differed with another genre. One of the student’s comments that “I am against collaborative writing, [it] might be a little more useful when studying poetry though.” A large proportion of the Form Five English course at Westlake concerns itself with Literature, and the writing of essays. This student may be right, and this has implications for a further cycle of action research.

In terms of implications for future practice, collaborative writing is a strategy which is shown to have positive results in the classroom. It cannot be used as a one-off teaching strategy as its

success has its roots in the good habits and trust established between students and teacher. It needs a positive working environment, and in turn helps develop a working environment where students look to one another for advice and support. It can help students to develop ideas - ideas that are not simply limited to creative writing. Collaborative writing in the form used in this action research project does have its limitations and the participants pointed these out in their feedback; “It is difficult to work outside the classroom on our work”, “Sometimes homework tasks can set us back as we have different ideas.” One possible solution to this is the use of online technology which would enable students to communicate with each other outside of the classroom.

To conclude, collaborative writing with a peer has to some extent enabled the students of Westlake to become more powerful, prolific and confident writers. It cannot be said whether it was solely responsible for the changes evident in the data as the nature of teaching is that students are influenced by many different factors, but the data would suggest that it has had some positive effect on the writing of boys and their attitudes.

Word count: 3778

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Appendix A

Task 1

Being There

You will complete this writing task by yourself. This will give me an idea about how you write by yourself. The instructions are very thorough. Go through each step carefully. We will use this descriptive piece of writing as a benchmark to see how you improve throughout the year.

Student Instructions Sheet

You will write a description about a place. Use Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* as a starting point, you will then choose your own scene and develop a description which evokes a sense of being there, of the place, its people, its sights and sounds. Your writing will be rich in imagery combining elements of both poetry and prose. Your writing in this particular style will be between 300 and 400 words long.

I will be looking at:

- how well you express and develop your ideas
- your ability to use an appropriate writing style
- how well you organise your writing
- your accuracy in spelling, punctuation and paragraphing.

**Extract from *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas
(The prologue to 'Play for Voices')**

To begin at the beginning:

It is spring, moonless night in the small town, starless and bible-black, the cobblestreets silent and the hunched, courtiers'-and-rabbits' wood limping invisible down to the sloeback, slow, black, crowblack, fishingboat-bobbing sea.

The houses are blind as moles (thought moles see fine tonight in the snouting velvet dingles) or blind as Captain Cat there in the muffled middle by the pump and the town clock, the shops in mourning,

the Welfare Hall in widows' weeds. And all the people of the lulled and dumbfound town are sleeping now.

Hush, the babies are sleeping, the farmers, the fishers, the tradesmen and pensioners, cobbler, schoolteacher, postman and publican, the undertaker and the fancy woman, drunkard, dressmaker, preacher, policeman, the webfoot cocklewomen and the tidy wives. Young girls lie bedded soft or glide in their dreams, with rings and trousseaux, bridesmaided by glow-worms down the aisles of the organplaying wood. The boys are dreaming wicked or of the bucking ranches of the night and the jollyrodgered sea. And the anthracite statues of the horses sleep in the fields, and the cows in the byres, and the dogs in the wetnosed yards; and the cats nap in the slant corners or lope sly, streaking and needling, on the one cloud of the roofs.

You can hear the dew falling, and the hushed town breathing. Only your eyes are unclosed to see the black and folded town fast, and slow, asleep. And you alone can hear the invisible starfall, the darkest-before-dawn minutely dewgrazed stir of the black, dab-filled sea where the *Arctura*, the *Curlew* and the *Skylark*, *Zanzibar*, *Rhiannon*, the *Rover*, the *Cormorant*, and the *Star of Wales* tilt and ride.

Listen. It is night moving in the streets, the processional salt slow musical wind in Coronation Street and Cockle Row, it is the grass growing on Llaregyb Hill, dewfall, starfall, the sleep of birds in Milk Wood.

Listen. It is night in the chill, squat chapel, hymning in bonnet and brooch and bombazine black, butterfly choker and bootlace bow, coughing like nannygoats, sucking mintoes, fortywinking hallelujah; night in the four-ale, quiet as a domino; in Ocky Milkman's lofts like a mouse with gloves; in Dai Bread's bakery flying like black flour. It is to-night in Donkey Street, trotting silent, with seaweed on its hooves, along the cockled cobbles, past curtained fernpot, text and trinket, harmonium, holy dresser, watercolours done by hand, china dog and rosy tin teacaddy. It is night nedding among the snuggeries of babies.

Look. It is night, dumbly, royally winding through the Coronation cherry trees; going through the graveyard of Bethesda with winds gloved and folded, and dew doffed; tumbling by the Sailors Arms.

Time passes. Listen. Time passes. Come closer now.

Only you can hear the houses sleeping in the streets in the slow deep salt and silent black, bandaged night. Only you can see, in the blinded bedrooms, the combs and petticoats over the chairs, the jugs

and basins, the glasses of teeth, Thou Shalt Not on the wall, and the yellowing dickybird-watching pictures of the dead. Only you can hear and see, behind the eyes of the sleepers, the movements and countries and mazes and colours and dismays and rainbows and tunes and wishes and flight and fall and despairs and big seas of their dreams.

From where you are, you can hear their dreams.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Task 1 Planning

- a) Choose a scene you know well. It might be the farm, the township or suburb where you live, or the local shopping mall or park.
- b) Develop an outline for your description. You could choose use or adapt these ideas or develop your own:
- Choose a time of year:
 - Establish a place and time of day:
 - Populate your scene:
 - Move to a new time of day in the same scene:
- *Eg: winter*
 - *morning in the township*
 - *children and family waking up getting ready for church*
 - *Joe working in the garage*
 - *later in the morning*

Task 2 Experimenting with syntax

- a) Draft your own opening where you set the scene and establish the atmosphere. Incorporate the details you planned for your opening in task 1 experimenting with sentence patterns. You should avoid every sentence being structured in the same way. Write in the present tense to create a sense of being there.

Task 3 Exploring personification

- a) Read these examples. The words which are central to the personification are in bold.

*Chilly sunrise **creeps up** over the farm. There an old farm house **lounges lazily**, well-warmed and well lived in.*

*The delicate breeze **breathes - gentle and curious** - over the mountaintop. It **swoops down**, in and out and around the branches of the tall pine trees before **slithering off**, then high, high back up into the clear morning sky it goes*

*The sun **stands sternly**, **supervising** all from the centre of the sky*

- b) Draft one or more sentences which personify a part of nature (like the wind, the mist or the morning) which you could incorporate into your own description.

Task 4 Writing the final piece:

- a) Write in the second person. Use direct address to give a sense that you are inviting the reader to share your impressions of a place you know well.
- b) Read your draft aloud to a partner or the class to highlight how you have used language.

Task 5 Check your work

- a) Your writing should be crafted to **create effects** through its use of
 - imagery and other language devices such as alliteration
 - rhythm
 - present tense and direct address
- b) Your writing should be **effectively structured** with
 - an opening which sets the time and place
 - the introduction of characters into the scene
 - a moving on in time
- c) You should use appropriate **writing conventions** accurately, including some complex sentence patterns.

An example of task 2/3

Using the photographs below, develop a background for two of the characters. You must then construct a narrative in which these two characters meet. Look at the photographs for clues as to how their paths may cross.



IGCSE Creative writing task

You must use the skills you have learnt over the last two weeks to produce a piece of creative writing by yourself.

You must use the images as a starting point. You have a choice of ONE of the following:

- A complete short story
- The opening chapter of a novel (your main focus should be on increasing tension)
- A day in the life of ONE of the characters

You need to follow these guidelines:

- 500-800 words
- No more than ten lines of dialogue/speech - you don't need to have any if you don't want to
- Show a clear sense of audience and purpose
- A variety of language structures, techniques and vocabulary for effect
- At the top of your work state the task, target audience and give your writing a title
- Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Content and language should be appropriate - remember a CIE examiner is going to mark/look at this

You will have today's lesson to plan. The rest of your work will be completed AT HOME.

Important dates:

DRAFT due on Wednesday 24th February

I will annotate your drafts and return before Monday 1st March

FINAL COPY due (with draft attached) on Thursday 4th March

This will go towards your IGCSE Language coursework mark and your internal mid-year mark. Use the IGCSE mark scheme to ensure you do everything that is required of you.

Appendix B

Survey questions

Pre-Action:

1. As a writer I am: Confident, Sophisticated, Just 'okay', Hesitant, Awkward, Clear, Disorganised, Logical, Fluent, Coherent, Other
2. Writing is important: Strongly disagree, Disagree, No opinion, Agree, Strongly agree
3. I am a good speller: Yes, No
4. When I write I wish I could...
5. I like to write outside of school: Yes, No
6. I like to share my writing with: Parents, Teachers, Friends, Classmates, Other
7. It helps me when I get feedback from: Parents, Teachers, Friends, Classmates, Other
8. I prefer writing: In a group, Alone, Not at all

Post Action

1. What did you most enjoy about writing with a partner?
2. What did you least enjoy about writing with a partner?
3. Do you think the collaborative writing has improved your own independent writing?
4. Think about your own writing. How have the following improved since the collaborative writing: Spelling, structure, grammar, ideas, punctuation, expression/phrasing, fluency, confidence, how much you can write.
5. You were not able to choose who you worked with. Was this a good idea?
6. As a writer I am: Confident, Sophisticated, Just 'okay', Hesitant, Awkward, Clear, Disorganised, Logical, Fluent, Coherent, Other
7. Writing is important: Strongly disagree, Disagree, No opinion, Agree, Strongly agree
8. I prefer writing: In a group, Alone, Not at all

9. How has collaborative writing helped you?

10. How else could collaborative writing be used in school?

Appendix C : Rubric

Collaborative Creative Writing: JUDGEMENT CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5
PROLIFIC: How much did they write? Did the meet/exceed word limit demands? How much care did they take in their writing?	A few sentences Unstructured Task not taken seriously	Written work has some cohesive structure though not always successful Some care has been taken	Written work has clear structure Evidence of cohesion and development Word limit considered	Written work has very clear structure and ideas are developed Word limit is met Care has been taken to complete task	Meets all demands of task Shows ability to be clear and concise Judicial choices of language
POWERFUL: Did they fulfil the task? Did they use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for effect? Did their writing have meaning? Did they craft their language for effect?	Writing is off task Language is limited Vocabulary is limited Sentence structure has no variation	Writing is on task Tendency to use cliché Relies on basic language features Sentence structure has little variation	Fulfils task Some variation of language use to achieve effect Developing vocabulary Attempts to use variety of sentence structure with some success	Task is completed with skill Language is used to create effect which has meaning in context of the writing Variety of language features, vocabulary and sentence structures	Fulfils all areas of task with flair Language is crafted carefully to achieve effect with the reader in mind Wide variety of language features, vocabulary and sentence structures with appropriate effect
CONFIDENT: Were the ideas original? Did they play with language? Were they able to correct errors and learn from them?	Lack of originality Limited Errors left unchanged	Some originality Some cliché Some errors changed - spelling, punctuation	Original Some inventiveness with language - not always successful Major errors changed - single words	Very original Attempts to play with language with some success Errors changed - single words, restructuring of sentences	Very original and engaging Manipulates and crafts language for effect All errors changed - often beyond the point of just changing one word or two
ACCURACY: Was their writing accurate in terms of spelling, grammar, punctuation and structure?	Lots of inaccuracies that affect meaning	Some inaccuracies - meaning clear	Occasional inaccuracies - common errors	Few inaccuracies - meaning not in doubt	No inaccuracies
COLLABORATION: Is their evidence they worked together? Did one partner take the lead? Did they discuss their work? Were changes made?	No collaboration Basic discussion	One partner did most of the work Discussion is limited	Working together to make changes Some discussion which does not always lead to effective change	Working together to make effective changes to improve and develop the work Some effective discussion	True collaboration; shared responsibility; effective discussion which leads to change