



## Holy Trinity School

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Dear Families,

Our VCOP and Big Write journey continues to build momentum in 2020.

VCOP stands for vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation. These four elements quickly and easily enhance writing by creating the writer's voice. Together with GHaSP (grammar, handwriting, spelling and punctuation) - the building blocks to correct and clear writing, VCOP adds the icing on the cake - excitement, pizzazz and flow to keep the audience engaged throughout the piece.

Children take part in a variety of oral and written activities and games throughout the week to develop their skills in these areas. As a celebration of their learning, children in all classes complete a piece of extended writing once a fortnight on a Thursday morning. Known as 'The Big Write,' it has proven an exciting and effective way of encouraging children to think about the four key areas for developing both their spoken and written language: Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation. This week is our first 2020 Big Write for Years 1- 6. Kinder will begin theirs later. The students have been extremely positive about the Big Write and we have enjoyed seeing them put their skills into practice.

### *If they can't say it, they can't write it*

Speaking about ideas before they can be used in writing always forms a key part of the 'Big Write' sessions. In order for children to produce their best writing they need to discuss the topic in advance. This is referred to as "Talk Homework." The day before their Big Write, children are given information to take home about the next day's task. Classroom teachers also place notifications on class dojo or email. We ask that children discuss the topic with an adult at home in preparation for their writing. This homework involves discussion only, however, we feel that it is equally valuable to written homework tasks. It is clear that those children who complete their 'Talk Homework' feel more confident leading into their written tasks and produce more engaging pieces.

We recognise that opportunities for discussion are one of the most important factors in determining a child's progress in Literacy. Below, you will find some hints to help with the Talk Homework process.

If you have any questions at all regarding The Big Write or Talk Homework, please contact your child's class teacher or Mrs Koch.

### TALKING HOMEWORK IS A CHANCE TO:

- Help your child to think through and discuss initial ideas in order to develop the thought process.
- Engage your child in purposeful talk.
- Ask your child for their opinions
- Show that it is fine to have different views or opinion
- Develop your child's vocabulary through the use of WOW words (really good "ambitious" vocabulary which is more sophisticated than normal spoken language)
- Stimulate your child's creativity

- Encourage the use of Standard English with no slang or incorrect grammar. Children need to understand that the way we talk is different to the way we write.

#### SOME HINTS FOR A TALKING HOMEWORK CONVERSATION:

- Encourage as many family members as possible to be involved in the Talking Homework
- Make it an enjoyable activity
- Switch off the television to try to ensure that this is dedicated talking and listening time
- Begin a conversation by modelling... "I think that... because ..."
- Ask other family members to give their ideas, opinions and reasons why
- Encourage thinking about exciting words to use to make their writing more interesting.

"If they can't say it, they can't write it!"

Yours Sincerely  
Mrs Cathy Koch  
Leader Of Pedagogy