

Our competition, *Around the World with Wally*, will give you plenty of opportunities for exciting and effective English and cross-curricular work – and perhaps most importantly, a real **purpose** and **audience** for writing.

## Getting started – have fun!

Hook the children in.

- Find Wally's hat and other lost items like Wizard Whitebeard's scroll, Woof's bone or Wenda's camera (see the toolkit for pictures of the items which you can photocopy) in the classroom and discuss who they belong to and how they might have got there.
- Print out Wally images and stick them in various places, including the children's books. Read out Wally's name when taking the register.
- Wear a Wally costume yourself, or better still, get the headteacher to take assembly wearing a Wally or Wenda costume!
- Create a postcard from Wally inviting the children to take part in the competition.

Get the whole school involved (the beginning or end of playtime might be a good time); dress up a Wally, Wenda, or some of the other characters and get them to mingle unobtrusively. Then get someone to take a photo or a video using, if possible, the kind of camera that takes panoramic prints, and taking the photo from a height, for example out of a second or first floor window. Another possibility is to stand in the middle of the scene and use a camera or mobile phone to take a short video as you revolve! (You can use these images as the front of your postcard.) They can be used for all sorts of purposes, but especially to link with geography – see below.

## A basic sequence for teaching the writing skills involved in the competition

However you choose to approach the *Where's Wally?* competition, following this basic sequence will help you get the best writing from the children. With adaptation and additional support where appropriate, the sequence will work for children from Year 1 to Year 4.

The sequence follows the basic pattern of introducing the key focus as a whole class activity, then moving into shared work before asking the children to carry out a quick activity as supported work – for example, asking pairs to write a short sentence on individual

whiteboards – so you can check understanding. Children should then be able to carry out some independent activities confidently. Using a Working Wall or display to show examples, learning intentions and success criteria will also be helpful.

You could use the sequence as part of a special *Where's Wally?* day, or as part of a whole unit of work lasting a week or two. If using the sequence over several days, it's useful to have a Working Wall where you can display reminders of the previous day's work to activate prior knowledge. Numbers indicate ways of splitting up the sequence if you are doing it over several days, but are guidance only.

## 1. Start by tuning in to the *Where's Wally?* concept

- Choose a *Where's Wally?* spread to focus on. Concentrate on one spread, preferably not the one you might be using as a stimulus for the final writing. (You'll find a good selection of *Where's Wally?* spreads on the competition page of the National Literacy Trust website to print or to use electronically.) Talk generally about the spread you're looking at. (It's probably best to choose a contemporary setting or one where children are already familiar with the context for this exercise - so as not to get diverted – but see “Cross-curricular ideas” for more on this.)
- First give children plenty of time to explore the spread you are using, finding Wally and other characters, and talking freely.
- Then guide the discussion a little more. Keeping your questions open will encourage the children to talk more freely. Display questions on your whiteboard for reference. Some ideas might be:
  - “Tell me something about this picture.” – this is a very open invitation, and should enable everybody to say something! Model listening to one or two children and then ask children to invite one another to comment in the same way, so as to maximise children's engagement and the time they spend talking.
  - “What do you like/dislike about this picture?”
  - “Is there anything that puzzles you about the picture?”
  - “Are there any questions you would like to ask about the picture?”
- As before, model once or twice, keeping it brief and pacy, and then ask children to discuss one or two questions in pairs – give them about one or two minutes for this, depending on age. Listen to the conversations and pick out one or two interesting answers. Model dialogue by responding to children with further questions or comments, using constructions such as “I think...” and “I wonder if...” and encourage them to respond further.
- Play a game where questions and comments flash up at random on the whiteboard with a child's name (you could leave out names if you feel this would put shy children too much “on the spot”, or alternatively use the names of talking partners so children feel supported). Another version would be to ask children to “pick a card” with a tick (“I like”), cross (“I dislike”), a thought bubble (“I think” or “I wonder if”) or a question mark (“I don't know” or “I don't understand”) and then say something appropriate either to

the class or to their talking partner. Record some of the responses on the whiteboard or on flipchart paper to use later, maybe displaying them on your Working Wall.

- Supported writing – ask children, working in pairs or individually, to write a complete sentence starting with one of the prompts you have practised on individual whiteboards. Ask them to share with the class and choose a couple to comment on, for example picking one where there is a complete sentence correctly punctuated, and another where the sentence isn't complete. Ask children to rethink this one and come up with a complete sentence.

## 2. Start getting the children really thinking and talking about details

- Play “Magic Magnifier” using the same spread as before, focus on one small part of the spread. You can use whiteboard tools to do this, or use a photocopier to blow up key scenes and use a big cardboard “Magic Magnifying Glass”. It's a good idea to find Wally first as children are always eager to find him! Talk about the scene you're focusing on – What's happening? What do the people feel like? How can you tell? (focus on expression and body language). What might they be saying to one another? Might they be thinking something different?
- “Freeze Frame” - Group the children and ask them to “Freeze Frame” the magnified scene. Take a photo of each group for future use. Encourage empathy by choosing one group and playing “Speech Bubble, Thought Bubble” – touch a child in the Freeze Frame on the shoulder and ask them to say what their character might be saying and then thinking, remembering that words and thoughts may not be the same!
- Give groups of children their own copies of the same *Where's Wally?* spread and their own Magic Magnifying Glass. Ask them to choose a scene from the spread, and discuss it using the same prompts as before, then to prepare a Freeze Frame, thinking about how their characters are feeling, and what they might be saying and thinking. Groups take it in turn to show their Freeze Frames and other children discuss briefly which part of the original spread the group has chosen and what the characters are feeling, saying and thinking. Take photos of each group for future use.

## 3. Encourage empathy

- Have a large copy of your chosen spread as a background on your Working Wall and attach the photos of your children's chosen scenes to or around it, with arrows pointing from the photos to the scene in the spread.
- Ask children to fill in speech bubble and thought bubble sticky-notes for their own characters. Very young children could use just one word – but encourage them to say more, even if their writing is minimal - or have support to write. (You can actually buy speech bubble and thought bubble sticky-notes, but this isn't necessary!)
- Give children copies of their own photos and ask them to annotate with saying-thinking-feeling. They could think up suitable names for their characters, and older children could invent a CV or short biography for them.

#### 4. Start to focus on writing descriptions of the setting

- (You could continue using the same spread for this part of the sequence, or choose another. Again, choose a spread whose context the children know, so you can focus on the writing skills without distractions.) Ask the children to study the spread in silence for a short time, thinking about any words that they could use to describe the spread, then ask them to swap words with a partner, taking turns to say one word each, as many as they can say in a given (very short) period of time – the winner is the one who can keep going the longest! Then ask them to give you words as a class while you write them down on a whiteboard or flipchart. If you are brave and can stand the noise, ask them to all say their words at once, and write down as many as you can, on the whiteboard or on sticky-notes – this technique can be riotous, but it does get them all involved!
- Take the chance to increase children’s vocabulary by adding any words to the list that you think would be useful and briefly discussing meaning.
- Play “Best words, Worst words”. Have a target on the whiteboard, or on a flipchart, and ask children to decide whether the words the class came up with are really good words to describe the spread, in which case they go in the middle of the target, or less good, so they go towards the outside. Discuss reasons for choices.
- With children from Year 2 upwards, you could sort the words into adjectives and other word classes, using the terminology as appropriate.
- Pick an object in the spread, and ask children to choose a couple of adjectives to describe it – for example, “the tall green alien”. (For Year 2 upwards, take the chance to use the terminology *noun* and *noun phrase*.) Do a couple together and then ask children to come up with another couple in pairs.
- On individual whiteboards, ask them to write a noun phrase to describe a chosen object from the spread. Discuss choice of words – do some work better than others? Why? Can you change the order of the adjectives? (Sometimes you can, but sometimes you can’t; for example, in English we wouldn’t say “the green tall alien”.)
- For older children, you could ask them to extend the noun phrase by adding words after the noun – for example, “the tall green alien with sticky-out ears and a big antenna”.
- Find Wally in your chosen spread. What can he see? Model an example and write it on the whiteboard. Discuss the noun phrase and underline it, for example, “Wally can see a crowd of tall green aliens”.
- Ask the children in pairs to come up with a sentence including a noun phrase. Others should listen and spot the noun phrase. Write several examples on the board, underlining the noun phrase.
- Ask the children to imagine that they are Wally. How would they rephrase one of these sentences? “I can see...” Get the class to practise this in pairs while you listen and ensure they are using the first person.
- Get the children to write a sample sentence or two on individual whiteboards, and ask everyone to check that they are written in the first person, contain a noun phrase and are correctly punctuated!

- Take this further for older children. Instead of an extended noun phrase, can they choose a really descriptive noun instead? This is actually quite difficult in describing the spreads and might require some specialised vocabulary, for example “galleon” rather than “pirate ship”.

## 5. Focus on how to write a postcard

- Find some examples of written postcards – real ones if possible (ask around – people often keep postcards, or may even have some examples of old postcards in a collection). You can also find examples on the web and/or write your own.
- Together, look at a couple of examples and discuss. Highlight the different elements on your whiteboard or Working Wall for future reference.
  - What’s the subject matter? (Usually describes events or surroundings)
  - For older children, discuss what kind of sentences are used (you may want to focus on getting complete sentences with full stops, exclamation marks, question marks and capitals with Key Stage 1). Do you need to use complete sentences in this kind of writing? What kind of punctuation is useful? Point out that you don’t have room for too many words, so you can break some rules about complete sentences and also use more “informal” punctuation, for example, dashes, and even more than one exclamation mark at a time! – usually not a good idea!
  - Given that you can only use a few words, point out how important it is to make sure they’re all worthwhile. Adjectives are important, but make sure they’re well-chosen for maximum impact, and also try and use precise nouns where possible: for example “a huge, threatening galleon” rather than “a big, scary pirate ship”.
  - Note the key elements on your Working Wall to use as success criteria.
- Give children examples to look at in pairs and ask them to give examples of these different elements.
- Using a selection of postcard images, set some challenges. Can you write a noun phrase about one of the pictures? Can you write a complete, properly punctuated sentence about it? Can you cut some words from your sentence and still make it make sense? Ask pairs to write sample sentences on individual whiteboards.
- Using a spread other than the one you are planning to use for the competition, model using the success criteria to write a postcard from Wally. Get the children to check that you are including all the elements you have discussed.
- Ask the children to try writing their own practice postcard using either the same spread or a different one (but not the one you want to use for the competition, if this is your plan!).

## 6. Competition time!

The children should be ready to have a go at their competition entries. Before they start, ask them to think about not only the things they've learned, but also about what will make their postcard special and different...

## Ideas for different curriculum areas

### English

This is an excellent project for demonstrating how the skills of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation and vocabulary are vital for producing good descriptive writing. Specific points to consider might be:

- thinking about when it's necessary to write a complete sentence and when you can cut the sentence down to note form to save space while still making sense.
- perhaps using multi-clause sentences to convey information economically using either co-ordinating conjunctions such as *and, or, but* or subordinating conjunctions such as *while, because* (see below).
- punctuating sentences appropriately using capital letters and full stops as a minimum – it should be possible to use full stops, exclamation marks and question marks in a postcard without having to introduce them artificially. Older children might need to use commas, either between items in a list, or between clauses in a multi-clause sentence. You could also use brackets, commas and dashes (dashes might add a nice touch of informality) to indicate parenthesis.
- Learning the punctuation terminology from the National Curriculum to go with this: *capital letter, word, sentence, punctuation, full stop, question mark, exclamation mark (Year 1 onwards), statement, question, exclamation, comma (Year 2 onwards) parenthesis, bracket, dash (Year 4)*
- writing vivid descriptions by:
  - learning and using new vocabulary – especially effective adjectives and precise nouns.
  - using prepositions and adverbials to indicate place and position (e.g. In the distance I can see... Next to me there is... There are aliens under my feet...).
  - using conjunctions to express time and cause in a subordinate clause (e.g. *While* I was asleep, the aliens hid my spaceship, I like it here *because* it is sunny).
- learning the grammar terminology from the National Curriculum to go with this: *noun, noun phrase, adjective, adverb (Year 2 onwards), preposition, conjunction, clause, subordinate clause (Year 3 onwards), relative pronoun, relative clause (Year 4)*

Lastly, don't forget to encourage empathy. Encourage the children to express viewpoint by including something in their descriptions that shows what Wally might be thinking and feeling.

## History

### Key Stage 1 (KS1)

You could use *Where's Wally?* as an introduction to the works of L.S. Lowry and Pieter Breugel the Elder, who both painted pictures full of figures. Perhaps a small cut-out Wally could hide in one of their pictures and describe what he sees. You could use a small version or section of the relevant picture as the front of the postcard. Use this as a starting point for discussing the differences between life in Breugel's day and in Lowry's.

In addition, you could play "Where's Henry?" using the picture of The Field of the Cloth of Gold (available online). This famous picture was painted to commemorate the grand peace talks between England and France early in the reign of Henry VIII and Henry himself appears in it three times. Use this idea to start thinking about the concept of historical sources with children – how can pictures tell us about what life was like and what people thought in historical times? Why does Henry appear three times?

Alternatively you could create your own Wally spread based around a historical event. Where would Wally have been at the height of the Fire of London, for example? On a boat on the Thames watching the flames? Helping Samuel Pepys bury his cheeses for safety in his garden? Forming part of a human chain passing buckets of water to try and put out the fire?

### Key Stage 2 (KS2)

The same sort of ideas could be used in KS2, linked to the KS2 programmes of study. Wally could appear as part of the invading Roman army, for example. Discussions about what he can see could lead to learning key vocabulary and concepts, and he could write his postcard back to his friends in Rome. Alternatively, he could find himself transported back in time, perhaps to Baghdad in AD 900 and write a postcard to be found in the future. You could of course, use one of the spreads set in the past as a starting point for this activity. Either way, focus on learning key historical and technical vocabulary, which will support both good descriptive writing and historical skills.

## Geography

### KS1

There are plenty of opportunities to link Wally with geography, and even to use him to promote children's geographical knowledge and skills. For example, you can support locational knowledge by playing "Global *Where's Wally?*". Teach the names of the continents and oceans by having a map of the world on the whiteboard and arranging for Wally to appear in different places. Children have to spot him and say where he is. In smaller groups, use a globe and a cut out of Wally. Stick Wally somewhere on the globe (so the children can't see where) and then spin the globe and ask them to say where he is as soon as they see him. Ask the children to take turns in putting Wally somewhere on the globe. Follow-up by playing the game again and asking children to find the same place on their own globes – blow-up ones are very cheap and fun to use!

Extend the game by having Wally say where he is, for example “I’m on a big southern hot continent and I can see kangaroos” and have the children find the place on their globes or a map (globes are better, to reinforce the idea of the Earth as a sphere) and say the name. Build on Wally’s clues as a starting point for some descriptive writing. Do make sure the children understand that there aren’t just kangaroos in Australia, penguins in Antarctica, etc. – it’s easy to over-simplify, even with very young children!

You can take this approach with all the elements of KS1 geography – Wally can be in different places in the UK and in Europe, for example. Depending on the age and ability of the children, Wally can describe more precise physical features using the basic geographical vocabulary in the National Curriculum, i.e. *key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather* and *key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop*. He could also use compass directions to say where he is.

To study the geography of the school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment, you could have great fun photographing your own *Where’s Wally?* spread – see competition ideas. Then Wally can describe what he sees, again using key vocabulary.

## **KS2**

Use the same sort of ideas for children in Years 3 and 4, being more explicit as required and using the key vocabulary for KS2. For example, Wally could appear on an ordnance survey map and describe what he sees using the symbols and markings such as contour lines. Wally could also explore volcanoes, or rainforests – the possibilities are endless! Whatever you choose to do, make the most of the opportunities to learn key vocabulary and use this in the postcard to get vivid, accurate descriptions.