

Explicit vs Metacognitive Writing Instruction: A Teacher Choices Trial

School FAQs Document

Project Involvement

1. What is this project about?

The trial compares two approaches to reteaching sentence-combining in Year 3 and Year 4:

- Explicit instruction
- Metacognitive strategies

Each participating school delivers both approaches – one in Year 3 and one in Year 4 – over a 12-week period in Spring 2027.

2. What will our school need to do?

Schools will:

- **Nominate participating teachers and share key information**
 - Provide Year 3 and Year 4 teacher contact details
 - Share pupil data securely using our systems
 - Distribute parent/carers information and manage opt-outs
- **Support baseline and endline assessment activities**
 - Oversee short whole-class writing assessments
 - Administer the endline pupil questionnaire
 - Return completed assessment materials using pre-paid tracked envelopes
- **Deliver the allocated approach**
 - Deliver 3 short reteaching sessions per week for 12 weeks
 - Ensure teachers follow their assigned approach
 - Keep Year 3 and Year 4 approaches separate during delivery
- **Support light-touch evaluation activities**
 - Encourage completion of short fortnightly teacher logs
 - Facilitate in-person visits if invited by the evaluation team

Eligibility

3. Which schools can take part?

State primary schools with at least 20 pupils in each Year 3 and Year 4 class.

4. Can schools with multiple Year 3 or Year 4 classes participate?

Yes. A teacher from one class per year group will be randomly selected, whose class will take part in the trial.

5. Can small schools take part?

Only if they meet the minimum class size of 20 pupils in both Year 3 and Year 4.

Delivery & Workload

6. What will teachers need to deliver?

Three 15–25-minute reteaching sessions per week for 12 weeks (Jan–Apr 2027).

7. Do teachers need to create new resources?

No. A clear implementation guide is provided.

8. How much training is required?

None. Teachers will receive a guide before they deliver sessions.

9. Do teachers need to prepare for lessons?

We expect 10-15 minute lesson preparation at most - if the concept of explicit instruction/metacognition is new to you, preparation for the first few lessons may take a bit longer.

10. Does this replace normal English lessons?

No. Sessions are short reteaching activities that should be incorporated into existing lessons. You are encouraged to re-teach sentence combining sessions across multiple subjects (e.g., science, writing, topic work) and writing styles (fiction, non-fiction, persuasive and non-persuasive). The session outlines offer examples of different subjects and writing styles.

11. What if I have to cancel a session due to unforeseen circumstances?

If it is just an occasional session you need to cancel, this can be rescheduled or caught up so that pupils receive the minimum of 2-3 sessions of 15-25 minutes a week. If sessions are missed on more regular basis or multiple sessions are missed in a block, please do let us know by e-mailing teacher.choices-evaluation@oxfordmeasured.co.uk.

Randomisation & Approaches

12. How are classes allocated to each approach?

One Year 3 and one Year 4 teacher from each school will be randomly assigned to deliver either the explicit instruction or metacognitive approach with their class.

13. Can teachers choose which approach they deliver?

No. Allocation is random to ensure a fair comparison.

14. Can other teachers in the school use the materials?

Yes. All Year 3 and 4 teachers are encouraged to use the approach assigned to their year group.

Assessment & Data**15. What assessments are involved?**

Baseline (Nov 2026) and endline (May 2027) assessments will be administered by teachers.

The writing task (the Writing Assessment Measure (WAM)) will take 15-20 minutes to complete with the whole class and should be completed at baseline and endline.

A questionnaire about writing (the Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS)) should be completed at endline only and will take 15 minutes to complete.

16. What data do schools need to provide?

Staff data as well as pupil data. Staff data will include:

- First name
- Last name
- Email address
- Phone number

Pupil data will include:

- First name
- Last name
- Date of birth
- Unique Pupil Number (UPN)
- Gender

17. What is the purpose of collecting this data?

We will:

- use staff names and contact details to organise evaluation activities
- use children's names and dates of birth to create assessment materials and organise baseline and endline testing

- use children's demographic and background information to link assessment records securely over time
- use children's demographic and background information to analyse differences in outcomes across pupil groups

18. How is pupil and data kept secure?

All data is transferred via a secure portal and handled under GDPR-compliant processes.

19. What is required from schools regarding parent/carers communication?

Schools will distribute parent/carers information provided by the evaluation team and record any opt-outs using straightforward guidance supplied during onboarding.

Schools will be asked not to share data for any pupils whose parents/carers have withdrawn them from the evaluation.

20. Can pupils whose parents/carers have withdrawn them complete the assessments?

Yes. These pupils can still complete the assessments as part of normal classroom activity, but schools must not share their completed assessment materials with the evaluation team. Schools will receive a pupil list ahead of baseline and endline testing showing which pupils' assessment materials can be returned.

21. Will schools receive individual feedback and results?

We are not able to provide individual school-level results. However, all participating schools will receive the final published evaluation report, which will summarise the overall trial finding.

Payment & Costs

22. What payments do schools receive?

£100 after baseline, £100 after endline, plus £100 if hosting an in-person visit. Please note that only 8 schools will be invited to host in-person visits.

23. Are there any costs to take part?

No. Participation is fully funded.

Timeline

24. When does delivery take place?

January–April 2027.

25. When is the sign-up deadline?

31st July 2026.

26. What happens after submitting an EOI?

Schools receive the MOU, onboarding instructions, and data-upload guidance, as specified in section 17.

Practicalities & Contingencies**27. What if staffing changes?**

If there are staffing changes, please contact Navigator Insight as soon as possible. Our team will send the fortnightly log to the new teacher, who can continue delivery using the implementation guide.

28. Can supply teachers deliver sessions?

Yes, using the guide.

29. What if a class is split or reorganised?

Notify the Navigator Insight as soon as possible so we can advise on the best approach.

30. What if pupils join or leave mid-year?

New pupils can join during the year. Leavers will be recorded for analysis, but no assessment forms are required for pupils joining after baseline.

31. Can SEND pupils take part?

Yes. The evaluation will explore differences by pupil group, including pupils with SEND. Information about pupils' SEND status will be taken from the National Pupil Database (NPD).

32. Who should be the school lead?

Schools should nominate a named school lead (e.g. English lead, literacy lead, or senior leader) to act as the main point of contact and coordinate trial activities.

33. Can schools withdraw from the trial?

Yes. Schools can withdraw from the trial at any time, although withdrawal may affect the integrity of the evaluation and the reliability of findings.

34. What support is available?

Oxford MeasurEd and Navigator Insight will be available throughout the project to answer queries relating to school recruitment and the baseline and endline assessments. We have dedicated shared inboxes that are monitored daily.

35. Will schools receive the final report?

Yes. The EEF will publish the report in Spring 2028.

36. How do we register interest?

[Complete the short Expression of Interest form at this link.](#)