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Creative Writing in Schools:
Literature Review

First Story, Paper Nations and LKMco have identified six key themes they are interested in exploring as part of the Creative Writing in Schools evaluation.

These are: sustainability; engagement; skill development; best practice; networks, and; valuing creative writing.

To refine these themes, a review of the academic and grey literature has been carried out focussing on the following research questions:

- How has previous research conceptualised the proposed themes and how might we need to adapt or refine them?

- How have these themes been measured in the past and what can we learn from this?

- How have previous projects sought to impact in these areas and what can we learn from this?

This document summarises the key findings and then goes on to explore them in more depth.

By Eleanor Bernardes and Loic Menzies

"Society should ensure that all young people receive the support they need in order to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood"

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Executive Summary
The headline findings in relation to the six themes are summarised below:

1. Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the degree to which changes in practice are maintained over time and the literature highlights the following findings in relation to it:

1   Schools have different intentions for engaging with projects (long- or short-term). It is important to understand their motivations and expectations at the outset.
2   Impact is more sustainable when cross-curricular links are made, and this is easier at primary than at secondary school level for logistical reasons.
3   Sustainability is more likely to be achieved when responsibility for a project is given to a senior member of school staff, and especially when the headteacher is involved.
4   Continuity amongst teaching staff can present a considerable barrier to sustainability.
5   Sustainability is achieved most successfully when teachers change their teaching practice and pedagogical perspectives as a result of a project.
6   Funding is a challenge in initiating projects, but rarely mentioned in terms of sustainability.
7   There has been little, if any, cost effectiveness analysis carried out in this area.
8   There is no single model for success.

2. Engagement

This theme relates to how pupils and teachers engage with creative writing, their motivation for and the outcomes of participating, and their perceptions and enjoyment of writing.

1   There are concerns that government efforts to raise standards in literacy have been at the expense of cultivating excitement about writing.
2   Both students and teachers enjoy writing more if they have autonomy and ownership over what they writing about.
3   Boys considered 'at risk' of underachievement have been found to enjoy writing in their English lessons more than elsewhere in the curriculum.
4   Young people make links between enjoyment of writing and self-confidence in writing.
5   Young people's attitudes to writing are closely linked to their perceptions of technical accuracy.
6   Unlike with reading, there does not appear to be a link between SES background and writing enjoyment.
7   Girls enjoy writing more than boys, and 11-14 year olds enjoy writing less than other age groups.
8   The term "creative writing" itself has historic connotations for schools and teachers that are not always positive.
9   Most young writers acknowledge a link between writing and future success and wellbeing.

10 Young people's creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher's creative abilities are properly engaged.
11 To fully appreciate students' writing journeys, teachers need to be writers themselves and to write alongside their students in class.
12 Arts projects can help reduce inequalities in academic achievement between privileged and disadvantaged children.
13 Young people's experience of and participation in writing at home is unexpectedly rich.
14 Elements of programmes that 'reach-out' into the community are very highly valued.

3. Skill Development

The literature explores a wide range of skills, dispositions and character traits thought to be developed through participating in creative writing. The key findings are outlined below:

1   While there is a considerable range of academic research that highlights the positive educational impact of the arts, there is comparatively little on the impact of creative writing interventions, in comparison with music, dance, drama and visual arts.
2   There are a wide range of skills, dispositions and character traits thought to be developed by participating in creative writing, the most frequently highlighted of which are:
    • Creativity
    • Risk taking and problem solving
    • Metacognition
    • Confidence
    • Social and interpersonal skills
    • Patience, perseverance and resilience
    • Communication skills
    • Critical Thinking
    • Self-efficacy
3   Research about creativity is well established in relation to children and adults, but a gap exists in relation to adolescents (due to the unique cognitive developments thought to occur during this period). Therefore, generalising across the three groups should be avoided.
4   Creative practitioners have been found to use strategies to develop students' risk taking and self-belief more effectively than teachers.
5   Metacognition involves reflecting upon and evaluating one's learning, and is of particular importance in writing. Even very young writers can be helped to think about and reflect upon their writing processes in metacognitive ways.
6   Changes in pupils' confidence levels are one of the most commonly reported impacts of creative writing programmes, although the rigour and robustness of research methodology and data collection in many studies is questionable.
7   There can be a perceived tension between creative writing initiatives and the 'standards agenda'.

8   Writing is the most complex and mentally demanding of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

9   A student's perception of their own technical writing skill is closely linked to their enjoyment of writing.

4. Best practice and pedagogy for creative writing

Best practice and pedagogy for creative writing was explored in relation to three main areas: having the tools, resources and qualification for success; teachers' confidence in delivering creative writing; and how evidence of best practice has been applied in schools.

1   The quality of the student writing environment (for example, the classroom in which they write) is seen to be of primary importance.

2   Libraries, and librarians are an important resource for schools.

3   Teachers' confidence in delivering creative writing is a key feature in successful programmes. The following are frequent areas of difficulty for teachers:
   • Writing authentically and understanding that risk taking is a central component in creativity
   • A problematic tendency for teachers to consider creativity and technique separately
   • Poetry

4   The literature particularly highlights good practice in relation to:
   • Developing students' risk taking
   • Leadership and management of projects
   • Pedagogy (including: drama; talk; self expression; and knowledge about language)
   • Teaching poetry
   • Writers and 'creative practitioners' working in schools and education settings
   • Provision of feedback on writing and developing students' editing skills
   • Engaging with communities and parents

5. Networks

Effective partnerships and networks are essential to a project's success. The key findings from the literature are summarised below:

1   The most effective partnerships tend to be developed by more receptive teachers, and creative practitioners who understand the constraints faced by schools.

2   Effective selection of receptive staff for participation in projects can catalyse wider participation and enthusiasm for a project.

3   Joint working often lacks common purpose due to different priorities.

4   Several barriers to building networks are highlighted in the literature, relating to different partners:

Teachers can hinder the creation of effective networks by:
- Delegating the role of 'the teacher' to a visiting practitioner
- Feeling constrained by the curriculum and lacking sufficient confidence or trust to buy into a visiting practitioner's methods
- Refusing students the opportunity to leave their lessons to participate in programmes

Writers can hinder the creation of effective networks by being reluctant to:
- Initiating longer term residencies
- Joining formal networks
- Receiving more formal training

Additionally, schools themselves can create barriers as a result of:
- Concerns about cost
- Holding pre-conceptions about students' willingness to participate in creative writing and their likelihood of success
- Time-tabling and logistical issues exacerbated by an exam-focused system
- Perceived indifference amongst staff

5   Reaching out to families and wider communities alienated by or isolated from learning can be particularly challenging.
6   The following areas are of key importance in ensuring a project's success:
- Time given to developing relationships
- Quality and experience of staff assigned to projects
- Overall project management responsibilities
- Geographical location and reach
- Brokering partnerships

6. Valuing Creative Writing

The value that schools, teachers and the wider community place on creative writing is of prime importance to the success and sustainability of creative writing projects.

1   The perceived opposition between creativity and technique is an important barrier to schools and teachers valuing creative writing.
2   Teachers' own values (for example, relating to the importance of grammar and different pedagogical approaches) influence their teaching of writing.
3   Many teachers place low value on teaching poetry and teacher attitudes towards poetry itself play an important role in this.
4   Schools value having an "outcome for public consumption" from a project, but this is not always shared by creative partners.

5   The 'celebritisation' of writing has changed the way many young people view writing, yet whilst this has ensured *literacy* has remained high profile, insufficient attention has been given to the teaching and learning of writing specifically.

6   Arts educators and creative practitioners need to avoid allowing arts subjects to be justified wholly (or primarily) in terms of what they can offer academically.

7   More effort needs to be invested in ensuring that teachers, schools and the wider public understand that "inspiration does not have to be at the expense of standards."

Possible implications for evaluation:

1. The extent to which a project leads to an actual change in practice on the behalf of teachers is of prime importance.
2. Creativity and technique should not be considered separately but as mutually reinforcing elements of writing.
3. Evaluating progress in skills such as 'creativity' and 'self-confidence' is complex and demands well-designed tools that need to be administered in a rigorous and robust way.
4. The quality of partnerships and joint working methods that underpin a project play a crucial role in its success.
5. Projects should be evaluated for their wider impact on the school community, not just on the direct participants.

1. Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the degree to which changes in practice are maintained over time.

1.1 Intention and desire to continue
Schools, and to some extent creative partners, have different motivations for becoming involved with creative writing projects, and will therefore have varying intentions for continuing with them. It is important to understand these desires and intentions at the outset of a project.

If an arts programme's impact is to be maximised and sustained, partners must desire to maintain changes in practice. However, whilst some schools engage in arts provision to bring about cultural and pedagogical change, others do so for a 'one-off' experience. This can be a considerable barrier to sustainability.

Some staff feel that the "one-off nature" of a project or event is important for engaging young people, and that "such work could not be sustained on an ongoing basis" because they "are bound by exams" (Marsh et al., 2009). On the other hand, many schools engage in projects in a longer-term way and plan them "in order to ensure sustainability" (Marsh et al., 2009). There are also many examples of school leaders who approach engagement from a pedagogical perspective to develop "staff who [can] teach creative writing and develop risk-taking skills", with the aim of creating "an English department that writes" (Owen and Munden, 2010). Owen (2008) explains that although schools can perceive writer residencies as both "magical" and bringing "reality to the non-real school classroom", they also frequently view the impact as of "limited shelf life" because there comes a time when "what the school is trying to do has to be re-established."

Horner (2010) suggests that securing sustainability is easier at the primary- than the secondary-level because teachers can more readily make connections between subject areas and across curriculum topics. Indeed, even in secondary schools where cross-curricular writing links have been successfully established, "maintaining the impetus" is often difficult (Horner, 2010). Owen and Munden (2010) also highlight logistics as a particular barrier to sustainability in secondary schools.

Lack of continuity amongst teaching staff is a significant barrier to the sustainability of creative writing projects (Owen and Munden, 2010) and widespread buy-in is therefore key. Impact is also more sustainable when responsibility for a project is held by a more senior member of staff (Galton, 2008; Marsh, 2009). In the majority of schools where post-project impact has been sustained, headteachers have played an active and important role (Marsh, 2009).

1.2 Capacity and ability to continue
Teachers often raise questions about their schools' capacity and ability to continue delivering a project once the initial momentum (such as the involvement of a writer) has passed.

A common theme of successful projects is that teachers change (or adapt) their teaching style or approach, and put new techniques into practice (SQW, 2012; Society of Authors, 2013; CapeUk, 2010; Galton, 2008; Cremin, 2006; Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Marsh, 2009; Horner, 2010). In this way, teachers actively develop the capacities and abilities they need in order to sustain change.

The literature suggests several ways in which projects can be designed to ensure that this happens effectively and not superficially:

1   Teachers should be encouraged to reposition themselves as writers in the classroom and engage with projects reflectively (Goouch et al., 2009; Ings, 2009; Cremin, 2012).
2   Creative partners should concentrate their efforts with fewer teachers and classes. Changing pedagogy involves challenging personal values and beliefs and partnerships need time to develop if this is to happen (Galton, 2008).
3   Writers need be explicit about the processes pupils have been through and the skills they have developed including why they matter, to make it easier for teachers to follow up the experiences and change their routines and continue the creative approaches they have seen in action (Horner, 2010).
4   Teachers need to change the way they teach writing and schools need to understand that this is "not a short-term enterprise": the confidence and enthusiasm that results from residencies can dissipate if it is not embedded in the weeks that follow and if it is not part of a long-term commitment from the school, including from senior management (Horner, 2010). Galton (2008) suggests it is probably a two-year process to secure changes and that change requires strong leadership, a school strategy for writing and whole-school involvement in new pedagogical styles.
5   Care should be taken when selecting teachers for participation if sustainability is to be maximised: only those who are at the point in their development where they are willing to attribute failure to their own efforts, rather than blaming it on factors outside their personal control, are at a stage of professional competence where they are likely to be receptive to the theoretical implications behind the creative practitioners' approach (Galton, 2008).

- *Economic viability*

A survey by the Society of Authors (2013) found that funding was the biggest concern for schools when trying to organise visits by writers. The majority of state secondary schools paid for the work through overall school, departmental or library budgets, with a small number relying on parental and community fundraising. The bursary that was made available to schools participating in the Everybody Writes programme was found to enable schools to develop and purchase 'high-quality' resources, but the project evaluation found that the most effective resources were not necessarily the most expensive (Marsh, 2009).

There appears to be little, if any, cost effectiveness analysis in the area of participation in arts activities (including creative writing) (EPPI, 2014), but despite this, Horner (2010) believes that projects that promote "positive school ethos", "raise standards of writing" and

have a concomitant impact on pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment are a worthwhile investment for schools.

In order to minimise the issue of cost, the Society of Authors (2013) suggests that schools should be encouraged to:
- Pool resources
- Share visits
- Identify local authors (to reduce transport costs)

1.3 Establishment and dissemination of scale-able best practice models
Ings (2009) suggests that the following points were essential in sustaining the impact of the 'Writing is Primary' project:

1   There is no one model for improvement. Programmes for change should be tailored to suit the school's attributes, its strengths and weaknesses, and its unique culture.
2   The sustainability of a school's improvement programme for writing is enhanced by collaborative working and peer networking with neighbour or partner schools, sharing commitment, ideas and practices as well as teaching staff.
3   'Whole-school' awareness of the importance and pleasure of writing is essential, ideally extending to the community beyond its gates.

1. Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the degree to which changes in practice are maintained over time and the literature highlights the following findings in relation to it:

1   Schools have different intentions for engaging with projects (long- or short-term). It is important to understand their motivations and expectations at the outset.
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4   Continuity amongst teaching staff can present a considerable barrier to sustainability.
5   Sustainability is achieved most successfully when teachers change their teaching practice and pedagogical perspectives as a result of a project.
6   Funding is a challenge in initiating projects, but is rarely mentioned in relation to sustainability.
7   There has been little, if any, cost effectiveness analysis carried out in the area.
8   There is no single model for success. Programmes need to be tailored to specific schools and contexts.
9   Sustainability is enhanced by collaborative working and peer networking with neighbour or partner schools, sharing commitment, ideas and practices as well as teaching staff.
10 'Whole-school' awareness of the importance and pleasure of writing is essential, ideally extending to the community beyond its gates.

2. Engagement

2.1 Enjoyment

'Enjoyment' is a key recurring theme in the literature on engagement in writing for young people. There are concerns that successive governments' emphasis on raising standards in literacy has been at the expense of cultivating excitement about writing (Horner, 2010).

Research has found that young people are ambivalent towards writing with 49% holding negative perceptions of writing compared to 51% with positive perceptions. The National Literacy Trust (2015) report that whilst young people's enjoyment of reading has steadily increased since 2010, the same cannot be said for writing, and whilst young people's daily writing levels have remained stable over time, engagement with reading has steadily increased (National Literacy Trust, 2015). While lower socio-economic background has been found to be significantly related to lower reading enjoyment (e.g. Clark and Akerman, 2006), this relationship does not seem to be replicated in writing enjoyment (Clark and Dugdale, 2009; National Literacy Trust, 2015). Girls enjoy writing significantly more than boys, who are more likely to believe that writing is "something that must be done" rather something that can be enjoyed (Clark and Dugdale, 2009; National Literacy Trust, 2015). However, boys are more likely to be positive about technology's potential to increase their enjoyment of writing (Clark and Dugdale, 2009). KS2 and KS4 pupils enjoy writing significantly more than KS3 pupils (Clark and Dugdale, 2009), with 11-14 year old pupils most likely to have negative attitudes towards writing (Horner, 2010).

Various factors appear to play a role in the degree to which young people enjoy writing. Clark and Dugdale (2009) highlight the important role of choosing one's own topic; children frequently express a desire for more autonomy in writing and value opportunities when they can exert agency over the process (Grainger et al. 2003; Myhill 2005; Cremin 2012). This is also the case for 'at risk' groups such as underachieving boys who have been found to enjoy the creative freedom of writing in English but not across the rest of the curriculum (Myhill, et al., 2008). Both teachers and students have been found to experience a greater sense of achievement when they are doing something "for and of themselves" (Grainger, 2005), enabling them to make "dynamic sense of their own lives" (Grainger, 2005; Moffett, 1968). Conversely, if the act of writing is divorced from the writer themselves, disinterest and disaffection are likely to develop (Packwood and Messenheimer 2003). The evaluation of 'Writing The Game' (Murphy, 2015) also found that young people strongly linked their increased enjoyment in creative writing to an increase in their self-confidence.

In recent years, concerns have been expressed about young people's attitudes to writing and their low self-esteem as writers (Cremin, 2006; Cremin and Myhill 2012; Owen and Munden, 2010; Grainger, 2005; Booktrust and National Literacy Trust, 2011). Motivation also appears to be affected by young people's 'self- perceptions and beliefs about themselves as writers, their writing competence, and their ability to manage writing tasks' (Boscolo and Gelati, 2007; Cremin 2012). This is compounded when young people express a lack of confidence in terms of technical competence rather than in regards to the messages that they might actually want to convey (Horner, 2010).

2.2 Participation in creative writing
A number of factors relating to both teachers' and pupils affect participation in creative writing.

   a) **Pupils**

There is a wealth of evidence testifying to participation in creative writing's positive impact on young people, with boys in particular having been found to move from a position of 'antagonism' to one of 'enthusiasm and engagement' (Owen and Munden, 2010). The term 'creative writing' itself, however, is often avoided. Cremin (2012) suggests that this is because of an earlier tendency for creative writing to be seen as contrived, artificial and "divorced from real feeling" (DES, 1975). This occurs if teachers retain "too strong a grasp on the curriculum reins" and prioritise writing instruction at the expense of developing the desire, commitment, ownership and agency of young writers (Cremin, 2012)

Writing well matters for "emotional, intellectual and social wellbeing" (Owen, 2008), and the link between writing and future success is acknowledged by most young writers (Clark and Dugdale, 2009).

   b) **Teachers**

Young people's creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher's creative abilities are properly engaged and when teachers themselves engage in being writers (rather than teachers of writing). Their insights into this process enable them to understand better how young writers experience writing in their classrooms (Cremin, 2006; Cremin and Myhill, 2012). Yeo (2007) argues that teachers who write in their personal lives develop their writing identities and transmit the benefits of such practice to their students through their teaching of writing. Only when teachers are writers themselves do they learn empathy with their pupils, enabling them to give more space to pupils and to model writing 'live' (Horner, 2010).

Teachers writing alongside children in class also increases pupils' motivation and commitment, and research suggests that young writers settle more quickly and remain focused for longer when their teachers are similarly engaged (Goouch et al., 2009; Cremin and Baker, 2010). When teachers reveal their vulnerabilities as writers, children begin to talk more about their own thought processes as writers, and begin to appreciate that all writers, whatever their age and experience, encounter challenges and frustrations as they write (Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Grainger, 2005).

Cremin and Myhill (2012) find that children often observe that their teachers do not like writing, but by sharing in the 'discomfort' of their students, teachers are able to "mobilize a kind of creative energy" (Runco, 1999) often generating temporary resolutions to their immediate dilemmas until other writing problems emerge. When teachers in one programme responded to the creative challenge of writing a short story, they encountered

periods of "intensely experienced insecurity" and expressed "considerable emotional discomfort and even distress" unbeknown to the participants, their school leader perceived they were so stressed he requested that the programme should cease (Cremin, 2006): this fear of failure and possible exposure raises issues of security, ownership and trust in writing as teachers experienced the risk, and lack of certainty involved in composition. Participating on the programme led teachers to feel that their sensitivity to children's "journeys as writers" had increased (Grainger, 2005).

According to Ings (2009), "the most exciting" outcome of the 'Writing is Primary' project was that teachers developed a deeper understanding of the writing process through their own practice as writers, which ultimately led to a change in the way they taught writing. Similarly, in the Big Writing project, Harland et al. found that teachers reported a range of impacts on the way they taught writing, including on their: repertoire of approaches and techniques; ability to teach writing in an engaging way; ideas and resources; ability to stretch and challenge pupils; subject knowledge about teaching writing; and assessment of writing (Harland et al., 2014).

2.3 Characteristics of participants

Although many creative writing projects exist, young peoples' (and teachers') likelihood of accessing them varies. The Booktrust (2010) found that those who already participate have a great appetite for more, but children and young people who do not participate are rarely represented among the users of new programmes, a trend that is consistent with other cultural activities.

2.4 Engagement with learning in and out of school

One small-scale case study of four child writers in a single primary school revealed that students had an unexpectedly rich practice around writing at home (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). Clark and Dugdale (2009) suggest that young people's engagement with writing outside of the classroom has been further improved by young people's access to, and use of technology, with 60% of young people believing that computers allow them to be "more creative, concentrate more" and are encouraged "to write more often."

Many creative writing programmes include community outreach elements and these strands of work are often very highly valued, especially by parents (SQW, 2012). In the evaluation of 'Write-Minded', SQW (2012) highlight that the positive "unintended consequences" of family and community literacy activities are that parents are able to share experiences and support each other alongside their children, developing new friendships and networks of their own. The project encouraged parental participation in activities focused on developing their own child's literacy, and this led to an unanticipated momentum amongst the community in organising literacy activities (SQW, 2012).

Owen (2008) describes the way in which one writer's approach to working in schools impacted on the wider community by "extending learning linkages over and beyond the immediate protagonists in the classroom" (Owen, 2008).

2. Engagement

This theme relates to how pupils and teachers engage with creative writing, their motivation for and the outcomes of participating, and their perceptions and enjoyment of writing.

1 Concerns have been expressed that government efforts to raise standards in literacy have been at the expense of cultivating excitement about writing.
2 Both students and teachers enjoy writing more if they have autonomy and ownership over what they writing about.
3 Boys considered 'at risk' of underachievement have been found to enjoy writing in their English lessons more than elsewhere in the curriculum.
4 Young people often make links between enjoyment of writing and self-confidence in writing.
5 Young people's attitudes to writing are closely linked to their perceptions of technical accuracy.
6 There does not appear to be a link between SES background and writing enjoyment.
7 Girls enjoy writing more than boys, and 11-14 year olds enjoy writing less than other age groups.
8 The term "creative writing" itself has historic connotations for schools and teachers that are not always positive.
9 Most young writers acknowledge a link between writing and future success and wellbeing.
10 Young people's creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher's creative abilities are properly engaged.
11 To fully appreciate students' writing journeys, teachers need to be writers themselves, and to write alongside their students in class.
12 Arts projects can help reduce inequalities in academic achievement between privileged and disadvantaged children.
13 Young people's experience of, and participation in writing at home is unexpectedly rich.
14 Elements of programmes that 'reach-out' into the community are very highly valued.

3. Skill development
The literature explores a wide range of skills, dispositions and character traits thought to be developed through participating in creative writing.

3.1 Enhancement of soft skills
A range of skills, dispositions and character traits are thought to be developed through participating in creative writing. For the purpose of this literature review, we will explore them all under the heading 'soft skills'.

While there is considerable evidence supporting the positive impact of the arts in education (on both academic and soft skills), much of the research focuses on drama, music, dance and visual art, with comparatively little research on the impact of creative writing (Lorenzi and White, 2013). A number of early studies indicate that creative writing has a positive influence on participants' academic attainment and also on their "personal, social and civic development" (Chandler, 1999; Howell, 2008), but recent research (such as Roberts and Eady, 2012), has tended to focus on the effect of group interaction on individuals' literacy and writing skills as opposed to the impact of such activity on individuals' holistic development (Lorenzi and White, 2013).

The process of participating in a group writing project can be an "affirming experience" that enables individuals to access "self, imagination and voice" (Chandler, 1999). It has also been suggested that experiencing success in a writing project boosts students' self-esteem (Nicolini, 1994; Lorenzi and White, 2013). A further study conducted by Chandler (2002) found that a specific group writing approach facilitating emotional catharsis increased participant self-knowledge, coping strategies, and understanding and appreciation of others (in Lorenzi and White, 2013). Research in the field of psychotherapy highlights the therapeutic value of creative and expressive writing as an agent for self-expression (Lorenzi and White, 2013; Wright, 2002; Baikie and Wlihelm, 2005). Weinstein (2010) identified youth spoken word poetry as a vehicle for the development of literacy skills, self-confidence, positive self-identity, community building and respect for peers and adults (Lorenzi and White, 2013).

It is also important to keep in mind that "creativity is not simply a matter of letting go" (NACCCE, 1999): rather genuine creative work "relies on knowledge, control of materials and command of ideas" and involves not just innovation, but also knowledge and skills (Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

   a) **Creativity**

Creativity is a dominant concept in western educational policies with the UK, US, France, Germany, Sweden and Austria all restructuring their education systems to encompass creativity over the last decade (Lorenzi and White, 2013; Feldman & Benjamin, 2006; Craft, 2005; Shaheen, 2010). Given the benefits of creativity in solving complex individual, social, and global problems, Beghetto (2005) argues that promoting creativity should be central to educational efforts. However, questions remain about what creativity actually means and

how it might be fostered: "Creativity, it appears, albeit essential, is a somewhat elusive concept" (Lorenzi and White, 2013).

Cremin and Myhill (2012) suggest that before addressing 'creative writing' it is essential that "the tangled knot" of creative writing and creativity in writing is untangled, claiming that the term itself is "largely restricted to the school writing curriculum" with little meaning to the wider world outside of formal education. They go on to argue, however, that all writing is creative, and that this creativity manifests itself in how a writer "recognises and [uses] the infinite possibilities of language" with seeing things differently at its heart (Bruner, 1979; Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

Although the area is widely acknowledged as being complex, aspects of creativity, and therefore creativity in writing, are both believed to be observable and measurable (Treffinger, 2003; Lassig, 2013). There are, however, limited understandings of creativity in the adolescent age group (Lassig, 2103; Claxton, Pannells, & Rhoads, 2005; Oakley, 2007), a gap in research that exists despite claims that adolescence could be the critical period for development of creative capacity (Rothenberg, 1990). Although research on creativity tends to generalise across age groups, Lassig (2013) warns that given the significance of adolescence and its developmental and experiential uniqueness compared to other age groups (Vygotsky, 2004), we cannot assume findings about the creativity of children or adults are generalisable to adolescents.

Research in creativity has radically altered over the last decade, moving from a psychological approach that is easily measurable, to one in which creativity is conceptualised in more social and cultural terms (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). The idea of the creative individual has also been democratised from an "essentially elitist" viewpoint (Banaji and Burn, 2007) in which "creative genius" is confined to an exceptional few, cannot be taught and is therefore not necessarily open to scientific study (Sternberg and Lubart, 1999; Treffinger, 2003), to one in which everyone has the capacity to be creative (Robinson, 2001). More recently these differences have begun to be referred to as 'Big C' and 'small c' creativity respectively, but there are concerns that this dichotomy overlooks the type of creativity demonstrated by individuals engaged in the process of learning (Kaufman and Beghetto, 2009).

Traditionally, observing and measuring creativity focuses on one or more of Rhodes' (1961) 'Four P's': person, process, product and/or press, with the recent addition of the two extra P's of persuasion (Simonton, 1990; 1995) and potential (Runco, 2003), of which the latter should be of primary concern to educators according to Lassig (2013):

Person	Process	Product	Press	Persuasion	Potential
Personality, intellect, temperament, physique, traits, habits, attitudes, self-concept, value systems, defence mechanisms, and behaviour	Motivation, learning, thinking, and communicating	The outcome of creative engagement: a tangible product, behaviour/s or repertoire, or set of communicated ideas	The relationship between creative persons, processes, and products and various social and environmental factors, and what facilitates or hinders creative engagement and production	Creativity and the environment have a reciprocal relationship with the judgement of creativity resting on creators persuading others that they, their process, or their outcomes are creative	People's potential for creating meanings and interpretations that are new to them as individuals

Lassig (2013) found that when focusing on 'process', adolescents approached creativity in four (non-hierarchical) ways:
- Transfer (where existing ideas are transferred from one task (or domain) to another)
- Adaption (where existing ideas are adapted from one task to (or domain) to another)
- Synthesis (where two or more existing ideas are combined to create something new)
- Genesis (where the product is significantly different to existing work that a student has been exposed to, and the origin of the idea is not identifiable)

Piffer (2012) studied the 'person' and found that creative people in both the arts and sciences tend to share certain personality characteristics. From this he concluded that a person's creativity is a biological phenomenon and as such cannot be measured with psychometric instruments and impersonal methods (such as standardised surveys). He therefore suggests that researchers should only use unstructured or semi-structured interviews to collect data.

b) Risk taking and problem-solving

Risk-taking and problem-solving are seen to be essential prerequisites for creativity (Lorenzi and White, 2013) and both feature heavily throughout the literature.

Composition itself, like any generative process involves being prepared to take risks (Grainger, 2005), and it is important that this is modelled to young people (along with recognising and managing fear) (Cremin and Myhill, 2012): young people need to see writing as a problem solving activity (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987) and as a process of thinking and evaluating that involves an internal dialogue. The tendency for pupils in school to be risk averse (from a very young age) is therefore a challenge (Galton, 2008). Galton (ibid) suggests that the school system itself (in particular recent educational reforms focusing on the 'standards agenda') causes this, and that as a result young people have developed a

range of strategies to "[draw] the adult into giving more and more clues until the answer becomes obvious."

Part of the benefit of deploying creative practitioners may stem from this, since they have not been conditioned in the same way as teachers and are "more comfortable with silence" allowing them to present tasks with higher levels of ambiguity that are perceived as "more risky" by students, allowing them to develop their capacity for risk taking further (Galton, 2008). Galton (ibid) also notes that creative practitioners tend to use certain strategies more effectively than teachers, such as allocating responsibility whilst displaying great confidence that the pupils will be able to cope without mishap. This increases pupils' self-belief, and thus their capacity for risk taking. Ofsted (2006) also found that young people are "inspired" when working with creative practitioners and that they develop creative skills such as risk-taking, improvisation, resilience and collaboration.

c)   Metacognition

'Metacognition', the process of reflecting upon and evaluating one's learning, has long been understood to be of particular significance in writing (Martlew, 1983; Cremin and Myhill, 2012). Jacobs (2004), amongst others, demonstrated that very young writers can be helped to think about and reflect on their thinking and composing processes in metacognitive ways (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). By providing opportunities for students to think metacognitively about their creativity, teachers can encourage them to experiment with taking different approaches to different tasks, and then to self-assess the outcomes of their creative experiences (Lassig, 2013): "the most vital knowledge [students] gain about writing, gradually, will be self-knowledge (metacognition) of the most practical kind" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

d)   Confidence

Increases in pupil confidence are one of the most commonly reported impacts of creative writing programmes (Horner, 2010; Marsh et al., 2009). However, confidence data is usually collected through teacher observation and pupil self-reflection meaning that, whilst there are some interesting findings, questions remain over rigour and robustness.

In the evaluation of 'Writing the Game' (Murphy, 2015) young people were able to clearly articulate the following connections during interviews:

1. Positive feedback and support from working with writers was seen to be "highly significant" in raising self-confidence.
2. Increased enjoyment of creative writing was strongly linked to increased self-confidence.
3. Young people were "astute in their understanding" that without greater self-confidence, they were unlikely to make progress in their writing - they connected confidence not only with attainment and achievement, but also with a "deeply held sense of self."

4. They reflected on their developing self-confidence as "significant" to their sense of themselves as learners, recognising that the confidence and progress that they were developing in writing revealed their potential learning capacity in other areas.

   e) Others

Other soft skills that have been explored (and seen as important) in creative writing projects include:
- Social and interpersonal skills (Owen, 2008; EPPI, 2014; Lorenzi and White, 2013)
- Patience, perseverance and resilience (Joubert, 2001; Cremin, 2006)
- Communication skills (EPPI, 2014; Ings, 2009)
- Critical Thinking (Lorenzi and White, 2013)
- Self-efficacy (Chandler, 1999)

3.2 Pupils' literate communication (and perception of)
A pupils' ability to communicate meaning is central to the writing process. In this section the term 'literate communication' means the technical skills that a student needs to convey meaning effectively.

Research has frequently highlighted a perceived conflict between creative writing initiatives and the 'standards agenda', with some teachers (in a range of projects) suggesting that the programmes they have been involved with and the day to day business of their schools are not always compatible (Horner, 2010; Galton, 2008; Marsh et al, 2009). This is compounded when teacher perceptions of improvements in pupil literate communication are not played out in subsequent statutory assessment (Safford, 2003).

Young people's perceptions of what underpins literate communication are revealed when students are asked to rate themselves on how good they are as writers. Clark and Dugdale (2009) report that the most common reasons cited by those who rate themselves positively are:
- Using their imaginations
- Knowing how to type
- Knowing how to spell

When students rated themselves poorly it was because of:
- Poor handwriting
- Poor spelling
- Not being good at checking their work

This demonstrates that technical aspects of writing are important to students' perceptions of themselves as writers. Underscoring an approach that emphasises both creative and technical factors may therefore increase students' enjoyment of writing.

Of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), writing is the most complex and mentally demanding (Ings, 2009; Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Kellogg, 2008). Articulating thoughts, ideas and responses in writing may be part of the 'standards' agenda but it is also about "access and empowerment" (Myhill et al, 2013). Freire (1972) conceptualises a 'symbiotic relationship' between literacy and power and writing is a key tool in that (Myhill et al, 2013). Munden (2011) also suggests that precise and creative use of language is essential for the maintenance of the complex intellectual, industrial and democratic structures that surround us. Clark and Dugdale (2009) state that writing is more than a compulsory task: it is an essential life skill.

In the literature, the dominant theoretical view of writing at present is that of a 'social act': "when we write, we are participating in a social practice… shaped by social and historical understandings of what writing is and what texts should do" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

3. Skill Development

The literature explores a wide range of skills, dispositions and character traits thought to be developed through participating in creative writing.

1. There is little research on the impact of creative writing on academic and soft skill development in comparison to music, dance, drama and visual arts.
2. There are a huge range of skills, dispositions and character traits thought to be developed by participating in creative writing, the most frequently highlighted are:
    *   Creativity
    *   Risk taking and problem solving
    *   Metacognition
    *   Confidence
    *   Social and Interpersonal skills
    *   Patience, perseverance and resilience
    *   Communication skills
    *   Critical Thinking
    *   Self-efficacy
3. Research about creativity is well established in relation to children and adults, but a gap exists in relation to adolescents (due to the unique cognitive developments thought to occur during this period). Therefore, generalising across the three groups should be avoided.
4. Creative practitioners have been found to use strategies to develop students' risk taking and self-belief more effectively than teachers.
5. Metacognition is of particular significance in writing and even very young writers can be helped to think about and reflect on their writing processes in metacognitive ways.
6. Changes in pupil confidence levels are one of the most commonly reported impacts of creative writing programmes, however the rigour and robustness of research methodology and data collection in many studies is questionable.
7. There can be a perceived tension between creative writing initiatives and the 'standards agenda'.
8. Writing is the most complex and mentally demanding of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).
9. A student's perception of their own technical writing skill is closely linked to their enjoyment of writing.

4. Best Practice and pedagogy for creative writing

Best practice and pedagogy for creative writing was explored in relation to three main areas: having the tools, resources and qualification for success; teachers' confidence in delivering creative writing; and how evidence of best practice has been applied in practice.

4.1 Having the tools, resources and qualifications

Offering pupils resources that are different from what is provided 'everyday' for writing in schools was found to enhance motivation for writing (Marsh, 2009). High-quality resources and "tool boxes" have also been found to increase the sustainability of a project (Owen and Munden, 2010; Marsh, 2009).

Access to libraries and librarians may also be an important resource. A survey by the Society of Authors (2013) found that 89% of secondary school respondents (mainly teaching staff) said it was the librarian who had responsibility for organising visits from writers.

Environment was seen to be a resource of primary importance in the literature, with writing classrooms needing to create "space for the imagination", "serendipitous moments", vibrancy and playfulness (Cremin and Myhill, 2012), whilst also being "safe spaces" and secure writing environments in which young people can experiment and take risks (Grainger, 2005; Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

4.2 Teachers' confidence in delivering creative writing

Commentators, researchers and Ofsted have all questioned whether the teaching profession is sufficiently confident, assured and well informed about writing to teach it effectively (Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Rosen, 1981; Geekie et al., 1999; Andrews, 2008; Horner, 2010; Ofsted, 2009). As noted in Section 2.2b, teachers' own confidence as writers cannot be taken for granted (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). The majority of secondary school teachers are drawn to teach English because of a love of reading (literature) or because of an inspirational English teacher rather than through an interest in writing (Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Peel, 2000; Gannon and Davies, 2007).

Cremin summarises the research on teacher confidence as follows:
- Some studies claim that when practitioners demonstrate "writerly" behaviour and share their challenges as writers, younger writers benefit (Root and Steinberg, 1996; Susi, 1984)
- Others, however, suggest that teachers' perceptions of the importance of writing and their faith in their students' ability are more significant indicators of their efficacy than their involvement as writers (Gleeson and Prain, 1996; Robbins, 1996)
- Some express concern that by writing authentically (see below) teachers not only become susceptible to exposure but also lose teaching time (Cremin and Myhill, 2012)

Galton (2008) develops this final point further: "teachers are taught from the outset that to be successful you need to keep your life and feelings separate from your relationship with the pupils."

a) Writing authentically

Surveys have revealed that the majority of teachers pre-prepare writing to be shared or modelled at home rather than in front of a class. This practice was found to be particularly prevalent amongst less confident teachers and those who expressed low self-esteem as writers (Grainger, 2005; Cremin and Myhil, 2012). By doing this, teachers allow themselves "incubation", "preparation" and "percolation" time rarely afforded to their own pupils (Cremin, 2006) and thereby avoid the "spontaneity and risk" necessary for composition.

As discussed in the previous section, risk taking is a central component in creativity (Sternberg, 1997; Craft, 2000; Joubert, 2001) but it is also accepted as a common characteristic of "successful literacy teachers" who engage artistically, experiment with possibilities and remain open to ideas, a strategy which has been found to benefit learners (Wilson and Ball, 1997).

Cremin and Myhill (2012) suggest that to exploit this, a "shift in the locus of control is needed"; where historically the focus of teaching writing has been on the 'product', teachers should instead focus on the 'process', fostering an "enhanced sense of autonomy and authorship" in their students.

b) Language

There is a "residual and problematic" tendency for teachers to consider creativity and technique as needing to be addressed separately (Owen and Munden, 2010). This is a longstanding problem. In as early as 1927, Sir Charles Cheers Wakefield (in Ings, 2009) argued that the issue was exacerbated by "average" teachers being happy to correct errors in grammar or spelling, but giving little help to students with the process of composition. More recently, research has found that it is metalinguistic knowledge itself (the awareness and control of different linguistic components of language) that teachers find challenging (Myhill, 2013; Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

Owen and Munden (2010) believe that this is important because teachers engaging with "highly technical skills" will lead to student interest in creative writing's "many applications" leaving scope for "almost any subject matter to be addressed." Teachers with poor grammatical knowledge are "unable to see language development in the writing and speaking of their own pupils" (Gordon, 2005), thus hampering the teaching of writing because a lack of implicit knowledge allows them to do little more than imitate the features and style of a text (Myhill, 2013). Without "well-developed grammatical pedagogical content knowledge" linking grammar to purpose, teachers attempt to communicate highly generalised principles for writing which are difficult for learners to operationalise meaningfully. Teachers who lack confidence in this area have also been observed to quickly close down conversations initiated by students attempting to ask questions about grammatical content knowledge (Myhill, 2013).

Beginning teachers now have lower levels of grammatical content knowledge (Myhill, 2013), a problem compounded by training providers appearing to have a "distinct preference for teachers who have come through the literature degree route" combined with a shortage of applicants from linguistics routes (Blake & Shortis, 2010). As a result, many teachers have no formal study of language and draw upon "partially remembered folklore" about language and grammar (Derewianka & Jones, 2010). They may therefore feel ill equipped to cope with the metalinguistic demands of the curriculum.

Myhill (2013) notes that teachers with limited grammatical content knowledge are frequently highly capable and professional teachers of English, who could benefit from addressing their limitations in this particular area. However what seems to be missing is "any notion of what practical strategies a teacher can take if she or he wants to improve their performance as a teacher of writing" (Ings, 2009).

c) Poetry

A small-scale study of trainee teachers' attitudes towards poetry found that only 4.2% read poetry on a regular basis, and a third did not read it at all (Rogers, 2008). This is a long-standing issue, already highlighted by Ofsted in 1987 (DES, 1987) when they noted that "some English teachers express great unease about teaching poetry and it appears that there are few genuine enthusiasts who read poetry extensively themselves and communicate that enthusiasm to pupils" – a finding highlighted once more in Ofsted's 2007 report (Ofsted, 2007).

In secondary schools, teachers have been found to concentrate on preparing pupils for exams at the expense of teaching poetry, and even when they must do so at GCSE, they rarely give young people the chance to write their own poetry (Rogers, 2008). The Booktrust (2010) notes that even where teachers are enthusiastic about poetry, they feel they need more support to develop their skills and confidence in the area.

4.3 Application of best practice
In seeking to define best practice in promoting creative writing, the literature particularly focuses on the following areas:

a) Risk taking
b) Leadership and management
c) Pedagogy (including: drama; talk; self-expression; and balancing the teaching of knowledge about language and creative language use)
d) Poetry
e) Writers in schools
f) Feedback and editing
g) Engaging with communities and parents

We now explore these each in turn.

a) Risk taking

As highlighted in Section 3.7, risk taking is a key element of the creative writing process. Best practice therefore involves "modelling the creative process for pupils with all the attendant risk taking this involves" (Ofsted, 2003; Grainger, 2005) and revealing the challenges involved as writers struggle to "express the inexpressible" (Ofsted, 2003).

b) Leadership and management

In the final evaluation of the 'Everybody Writes' project, Marsh et al (2009) suggest that where leadership and management was effective:

- There was strong management as well as clear aims and thorough preparation and planning, including leaders planning for sustainability
- Leaders made links between the project and the school's development plan and senior management were involved, driving forward a whole school approach
- Leaders emphasised the relationship between talk and writing as well as reading and writing and encouraged a flexible approach to pedagogy with a focus on creativity
- Leaders provided opportunities for staff to engage in professional development and built links with external providers, engaging external expertise where possible
- Leaders cultivated a whole school enthusiasm and excitement about writing projects

c) Pedagogy

i.   Drama

The use of drama as a pre-writing activity has been highlighted as a feature of best practice in creative writing (Cremin et al, 2006; Cremin, 2006; Grainger, 2004). Student concentration and ability to focus and follow through on their written work was found to be positively affected by their involvement in improvisational drama (Cremin et al., 2006), while "stepping into role" (involving tension, emotional engagement and a sense of perspective) created writing that was authentic, detailed, emotive and empathetic, and more effectively captured the readers' interest through a heightened sense of audience (Cremin et al. 2006; Grainger 2004; Cremin 2006).

ii.   Talk

Oral rehearsal and reflection as pre-writing activities help young writers to become more aware of their written text and how to talk about it (Fisher et al., 2010; Myhill and Jones, 2009). Using talk to generate ideas is the most common use of talk in writing classrooms (Cremin, 2006), but for students struggling to write, talk on the "assembling and development of ideas" can also be valuable (Ings, 2009).

For writers too, oral rehearsal is seen as a valuable experience: Philip Pullman (1999) notes that as a writer, working in schools offered him the chance to refine his skills through

repeatedly retelling tales and embellishing and polishing his writer's voice in the process (Cremin, 2012).

iii.   Self expression

During the 'Writing the Game' programme, teachers observed high levels of engagement with writing from students who were usually reluctant writers. Students suggested this was because they were given the opportunity to "[write] from the heart" (Murphy, 2015). Galton (2008) suggests that one of the most successful elements of a creative practitioner visit to a school is that they are comfortable expressing their own feelings in a way in which teachers generally are not, thus conveying the message to pupils that "talk of this kind is acceptable currency among the group." Emig and Britton (in Cremin and Myhill, 2012) also argue that transactional writing (i.e. writing intended to communicate ideas and information, such as letters and speeches and job applications) can only develop effectively when writers are allowed to write expressively as part of the learning process.

iv.   Balancing teaching of knowledge about language and creative language use

A balance between teaching 'knowledge about language' and teaching 'creative language use' needs to be struck when helping students find their authorial voice (Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Grainger et al., 2003; Grainger, 2005). However, Boden (2001) warns that these are not two opposing forces but "two sides of the same psychological coin." Cremin (2006) suggests that this balance can be found when teachers set writing targets that relate to both "punctuation and spelling" (for example) as well as targets which focus on making an impact on the reader (such as writing to amuse, persuade or shock). In this way, children can be recognised as "authors, communicators and meaning makers" (Cremin, 2006). Cremin (2009) suggests that a "creative approach to teaching literacy" is highly motivating and enables teachers to make informed decisions about their practice. She suggests that there should be eight strands to this approach:

1. Profiling meaning and purpose;
2. Using rich texts (single and multi-model) as inspiration for writing, especially those that bridge the gap between a child's own 'cultural capital' and that of the school;
3. Fostering play and engagement;
4. Harnessing curiosity and exploring and profiling student agency;
5. Encouraging collaboration and making connections;
6. Integrating reflection, review, feedback and celebration;
7. Allowing time for students to explore and engage with the work (or "travel"), and;
8. Ensuring the teacher is creatively involved.

d) Poetry

The Booktrust (2010) explored how the best schools teach poetry and emphasised the importance of:

- Working effectively with poets
- Encouraging pupils to contribute to competitions, local festivals and school reading groups

- Effective subject leadership

e) Writers in schools

Writers in schools are an important aspect of best practice in creative writing programmes because young people do not otherwise generally encounter people whose main job and source of income is writing (Horner, 2010). Exposure to a writer provides pupils with something new or unfamiliar (Owen, 2008) and evaluations of projects show that bringing "school writing closer to the social world" helps young people, particularly those who are disaffected, see the point of writing (Horner, 2010). Furthermore, introducing an external visitor without any preconceptions about individual students and whose authority is based on expertise in an art form rather than institutional authority allows writers to engage with students in different ways (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). Motion also argues that hearing writers read their own work in their "own accent and idiom" can be "enlightening" (Booktrust, 2010).

However, Owen (2010) suggests that to be "of use" writers must also be of "practical benefit", adding a word of caution about the concept of the writer in school as a "role model" for children: "we best take care… which attributes are being role modelled: transience, impermanence and solitude would not rate highly on many teachers' or parents' lists." He also notes that children can sometimes become "quite distressed at the pressures they felt," leading them to subsequently withdraw from activities they were participating in.

We turn to how teachers and writers work together most effectively in Section 5.

f) Feedback and editing

Students who participate in creative writing programmes frequently say that the feedback that they received on their work developed their enjoyment of creative writing and increased their achievement (Murphy, 2015). However, Wilson (2009) found that many teachers were reluctant to assess or to comment critically on children's creative writing (particularly in regards to poetry). Part of the challenge here is that judgement is essential to the creative process and creative outcomes, and all creative endeavours "require mastery of the tools of the trade and the necessary skills to enable creative activity to flourish" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). Teachers' confidence in making such judgements therefore underpins their ability to provide the feedback and editing needed to develop pupils' creative writing.

Students themselves also need to be explicitly taught how to evaluate and edit their writing, since novice writers frequently find this challenging, believing that the editing process is one of 'addition' (adding in 'wow' words and more interesting punctuation) rather than one of 'subtraction' (taking the "designer's knife" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012) to their own work).

g) Engaging with the community/parents

Successful writing residencies tend to involve building up multiple and overlapping links across subjects, and year groups and across the school and community. However, this

process frequently produces new and unexpected outcomes and surprises (Owen and Munden, 2010): Cape UK (2010) found that as a result of children's enthusiasm for creative projects, schools found improvements in parental engagement - even where this had been limited in the past. This was considered a consequence of children taking their creative project work home. In the case of the 'Class Writing' project (Owen and Munden, 2010), subject teachers' refusal to allow pupils to leave their lessons to participate in the project meant that the programme was increasingly delivered at weekends and outside of the main school timetable. This had the unexpected benefit of promoting links with the wider school community.

SQW (2012) suggests that over the course of the 'Write Minded' programme, low levels of parental involvement in children's learning contributed to the challenge of sustaining language development and literacy progress.

4. Best practice / pedagogy for creative writing

We have explored best practice and pedagogy for creative writing in relation to three main areas: having the tools, resources and qualification for success; teachers' confidence in delivering creative writing; and how evidence of best practice has been applied in practice.

1   The quality of the student writing environment (for example, the classroom in which they write) is believed to be of primary importance.
2   Libraries, and librarians are an important resource for schools.
3   Teachers' confidence in delivering creative writing is a key feature of successful programmes. Teachers have frequent difficulties in the following areas:
    • Writing authentically and understanding that risk taking is a central component in creativity
    • A problematic tendency for teachers to consider creativity and technique separately
    • Poetry
4   The literature particularly highlights good practice in relation to:
    • Developing students' risk taking
    • Leadership and management of projects
    • Pedagogy (including: drama; talk; self-expression; and knowledge about language)
    • Teaching poetry
    • Writers working in schools and education settings
    • Provision of feedback on writing and developing students' editing skills
    • Engaging with communities and parents

5. Networks
Effective partnerships and networks are often essential to a project's success.

5.1 Reach

Writers in schools can be catalysts for the formation of new networks (Owen and Munden, 2010). This is especially the case when writers work collegially with school staff and share a common philosophy (Ainscow and West, 2006). In the literature, networks are characterised as encompassing varying degrees of reach: between writers and teachers; whole school staff; students; parents and the wider community.

5.2 Barriers and enablers to partnership working

The literature suggests that effective partnerships between organisations depend on five main factors:

1. Time: partners need to invest time in establishing their relationships; finding common elements in their practice and being open about the "principles that govern their approach" (Galton, 2008).
2. Seniority of staffing: where relationships are delegated to relatively junior members of staff, 'buy in' and 'sign off' can be difficult and this frequently wastes time. Schools therefore need to engage at a senior management level (Galton, 2008).
3. Project Management: In order to keep projects on track, Marsh (2009) highlights the need for expert project managers who are able to communicate effectively with schools, writers and other partners.
4. Geographical location: not only is it difficult to support teachers at a geographical remove (Owen and Munden, 2010), but the development of links with the wider community is also seen as important (Marsh, 2009).
5. Brokering: Writing agencies and literature organisations can act as valuable brokers between writers and schools partly because these organisations are often very influential with writers themselves (Horner, 2010).

Even when joint working is well established, however, there remains a risk that hard work can be undone when key staff members move on, or school priorities change.

Strong partnerships and networks are most likely to develop when they involve "receptive teachers" (Galton, 2008). Targeting such teachers in the first instance could therefore be an important enabler, allowing enthusiasts to act as models and catalysts. Involving the most effective creative practitioners who "[recognise] the constraints that exist in schools" is also important (Galton, 2008).

Barriers to partnership can arise as a result either of schools' actions, writers' actions or a mismatch between the two. Two school driven factors are particularly salient:

1. Delegation of teachers' role to the visiting practitioner, leading to little involvement from the teacher who positions themselves "to one side" (Galton, 2008; Ross and Kamba, 1997; Horner, 2010).

2. Teachers feeling "too strained by curriculum pressures" and lacking the confidence or trust to buy into the visiting practitioner's methods (Cremin and Myhill, 2012).

In addition, The Society of Authors (2013) highlights the following challenges faced by school staff themselves when trying to convince their schools to engage a writer:

- Cost
- Resistance to 'taking pupils away from lessons'
- Holding pre-conceptions about students' willingness to participate and likelihood of success
- Time-tabling and logistical issues driven by an emphasis on exams
- Staff indifference

Writers can create barriers to partnership too, particularly when they resist longer-term residencies and advocate a "single visit" approach (Ross and Kamba, 1997). Furthermore, Ross and Kamba suggest that many writers are reluctant to join more formal networks or to receive more formal training (ibid).

Finally, barriers to partnership working can also arise due to mismatch in values and practices, which results in a lack of common purpose. We explore this issue in more detail in Section 6.1.

5. Networks

Effective partnerships and networks are essential to a project's success. The key findings from the literature are summarised below:

1   The most effective partnerships tend to be developed by more receptive teachers, and creative practitioners who understand the constraints faced by schools.
2   Effective selection of receptive staff for participation in projects can catalyse wider participation and enthusiasm for a project.
3   Joint working often lacks common purpose due to differing priorities.
4   Several barriers to building networks are highlighted in the literature, relating to different partners:

> Teachers can hinder the creation of effective networks by:
> o   Delegating the role of 'the teacher' to a visiting practitioner
> o   Feeling constrained by the curriculum and lacking sufficient confidence or trust to buy into a visiting practitioner's methods
> o   Refusing students the opportunity to leave their lessons to participate in programmes

> Writers can hinder the creation of effective networks by being reluctant to:
> o   Initiating longer-term residencies
> o   Joining formal networks
> o   Receiving more formal training

> Additionally, schools themselves can create barriers as a result of:
> o   Concerns about cost
> o   Holding pre-conceptions about students' willingness to participate and likelihood of success
> o   Time-tabling and logistical issues exacerbated by an exam-focused system
> o   Perceived indifference amongst staff

5   It can be particularly challenging to reach out to families and wider communities alienated by, or isolated from learning.
6   The following areas are of key importance in ensuring a project's success:
   - Time given to developing relationships
   - Quality and experience of staff assigned to projects
   - Overall project management responsibilities
   - Geographical location and reach
   - Brokering partnerships

6. Valuing Creative Writing
The value that schools, teachers and the wider community place on creative writing is of prime importance to the success and sustainability of creative writing projects.

6.1 Shared values and approaches
Schools can need persuading that creative writing projects are "something worth doing" and, even schools with an appetite for such projects often express a concern about such programmes being "a distraction from the main endeavour: academic results" (Owen and Munden, 2010). A failure to value creative writing can therefore act as a serious hindrance to the development of creative writing projects. As noted in Section 3, this can partly result from a perceived tension between creativity and technique amongst teachers (Horner, 2010).

As noted in Section 5.2, establishing common priorities and expectations is a crucial foundation for partnership. This "mutual misunderstanding" (Horner, 2010) can result in:
- Issues of ownership and responsibility (i.e. who is responsible if things go right or wrong?)
- Perceived appropriateness of material
- Pre-conceptions of one another's roles (eg. writer/teacher) (Thomas et al, 2006; Cremin and Myhill, 2012)

Owen and Munden (2010) cite one example in which a school joined the 'Class Writing' project for "publicity purposes." This made collaborative working impossible due to a lack of shared purpose (Owen and Munden, 2010). Schools also frequently place particular value on having an "outcome for public consumption" (Galton, 2008) – a value not always shared by creative practitioners, who may find that it restricts their work and undermines some of their pedagogical approaches and principles.

According to Rogers (2008), teacher training, careful preparation and "greater understanding and accommodation of each other's needs and priorities" can all play a role in overcoming these difficulties and in building shared values, expectations and practices.

6.2 Advocacy and public value
Despite concerns about writing standards in schools declining, Clark and Dugdale (2009) argue that the status of writing has undergone a cultural change over the past decade with authors becoming celebrities and celebrities becoming authors. This 'celebritisation' of writing has changed the way many young people view writing (Clark and Dugdale, 2009). However, Cremin and Myhill (2012) argue that this has failed to result in sufficient attention being given to the teaching and learning of writing specifically - mainly due to successive government's viewing creative writing as "little more than an unproblematic set of technical skills." Furthermore, Hetland and Winner (2001) argue that arts educators need to avoid allowing arts subjects to be justified wholly (or primarily) in terms of what they can offer academically. Instead they argue that "the arts must be justified in terms of what the arts can teach that no other subject can teach."

There therefore remains significant scope for the advocacy of creative writing education in order to articulate a more nuanced conception of what it involves, why it is valuable and that "inspiration does not have to be at the expense of standards" (Horner, 2010).

6. Valuing Creative Writing

The value that schools, teachers and the wider community place on creative writing is of prime importance to the success and sustainability of creative writing projects.

1   The perceived opposition between creativity and technique is an important barrier to schools and teachers valuing creative writing.
2   Teachers' own values (for example, relating to the importance of grammar and different pedagogical approaches) influence their teaching of writing.
3   Many teachers place low value on teaching poetry and teacher attitudes towards poetry itself play an important role in this.
4   Schools value having an "outcome for public consumption" from a project, but this is not always shared by creative partners.
5   The 'celebritisation' of writing has changed the way many young people view writing, yet whilst this has ensured *literacy* has remained high profile, insufficient attention has been given to the teaching and learning of writing specifically.
6   Arts educators and creative practitioners need to avoid allowing arts subjects to be justified wholly (or primarily) in terms of what they can offer academically.
7   More effort needs to be invested in ensuring that teachers, schools and the wider public understand that "inspiration does not have to be at the expense of standards"

Possible implications for evaluation:

1. Creativity and technique should not be considered separately but as mutually reinforcing elements of writing.
2. The extent to which a project leads to an actual change in practice on the behalf of teachers is of prime importance.
3. Evaluating progress in skills such as 'creativity' and 'self-confidence' is complex and demands well-designed tools that need to be administered in a rigorous and robust way.
4. The quality of partnerships and joint working methods that underpin a project are paramount to its success.
5. Projects should be evaluated for their wider impact on the school community, not just on the direct participants.

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"Society should ensure that all young people receive the support they need in order to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood"