

## Self and peer assessment - Primary

**By Debra Ridley**

Self and peer assessment of writing is something I always plan for at the end of a unit of work. This has had a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

The process of developing the right culture and modelling the process of assessing another's' work is something that I have built up slowly over the course of the year making sure that, from the outset, the pupils understood assessment of their own, or their peers work, was to pinpoint areas to improve *and* to celebrate successes. I didn't want the pupils to think that helping someone with their work was always a case of looking for 'mistakes'. Therefore, I always begin peer or self-assessment by asking pupils to identify strengths in the work. Identifying and sharing what their peers did well encouraged pupils to look for similar things in their own work. This was especially effective for those who found it tricky to identify their own successes.

After identifying areas of success, the pupils are then asked to identify *one* place in their work that could be improved. One really powerful way I have found to do this this effectively is to get a pupil to read aloud someone else's work back to them, following all punctuation and reading each word as it is written. Hearing what your own work *sounds* like, more often than not, makes pupils realise where things may not quite flow well, or sound repetitive or, because of the way it has been punctuated, doesn't make sense. I set this up initially by modelling this with the whole class. I used a piece of writing I put together myself and had a volunteer to read the work aloud exactly as written. Everyone in the class was given the opportunity to offer comments and opinions; firstly, on one thing they found really effective, and then one thing they thought could be improved. As pupils offered feedback, I offered suggestions as to how responses could be re-worded or developed to be more effective. The pupils then followed this model.

After receiving feedback from their peers or an adult, the pupils used a coloured pencil to make changes to their writing so any improvements could be clearly seen. Sometimes pupils ask to re-draft whole paragraphs as well as changing the odd piece of vocabulary or punctuation.