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# Using the Craft of Writing to improve pupil attainment in schools

| Submission date | Recruitment status | [_] Prospectively registered |
|---|---|---|
| 17/07/2018 | No longer recruiting | [X] Protocol |
| **Registration date** | **Overall study status** | [X] Statistical analysis plan |
| 25/07/2018 | Completed | [X] Results |
| **Last Edited** | **Condition category** | [_] Individual participant data |
| 04/10/2022 | Other | |

## Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
The Craft of Writing (CoW) intervention provides trainings for teachers (known as a sustained 'Arvon experience') to develop teachers as writers. The goal is for them to bring this knowledge back into the classroom. The trainings are created with professional writers. Teachers learn about writing – the process of writing; linguistic choices; and narrative/poetic techniques – and are supported in integrating what they learn into their routine teaching of writing. The aim of this study is to use the CoW programme to improve pupils' writing and idea generation through training their teachers in these respects.

Who can participate?
Approximately 96 state-funded primary schools in England. Within the schools, we focus on year 5.

What does the study involve?
Schools are randomly allocated to either the intervention or the control group.
Schools in the intervention group participate in the CoW programme. Teachers will receive writing training and development, and will bring this back into the classroom to improve children's writing skills and ability to generate ideas. One class from year 5 from each treatment school will be selected for participation in the evaluation.
The control group will receive no intervention and continue as usual.
Children will be asked to complete writing tests at the end of the school year.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
The possible benefit to participants is that taking part in cultural learning programmes such as CoW can lead to higher levers of achievement in mathematics and literacy, and therefore can lead to improved test scores. There are no known risks to participants taking part in this study.

Where is the study run from?
Study run from Craft of Writing, Centre for Research in Writing, Exeter
Evaluation run by UCL Institute of Education (London) and Behavioural Insights Team (BIT)

(London)
The schools participating in the study are based in the North-West and North-East with a small number from London.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
April 2017 to December 2019

Who is funding the study?
Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) (UK)
Royal Society for the Arts (RSA) (UK)

Who is the main contact?
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# Contact information

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Scientific

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# Additional identifiers

# Study information

### Scientific Title

Using the Craft of Writing to improve pupil attainment: A randomised trial in schools

## Acronym
CoW

## Study objectives
Participation by schools in the Craft of Writing programme, which trains teachers to develop their own writing skills and integrate this into their teaching practice, will improve pupils' writing attainment and idea generation.

## Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

## Ethics approval(s)
University of Exeter, 04/07/2017, STF/17/18/01
University College London Institute of Education's Research Ethics Committee, 14/12/2017, Z6364106/2017/11/69 REC 1010 Craft of Writing Evaluation

## Primary study design
Interventional

## Study design
Interventional two-armed clustered randomised trial with randomisation occurring at the level of the school

## Study type(s)
Quality of life

## Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Writing attainment at the end of year 5

## Interventions
Schools will be randomised into either the intervention or the control group. Schools in the intervention group participate in the Craft of Writing (CoW) programme, whereas the control group will continue "business as usual". For the randomisation, blocking will be used to improve cross-arm comparability of schools and also to improve precision of estimates. There will be four blocks, defined on the basis of class composition by English as an Additional Language (EAL) (high vs. low) and class composition by eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) (high vs. low). This approach will help to ensure that our treatment and control groups are well balanced in terms of these characteristics, which are likely to be correlated with our outcome measures (EEF, 2015b). High and low EAL and FSM in these definitions will be defined as above and below by the sample median to ensure that block sizes are approximately equal (which may not be the case if we used population, rather than sample, characteristics).
Randomisation will be designed to achieve an equal number of schools in each arm (i.e. 60 control and 60 treatment). Each school will be assigned a randomly generated number (setting a stable seed for the random number generation). Schools will be sorted by block and random number and will be assigned to the treatment arm and to the control arm in turn. Randomisation will be carried out by UCL in Stata and the code used to carry out the process will be recorded and reported in the final report.
Schools in the intervention group will participate in the Craft of Writing programme. One self-nominated year 5 teacher in each participating school participates in the training, which will be

led by tutors who are professional authors selected by Arvon. This includes two weekend (Friday-Sunday) 'Arvon Teachers as Writers' residentials six months apart. These will comprise workshops and tutorials for teachers led by professional writers, with time and space for writing, plus structured sessions to consider pedagogical implications and establish clear expectations for follow-through. There will also be a programme of CPD days for teachers.
The control group will receive no intervention and continue as usual.
The intervention occurs over the course of one school year (year 5). Follow-up for the trial occurs at the end of the school year, when the outcome measures are collected from both study arms.

### Intervention Type
Behavioural

### Primary outcome(s)
Writing attainment, assessed using the Writing Assessment Measure (WAM) at the end of the Year 5 school year in 2019.

### Key secondary outcome(s)
Writing self-efficacy, assessed using the Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS) (adapted to ensure age appropriateness) at the end of the Year 5 school year in 2019.

### Completion date
01/12/2019

## Eligibility

### Key inclusion criteria
1. Located in the North West and North East of England (with a small number from London)
2. Agree to provide student data in order that it is possible to apply for data from the National Pupil Database
3. Identify a lead teacher from Year 5 (all children in the teacher's class will participate in the trial)
4. Cooperate with the project and evaluation teams during the trial (further details of these requirements are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding with Schools)

Where possible it will aim to recruit schools that have larger populations of individuals receiving Free School Meals (FSM) than the national average of 15.3 per cent of pupils aged 5-10 (DfE, 2016).

### Participant type(s)
Other

### Healthy volunteers allowed
No

### Age group
Child

### Sex
All

### Total final enrolment
2192

### Key exclusion criteria
Parents may choose for their child to not participate in the study; their data will not be collected or processed.

### Date of first enrolment
17/10/2017

### Date of final enrolment
31/03/2018

## Locations

### Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

### Study participating centre
**UCL Institute of Education**
20 Bedford Way
London
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### Study participating centre
**Behavioural Insights Team**
4 Matthew Parker St
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### Study participating centre
**The University of Exeter**
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## Sponsor information

**Organisation**
Education Endowment Foundation

**ROR**
https://ror.org/03bhd6288

# Funder(s)

**Funder type**
Not defined

**Funder Name**
Education Endowment Foundation

**Alternative Name(s)**
EducEndowFoundn, The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), Education Endowment Foundation | London, EEF

**Funding Body Type**
Private sector organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**
Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

**Location**
United Kingdom

**Funder Name**
The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce

# Results and Publications

**Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan**
The datasets generated and analysed during the current study have been archived in the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)'s data archive, and will be available from this data archive in the future, on application to the EEF. Consent for this archiving and administrative data linkage was obtained from participants as part of the study. At the time of writing, access is not yet possible and the timing of access being made available is dependent upon the EEF, rather than the project team. The data archived includes all variables used as part of the analyses reported, named in line with a consistent data specification provided by the EEF (see appendix 3 of their policy on data archiving: https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/evaluation/archiving-evaluation-data/Archiving-evaluation-data-analysed-in-the-SRS-Project-completion-and-archiving-form_v2.pdf). Application for access to the EEF data archive is

contingent on providing detail of the public benefit of the research to be carried out, in line with the EEF data archive privacy notice: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-the-eef-data-archive; this will be assessed by the EEF as archive data owners, rather than the project team. Archive data are held and shared within a secure environment (UK Office for National Statistics Secure Research Service; ONS SRS), for which applicants must meet relevant requirements (including application for recognition as an accredited researcher from the ONS), as mitigation against potential identifiability risks.

## IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in non-publicly available repository

## Study outputs

| Output type | Details | Date created | Date added | Peer reviewed? | Patient-facing? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Funder report results | | 07/09/2021 | 13/09/2021 | No | No |
| Protocol file | version 1.1 | 29/03/2019 | 04/10/2022 | No | No |
| Statistical Analysis Plan | | 18/10/2018 | 04/10/2022 | No | No |
| Study website | Study website | 11/11/2025 | 11/11/2025 | No | Yes |