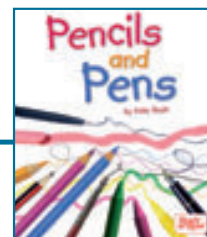


Pencils and Pens

by Kate Boyle



This text is levelled at **Turquoise 2**.

Overview

This report describes some school writing implements and how they have changed over the last hundred years. It includes explanations, supported by photographs and labelled diagrams of how they work.

As well as providing an intriguing look into changes in technology, this text provides opportunities for students to talk with older family members about what they used to write with at school and to make comparisons with their own experiences. There is an audio version of the text on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2011*.

Related Texts

- Texts that compare the present and the past: *The Way It Was* (RTR, Green) and *Red Rattlers* (RTR, Gold)
- Texts that include explanations of how things work: *Bikes* (RTR, Turquoise) and *Red Rattlers* (RTR, Gold).

Cross-curriculum links

Technology (level 1, characteristics of technological outcomes) – Understand that technological outcomes are products or systems developed by people and have a physical nature and a functional nature.

Text characteristics

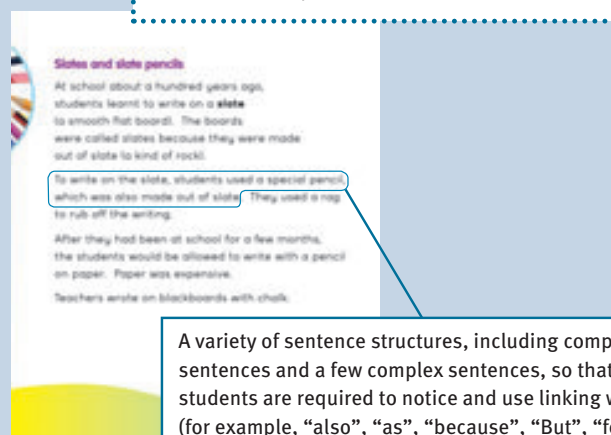
Key text characteristics as described in the reading standard for after two years at school are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes indicate additional characteristics.

The structure of the text as a report, with an introduction, a series of main points, and a conclusion

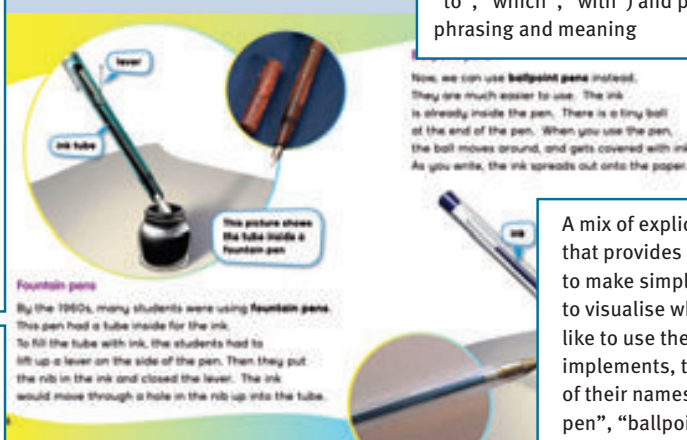
The historical context that may be outside the students' prior knowledge but can easily be related to it through:

- the photographs which show both present-day and older writing implements
- the direct address of the reader on pages 2 and 8, which encourages students to make connections to their own experiences of writing
- the clear information about the changes in technology, supported by indicators of time ("about a hundred years ago", "After they had been at school for a few months", "In the 1960s", "Then", "Now") and supported by the historical photographs

Visual language features such as a contents page, headings, labelled photographs and diagrams, and bold print for key words that are linked to definitions or explanations close by in the text



A variety of sentence structures, including compound sentences and a few complex sentences, so that students are required to notice and use linking words (for example, "also", "as", "because", "But", "for", "to", "which", "with") and punctuation as a guide to phrasing and meaning



Information organised in paragraphs

A mix of explicit and implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make simple inferences, for example, to visualise what it would have been like to use the older-style writing implements, to infer the derivations of their names (for example, "fountain pen", "ballpoint"), and to think critically about their pros and cons

Mostly familiar words, but some new topic words and descriptive language that are supported by the context and/or illustrations, (for example, "olden days", "slate", "board", "rag", "expensive", "dip pens", "metal nib", "inkwell", "smudges", "fountain pens", "invented", "tube", "lever", "ballpoint", "covered", "spreads"). Supports include the photographs and diagrams and the definitions or explanations within the text, sometimes signalled by the word "called" (page 3) or the use of parentheses (pages 3 and 4)

Suggested reading purpose

- To find out what students used to write with in the olden days and compare these with what we use now

Setting a learning goal

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically about” texts?)

To meet the reading purpose, students need to draw on a range of comprehension and processing strategies, often simultaneously. The strategies, knowledge, and skills below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. Select and adapt from them to set your specific learning goal. Be guided by your students’ particular needs and experiences: who they are, where they come from, and what they bring (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6).

This text provides opportunities for students to:

- make connections to their own experiences and between the ideas in the text (including the visual language features)
- identify and summarise main points
- attend to the details (in both written and visual language features) and track ideas within and between sentences in order to visualise the explanations in the text
- express and justify an opinion about their preferred writing implements, including the advantages and disadvantages (evaluate)
- use word-solving strategies to decode and/or work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

Introducing the text

- Show the cover of the book. *What do you notice?* Encourage the students to share any knowledge they have of the older writing implements. *What do you think this book might be about?*
- Have the students read page 2 to confirm that this text will tell them about what students used to write with in the olden days.
- Share the reading purpose and learning goal. Have the students look through the book and identify some features that will help them to find and summarise information, for example, the body text, photographs, captions, labelled diagrams, and the words in bold print.

Reading the text

Below are some behaviours you could expect to see as the students read and discuss this text.

Each example is accompanied by instructional strategies to scaffold their learning. Select and adapt from the suggestions according to your students’ needs and experiences.

The students use both explicit and implicit information to identify and summarise the main points about how writing implements have changed over time.

- Have the students read page 3. Allow plenty of time to discuss the students’ responses, including any confusions (for example, what a rag is or the concept of a pencil made of rock). Encourage the students to imagine (visualise) what it might be like to write on a slate. Prompt them to notice that their slate work would be rubbed out and replaced but that work on paper could be kept.
- Create a chart (with room for three time periods) and record the main points for “about a hundred years ago”.
- Remind the students to use the photographs and/or labelled diagrams as support for the descriptions and explanations on pages 3, 4, 6, and 7.
- Have them read page 4 and think, pair, and share about the main points. They can use the words in bold print as a guide.
- *Where does this information belong on our chart?* The students should be able to tell you that the time period is the same as for the previous page but is about older students. You could add subheadings (young students, teachers, older students) to the chart.
- Encourage the students to examine the sample of writing in the photograph on page 5 and share their opinions about whether they would like to use a dip pen and why or why not.
- You can continue in this way, stopping after each section or double-page spread to summarise and fill in the chart together, or give the students their own copies of a chart for them to fill in as they read and discuss the text with a partner. The students should be able to identify the two new headings they will need to add to the chart (“In the 1960s” and “Now”). You could do some calculations with them to work out that the 1960s were about 50 years ago.
- Have some ballpoint pens available so that the students can check out the information on page 7.
- A possible example of a summary chart is given below.

100 years ago	In the 1960s (50 years ago)	Now
young students – slates and slate pencils – rag to rub work off – sometimes used paper and pencils teachers – blackboards and chalk older students – dip pens and inkwells – messy and smudgy but could be beautiful	– fountain pens – didn't need to dip the pen	– ballpoint pens – ink is already inside the pen – lots of other sorts of pens and pencils too

The students make connections between the information in the text and their knowledge and experience of writing implements to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each one and express an opinion about what they would prefer to use.

- To provide more support for the students, especially English language learners, create a chart like the example below before discussing the students' preferences. Depending on the needs of your students, you might want to model one section. Explain that not all sections may have an answer.

	Slate pencil	Dip pen	Fountain pen	Ballpoint pen
made out of				
has (features)				
how to use				
our ideas				

- When the chart is completed, have the students write or discuss what they have found out. To support the students, you could provide a speaking frame like the following example. If necessary, model an example first.

A _____ is made out of _____. It has _____. To use it you _____ I think _____.

- Have the students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of slates and slate pencils, dip pens, fountain pens, and ballpoint pens and then make a decision about their personal preference. Encourage the students to think beyond the information in the text, for example, to make connections

with their own experiences, visualise, and make inferences as they come to their decisions.

- Look for indications that the students can see the improvements in technology over time, particularly from the dip pen to the fountain pen.
- Record the students' opinions.
- Revisit the learning goal and support the students to track how they met it.
What helped you?

The students use word-solving strategies (for example, using grapho-phonetic information, knowledge of word structure and context, or looking for definitions or explanations) to decode and/or work out the meanings of unfamiliar words and phrases.

- Prompt the students to break multisyllabic words into chunks or syllables, for example, "ex-pen-sive", "black-boards", "foun-tain", "eas-i-er". You could demonstrate this on the whiteboard.
- Model how to look for definitions within the text. For example, on page 3: *Before I even read this page, I can see that the word "slate" is important because it's in bold print. I'm inferring that the students in the page 2 photo are using slates, so I'll read this first paragraph to find more information ... yes, I've found out what a slate is, why they were called slates, and that slate is a kind of rock.* Have the students read the paragraph themselves to look for the "signposts" for the definitions and explanations (the words "called" and "because" and the use of parentheses). Prompt them to look for other similar signposts (as well as the photographs, caption, and labelled diagrams) to help them with the meanings of unfamiliar words as they continue reading.

- Prompt the students to notice the connections between the names of many of the writing implements and their characteristics, for example, “slate” (as noted above), “dip pen”, “inkwell”, “ballpoint”. The reason for the name “fountain pen” isn’t obvious from the text. You could leave this as a question to be researched after the lesson, for example, when the students talk with their families.
- Have a dictionary available to confirm or clarify word meanings.

After reading

- The students can reread the text as they listen to the audio version on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2011*.
- If possible, provide opportunities for the students to try out the older technologies (for example, reproductions of slate pencils are available from places like museums) and then review their previous preferences in the light of their experience.
- Have the students explain to a partner how a fountain pen or ballpoint pen works.
- Have the students share with a partner any words they found difficult and the strategies they used to work them out. Listen to the discussions. Do you need to follow up on any decoding strategies, particular words, or features of words?
- Focus on some of the aspects of word structure (for example, the components of the compound words or the reasons behind the names of the pens) and make connections to the names of current writing implements, for example, “felt pens”, “highlighters”, “roller pens”.
- Encourage the students to take the book home and see what their parents or older family members can tell them about the implements described in the text – and if they can explain how the fountain pen got its name. (If possible, find a fountain pen so you can demonstrate how the ink squirts out like a fountain if you lift the lever while the pen is full of ink.)