

Choose one of the following tasks, activity 1 or 2, depending on the level of challenge you want:

**Activity 1: Writing development**

1. What is writing? Create a definition in less than 20 words:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. What is writing *for*? Note down at least three suggestions:

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....

**Activity 2: Writing development**

1. One definition of writing is this: *Writing consists of changing the sounds of spoken language into symbols that can be permanently recorded.*

Do you agree? Why or why not?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. What is writing? Use some of the following keywords and no more than 20 words to write your own definition.

**Keywords:** *sounds, spoken, language, permanent*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

### Activity 3: Personal experiences

What can you remember about the following aspects of learning to write? Discuss and make notes on your ideas in pairs, and be ready to share with the class. Don't worry if you can't remember the answers to all of the questions! Discuss any you can remember most clearly.

1. Could you write before you went to school? If so, how did you learn to write?
2. With what type of writing instrument did you learn to write? Were there any rules about what instrument you were allowed to write with?
3. What sort of things did you write in the early years of primary school?
4. Did you write at home? If so, what did you write?
5. What did you learn first: printed or cursive (joined-up) handwriting?
6. How did you learn to leave spaces between words?
7. How did you learn to keep your writing in straight lines?
8. How did you learn when to use lower and upper case letters?
9. What can you remember about learning to spell? Did you have spelling tests? What words were more difficult to spell? How did you try to learn them?
10. What can you remember about learning punctuation rules? Which punctuation rules were more difficult to learn? How did you try to learn them?
11. Did your primary school teacher set rules for writing e.g. for how to lay out your work?
12. Did you produce extended pieces of writing, either at school or home? If so, what sort of things did you write?
13. Did you enjoy learning to write? Why / why not?
14. In your opinion what are the most difficult aspects of learning to write and why?

### Activity 4: Case studies

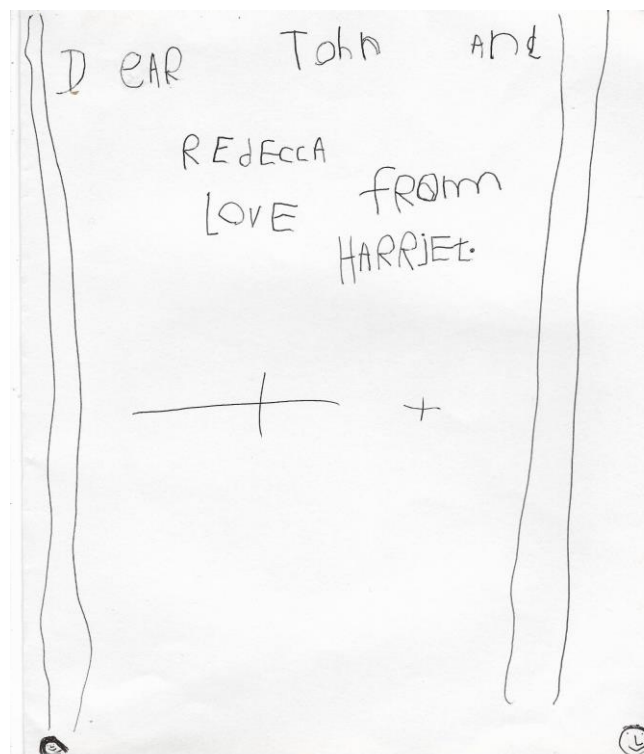
Annotate the two texts on the following page, identifying the ways that each child's writing is developing. Try to use all of the following terms at least once:

directionality      print      letter reversal      polysyllabic lexis  
punctuation      upper case      lower case      text-image cohesion  
substitution      linearity      proper noun      letter-like forms  
ascender (letter stem which goes up above the line of writing e.g. b, h)  
descender (letter stem which goes below the line of writing e.g. g, y)

Agnes, aged 3 years 10 months, has drawn and written about herself with her friends.



Harriet, aged 5 years 11 months, has written a card to her friends John and Rebecca.



**Activity 5: Write a short piece of analysis, comparing and contrasting the writing development of these two children.**