

# Can the use of student coaches raise attainment and accelerate progress in writing?



## 01. Introduction

This action research project investigates the effectiveness of using student coaches to raise attainment and accelerate progress in writing. The approach centres on the power of peer support, with trained student coaches guiding their classmates through writing tasks, offering feedback, and modelling successful strategies. The project specifically targeted "tipper" children — those on the cusp of achieving the next level — who often benefit most from personalised support and timely intervention. The aim was to increase pupil engagement, confidence, and independence in writing, while also developing the leadership and communication skills of the student coaches. This research explores whether harnessing the strengths of capable peers can lead to measurable improvements in writing outcomes for both the coached and the coaches.

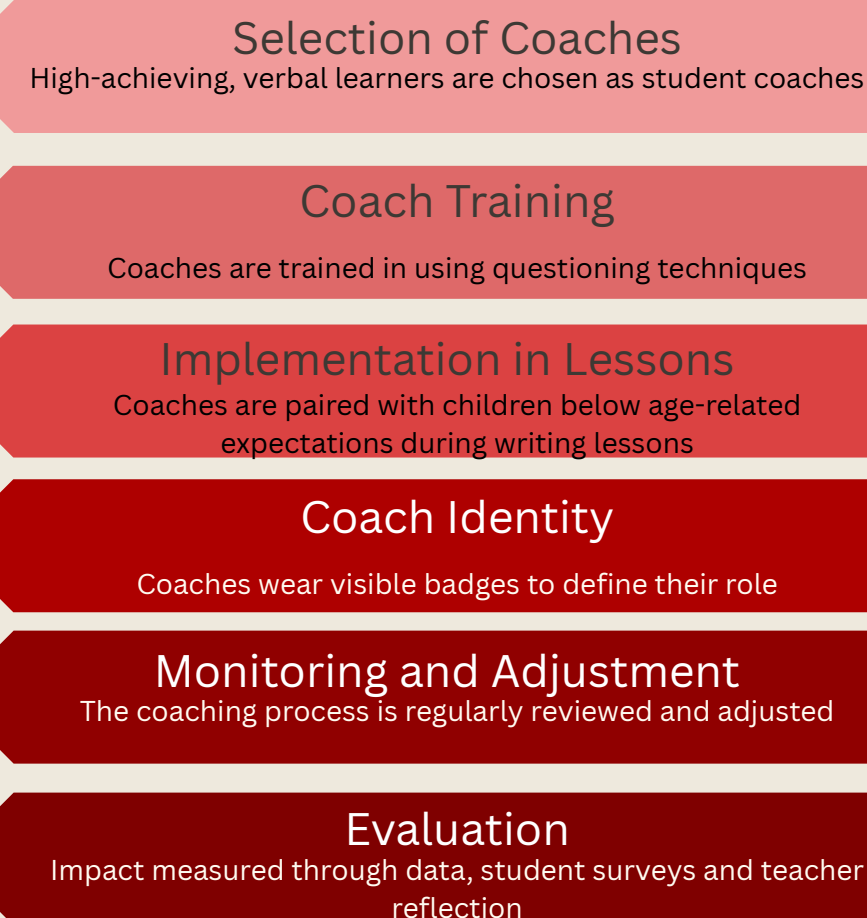
### Research questions

- Can the use of student coaches raise attainment outcomes in writing?
- What is the effect of peer collaboration in the classroom?
- Does being a student coach affect their own attainment and progress?
- Are students being coached by their peers more engaged in their learning?

### References

Little, J. W. (2005). Professional community and the problem of high school reform. Teachers College Press.  
Peinhardt, J., & Hagler, D. (2013). Peer coaching in writing: Fostering student learning through feedback and collaboration. Journal of Nursing Education, 52(4), 222–229.

## Action Research



## 03. Methodology

Six high-achieving and confident speakers from the class were originally selected and trained as coaches. The training focused on developing their ability to support peers effectively—not by providing answers, but by asking guided questions and offering clear explanations when misunderstandings arose. Each student coach was given a badge to reinforce their role and promote responsibility and visibility within the classroom. During writing lessons, coaches were strategically deployed to work with targeted "tipper" children. At key points throughout the lesson, student coaches supported their peers through discussion, clarification, and encouragement. This consistent, structured peer support aimed to boost the confidence, engagement, and writing outcomes of the targeted learners.

- Surveys
- Progress and Attainment Data

## 04. Results/Findings

- 100% of student coaches said it improved their own learning.
- 73% of coached students said it helped their own progress.
- By the end of Term 2 (April), 3A, the class with student coaches, had 91.3% students on target or above for progress in the writing data.
- The percentage increase in students on target and above from December to April—after student coaching began—was 133.5%.

## 05. Analysis

To measure the impact of student coaching on writing progress, both progress data and student voice were analysed. Percentages, ratings, and bar charts showed trends in participation and progress, while written responses highlighted key benefits and challenges. This gave a clear picture of how coaching supported learning and engagement.



## 06. Conclusion

The data clearly shows that student coaching had a positive impact on writing progress. From December to April—when coaching was introduced—there was a 133.5% increase in the number of children working at or above target. Survey responses supported this, with all student coaches reporting improved learning and high satisfaction ratings. The combination of strong quantitative gains and positive student feedback suggests that peer coaching was an effective strategy for accelerating progress and boosting confidence in writing. Student coaching has been so successful in English lessons, we are now using student coaches in other subjects e.g. Maths.

