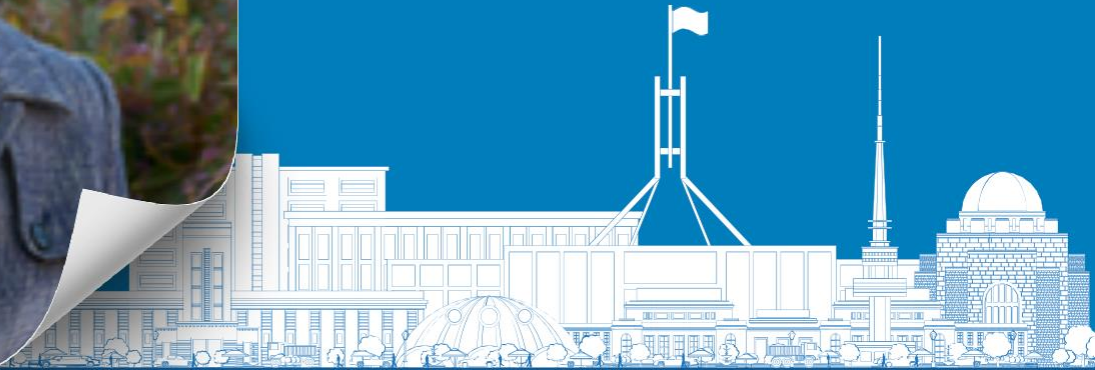




Building tomorrow's minds : On the shoulders of teaching giants in the bush capital



Writing became a priority for CGS in 2022, with a collective focus on helping students develop the necessary skills in their junior years so they could write with greater confidence in their high- stakes senior years. A meaningful teaching moment stemmed from this goal – developing a Writing Guide that would make quality writing possible for all students. What started as a small project to create a handout that would serve as a 'one-stop-shop' of structures to accurately respond to subject-specific command verbs quickly gathered momentum.

Research led me to the successful ALARM model as the foundation from which I offered student-friendly advice that broke common subject verbs down into parts, offered examples of answering strategies and presented helpful terminology. Students could then select a scaffold suited to their ability to plan answers.

Support, however, didn't stop there. Sentence starters and transitional verbs, subject-specific terminology, a guide for writing about graphs and charts, as well as referencing tips, complemented the scaffolds and explainers and would help students add another layer to the quality of their writing. Seeing student writing evolve as they used this guide was a truly rewarding experience, with improvements for students that had both struggled and succeeded with writing in the past. Similarly rewarding was seeing my colleagues use the supporting materials I created to help them become more confident teachers of writing skills. As a team we now have a strategy to foster writing mastery among students at CGS.

Mrs Rowena Gregson
Canberra Grammar School
Red Hill

