

Course GUIDEBOOK

Utilising the **VCOP** Boards

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A Letter From Your Teacher

I'm Sammy Taylor, a dedicated primary school teacher, and co-founder of Andrell Education Australasia. I have a drive and passion to present the Big Write & VCOP literacy workshops, including the Big Talk for Pre-Writers.

In 2020, we were excited to announce that we could deliver our famous series of Big Write and VCOP workshops online, and live.

We wanted to extend accessibility to workshops even further, by providing educators- like yourself, with self-paced professional development as well.

Welcome to your very own self-paced course. Take your time and watch it as many times as you need.

If you need further assistance, feel free to reach out and book a consulting call by emailing info@andrelleducation.com.au



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Introduction

UTILISING THE VCOP BOARDS

What is a VCOP Board?

A VCOP display board is a classroom display space, broken into 4 quadrants. It is used as a visual reinforcement and celebration of the student's learning. It is colour co-ordinated with the VCOP elements. Yellow is for vocabulary, pink is for connectives, blue is for openers and green is for punctuation. These are the colours we also link to in the Student Analysis highlighting stage.

To complete this course, you will need access to the 'Utilising the VCOP Boards' Training video.

This workbook contains;

- A detailed course guide.
- Instructions to all games and activities in the training.
- Differentiation sheet templates and examples.

After this course, you will understand the importance and value of the VCOP boards, for both the student and classroom teacher. They will be a focal point of the classroom and they will continue to grow and develop throughout the year. You will have a new repertoire of games and activities that require minimal to no additional resources, beyond the VCOP boards. You will understand the benefit of differentiating at both a class level, as well as a school wide level.

This course is suitable for educators of Pre-School to Adult learners, using or wishing to use the VCOP elements in their classroom. It is also suitable for leadership, support staff, or educators wishing to raise writing or oral language skills of their students.

This course provides a further understanding of the benefits of VCOP, and is linked to the Big Write and VCOP writing approach and training courses.

“If they can't say it, they can't write it.”

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WHAT'S → *inside*

VOCABULARY GAME

Round the World with Vinny

OPENER GAMES

Knockout with Ollie

Opener Obstacle Course

Opener Quick Flip

CONNECTIVE GAME

Race to the Finish - suitable for all VCOP elements

PUNCTUATION GAMES

Punctuation Air Writing

Punctuation Tiggy

TEMPLATES

Opener Quick Flip differentiation sheets

Blank differentiation sheet

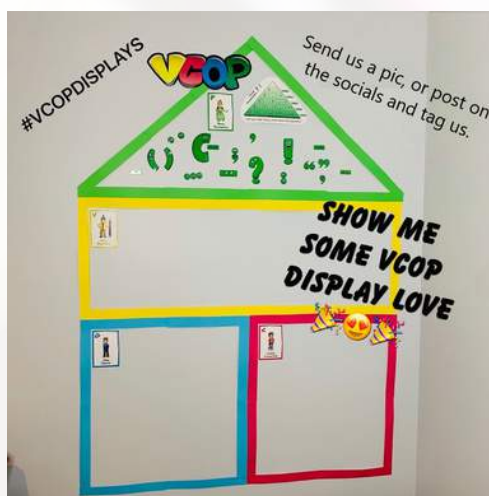
Setting Up

THE MILLION DOLLAR REAL-ESTATE OF CLASSROOM DISPLAY SPACE

When it comes to the classroom display area, we can easily identify your fixer-upper budget space, to your prime position, million dollar views. Now believe me, I know just as well as you do how sought after that million dollar view is. In fact it is so rare to come by, it's more likely to come with a 2-3 million dollar price tag and with half the land size of the other areas... So we have to use it wisely. **I can not stress this enough, there is no more valuable way to use the display space than with the student built VCOP boards!**

You don't need much to get started, but you do want to do it right. You will need yellow, pink, blue and green poster paper. Cut it into long strips of even thickness, (I usually fold A4 paper into thirds, portrait style which is about 6.5cm wide). These strips will become your quadrant borders, so just cut up what you need. But as a rule, my yellow vocabulary space, is usually double the size of the pink connectives and blue openers, and my green punctuation is the smallest. You will also need to put the **WHOLE** punctuation pyramid on display right from pre-school, it's exposure to the symbols and we'll use it for games and activities. No other area needs to be filled in, but I like to have the VCOP Gang on my boards. I also like to be prepared and for each of the V, C and O elements, I have a zip bag of coloured card about 10x20cm in the associated colours (big enough so every student can see and read the card from wherever they are sitting). In this bag, I also have a black marker and blue-tac so I am all ready to add to the displays.

*Remember, no teacher posters or words go inside the V, C or O display spaces. That is for the students to add to and celebrate their language discoveries and learning.



Reminders

KEEP IT REAL, MAKE IT COUNT!

We're busy, the curriculum is overcrowded, and we need to focus on...

I know the pressures of the classroom just as much as you. The demands of the profession and the role of the teacher keeps growing. So, I want to ensure you can teach smarter, not harder, and the VCOP display will help you to do that. But, they need looking after, and there are some rules to stick by.

They are an integral part of your teaching, and student celebrations.

Don't think that 'filling the space' makes a great board. A great board is fluid. It grows and changes as the students grow and change throughout the year. It is a celebration of their learning, not a certificate of participation, so don't just put everyone's work from one lesson on display. Select a few pieces at most, or a singular word, or a phrase, or sometimes even a sentence. Things that you are proud that the student was able to achieve. It can be from their own speech or borrowed from another, maybe it was found in their reading, or maybe they wrote it down and we are celebrating what we are aiming to achieve in our writing.

Don't use posters, keep it real and keep it theirs.

Link it in to your teaching.

Borrow a word or phrase from the board, add your own modelled language to the space around the displays, link it in with specific text types and teach them how to transfer the information across text types. Investigate how the VCOP changes from text type to text type or depending on the target audience.

Use it as a resource for games and activities.

Make sure you reflect on learning and progress.

Don't throw out language that comes down from the displays. Create a resource box to place them in. It will become another resource for games and activities, but it will also allow you to tip it out, to sort and reflect upon. Take photos of the boards regularly, especially in the junior area where they are not writing as much, as it will become an evidence bank of their oral language development.

Link the boards in with other curriculum areas, both in and outside the classroom.

Send the zip bag of yellow card with the students to specialist classes to collect wow words from their lessons as well. Or encourage specialists to have their own vocabulary display.

And most importantly - KEEP THE EXCITEMENT ALIVE!

Expectations

DON'T LET THE DISPLAYS FADE FROM VIEW

So what are some of the ways we can tighten up teaching? We want to make sure all students have access to the same expectations. We don't want the VCOP display to fade into the background, so we need to set some tight expectations, some non negotiables that we'll commit to as a VCOP teacher.

Where are you on your VCOP journey?

I'm only just starting, or I need to revise my displays...

In the next 10 days ensure you have your VCOP displays created, along with blank cards ready to add to the displays. They will be colour consistent, in a clear and visible area, and they will only have the students language on them. Make sure you read the 'Setting Up' page for more details.

I've had my displays for at least 3 weeks now...

You should now have a minimum of 3 wow words (with the student's name on them to celebrate success), 1 connective and 1 opener. Students should be able to tell a visitor how and why these cards were added, because you celebrated putting them up.

I've had my displays for at least 5 weeks now...

By now you should have more words & phrases on display. The students should be bringing words to your attention, not just you emphasising it and identifying it for them in their speech. If your team, or ideally your whole school is on board, you should now be able to complete a school walk around to amplify the celebrations.

Staff Walk Around:

For 5-10 minutes before a staff meeting, staff safely leave doors to their classrooms accessible. All staff walk around and visit 2 classrooms from ideally 2 other year levels. They have to borrow 1 Wow Word from each classroom. They write down the word, the student's name, and the class they visited. We ask that leadership and specialists are also involved in this process.

Then over the next 2 weeks, teachers have to use that word in a lesson or in a conversation. Once you do, you then need to publicly thank the student for letting you borrow their words and helping you out. You might like to take a few minutes to personally visit the classroom of the source of the word to thank them, maybe send a monitor with a sticker or special note, maybe an announcement is made over the P.A system or at assembly? However big or small your gesture, I guarantee it will change the attitude of all students within earshot, and will fill the student who you are thanking with so much pride you will feel confident you have completed your act of kindness for the day.

Watch the morale around the school change!

Schedule this walkaround, or a similar task, to happen at least twice a term.

VCOB Board Game

VCOP Board Game

OPENER OBSTACLE COURSE

Pair up with a set of opener flash cards from your VCOP Display or from the Race to the Finish Board game. Then head out to the playground or over to the stadium to map out an obstacle course of play equipment or gym equipment for your students to complete.

Nominate who is starting as the runner and who is starting as the guide. The runner's job is to complete each obstacle on the course, while the guide has to stop the runner at the start of each new section to show them an opener flash card. The runner needs to put the opener into a verbal sentence before they can complete that section of the course.

After they've finished the course, swap turns.

Challenges you may like to add:

- Add another V, C or P element that they need to also include.
- Set a topic that all the sentences have to be about.
- Ask the guide to come up with a verb for the runner to do while completing that obstacle section.



Don't have an obstacle course, or equipment? Not a problem, use chalk or masking tape to mark out areas for the runner to complete. The guide directs the runner by assigning a verb to each section, i.e. complete an opener sentence, then run from this line to that line, complete an opener sentence, now hop back again.

VCOV Board Game

OPENER QUICK FLIP

Create a set of opener flash cards (we recommend using the Race to the Finish board game to create your card sets)

Sit with a partner and the teacher will hand out 10 opener cards per pair, (or 10 each in the middle and upper school)

Place the cards in a pile **face down**.

Take turns flipping over an opener card and trying to turn it into a complete sentence.

If you can, you can keep the card face up off to the side. If you can't, you have to put the card at the bottom of the pile or let your partner try.

Things you could do to support students:

- Turn the pile of cards face up, instead of face down.
- You may like to nominate one student in the pair to be the reader as support.
- Spread the cards out, face up, in between the pair and each player can select an opener rather than it being the card on top of the pile.

Challenges you may like to add:

- Add another V, C or P element that they need to also include.
- Set a topic that all the sentences have to be about.
- Spread the cards out in between the pair, face down, and randomly flip over cards to create sentences. Play isn't over until all cards are flipped over.



This is a quick oral language game that can be used as a warm up, a brain break, or the talk game leading into a written task practising openers.

Let's differentiate

OPENER QUICK FLIP

A really great activity for team meetings or staff meetings, is differentiating games and activities. The goal is for a team to present a game or activity to staff. You all play the activity for a few minutes, then in small groups, you fill in the rest of the differentiation sheet provided by the presenter. The sheets are collected and collated, then uploaded to a share drive so all staff have access to an array of differentiated resources for their classroom. So let's practise...

Title of activity: Quick Flip Openers

Target: *I can use varied openers to start my sentences. (Openers)*

Resources required:

- *Opener cards from your display wall, or copied on to the blue opener cards from Race To The Finish*

Instructions: *Played in pairs or threes.*

- Sit opposite your partner with the pack of opener cards face down in between you.
- Flip over a card and read out the opener on it.
- Use the opener to put it into a full sentence.
- Play continues to be passed back and forth for a designated time or until the cards run out.

Catering for intervention or younger students:

Catering for extension or older students:

Other ways to use this resource/play this game:

VCOP Board Game

RACE TO THE FINISH

Race to the Finish created by VCOP kid, Oscar.

A quick and easy board game that can be used in any year level. The playing cards are blank so that you can write your own words using your class VCOP display boards. You can also use words that have been removed over time so that they are still being practised.

Once you have added words to the back of some of the VCOP cards, you can start playing. You will need a few tokens as game pieces and a die or fidget spinner.

Nominate a player to go first. They roll the die or spin the spinner, then move the correlating amount of spaces. Whatever grid they land on, indicates what colour card/s they need to pick up and try and use in a sentence. (For punctuation, you might like to start with naming and air drawing the punctuation, then a definition, then act out in a verbal sentence.)

The winner is the first player to the end square, and can use all 4 VCOP cards in a sentence.

Support:

- You may like to play in pairs, or with a buddy grade to begin with.



Race to the Finish cards can be used as a card set in most VCOP games and activities so you don't have to pull cards off your display spaces. We recommend you print and laminate the cards so you can write on them with permanent marker. At the end of the year, or to update cards, you can use alcohol wipes to clean the marker off.

Race to the Finish is a digital download available in the digital store at www.andrelleducation.com.au

VCOP Board Game

PUNCTUATION AIR WRITING

Punctuation Air Writing created by VCOP kid, Charlie.

Using the Race to the Finish punctuation cards we already created, students are given a pile of cards face down and a pencil.

Holding the pencil correctly, they have to flip over a punctuation card. They draw in the air the piece or pieces of punctuation shown on the card. Extend the activity by adding that they have to say the name of the punctuation as well as air write.

Challenges you may like to add:

- Ask them to also say the name of the punctuation.
- They have to add how the punctuation is used.
- They have to draw the punctuation in the air and then on paper.



VCOOP Board Game

PUNCTUATION TIGGY

Punctuation Tiggy or Tag

Nominate a few students to be taggers. They are going to try and catch and tag the other students. Then give them each 4 punctuation cards from the Race to the Finish set. Take all the students outside to a designated area to run in. Ask the students to spread out around the space while the taggers wait with you until you say go.

They then have to chase and tag a player in the middle. Once they do, they show them one of their punctuation cards. The player that was caught has to act out the symbol on the card using their Kung Fu Punctuation.

Play for a short time, and then rotate taggers. As play continues, add challenges to the game.

Challenges you may like to add:

- Ask the player that is caught to act out and say the name of the punctuation.
- Ask taggers to say the name of the punctuation and players to act it out without seeing the visual symbol.
- They have to add how the punctuation is used.
- They have to act out an example sentence.
- They have to add another V, C or O element to the sentence.



You could also make a rule that if you can not complete a challenge, you collect the card off the tagger and become a tagger yourself with only one card. Then you can build up the amount of taggers in play, which makes it harder for players to dodge being caught. If you get rid of all your cards, you turn from a tagger into a player.

Let's differentiate

OPENER QUICK FLIP

Here's one I prepared earlier...

Title of activity: Quick Flip Openers
Target: <i>I can use varied openers to start my sentences. (Openers)</i>
Resources required: • <i>Opener cards from your display wall, or copied on to the blue opener cards from Race To The Finish</i>
Instructions: <i>Played in pairs or threes.</i> • Sit opposite your partner with the pack of opener cards face down in between you. • Flip over a card and read out the opener on it. • Use the opener to put it into a full sentence. • Play continues to be passed back and forth for a designated time or until the cards run out.
Catering for intervention or younger students: • Have a more capable student read the opener out to remove reader barriers. • Student A models the opener in a sentence, student B to follow with their own sentence, still using the same opener. • Place the pile of cards face up so you can see which opener is next. • Spread cards face up between the pair so you can select openers.
Catering for extension or older students: • Add another V,C or P elements to include in the sentence. • Write out the sentence and then up-level it as a pair. • Hand out a number of cards each to spread out face down in front of each player. The goal is to flip over all you cards by turning them into sentences. • Challenge that all sentences must follow on from the first to create a paragraph (they set topic). • Add a topic card to make all the sentences relate too. –could link to other subjects and inquiry. • Nominate a text type the sentence have to be used in. • Nominate the audience you are targeting with your words.
Other ways to use this resource/play this game: • Take the cards out to integrate into a PE game or activity. • Use them in a Big Write for when you are stuck. • Lucky dip sentences.

Title of activity:

Target:

Resources required:

Instructions:

Catering for intervention or younger students:

Catering for extension or older students:

Other ways to use this resource:

Further P.D

BIG TALK FOR PRE-WRITERS

Big Talk for Pre-Writers will focus on supporting children who are not yet writing. Big Talk can occur in Early Childhood settings, in the first few Primary School years, or through intervention. This is an essential first day in implementing Big Write & VCOP in the Early Years and to support pre-writers. It is an interactive PD and the whole day is broken up with numerous games and activities that can be differentiated to suit multiple learning abilities, and where oral language is the focus. You'll leave confident and ready to support your pre-writers.

INTEGRATING VCOP INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND PLANNING

If you have ever said 'I love Big Write & VCOP, but I can't quite get my head around how Monday-Wednesday literacy will look in my classroom', then this is the session for you. It will clarify and clear up any misunderstandings, and ensure there is personalised question and answer time. It will provide you with a better understanding of how to plan and implement V.C.O.P integrated games and activities while teaching the English and Integrated Curriculum. You will partake in the process from planning, through to teaching/modelling, and then setting an engaging task. We will also re-model self-editing, breakdown buddies (red/green comments), and the Student Friendly Criterion Scale, to ensure you feel confident introducing them into the classroom, (If required.)

Also Available...

INTRODUCTION TO BIG WRITE & VCOP ASSESSMENT & DATA TRACKING

OR OUR MINI COURSES

ENHANCING TALK IN THE CLASSROOM & AT HOME
HOW TO RUN A WARM WRITE IN FOUNDATION
PERFECTING PUNCTUATION
OPEN YOUR EYES TO OPENERS
MAKING CONNECTIVES CLEARER
VIVACIOUS VOCABULARY

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