Year 2 Writing – Diary Entries

Purpose: to inform

Lesson Sequence

1. Research
2. Drama
3. Cold write
4. Capital letters and full stops
5. Plan
6. Improve (using Florence Nightingale)
7. Write
8. Edit

Key Vocabulary

diary	a book where someone writes about what happens each day
entry	one day's piece of writing in a diary
recount	writing that retells events that have already happened
chronological order	telling events in the order they happened
first person	writing using I, we and my
past tense	verbs showing something already happened, e.g. walked, went, was
time adverbial	a word or phrase showing when something happened, e.g. first, later that day
feelings	words describing how you felt, e.g. excited, proud, nervous

What is a diary entry? & How is it structured?

What is a diary entry?

A diary entry is a piece of recount writing where someone writes about events that have happened to them, usually on a particular day. It is written by the person it happened to, so it shares their own thoughts and feelings.

Key Features

- Written in the first person (I, we, my)
- Written in the past tense
- Events told in chronological (time) order
- Starts with the date
- Includes thoughts and feelings
- Uses time adverbials to link events
- Informal, chatty tone

Structure of a Diary Entry

Date: written at the top of the entry
Opening: a sentence introducing the day
Middle: what happened, told in order
Adverbials: link one event to the next
Ending: how you felt, or what happens next

Time Adverbials

First • Next • After that • Then • Later • Soon • Meanwhile • Before dawn • That evening • Finally • At last • In the end

Punctuation Checklist

- ☐ Capital letters for I, names, places and the start of sentences
- ☐ Full stops at the end of sentences
- ☐ Question marks (?)
- ☐ Exclamation marks (!) to show feelings
- ☐ Commas in a list
- ☐ Apostrophes for contracted words, e.g. didn't, I'm

"WAGOLL – Florence Nightingale

Thursday 4th November 1854

Dear Diary,

Today was one of the hardest days I have ever known. Before dawn, I walked through the wards at Scutari and saw hundreds of injured soldiers lying in the cold. First, I organised clean bandages and fresh water for the men. Next, I lit my lamp and moved from bed to bed, checking on each soldier. After that, I wrote letters home for those who could not write themselves. Later that night, I felt exhausted but proud, because I knew I had helped to save lives. Finally, as I sat down to rest, I wondered how much more there was still to do.

Write in the first person | Tell events in time order | Use time adverbials | Share my thoughts & feelings | Edit my work carefully