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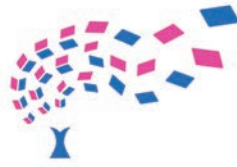
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# Hello!



**A**s I'm writing this, news of Rishi Sunak's autumn budget is fresh off the press, and with it an announcement of a boost to education funding that, although welcome, is perhaps still lacking.

Still, in brighter news, we've got your back with a whole slew of teaching ideas, expert insights and lesson plans. Our focus this month is on CPD and research, and on p58, Emma Jane Smith discusses how taking part in philosophy CPD changed her view of teaching; Dr Julian Grenier goes into the pros and cons of using research in the classroom on p52; and on p56 Nikki Cunningham-Smith gives us the run down on a behavioural approach to improve pupil-teacher relationships.

If you're more interested in reading, writing and 'rithmetic, we've got you covered there, too. Sue Cowley addresses the 'cult' of phonics, and how you can develop a more holistic approach to reading on p46; and John Bee walks us through how to use variation theory to unlock the maths curriculum for all learners on p36. If you're looking to develop your own little authors, look no further than p80, where popular author Catherine Doyle gives *A Christmas Carol* a new spin – don't forget to check out the accompanying podcast, too, to hear it all from Catherine herself.

We're also delighted to announce the winners of this year's Teach Primary Book Awards! With 32 astounding titles across four categories, judged by giants of the literary world such as Liz Flanagan, Konnie Huq and Brough Girling, there is sure to be one (or 10!) books to suit your class. A massive congrats to all our winners, and a heartfelt thank you to all that entered, and of course to our wonderful judges. Nothing brings us more joy than sharing epic story picks with you all.

I hope you all have a wonderful winter break, however you're celebrating, and that you get a chance to put your feet up. You've earned it!

*Charley*

Charley Rogers, editor  
 @TeachPrimaryEd1

*Don't miss our  
 next issue, on sale  
 7th January*

## POWERED BY...



**NICK EAST**

shares a six-week plan to develop map skills in KS1 geography, complete with downloadable resources

*"Create confident young geographers ready to explore the world in greater depth"*

p30



**EMMA CATE STOKES**

on why not having children doesn't make her a worse teacher than those who do

*"I have been told that when I have my own children I will understand my pupils better"*

p19



**ROB BIDDULPH**

on why the arts are just as important as STEM subjects, and deserve the same funding

*"Putting all of our eggs into the STEM basket is extraordinarily short-sighted"*

p62







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**We're all ears!**

We want to make sure our magazine is a brilliant resource for teachers and are always striving to improve. We love hearing from real teachers about what they liked and what they would change. Got feedback about this issue? Contact us via the details in the yellow box below – we'd love to hear from you!

**teach  
PRIMARY**

***We want to hear from you!***

Get in touch with your rants, comments, photos and ideas.



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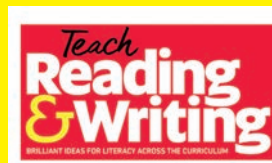
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We're delighted to announce the winners of this year's awards, chosen by our panel of expert judges. With 32 amazing titles listed, you're sure to find something to engage your class... get ready to find your new favourite story!

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# Breaktime

News | Interviews | Ideas | Resources | Research



## Man's best friend

The Wild at Heart Foundation has developed a new compassionate curriculum to help teach empathy and understanding in KS2. As part of the programme, children will be able to explore and better understand the symbiotic relationship that exists between dogs and their own mental wellbeing, whilst developing key skills in empathy, compassion, kindness and understanding. Be Kind has been developed alongside a team of passionate educators, to ensure that it's impactful, positive and inspiring. The programme is linked to the National Curriculum, and it's free to sign up and take part. Learn more at [tinyurl.com/tp-WildAtHeartBeKind](https://tinyurl.com/tp-WildAtHeartBeKind)

## 3 INSTANT LESSONS... (You're welcome)



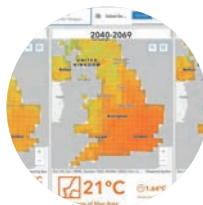
### ECOFILIX

A new streaming programme has launched to raise awareness and advance three of the UN' SDGs (Climate Action, Life Below Water, and Life on Land) through exclusive features. Use code TEACHPRIMARY2021 for a month's free access. Code expires 31 Dec 2021. Visit [tinyurl.com/tp-Ecoflix](https://tinyurl.com/tp-Ecoflix)



### FOOTBALL READING QUIZ

The Literacy Trust has released a free, 30-minute interactive quiz about football and reading. Hosted by Match of the Day favourite, Jake Wilson, alongside award-winning authors, the recording is available free for teachers and pupils at [tinyurl.com/tp-FRQ](https://tinyurl.com/tp-FRQ)



### CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The Met Office and Esri UK have teamed up to produce a series of resources exploring the current climate of the UK, how it could change over the course of the 21st century, and the impact it will have on our lives in the UK. Visit [tinyurl.com/tp-MetOfficeClimate](https://tinyurl.com/tp-MetOfficeClimate)

## →→→ TODAY'S **TOP** **RESOURCES**



### Improve instructions in KS1

Children in Years 1 and 2 will love reading the tongue-in-cheek model text, explaining top tips for keeping their teacher happy; then coming up with their own instructions and learning about imperative verbs on the way! Download the pack today, with a FREE 14-day trial, at [bit.ly/PlazoomTeacherHappy](https://bit.ly/PlazoomTeacherHappy)



Q &amp; A

## More money for education

As part of the autumn budget announcements, chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced an extra £4.7bn of funding by 2024-25 for the core schools budget in England. The government has also committed to tripling investment to create 30,000 special school places, and an extra £1.8bn is pledged to expand 'support to recover children and young people's lost learning as a result of the pandemic'. This brings the total investment in Covid catch-up to £4.9bn. The *Guardian* reports Sunak's comments that funding will be returned 'to 2010 levels, in an increase worth £1,500 per pupil'. Read the full budget and spending review (education summary on page three) at [tinyurl.com/tp-Budget2021](https://tinyurl.com/tp-Budget2021)



## Union slams teachers' pay freeze



NASUWT-The Teachers' Union, has released a statement welcoming the chancellor's decision to end the government pay freeze on teachers' salaries next year. Dr Patrick Roach, general secretary of the NASUWT, said: "This is a pay freeze that should not have been inflicted in the first place. To prevent further damage, teachers' pay must be increased to finally reflect the true value of the highly qualified and experienced professionals within the education sector." Read the full statement at [tinyurl.com/tp-NASUWtpayfreeze](https://tinyurl.com/tp-NASUWtpayfreeze)

# 76%

OF UK SCHOOL LEADERS BELIEVE THEIR SCHOOL IS UNPREPARED FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY, ACCORDING TO RESEARCH FROM ECCLESIASTICAL

## Look ahead | Book ahead



### SWITCH-OFF FORTNIGHT

Partnering with the Energy Saving Trust Foundation, the Pod's free flagship annual

energy campaign for schools, Switch-off Fortnight, is back from 8-21 November. [tinyurl.com/tp-SoF](https://tinyurl.com/tp-SoF)

### PRIMARY SCIENCE CONFERENCE

Herts for Learning's annual conference to inspire and enthuse science leaders of all experiences is back for 2021. The event will run online on 1 December.

[tinyurl.com/tp-HfLPrimaryScience](https://tinyurl.com/tp-HfLPrimaryScience)



## Nick Sheridan

Journalist and presenter

### What was primary school like for you?

Both my parents were primary school teachers, so primary school for me was sort of an extension of home life! My homework was always immaculately done, because if it didn't pass muster upon inspection by my dad the night before, then I would have to start from scratch! Being an enormous show-off, I loved subjects like drama, English, music – but was absolutely HOPELESS at subjects like maths and science. My highlight was probably my appearance as the Fox in our production of *Chicken Little* – my performance of a much-misunderstood character was very well reviewed I'll have you know

### How do you hope KS2 children and teachers will use your book?

Every part of *Breaking News* is designed to encourage pupils to develop their skills of critical analysis. It's an educational tool that can be used by teachers with lots of different learning outcomes in mind – I hope it will help them in their lesson planning to give structure to a subject that can often feel a bit nebulous and difficult to attack in a classroom setting.

### What was the most shocking fact you discovered while writing the book?

The story that I still can't believe is real is this one: a woman arrested for trying to dodge an evening curfew in the United States. Only dog-walkers were allowed out of their houses, so this lady put a leash around her husband's neck and walked him around the block! I thought I was reading fake news but no! It's 100% true!



Nick Sheridan is an award-winning journalist and television presenter. His book, *Breaking News: how to tell what's real from what's rubbish* (£9.99, Simon & Schuster) is out on 23 December





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# 7 NEWS STORIES

*you might have missed*

## HITTING HARD

A new Public Accounts Committee (PAC) report has found that deprived local areas and schools have been 'hit hardest' by the Department for Education's (DfE) school funding changes. The new national funding formula introduced in 2018-19 has caused re-distribution of funding from more deprived schools to less deprived schools, and average per-pupil funding has fallen in real terms by 1.2 per cent for the most deprived fifth of schools, but increased by 2.9 per cent for the least deprived fifth. Changes to the pupil premium funding also mean schools have lost out on £90m of funding to support disadvantaged children. Read the full report at [tinyurl.com/tp-PACschoolfunding](https://tinyurl.com/tp-PACschoolfunding)

## WIN £5K

The Rees Jeffreys Road Fund, whose mission is to 'deliver better roads and streets, to improve services for road users, and to promote the appeal and enjoyment of using streets and roads,' is offering up to £5,000 in prizes for schools across the UK. The competition asks schools to answer the question 'How do we improve the way that our roads and streets work for us in a changing world?' for a chance to win two prizes of £5,000 and four prizes of £2,000 across the primary and secondary categories. It is free to enter, and closes on 19 November 2021. More info at [tinyurl.com/tp-RoadFund](https://tinyurl.com/tp-RoadFund)



## REIGN OF TERROR

Dame Alison Peacock, chief executive of the Chartered College of Teaching, told the Times Education Commission late last month that Ofsted imposes "a reign of terror", and that chief inspector Amanda Spielman believes teachers "should be like robots". Tes reports. The meeting also heard from former teacher Ryan Wilson, who called for Ofsted to be replaced. Find out more about the Times Education Commission at [tinyurl.com/tp-TimesEdCommission](https://tinyurl.com/tp-TimesEdCommission)

## EDUCATION RECOVERY

The Education Policy Institute (EPI) has published phase two of its report into learning loss as a result of Covid-19 in English schools. The new report, released on 21 October, models the long-term impact of the pandemic on future earnings of current learners, finding that 'pupils are each likely lose at least £16,000 in earnings, rising to £46,000 in a worst-case scenario if the government fails to intervene'. The study also found that learning loss is not equal across all parts of the country, and pupils in parts of the north of England and the Midlands have seen learning losses that are greater than those in other regions, while poorer pupils nationally have also lost more learning. See the full report at [tinyurl.com/tp-EPIphasetwo](https://tinyurl.com/tp-EPIphasetwo)

## DIGITAL SKILLS FEST

Manchester Digital has announced the return of its Digital Skills Festival. The event will comprise of a week-long programme from 7-11 February 2022 that will 'unite industry and education to tackle the common goal of building a strong future for the digital and tech sector'. The schedule will include the return of face-to-face events – restrictions permitting – as well as virtual slots, after last year's line-up took place entirely online due to Covid-19. More information and the full programme is available at [tinyurl.com/tp-ManchesterDigital](https://tinyurl.com/tp-ManchesterDigital)

## CAUSING HAVOC

Geoff Barton, leader of the Association of Schools and College Leaders (ASCL), has said that Covid is continuing to cause 'educational havoc', as pupil and staff absence remain high through the autumn term. A survey of 567 headteachers and principals of schools and colleges in England, conducted by the ASCL, shows that 95% (537) said teaching and learning had been impacted by Covid-related pupil and staff absence during the autumn term so far, with 31% (173) saying the impact was severe, although the report summary does state that the majority of responses came from secondary schools. See the DfE data at [tinyurl.com/tp-CovidAbsence](https://tinyurl.com/tp-CovidAbsence)

## GENDER PENSION GAP

New analysis of Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) data by financial services mutual Wesleyan, reveals the average pension paid to female teachers in 2020-21 is 28 per cent less than that paid to male teachers. The report showed that in 2020-21, female teachers received just £11,581 a year, compared to £16,034 for males. One factor likely to influence this gulf is pension growth lost when members take time to have and raise children. Wesleyan's research also found that two in five (38 per cent) of female teachers in England are unaware that taking maternity leave will reduce their final pension pot. This rises to more than half (51 per cent) of female teachers in their 20s. See the TPS data at [tinyurl.com/tp-PensionGap](https://tinyurl.com/tp-PensionGap)





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# 6 WAYS to make active learning work in your class

Bringing activity, teamwork and fun into everyday lessons will encourage children to recover lost skills and develop new ones, says **Jon Smedley**...

## 1 | ACTIVE STARTERS FOR LASER FOCUS

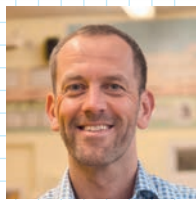
Active learning can get your lesson off to a flying start. Let's take a lesson on addition. You can do this with students sitting down and working through the sums. Or you can give each child a number card, put some music on and get them dancing around the room. Once the music stops, they have to join up with the student closest to them and add their two cards together. Take examples from around the room and write the sums on the whiteboard. The game continues so pupils have a chance to pair up with another person and complete a different sum.

## 2 | OUTDOOR LEARNING

With 'exploring the world around us' in the primary curriculum, why not take Reception children on a walk through the local area or around the playing field and when they come back to the classroom, they can draw what they have seen, whether that's buildings, nature or people. When working on sound and letter recognition, pupils can go on a lost letter hunt, searching high and low for lower case and capital letters hidden around the playground.

## 3 | RAINY DAY ACTIVITIES

Sometimes the UK weather can get the best of our outdoor learning intentions. In torrential rain and gale force winds, students can still move their bodies, get their hearts beating and endorphins flowing. In the classroom, kids can become meaning detectives and hunt around the room for synonyms that match the word on their sheet. Or you can give pupils word cards, and ask them to hop or skip around the hall to find a partner to form a compound word with.



Jon Smedley is a former primary teacher and sports co-ordinator, and founder of Teach Active. Find 50 free active lesson plans at [teachactive.org](https://teachactive.org)

## 4 | BETTER CONCENTRATION AND MEMORY RETENTION

A recent study found that regular physical activity has a positive effect on children's developing brains. So, when you are working on something in class that requires memory retention, such as learning and revising the times tables, it's good to get pupils moving too. They can jump over a small bean bag each time they say a number as they work their way through the times table. This type of activity helps students to remember better.

## 5 | SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Active learning can be a useful tool when used with small groups of children who need extra support. One of the schools we work with decided to focus on active lessons with a group of pupils who were underachieving. Eight Y5 boys who were classed as vulnerable were put into a group and the teachers focused on active learning lessons with them. It worked so well for them that they not only met expected standards at the end of Y5 but stayed on track throughout Y6.

## 6 | RECOVERING CONFIDENCE

It may look as though students back at school don't have a care in the world, but even the youngest children will have sensed some of the turbulence caused by the pandemic. Help pupils to recover their confidence and make up lost learning through team games, with the emphasis on fun. An English lesson where children work in groups by playing charades to act out the meanings of new words is a great way to boost communication in an enjoyable way.



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\* Specifications may vary by model and region



Anti-bullying ambassador programmes work a treat in improving behaviour and empathy in school

# Jamie Brewis

 @StopsleyPrimary  stopsleyprimary.co.uk



Facebook, Instagram, TikTok... just keeping up with the different social media apps is exhausting, let alone dealing with the potential for unkind behaviour and bullying that they invite. Couple that with judges' comments on the numerous TV talent shows, very public spats between our beloved celebrities, or even the behaviour of our world leaders, and our children are exposed to some pretty poor examples of how to treat others and deal with any sort of conflict that arises in their lives.

One of the drawbacks of social media is that everyone's thoughts and opinions are readily available to anyone and there is a growing divide between viewpoints, ranging from our footballers' stance on ending racism to what people should be eating with their Sunday roast! There are examples everywhere of people attacking others for not sharing the view point that they hold. The sort of arguments that were once the preserve of an English sit-com's brandy-fuelled Christmas dinner are now played out in full view of others, propelled by the safety of the keyboard and not even the consequence of being denied any trifle if they don't pack it in!

As part of the recent re-design of our curriculum, we asked every member of the school community to identify the characteristics and outcomes they felt were most important for children to develop during their time with us. Empathy, diversity, preparation for a successful life, and kindness were identified and became key drivers behind our new curriculum.

We based our curriculum around the UN's Global Goals, which, alongside the #changemaker projects we undertake to help achieve these goals, empower our children to make a difference to their own lives, their community and their world, both now and in the future. While the Global Goals are fantastic drivers, we also felt the children would benefit from support in developing stronger relationships with one another and knowing how to deal with conflict independently outside of the classroom. To achieve this, we decided to introduce Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (ABAs).



Ambassador training – part of the Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign – has built the resilience and character of our children by providing guidance in decision making, active citizenship, life and career skills. The applicants also experience a real-world process, as in order to be appointed, pupils must write a letter of application and are then shortlisted to interview by a panel of members of staff.

At breaktimes, ABAs are easily recognisable by their green caps. They work across the play areas, taking responsibility for engaging with each year group and leading on games and activities, modelling how to be a great friend and how to organise games so that everyone is included, is clear on the rules and that everyone has fun! The ABAs are also there to support children who might be feeling down or a bit lonely. They keep a watchful eye on our friendship bench where pupils can sit if they feel they need a friend or some help; and are a sympathetic ear for those that might need it – only for the children currently but we may extend this

to SLT support in the future! Finally, of course, they are available to support with conflicts that might arise. They model how children need to listen to one another, appreciate their point of view, acknowledge one another's feelings and come up with a solution that resolves the problem – although the preventative work they do has had a remarkable impact on the frequency of these incidents.

Ambassadors also organise regular special events on the importance of friendship, tolerance, anti-bullying and simple acts of kindness. They deliver lessons to all year groups, educating their peers about friendship, bullying behaviour and how to promote a culture that celebrates difference. They also take the lead on anti-bullying and online safety campaigns and help to keep their peers safe. They are currently working to organise activities annually to celebrate National Anti-Bullying Week. **TP**

*Jamie Brewis is deputy headteacher at Stopsley Community Primary School and Nursery.*

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## ¿HABLAS ESPAÑOL EN LA ESCUELA?

[@SchoolParklane](#) [parklane-gst.org](#)

### Why we teach all pupils Spanish, and you should, too

Imagine a school that brings foreign language and culture lessons into every class, from maths to art and everything in between. Language learning is no longer confined to a modern foreign languages (MFL) class once a week. Instead, it is fully integrated throughout the students' day, every day, helping to widen horizons and raise aspirations. Imagine a school where all students are trained in the skills they need to become bilingual future leaders, with broad cultural appreciation and in-depth understanding.

At Park Lane Primary School and Nursery, a Griffin Schools Trust school, we do just that. Spanish language lessons are incorporated into every subject we teach. Teachers greet students and take the register in Spanish, for example. Students recite Spanish numbers in maths lessons, and they use Spanish names for colours in their art lessons. Dedicated Spanish language lessons also take place at least once a week, in 40-minute segments. In addition, teachers assess and track students' language learning progress to ensure aspirational achievement goals are met, as we work towards bilingual fluency together.

Why Spanish? Most schools in the UK use French as their MFL. After all, France is our closest neighbour, and there are longstanding historical and cultural ties between our nations that

make French a popular choice. On a global scale, however, French is a less commonly spoken language, ranking seventh overall. By contrast, Spanish is the fourth most popular spoken language in the world; some 559 million people speak it in over 20 countries. It is widespread throughout the Americas and parts of Africa and Asia, including the Philippines. Spain is also a top travel destination. From 2017-2019, over 18 million tourists from the UK visited Spain each year. In today's globalised world, Spanish language skills are more important than ever before.

The Spanish language is also closer to English than some of the other most popular global languages, such as Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, or Arabic. This makes it easier for English speakers to achieve fluency. It is a Romance language based on Latin, just like French, but its pronunciation rules are clearer and easier for younger learners to grasp. Moreover, many Spanish words have been adopted in English, such as *rodeo*, *canyon*, and *suave*. So, your students will love discovering that they already know a few words!

Spain has a rich history and culture, making it an excellent choice for MFL at the primary level. We take pride in celebrating Spanish culture throughout our school. Spanish music, such as classical guitar, is regularly played as ambient music. The children enjoy learning about Spanish food, sports, and traditions. In

December, for instance, they explored how Christmas is celebrated differently in Spain. It's lovely to see how something universal like Christmas can bridge cultures and contribute to the children's understanding. It has broadened their minds and introduced them to new cultural ideas.

It's also vitally important for language learners to hear native speakers. This gives them a good appreciation of how people really speak a language, with exposure to regional accents, idioms, and slang. For this reason, we often have native Spanish speaking visitors in the school. As part of our work towards the British Council's International Schools Award and to further enhance our linguistic and cultural experiences, Park Lane Primary School and Nursery will be making links with Spanish-speaking schools in Spain or Latin America.

Bringing a bilingual curriculum into your school broadens your students' horizons. Students feel inspired to learn and grow, to travel and experience other cultures up close. As proud parent Sue Chetwynd commented: "My son has discovered a love for language through the Spanish lessons at Park Lane. In fact, we are planning a trip to Spain next year, so he can put his lessons into practice and get to see the country he is now so passionate about." We love to hear this kind of feedback and see the real-life impact of bilingual education.

As you can see from our story, MFL does not have to be limited to a single weekly lesson. Schools have the power to embed language across all subjects, just as we do. The enthusiasm of our students, parents, and teachers for this approach has been phenomenal. I hope more schools in the UK will be inspired by the success of our Spanish bilingual curriculum. **TP**

*Alexandra Ladbury is head of school at Park Lane Primary School and Nursery.*



## Make time-reading one of your classroom rituals

Practising skills little and often makes a huge difference to children's competence and confidence. As a teacher, you know this. You know that children feel more secure and learn better when classroom routines are clear and consistent.

### Learn to tell the time – the easy way!



At EasyRead Time Teacher (ERTT), we're passionate about helping kids learn to tell the time. And we've seen how effective the little and often approach can be.

One year three teacher told us how she chooses a child to be 'Time Lord' at the start of every day. The Time Lord's job is to read the time on the class clock at the end of each lesson. With the Time Lord's help, the class can get out to play or off to lunch on time.

The ERTT classroom clock is ideal for this. You can position it at eye-level at the front of the class, so children can see it easily. The clock face is designed to make telling the time simpler than using a traditional analogue clock. As well as bold digits representing hours, the minute numbers are also clear. Half and quarter hours are marked too.

The clock face goes hand in

hand with a clever step-by-step process for telling the time:

1. Read the number at the end of the long hand
2. Say which side the long hand is pointing to (minutes past or minutes to)
3. Read the number at the end of the short hand.

**So using the three steps, the time on the right reads as "8 minutes to 2". It really is that easy.**

Kids can pick up the three steps very quickly and will love the responsibility of reading the clock throughout the day, whether they're the Time Lord or not. Soon you'll find that they have built up the complex skill of telling the time quite simply, through repeated, daily practice.

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*Each issue we ask a contributor to pen a note they would love to send*

## A letter to... those who can't help but ask

I don't have kids, but that doesn't make me a worse teacher, says  
**Emma Cate Stokes...**



I am a teacher. I am not a parent. This doesn't mean I am not a good teacher. Sadly, there is still a prevalent narrative on social media and

within popular culture that being a parent automatically equates to being a better teacher. This is not only false but it is, at best, insulting to all of the childless teachers out there, and at worst, can be damaging for a whole multitude of reasons.

As I have hit my thirties, I have been subjected to countless questions enquiring as to when I will be having children. I have been asked by colleagues, family members, previous SLT, and parents of the children I teach. The reality is I won't. But, that is no one's business but mine and my partner's. Often my answer isn't enough for those who ask. I am regularly told I will change my mind, that I will feel differently if it is my own child, and that my life will be fuller, amongst other things. A common thread running through all of these comments is that by being a mother I will be, by default, better at my job. I will be more compassionate, understanding, and patient. No thought is given to the fact that I am already compassionate, understanding, and patient! The assumption is those qualities will automatically grow if I have children.

I am not alone in this experience. Many (predominantly female) teachers without

children have used social media to report similar experiences. For many women, being child-free is a choice, but this isn't always the case. Some women would love to have a child but are unable to have a baby for reasons beyond their control, and to be subjected to this line of questioning is an extremely painful experience.

Mental health and wellbeing is a popular talking point at the moment, especially in schools, and yet the impact these kinds of suggestions can have on mental health and wellbeing is rarely considered. Telling someone who can't have children that they would be a better teacher if they were a parent can be extremely damaging to someone's mental health.

Aside from that, the notion that you have to have your own child to know what is best for teaching them is quite frankly a ridiculous one. I have been told that when I have my own children I will understand my pupils better. A colleague was told that when she has children she will be able to empathise with parents at parents evening. This is nonsense.

We do not argue that a doctor who has had cancer is better at treating cancer. We know that doctors have had years upon years of training to do what they do. We trust their expertise. Yet often the same respect is not extended to teachers without children.

Teachers have extensive training. We have PGCEs, BAs, MAs, NPQs, some of us even have doctorates. Even more

importantly, we have experience. Tonnes of it. We know what we are doing. Teaching 30 Year 2s how to regroup in maths relies on my subject knowledge, knowledge of how children learn, planning, assessment, and my relationships with my pupils. It does not rely on whether I am a mother.

Of course, that is not to say that parents are not incredible teachers. They are! Teachers who are parents have experiences that will help shape their teaching practice just as those who do not have children do. A parent may have excellent time management skills that come from juggling parenting and full-time work, but that is not to say that those without children do not also have time management skills that have developed from different experiences.

On the flip side, a teacher without children may have more time to attend weekend conferences and engage in pedagogical research, but that does mean that a teacher with children does not also inform their teaching practice through the reading of educational books and attending virtual CPD. All our life experiences shape us in some way. One is not better than the other.

Ultimately, we all do the best we can and want the very best for the children we teach. That doesn't come from being a parent. That comes from being a teacher.

*From Emma Cate*

*Emma Cate is part of the T&L and Curriculum team at her school in East Sussex. She is currently the lead for KS1, research, and early maths and reading.*

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# How I do it

Use recycled materials for this art/science/citizenship lesson on fish fossils for LKS2

**MANDY BARRETT**

# 1

## FOSSILS

We begin by drawing fish, fish fossils and fish bones. The lesson is made memorable with the arrival of real sardines, (on a bed of ice to curb the stench) our children then draw these in different ways. They use continuous line drawings, draw with a variety of media and fully explore the shape of the fish."



**A**s a school we're working hard to create a more sustainable practice while designing new art schemes of work for our children. One of the many things we are considering is the use of materials. How can we look after the environment while developing interesting and engaging art projects? After contacting local

businesses, we discovered a printing and sign writing company who sent bursting skips of heavy duty, plastic vinyl to the tip. It struck me that we could help this company reduce the plastic it sent to landfill, while teaching our children the importance of recycling beyond their homes.

o o o o >

## MATERIALS

Ask the children to work both individually and in groups to share their drawing knowledge. What is it like drawing with biro compared to pencil? If you draw with wax crayon then add watercolour paint over the top, what do you see? Make opportunities within the lesson for the children to discover the answers to these questions independently and then share the findings with their peers.

# 2

## ADDING SCIENCE

We move on to looking at fish fossils and fish bones; both linking to the Science curriculum in Year 3. The children look carefully at the bone structure of the fish and make comparisons to a human skeleton. All while developing their ability to observe and use a range of drawing media.

# 3

# 4

## CUT AND STICK

Their final image is then created using the sticky backed vinyl. Henri Matisse famously said that creating his colourful cut-out images was like "drawing with scissors". This is the perfect opportunity for children to develop accurate cutting skills. Let pupils select their favourite colours, and then cut the vinyl into bone shapes. Help them peel away the back of the vinyl, allowing the child to fix the piece onto the paper. After repeating the process, a fish starts to appear. Fish have very tiny bones, and this ensures the children spend time developing accuracy and building up resilience when it comes to peeling the backing from the vinyl.



## CLIMATE AWARENESS

Talk with your class about the importance of looking after the environment and the different ways to do so. Do pupils recycle at home? What do they think you could do as a school to make use of 'another man's rubbish' in your local community?

# 5



Mandy Barrett is a specialist art teacher at Gomersal Primary School, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire.

[gomersalprimaryschoolart.blogspot.com](http://gomersalprimaryschoolart.blogspot.com)

[@GomersalArt](https://twitter.com/GomersalArt)



# My Letters and Sounds

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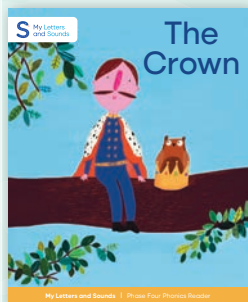
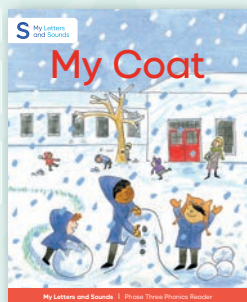
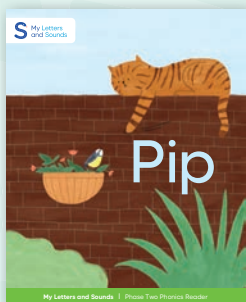
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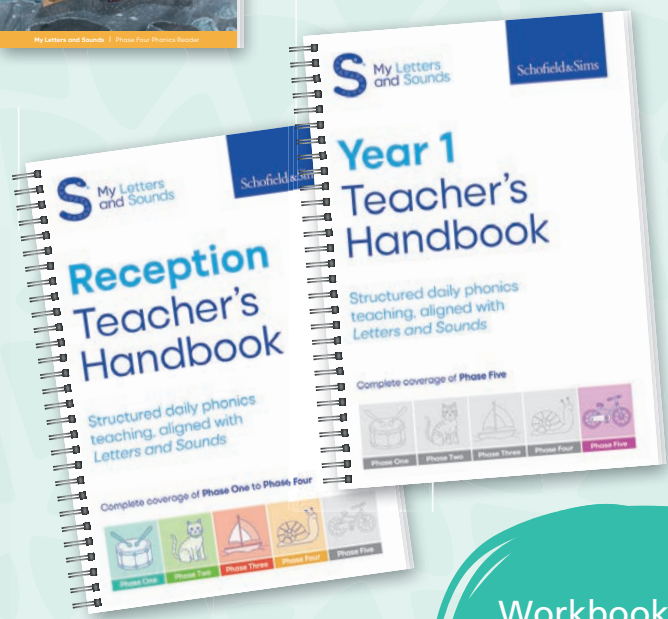
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**UNDERCOVER TEACHER**

*Our anonymous educator gets something off their chest*

# Love in the classroom - how I married my colleague

**S**taffroom romances. The great titivator of playground and school-run gossip – but they do happen. Which is not a surprise given the long hours, high stress and working conditions that are not conducive to meeting someone outside of the school you teach at. No surprise that a lot of teachers end up marrying other teachers. So how do you meet the love of your life in the staffroom without becoming gossip fodder and blowing up your job in the process? Having just married a fellow teacher, I have a few ideas...

**THE MEET CUTE**

Every great romance film, to quote Ernst Lubitsch, has its Meet Cute. That moment when the birds sing, the sun comes out from behind the rain cloud and all the stars align. Which in a school will be somewhere near the photocopier. Which is not such a bad thing. The bit with finding a boyfriend or girlfriend that can get missed in all those furtive glances and flirtatious comments about giving the paper draw a good filling is the friend part. My amour and I bonded over a class I handed over to her: they were utter hell spawn and the worst class we had ever taught.

But how to take that first moment and connection of friendship into the realm of dating? Well, proto-dating. Dates that are not dates, those one-to-one gatherings that are totally innocent. Like meandering around book shops looking for books for the class library. Total deniability if you bump into a parent. Or your headteacher.

It also gives you time to get to know this possible paramour without the pressure of dating, or the embarrassment of asking out a colleague to discover the feelings were not reciprocated.

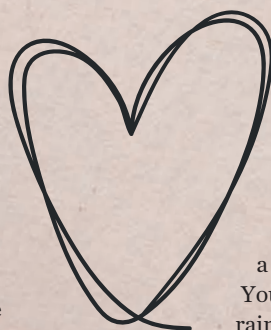
**COURTING**

You like this person. You enjoy spending time with them. You may well have accidentally met their family already because you got the time you were meeting them wrong. So how do you turn up the romance while keeping an exit strategy in case it doesn't work out?

Well, it turns out our grandparents were right about some things. Proper, old-fashioned courting: drinks, dinner, picnics, trips to the zoo or a museum.

Anywhere and everywhere that will not end with coffee back at someone's house. If a romance is worth it, give it time to grow and develop. Just do your geography homework as you will need to find places to visit that are not in your local town or city. Or even in your own county. A 30min drive time is a minimum to avoid the prying eyes of parents and colleagues.

If you are desiring to spend a lot of time with someone at work and outside of work, build the romance. A school holiday is a good time for courting as you will both be free and could plan to see each other most days.



*“Try to stop  
flirting over the  
photocopier”*

**TO BE OR NOT TO BE?**

And now is the crunch point: are you all in or is it time to bow out gracefully? Yes, you might have had a chased kiss at some point but it is a lot harder to ignore having seen your colleague without their pants on. So it is time to have a proper conversation about where this romance is going. Has it been a bit of fun or has the lust turned into love? You can always do this in a rowboat in the rain if it lacks Nicholas Spark's spark.

**AFTER THE HAPPY ENDING**

So girl has got boy/girl, but then what? First of all, quietly check your school or county's HR policy. While your private life is private, there can be issues if one of you is involved in the performance management of the other. Otherwise, your private life is your private life. Maybe drop into conversation with your TA that you and Mx Smith from Y3 will be going to the cinema together. Try not to spend too much time in each other's classrooms: children are way more observant than we give them credit for.

In school, be professional friends. Try to stop flirting over the photocopier. And definitely do not go into the stationary cupboard together. Even if you really do only need red pens. Try to carpool if staying over: it's great for the planet and means all that afterschool moaning can be left in the car. Home is for home, work is for working.

As for our happy ending, we are married and hoping to add our own member to the class in the future. **TP**

*The writer is a primary school teacher in England.*



# WHY I LOVE...

## The Whole of Me

### ABOUT ME:

**NAME:**

Richard McKelvey

**JOB ROLE:**

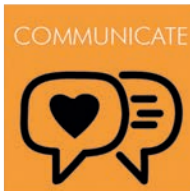
English lead

**SCHOOL:**

Antsey First School, Herts

**FAVOURITE FEATURE:**

In one word? Adaptability. The assets are so versatile, I can use them to suit the needs of my class.



### TALKING ABOUT: THE WHOLE OF ME

#### How did you hear about The Whole of Me?

I had worked with the co-creator, Philip Davis, as a creative consultant before, so when I discovered he was involved with a new product I was already convinced it would be something I would use in my classroom.

I discussed with the head teacher and identified that The Whole of Me (TWOM) would fit perfectly into an Inset we had planned focusing on pupil wellbeing.

We always have the whole child in our minds, so everyone got excited about using this new toolkit.

I started trialling it in my class focusing on the story and using the movements and soon decided to use it for my first English unit.

#### How have you used TWOM in school?

We all use it in slightly different ways. I use elements of it in literacy lessons. The headteacher uses it for PPA cover, becoming part of the wellbeing curriculum, and Early Years use it for relaxation sessions after lunch. We have really adapted it to suit our children and what we want them to get from it.

In my Y1 and 2 class last year, TWOM gave them an authentic way to express themselves through music, movement, song and writing.

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#### What difference has it made?

It is a brilliant resource to connect the EYFS with KS1. I had a few children with SEND and TWOM was incredibly calming. You could tell when we had done it in the morning, as the afternoons were really chilled! We also use it in forest school. They love being still and listening to the stories. I could almost see their wellbeing improving.

I asked the children what they thought TWOM helped them with. Of all the many positive comments one stuck out: "We get better at listening to our feelings and our emotions."

The children really do get in touch with the emotional parts of TWOM.

#### What is your favourite part of TWOM?

Later in the term, the headteacher was speaking to me after using TWOM, saying: "I cannot believe the vocabulary in your class when we talk about emotions. It's amazing. They have such a rich language to describe how they feel."

TWOM is inclusive by default. You don't need to adjust it or change it. It doesn't require much set up time at all, and it's all very intuitive. The user interface is very good.

But most importantly, the impact it has on children is phenomenal, so it's very easy for teachers to get excited about.

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# THINK OF MATHS LIKE A GAME OF JENGA...

Maths can be tricky, but teacher enthusiasm and firm foundations are key to making learning stick...

 whizz.com

“I’m not good at fractions so we’ll go through this together.” This was a sentence uttered by a colleague while I was observing the class several years ago. At the time, it made me go cold but also reminded me that maths is a tricky subject, and how positive role models for children are important and making maths fun and engaging can help. I don’t agree with the current trend that we are seeing in the media and some TV advertising campaigns that ‘it’s ok not to be good at maths,’ and teacher enthusiasm is key to turning this around.

However, for primary school teachers delivering learning across a range of topics, maths can certainly be one of the most challenging. I taught in primary schools for 20 years and know how difficult engaging children in maths can be.

## Why is maths hard?

One reason is that the answers to mathematical questions are either right or wrong. Children can get hung up on this early on. There are also so multiple topics which are all interconnected, so if firm foundations are not established in one area, progress will be affected as overall learning develops. It’s a bit like a game of Jenga where all the pieces of the puzzle need to be in place at the bottom level to build the tower successfully and to ensure it doesn’t crumble and fall in the future.

A further challenge when it comes to teaching maths

successfully, is that it is a subject full of abstract concepts which can be difficult to grasp. Here, it’s important to make maths real. This might be by manipulating objects, counting coins or physically moving items to create understanding. Then it is possible to progress to drawing pictures and then understanding of the abstract concept. Although they never made a physical appearance in the classroom, my pet Schnauzers would frequently present us with maths problems successfully solved through drawings and pictorial representation!

This ‘concrete, pictorial, abstract’ theory was pioneered by American psychologist Jerome Bruner and is used as an effective method of teaching maths mastery. Workbooks simply become a record of what achieved rather than an instruction manual.

Equipment is key to this concept. However, I found some older children used to feel they had ‘failed’ if they needed to use resources such as base ten equipment, for example. They were often reluctant to ‘get practical’ and felt it was like taking a step back. One group of Y4 high attainers said they thought it was ‘cheating’ to use the resources when they were stuck on a problem. Shifting classroom culture to ensure all ages and abilities can choose which resource to use to solve a problem successfully is the ideal scenario.

## Allow mistakes

A further challenge for teachers is that the new curriculum is less instructional than the old National Numeracy Strategy which included more of a ‘how to guide’. Head teachers who are succeeding have brought in maths leads who really know their subject and this cascades down through the other teaching staff to ensure they have all the tools, resources and support in place to improve outcomes.

While we must aim to make maths practical and fun with physical resources and pictorial representation, we should still emphasise the ‘why’ of learning is to remember and retain. That said, maths anxiety is also a real issue. Here it’s vital that teachers know their class and know the children. Anxiety can manifest itself as a naughty or disruptive student or equally a quiet child. I used to play carefully selected popular music as children entered the classroom, setting an easy task on the board which they could get on with as soon as they sat down to erase any anxiety. They soon noticed if I forgot to play the music!

It’s important to develop a culture where it’s ok to make mistakes. Encourage everyone to remember that we often learn more if mistakes are made. Make the classroom a positive learning environment by fostering enjoyment. In this way, each piece of the Jenga puzzle can be carefully put in place to ensure solid foundations for further learning and attaining life-long mathematical skills. **TP**

*Fiona Goddard has 20 years of teaching experience, and is now an education consultant for Whizz Education.*





## How we raised the Profile of Maths at VALLEY INVICTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

We trialled **Maths-Whizz** in 2020, and now all of our 220 students have been using Whizz Education's virtual tutor for a whole academic year.



**The main benefit is the individual tutoring aspect of the solution which works at different levels. The children are all still doing maths and are engaged but are all working at different stages and at rate which suits them.**

In terms of results, obviously last year was a bit different with the restrictions and lockdowns. We saw our progression rates slow in a range of subjects due to the pandemic except maths, which remained steady, and this is due to the children's

access to Maths-Whizz. It's been such a vital tool to be able to scaffold to their ability. It means they have been able to engage with maths learning at home, while their parents carry on with their lives.

While students have been able to attend school, 87% of our children making accelerated progress when completing their recommended amount of Maths Whizz. This means the children had advanced further than their chronological age compared with the number of weeks exposed to the virtual tutor.

Whizz Education provides email updates, ideas and competitions to keep everyone involved. We also get data drops of most successful students, plus strengths and weaknesses for all individual classes so we can highlight and reward students.

Overall, as well as experiencing learning gains across our school during some of the most challenging times, Maths-Whizz has helped us raise the profile of maths at Valley Invicta and we are proud of the progress of our students.

Comments by **Josh Still, Maths Subject Leader and Specialist Resource Provision Lead Teacher, Valley Invicta Primary School at Leybourne Chase**



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# WHY I LOVE...

## The WellComm Primary Toolkit

### ABOUT ME:

#### NAME:

Nicky Martin

#### JOB ROLE:

Senior inclusion consultant at North Star Inclusion Advisory Team

#### FAVOURITE FEATURE:

The Book of Ideas. It gives easy to follow strategies that specifically target the areas of need identified by the assessment



### TALKING ABOUT: WELLCOMM PRIMARY TOOLKIT

#### “ Why did you introduce WellComm?

According to the latest data released by the Department for Education (DfE, June 2021), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are the most common type of primary special educational need in state schools. Our service works closely with our partners in NHS Speech and Language Therapy Services, and we know that they are inundated with referrals for assessment and advice – which is why we started to use GL Assessment's WellComm Primary Toolkit.

Just like the WellComm Early Years Toolkit, which we've used for many years, WellComm Primary identifies specific aspects of a child's speech and language and social communication skills that are a cause for concern. It also provides the resources needed to plan targeted intervention within schools and settings in the accompanying 'Big Book of Ideas.'

#### “ How has it been used?

WellComm is being used to support schools and settings as they identify need and plan targeted interventions for children with SLCN. The information gathered through the short screening activities also supports onward referrals to speech and language therapy services, when required. Together, this means that more immediate action can be taken within schools and settings straight away, and it's a more efficient use of NHS resources for children who have more complex SLCN needs.

#### Contact:

For more

information visit

[gl-assessment.co.uk](http://gl-assessment.co.uk)

[info@gl-assessment.co.uk](mailto:info@gl-assessment.co.uk)

#### “ What difference has it made?

WellComm has made a huge difference.

To take a recent example, it was unclear if one child's learning difficulties were the result of having English as an additional language or a special educational need. Screening with WellComm quickly identified that although her language understanding was at an age-expected stage, she was having difficulties recalling what she had heard, structuring sentences for speaking, and retrieving vocabulary.

Interventions were put in place to remove barriers to learning in the classroom and, when the screener was repeated after eight weeks, there was a notable improvement in the child's ability to structure sentences for talking. However, as there were still other causes for concern, a referral was then made – and accepted – to speech and language therapy. Until specialist support begins, the school continues to deliver the targeted interventions suggested by the Big Book of Ideas.

### WILL IT WORK FOR YOU?

• Quickly identify children needing support with their speech and language development

• Requires no speech and language expertise to administer

• Age-appropriate Big Book of Ideas provides over 50 play-based activities

• Optional Online Report Wizard is especially helpful for comparing children across linked schools

MEDIUM TERM PLAN

**KS1**

**GEOGRAPHY**

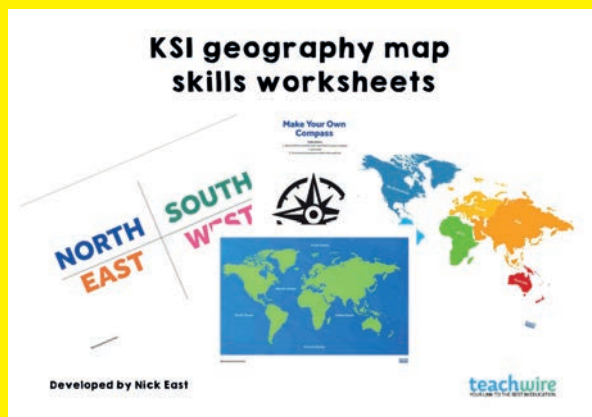
**MY**

**WORLD**

NICK EAST

In this engaging geography unit, students will learn about the names and location of the continents and oceans of the world; develop global awareness by looking in detail at the position of the seven continents and five oceans; and learn to locate the poles and the equator, and their position relative to the continents and oceans. They will also learn the four cardinal directions and have the opportunity to make their own compass. They'll understand that the world is a sphere and create their own journeys across the world, and build on their map skills using atlases, world maps and globes. By the end of this unit, students will be confident young geographers ready to explore the world in greater depth as they enter KS2.

**FREE ACCOMPANYING RESOURCES...**



Find all the resources you need for this unit – free and printable – at [tinyurl.com/tp-KS1mapworksheets](https://tinyurl.com/tp-KS1mapworksheets)

Now split your class into pairs. Give each pair a copy of the **continents rhyme time activity sheet** (download link above). Now explain that they are going to work together to create a mnemonic (rhyme) to remember the names of the continents.

For example:

Eat An Apple After A Night time Snack  
Europe Africa Antarctica Asia Australia  
North America South America



**Assessment**

Informal assessment only for week 1. Ask students to point and name a chosen continent on their **continents of the world handout** while you roam during the lesson. First formal assessment will come in week 2.

**WEEK 1**

**Learning objective:**

- To locate and name the continents of the world

Start the lesson by finding out what your students already know about the continents and oceans of the world. Ask:

- What is a continent?
- Can you name any continents?
- What continent is the UK part of?
- Have they visited any other continents?

Explain that today they are going to learn the names of all the continents of the world.

Sort students into groups of four to six. Give each group a copy of the **continents of the world handout** (download link above). Explain there are seven continents in the world. Point at each continent and say the name together as

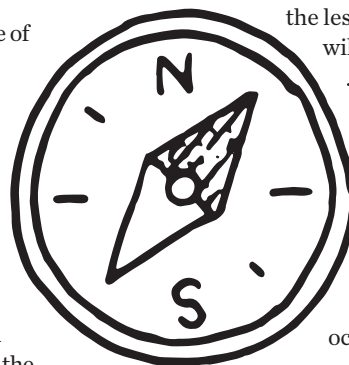


a class. Next, say the name of a continent and ask your students to point at it. This simple activity will begin to cement their knowledge of the seven continents.

Next, play a game of 'continent race'. Ask each group to place their **continents of the world handout** in the middle of the workspace. Pupils then take turns to name a continent, and the first person to put their finger on that continent gets to name the next continent for the rest of their group to find.

It's time to delve deeper. Ask your students the following questions:

- Which continent is the biggest?
- Which continent is the smallest?
- Which continent would be the coldest?
- Can they find two continents that are touching?
- Can you see any continents that are surrounded by water?



**WEEK 2**

**Learning objective:**

- To consolidate the names of the continents
- To locate and name the oceans of the world

Start the lesson by reinforcing the names of the seven continents learned last week. To do this, play the 'continents name game': All pupils stand up. Choose one student to start. Ask them to name two continents. The next child must name two different continents. If a student names a continent said by the previous student, they must sit down.

For less able students, give the continents of the world handout from the previous lesson as a learning aid. For more able students, they can only name two continents that start with a different letter. For example, Africa and Europe.



Next, sort your class into pairs. Give each pair a copy of the oceans of the world handout (download link above). Explain there are five oceans in the world, and quickly introduce the names by pointing and naming together as a class.

Now explore the idea of oceans with these questions:

- Which ocean do you think is the largest?
- What animals would you find in the ocean?
- Which oceans are closest to the United Kingdom?
- Which ocean do you think is the deepest?
- Which ocean might be the coldest?

Then, give each pair a copy of the **oceans jumble activity sheet** (download link p30). Students must unjumble the ocean names and write the correct name on the activity sheet.



## Assessment

Ask pupils to complete the **continents and oceans of the world activity sheet** (download link p30). This may be completed in class or as a home learning task if preferred.

## WEEK 3

### Learning objective:

- To use a world atlas
- To locate the major countries of the world

Begin the lesson by reinforcing student knowledge of the oceans and continents of the world. You may wish to display a world map. Ask students to come to the front and point to each continent and ocean.

Explain that in today's lesson, they will learn to use a special book called a world atlas. Explain that an atlas is a map of the world in a book. Ask the following:

- What's the difference between a continent and an ocean?
- Which one covers more of the planet? Oceans or continents?
- What shape is the world?
- Can you think of something else that is the same shape as the world?
- What might you see on a map?



one country using the world atlas index. Make anecdotal notes as required.

## WEEK 4

### Learning objective:

- To learn the four compass points
- To make your own compass

Prepare the lesson by putting up the **compass point posters** (download link p30) on the four walls of the classroom. Cut up the **compass points – teacher copy sheet** (download link p30) and keep handy. This will save you time later in the lesson. Explain that in this lesson we will learn the four compass points.

Begin by discussing the following questions:

- North is a direction. Can you think of any other directions?
- What is a compass?
- Do you know how a compass works?
- Who might use a compass?
- When would a compass be useful?

Introduce the four compass points; north, south, east and west. Explain that a compass has a needle that always points north and south. This needle points to the north pole and the south pole or the very top and bottom of the world.

For more able students, explain north, south, east and west are known as cardinal points. Explain there are also four ordinal points; north-east, south-east, north-west and south-west.

Next, explain you are going to play a game called 'four corners'. Students must stand underneath one of the four compass points on the classroom walls. Shuffle the compass points – teacher copy behind your back and choose one at random. Any students at that compass point must return to their seats.

Remaining students may choose to stay where they are or move to a different compass point.

Continue the game until only one student remains standing.

Repeat the

game as necessary. This is a great opportunity to quiz students about what compass points they are standing at and which compass point is opposite. This will help to reinforce the

Next, sort your class into pairs. Ask your students to put the world atlas on the table in front of them and to name a country. As a class, model how to use the index to find the country. Repeat this essential skill several times as it may be tricky for KS1 students.

Ask your pairs to discuss where they might also find maps of the world, then share their ideas with the class. Encourage pupils to consider both offline (globes, wall map) and online (Google Maps) versions.

Give each pair a copy of the **country hide-and-seek handout** (download link p30).

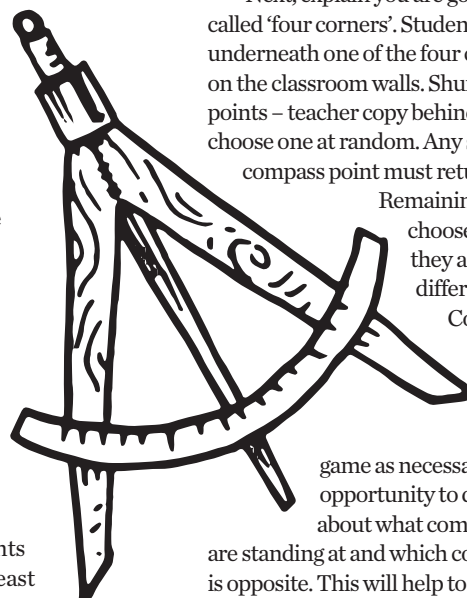
They should use the index of their world atlas to locate the countries listed. Encourage the children to work as a team.

For less able students, ask to find at least three countries of their choice. For more able students, ask to find all the countries listed on the **country hide-and-seek handout** and any other countries they know. More able students may also benefit from using other forms of map including globes, wall maps or Google Maps.



## Assessment

Use informal assessment this week. In pairs, students should be able to find at least



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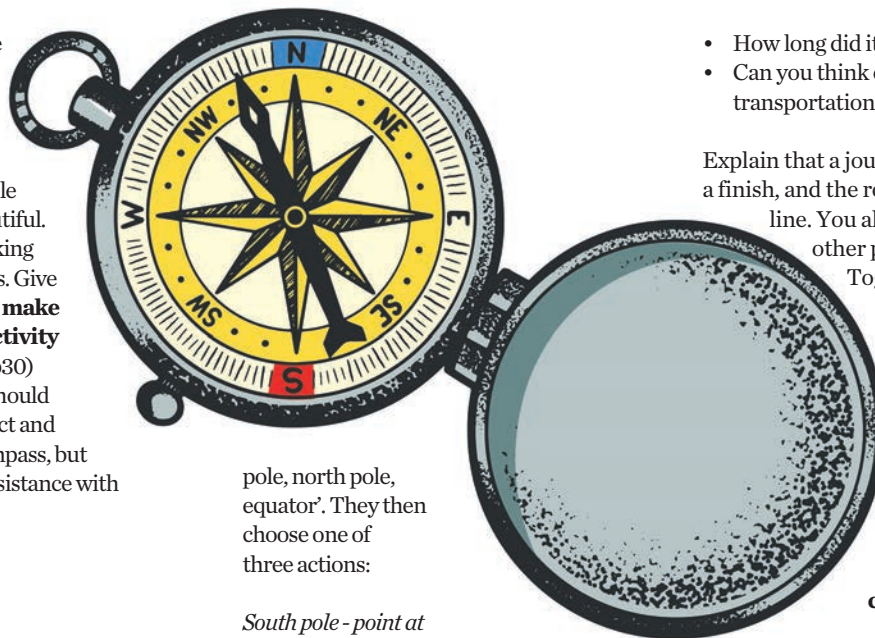
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relative positions of the four points.

Finally, explain that all compasses are used to find directions, but some are very simple and some are very beautiful. Today, they will be making their very own compass. Give each child a copy of the **make your own compass activity sheet** (download link p30) and a split pin. Pupils should independently construct and decorate their own compass, but may require teacher assistance with the split pin.



pole, north pole, equator'. They then choose one of three actions:

*South pole - point at your feet*  
*North pole - point at their head*  
*Equator - hands on hips*

To win:  
*North pole beats equator*  
*Equator beats south pole*  
*South pole beats north pole*

The loser sits down, counts to ten then stands up and can play again.

Next, hand out world atlases. In pairs, students use their atlas to complete the **equator and the poles treasure hunt** (download link p30). Encourage pairs to take turns answering the question.

Pair less able students with more able peers. Challenge more able students to identify the other lines they see on the map. They may wish to use the internet to inform their learning.

- How long did it take?
- Can you think of any other types of transportation?

Explain that a journey must have a start and a finish, and the route is called a journey line. You almost always go through other places on the way too.

Together, all these points on the journey are called destinations. Today, they are going on a journey around the world and we will be making their very own journey lines!

Play the 'journey lines game'. Give out one **journey lines game card** (download link p30), per pupil. They are the destination in bold. On 'go', children

must find the other three people on their journey lines game card. Once students have made a complete journey line group, they must stand in a row in the order of their destinations and say 'toot toot' like a train.

In pairs, ask pupils to complete the **journey lines activity sheet** (download link p30). Get students to plot their journeys with blue tack and string, noting each ocean and continent destination on their activity sheet. Encourage the children to work together and take turns scribing answers and plotting their journey lines.

Challenge more able students to list countries they visited on each journey line in addition to continents and oceans. Pair less able students with more able or use small group instruction with the teacher or TA.

## Assessment

Use the **make your own compass activity sheet** to evidence students have achieved the learning objective.

## WEEK 5

### Learning objective:

- To locate the poles and equator
- To consolidate how to use a world atlas

To begin the lesson, explain that your students will be learning about three important parts of the world. It would be useful to display a world map for this part of the lesson.

Begin by briefly showing your students the location of the north pole, south pole and equator.

Generate discussion with the following questions:

- Where does Santa Claus live?
- What is the opposite of the north pole?
- What is the line around the middle of the world called?
- Can you see them?
- Is it hot or cold at the equator?
- Why do you think that might be?

Now explain you will play a game like rock, paper, scissors called North Pole, South Pole, Equator.

To play, students spread out around the classroom. On 'go', they find a partner to play. They count in the game by saying 'south



## Assessment

Use the **equator and the poles treasure hunt** to evidence that pupils have achieved the learning objective.

## WEEK 6

### Learning objective:

- To create a journey line

To begin the lesson, explain that today will be all about journeys. Expand the discussion with the following questions:

- What's a journey? Can you think of another word for journey?
- Where have you been on a journey?
- What transport did you use?

## Assessment

Use the **journey lines activity sheet** as your final assessment to evidence pupils have achieved the learning objective.



*Nick East is a Twinkl content writer and product owner, primary teacher and podcaster. Originally from Australia, he is now based in Frome, Somerset.*

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# WHY I LOVE...

## Reading Plus

### ABOUT ME:

#### NAME:

Verity Lee

#### JOB ROLE:

Y6 teacher/  
assistant head

#### SCHOOL:

Sunnyside Spencer Academy

#### FAVOURITE FEATURE:

Variety of texts. Clear assessments and data. Accessible from home.



### TALKING ABOUT: HOW READING PLUS ACCELERATES READING PROGRESS

#### “How does Reading Plus allow you to fulfil your school motto, ‘Making Every Moment Count’?”

Budget restraints in school mean that children don't have a wealth of books to read. Reading Plus allows pupils to access a vast range of texts, as the online programme has over 1,000 fiction, non-fiction, and informational texts. The students enjoy talking about what they've read with their teachers and peers.

I particularly like that Reading Plus motivates our boys to read more. They are competitive, and they want to see their scores after answering each comprehension question.

#### “What has been the impact of Reading Plus in your school?”

The initial assessment pupils sit when they first start on the programme gives us baseline data and makes it clear which pupils need to focus on fluency or comprehension. We found that pupils may have high fluency but low comprehension.

The nature of the programme, and features such as the Guided Window, encourage pupils to pace themselves, not rush and refer back to the text if they are unsure so that they can comprehend what they are reading. Pupils can now independently make a point, find the evidence, and explain without any adult support.

#### Contact:

For more information visit  
[www.readingsolutionsuk.com](http://www.readingsolutionsuk.com)  
[info@readingsolutionsuk.com](mailto:info@readingsolutionsuk.com)

#### “What gains have you seen?”

In 2019, our reading results for Y6 were EXS 63 per cent and GDS 13 per cent. After using the programme, their recent SATs results increased to EXS 86 per cent and GDS 41 per cent.

Our Y5 class have shown the most progress. Used as specified, in one-year pupils make an average of 2.6 level comprehension years in gains on Reading Plus. At Sunnyside, 71 per cent of pupils made 2.6 gains or more, two pupils gained 6.6, and one pupil progressed 7. The average reading speed of pupils has increased 42 per cent to 200 words per minute (wpm), while the national average for Y5 is 175wpm.

#### “How does Reading Plus influence reading lessons?”

Reading Plus is not a replacement for reading lessons, but it does allow pupils to apply their newly learned skills independently. The Skills Feature provides intervention materials such as PDFs and lesson plans, saving time when planning and supporting staff with the scripts to ensure high-quality teaching.

Thanks to Reading Plus, pupils have developed a love of reading. They love finding out more, and at the end of each lesson or during a spare five minutes, they ask to go on Reading Plus – Making Every Moment Count.

### WILL IT WORK FOR YOU?

• Proven to increase fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension

• Adaptive intelligence matches learners to texts and continues to do throughout

• Printable resources, lesson plans and worksheets for weaker readers

• Pupils can access huge range of texts from home



# How to unlock MATHS FOR ALL LEARNERS

Variation theory can help children understand similarities and differences in concepts and procedures

JOHN BEE

**V**ariation theory draws attention to essential and non-essential properties of concepts. It focuses your attention on the variables in maths and considered similarities and differences. Used accurately, it can be a transformative pedagogical approach to unlock the maths curriculum for all learners.

## How does it work?

First, we need to be careful that we do not confuse variation with variety. Most lessons offer a variety of different activities

for children to engage with. Variation needs careful and deliberate choices on what to vary and when to vary it.

## Conceptual and procedural variation

There are two different types of variation theory: procedural and conceptual.

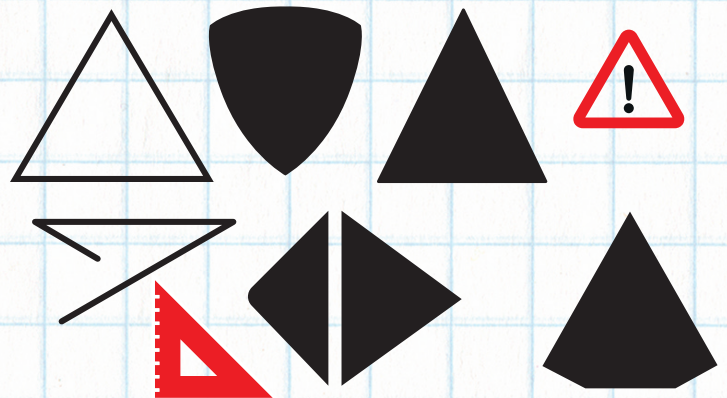
Conceptual variation draws attention to the essential features, to the essence of the concept by varying the non-essential features. The example below shows an octopus and a non-octopus (a cuttlefish).



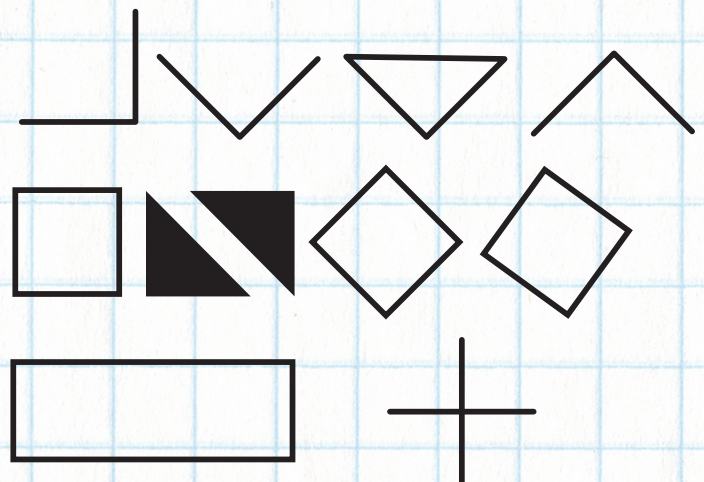
Here we are forced to think about what makes an octopus an octopus and not a cuttlefish. Even though there are certain similarities, there are many differences.

- Similarities: live in water, change colour, move by jet propulsion, have eight arms.
- Differences: Cuttlefish have backbones, octopuses have a round head but cuttlefish are triangular.

In a maths context, this can support children's understanding of key concepts. For example, when learning about the concept of a triangle, using examples and non-examples can draw attention to the essential and non-essential features of a concept:

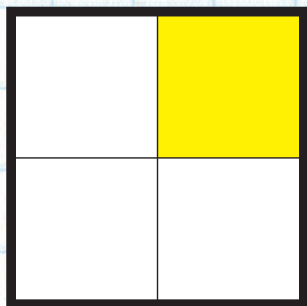


Similarly, in Key Stage 2, when learning about right angles, children may only ever see right angles presented in standard ways.



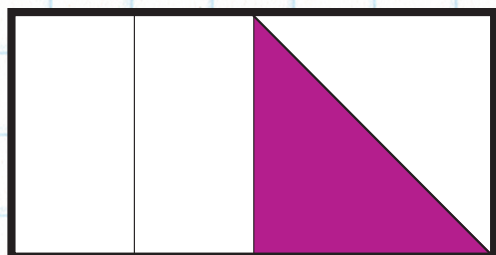
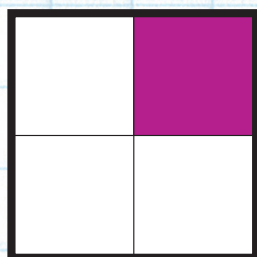


Finally, imagine you are beginning to teach fractions for the first time and you are introducing the concept of  $\frac{1}{4}$ .



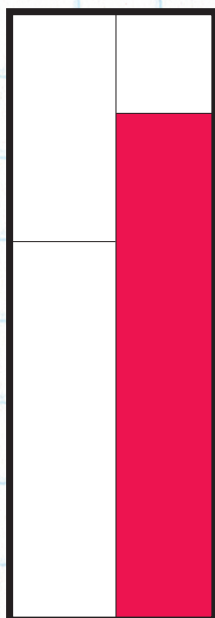
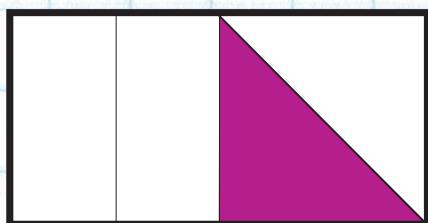
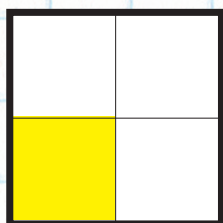
Showing a representation like the one here may lead children to think that  $\frac{1}{4}$  is a square, it is yellow, it is a part, it is in the top right of a shape.

Now imagine, a quarter was presented as follows and preceded by asking: 'What's the same, what's different?'



Here, children can generalise that there are 4 parts and so one part is a quarter.

Now imagine, we add in a non-example to compare the concept of  $\frac{1}{4}$ .



Here, children can deepen their understanding by considered fractions as being equal parts of a whole.

*Procedural* variation draws attention to patterns and generalisations, quite often in number. It links one calculation to the next and establishes a connections and pattern. Asking, 'what is the same, what is different?' can be a powerful approach in the classroom as it focuses attention on patterns, links and connections.

#### Set 1

$$15 - 6$$

$$25 - 6$$

$$35 - 6$$

$$45 - 6$$

$$55 - 6$$

$$65 - 6$$

#### Set 2

$$150 - 60$$

$$250 - 60$$

$$350 - 60$$

$$450 - 60$$

$$550 - 60$$

$$650 - 60$$

Taking this further, you could present children with calculations such as:

$$8 - 3 = 5$$

$$9 - 4 = 5$$

$$10 - 5 = 5$$

$$11 - 6 = 5$$

Children may draw attention to the difference being five each time. Asking children to continue this or find as many numbers as possible with a difference of five can be a powerful learning experience. Children may be able to generalize that  $12 - 7 = 5$  as it follows the pattern or that  $7 - 2 = 5$  as this precedes the pattern. Deepening their thinking could lead to decimals such as  $8.1 - 3.1 = 5$  and so  $8.2 - 3.2 = 5$  and therefore  $8.11 - 3.11 = 5$  too. Here, the careful and deliberate variation of the numbers leads children to expose the underlying structure of difference.

#### If, then, so

Introducing procedural variation for the first time in the classroom takes time. Children need to learn to look at maths in a completely new way and need to be explicitly taught to expose mathematical patterns and structures. In the example below, the factors have been varied to impact on the product.

<b>If</b>	$5 \times 10 =$
<b>Then</b>	$5 \times 100 =$
<b>So</b>	$50 \times 100 =$

You could ask children how they might work out  $500 \times 100$  or  $0.5 \times 100$  or take a more general approach and ask children what is the same, and what is different and then ask what other calculations pupils can derive from the sequence. Once children have practiced this, they may begin to design some questions of their own.

Use these activities to focus on essential and non-essential properties, and allow your pupils to think deeply about mathematical concepts, and make connections, patterns and links.



*John Bee is head of KS2 and maths leader at a primary school.*

@mrbeetech

mrbeetech.com



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## Strength in numbers

Liz Hawker explains how Development Matters 2021's maths approach supports SEN pupils...

Read it at [tinyurl.com/tp-SENmaths](https://tinyurl.com/tp-SENmaths)



## Relationship readiness

Try this lesson plan for KS1 & KS2 to help pupils understand different kind of relationships, by Kate Bradley...

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# How to balance the SENCO WORKLOAD

**Michael Rogalski** shares what he's learned over the last six years on how not to blow a gasket

**F**our years into my decade-long teaching career, I willingly took on the role of SENCo from a colleague approaching retirement. "You're the ideal person, you'll be great at it," she assumed, knowing my background working with charities for children with disabilities.

Looking back, if I hadn't known this colleague well, I would have felt like I was being stitched up. The role of SENCo is certainly far more complex and demanding than I initially expected, but is nonetheless one of the most rewarding parts of my job.

When I say that the role is more complex than expected, I believe this is because of the lack of time dedicated to SEN during initial teacher training. In particular, from my own experience and hearing those of friends, there is often a misconception about the SENCo's responsibilities within schools. Traditionally, SENCos may have seen as the person to call on if there was a behaviour issue, or a child other teachers didn't know how to deal with. But times have moved on, and since the introduction of the mandatory National Award for SEN Coordination, the SENCo is now a strategic leader in schools.

Unfortunately, the success of this heavily depends on how the leadership team is structured and what emphasis is placed on the role. In my current school, I'm glad to be part of the senior leadership team which ensures SEND is well-represented when decisions are made.

I certainly don't have a miracle solution to manage this challenging

position but I have learned a number of strategies that can help to maximise our time and decrease day-to-day stresses.

## Sharing is caring

Learn the art of delegating. As a bit of a perfectionist in some ways, delegating is something that I will admit that I am still learning. Teachers know the children in their class better than anybody so they are key people to look to support you in your role; use their knowledge of the child to help you complete any paperwork and ask their opinion when it comes to review meetings.

A coaching approach to support staff in troubleshooting issues in the classroom is also worth considering. Coaching can take different forms but the common outcome is to improve professional practice and make staff feel empowered to overcome any issues they have raised. As a SENCo this can work well because initial support for pupils who have suspected SEN should include quality-first teaching and reasonable adjustments. Simple, informal coaching conversations can lead to staff coming up with their own ideas of what adjustments they can implement to assist children in their class.

## One step forward

Think progress, not attainment. There is constant pressure to ensure children reach 'Expected Standard' but as we are all too aware, there are some children who, not matter how high our aspirations for them are, will find this too much of a challenge. This is amplified further if they have



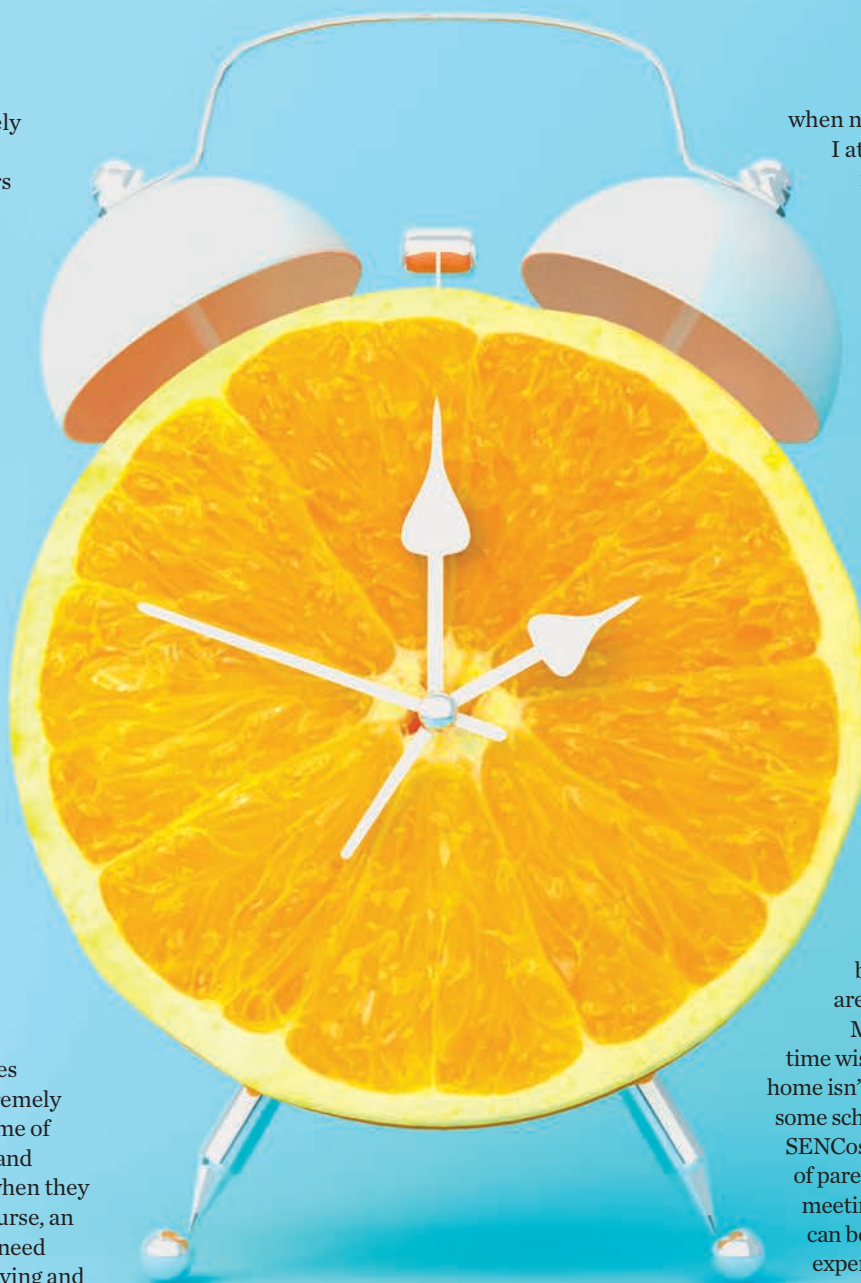
SEN. I have unfortunately participated in training courses that tell teachers to pitch at the expected standard and beyond for most children. In my view, we simply cannot do this in the vain hope that children will grasp it. If the foundations of learning are not present, this is highly unlikely to work.

Taking the progress approach ensures that children are building on their prior knowledge and are developing a solid base for future learning. Without a solid foundation, this becomes a significant issue for children as they move through education. In my experience, the gaps in their knowledge hinder them from making additional progress. A child who is insecure with multiplication tables will no doubt find it extremely challenging to access some of the expected reasoning and problem-solving tasks when they reach Y6. There is, of course, an argument that children need exposure to problem solving and reasoning tasks, but if they are insecure with the fluency aspects of this area, this is where regular opportunities to practise, intervention and over-learning is required.

I try to overcome this issue with our children with more significant SEN by assessing them on a system that matches their needs. Some children are able to demonstrate their progress on the whole-school tracking system, but some require objectives to be broken down into smaller steps. Having children on the correct tracking system for them also ensures that their intervention or support plan targets are relevant and specific.

## Community matters

Building relationships with parents is key. As class teachers will know, if parents are on board, things run more smoothly and this same as a SENCo.



Keep communicating with them, even if the news isn't always good. Most parents do appreciate good communication and will learn to trust you. Children with more severe SEN will have your involvement for many years, so you need to build trust to ensure a positive relationship throughout the time a child is with you.

## Log out

Take social media with a pinch of salt. When I became a SENCo, I joined a couple of Facebook groups but very quickly removed them. Most people have good intentions, but the variation in posts between heavy rants and the perfect SEN resources was quite mind-blowing. This is where I decided I would do what works best for our school and search for support

when needed. Instead, I attend 'SEN Update' meetings run by our local authority which provide up-to-date and relevant guidance about all things SEN. I often make a list of a few questions I have beforehand so I can ask them at the meeting or discuss them with SENCos who attend. Networking events like this are a far more reliable source of information and guidance than what can be found on online forums. As with many things posted online, we don't fully know the credibility of the person or motives behind what they are typing!

Manage your release time wisely, too. Working from home isn't always an option in some schools – particularly for SENCos – with the number of parent/professional meetings we deal with, but it can be a good option. From experience, productive hours can be dramatically reduced by the time you've found somewhere quiet to work and

you've dealt with the fifth "have you got a minute?" query of the morning!

Managing the workload of a SENCo isn't for the faint-hearted but would I give up the SENCo role? No. It takes an all-rounder to be a good SENCo; a team player, an effective communicator, a leader, an advocate and most importantly, someone with understanding. It's this variety which makes the role so unique and has allowed me to work with some fantastic children and families. **TP**



*Michael Rogalski is a Y5 teacher and SENCo in Staffordshire. He is also a director of the charity, Our Space (Staffs) Ltd, which provides social opportunities for children and adults with disabilities.*



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# ARE YOU READY FOR LEADERSHIP?

**Jonathan Coy** shares his experience of taking the plunge, and how to recognise when the time is right...

**B**eing a school leader is one of the most fulfilling roles I have ever had the privilege to have... It's so rewarding to know that you have a positive impact on others.

But I took many years to decide whether I wanted to be a leader or not. So, how do you know when you are ready to take the next step in your career?

First things first, I think it's only fair to say that being a school leader is hard work. You are responsible for a lot more than a class teacher is, and often, depending on your new role, you won't always have a lot of time to fulfil everything you want to. It can also be a lonely job, as there are fewer leaders than there are teachers. The step from being 'part of the group' to suddenly not being part of the group is hard for some.

However, on the plus side, being a leader is very rewarding. It's exciting to see your plans come to fruition, and to help support your community, knowing that you have made a difference to a lot of people's lives.

Remember – no one can tell you whether you are ready or not to be a leader. Only you can decide. Take your time, seek support along the way, and ask yourself these key questions to see if you are heading in the right direction for you:

## Am I being challenged?

Schools are interesting places at the moment and you are probably being challenged in many different ways, especially with Covid19. However, try to take some time out of your day to reflect on how you feel. Do you feel that you are being challenged? Are you bored with certain aspects of the day? Do you feel like you would like to make some changes to how things are done? If the

answer is yes, it is probably time to have a chat with your line manager, and ask if there are opportunities for you to have more responsibilities and to learn new skills.

## Do I want to learn more?

Go and find out information. Ask questions, lots of them! Are there any training courses you could attend? Is there someone you can talk to about what it's like to be a leader?

## Do I have a champion?

We always talk about children having a champion around the school. However, is there someone who champions you? Is there someone who has told you that you are good at what you do, and talked to you about possible next steps for your career? If not, have you got someone who mentors and coaches you so that you can discuss ideas and ways forward? If you don't have anyone in your school that supports you, try getting in touch with a coach, as they will be able to help you shape your plans and ideas. They will believe in your values, and notice the

impact that you are having around the school, and be your champion!

## What if I had to take the reins?

For me, it was only when I really started to take on more responsibility in school and saw the impact that I was able to create, that I realised I was ready to consider taking the step into leadership.

I started by leading in a core curriculum area. This gave me the confidence to try other areas of school leadership until I felt ready to be a headteacher.

This is what I suggest you do first. Take on more responsibility as a leader in school to begin with, such as a core subject or key element on the development plan. Talk to your leadership team and ask if they will support you with this.

Whatever you decide to do, don't be afraid to ask for help or to wait until you are ready to take that next step. There shouldn't be any pressure on you to go into leadership too soon. Whatever you decide to do, I wish you all the best. Being in education is the best job in the world! **TP**



*Jonathan Coy is the CEO of HeadteacherChat and an experienced school leader. Find out more*

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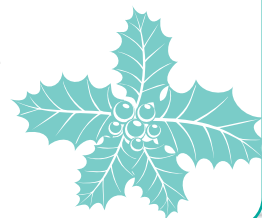
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# Building security AND TRUST

Dawn Jotham shares how you can support looked-after children in the classroom

*Josh is nine years old. Josh moved in with his grandparents when he was seven after witnessing domestic abuse in the family home. His grandfather recently passed away and so by voluntary agreement with his parents, Josh is placed under the care of the local authority. Josh doesn't understand why this has happened and feels rejected by his family.*

*Josh is moved to a foster carer out of the local area. He starts at a new school where he does not know anyone. Josh feels isolated and detached from family and friends.*

- What are Josh's needs?
- What support would help Josh in school?
- How could you support Josh in your role?

## Who are 'looked-after children'?

Children are placed into care for many different reasons. Like Josh, many will have come from complicated backgrounds and have experienced neglect and abuse. Some placements will be short-term, and some will last until the child is adopted or until they turn 18.

Looked-after children (LAC) include:

- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Children whom the local authority has the jurisdiction to place for adoption
- Children in a family and friends placement (often known as kinship care).

Over 70 percent of LAC are placed into foster care, and approximately 13 percent of those are with a relative or friend. The local authority will try to provide a home for the child within the local area where possible, allowing the child to live near their family home.

But children in care often experience placement breakdown due to instability, a change in social worker, or the child's level of motivation to stay in the placement.

## Importance of understanding

Our early experiences in childhood have a strong impact on our development and behaviour. Making strong emotional bonds to an individual is a basic part of human nature which begins at birth. Babies are biologically predisposed to form relationships which

make them feel safe and secure. This is the basis of 'attachment theory'. Children in your school might experience attachment as:

• **Secure attachments,** where a child feels loved, safe and secure and their needs are met.

• **Insecure attachments,** where children who have not grown up in a nurturing, loving environment, who have experienced abuse or neglect, or whose parents use drugs or alcohol, may develop attachment difficulties.

If a child in school is struggling, bringing something comforting into school can help. This can be an object that a child could have in their pocket that by touch is reassuring, or a cloth with a favourite smell on it.

## Primary setting support

Creating a whole-school, proactive approach to understanding the needs of any LAC is important to help achieve positive outcomes.

Under the Children's and Young Persons Act 2008, schools are required to have a designated teacher (DT) for looked-after and previously-looked-after children. They take the lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan and are the central point of contact within the school and externally.



Getting the correct person in place is pivotal in helping establish effective policies and procedures, ensuring the voice of the child is heard, and promoting a culture in which the child feels they are included and can succeed. A DT should work closely with the designated safeguarding lead and the SENCo. They should, of course, also be equipped with appropriate training to help them manage.

*The designated teacher (DT) arranges a walk round the school for Josh and his carers. She talks about the things he likes doesn't like and if he has any worries. The DT also arranges a call with his social worker and the virtual school where they talk over the PEP. The DT provides an induction period for Josh which is regularly reviewed. They decide to buddy him up with several children with similar interests.*



## Making a positive impact

LAC (and previously-LAC) are more likely to experience social, emotional, and mental health issues. They may struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings e.g. anxiety and anger, sensory processing difficulties and coping with transitions and change. Of course, all this can affect their behaviour in an education setting.

Children who have experienced trauma may be hypervigilant and may act in a way that appears extreme or disproportionate to a situation.

Everyone working with looked after children should understand the impact that

trauma and attachment have on a child. Ideally all staff should be trauma informed and attachment trained. This should cover:

- How attachment difficulties begin and how they can present in children and young people
- How attachment difficulties affect learning, education, and social development
- An understanding of the consequences of maltreatment, including trauma
- How they can support children and young people with attachment difficulties
- An appreciation that transitions and school transfers can be difficult for children with attachment difficulties.

## IF YOU WORK WITH LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IT IS IMPORTANT YOU:

- Remember that there is no typical looked-after child. It is important to understand that children in care often feel they have lost their identity. They feel labelled as a looked-after child in everything they do
- Develop strong partnerships with the carers, making contact for positives as well as concerns
- Are aware of difficult topics such as birthdays and Christmas, or celebrating Mother or Father's Day. Where appropriate the child should be given the chance to go and do another activity
- Understand the impact being in care has on a child or young person
- Give children and young people voice and influence
- Support the child's emotional needs
- Help young people identify and strengthen their support networks
- Remain child-focused
- Are aware of the possibility of stigma and labelling and act if necessary.

*Josh often got into trouble at his old school for shouting and getting angry, this has got worse since his grandfather passed away. He finds making friends hard. The social worker and carers discuss with the school what interventions work at home. They agree that Josh can bring an item into school that reminds him of his grandad may help. Bereavement support is provided to help Josh.*

## Key points

Make sure to take a consistent approach. Statistically, looked-after children are more likely to be excluded compared to their peers. Any emerging concerns should be addressed to the DT.

Looked-after children can also experience a conflict of loyalty between their carer and their birth family.

LAC need to develop a secure sense of identity and understand their personal history. Life story work should be an ongoing process, undertaken in a sensitive way. **TP**

*If we think about Josh, we need to consider:*

- What are Josh's needs?

*Josh experienced abuse and loss so may have attachment issues as well as experience trauma*

- What support would help Josh in school?

*Josh would benefit from a key worker who understands his needs and can be his advocate within in school. Relationships with the carers and any agency involvement should be well structured and regular communication. All staff in the school are trauma and attachment informed.*



*Dawn Jotham is Safeguarding & Pastoral Care Expert at Tes, and helped develop the LAC training course with The Children's Society.*

# THE BIG PICTURE: BEYOND PHONICS

Reading development requires more than phonics. Here's what else to include...

SUE COWLEY

**T**he question of how we learn to read fascinates both teachers and policy makers. Teaching children to read is vital to ensure they can access the curriculum, and becoming literate allows children to participate fully in society, with poor literacy skills closely linked to social issues like unemployment and poor mental health.

Over the past two decades, there has been an increased focus on finding the 'best way' to support this process. But as focus and investment from the DfE slants ever more towards decoding, is it time to ask if the balance has tipped too far?

## The 'subject' of phonics

When I pointed out on Twitter that "‘phonics’ gets talked about like it's a subject in its own right, rather than a method for learning to read," I got a strong reaction. For example, a parent whose child got "phonics interventions even after he learnt to read perfectly well"

[sic], claims that phonics felt like it had become a "cult".

Certainly, there is a heavy focus from the DfE on systematic sustained phonics (SSP), alongside ever tighter controls on how the method is applied.

***"As focus and investment from the DfE slants ever more towards decoding, has the balance tipped too far?"***

This could lead to teachers focusing more on decoding than on comprehension. Ofsted 'deep dives' into reading, and an insistence that children start phonics from the first week in Reception, have caused concern.

## Phonics check

In 2012, then-Schools Minister Nick Gibb MP introduced a statutory Phonics Check. The check was described as a 'light touch' diagnostic tool to identify children needing additional support. It soon transformed into

something different. With Gibb sending out letters to schools that achieved a '100% pass rate', the check became a closely monitored data point.

Ofsted's Bold Beginnings report added to the pressure to

support for early language development, skilled teaching of comprehension strategies, and a focus on developing a love of reading, are equally important in learning to read.

The DfE's Reading Framework acknowledges that 'word reading and language comprehension require different sorts of teaching'. It further notes that 'language comprehension and composition are developed by talking, listening to and talking about stories, and by learning poetry and songs'.

focus on formal literacy from the start of Reception. With the publication of the DfE's 'Reading Framework' in July 2021, pressure on teachers to emphasise phonics comes from every angle.

In a House of Commons speech in 2011, Gibb said that SSP would "eradicate illiteracy". A decade later, shortly after becoming Education Secretary, Nadhim Zahawi told the Conservative Party Conference about his plans to "tackle innumeracy and illiteracy". Apparently, despite millions of pounds spent on phonics programmes and testing, and Gibb's laser-like focus on SSP, it has still not worked.

## The bigger picture

As research shows, phonics is not enough. In fact,

## RESOURCES

- The Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University – Serve and Return [tinyurl.com/tp-serveandreturn](https://tinyurl.com/tp-serveandreturn)
- The National Literacy Trust – Words matter: the role of literacy in combatting social exclusion [tinyurl.com/tp-wordsmatter](https://tinyurl.com/tp-wordsmatter)
- Open University – Reading for Pleasure website [tinyurl.com/tp-ourfp](https://tinyurl.com/tp-ourfp)
- The Reading Framework, DfE publication [tinyurl.com/tp-ReadingFramework](https://tinyurl.com/tp-ReadingFramework)





## Early language development

Serve and return conversations lie at the heart of language development in young children. The term refers to warm interactions between an adult and child, where the adult listens carefully, responding to and building on what the child says. Like a game of verbal tennis between teacher and pupil, these interactions are hugely powerful in supporting early brain development.

The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard offers an excellent explanation of what 'serve and return' is and why it matters so much. Their website has a series of videos showing the process in action, suitable for parents and carers as well as teachers.

## Talking, writing, reading

Reading is inextricably linked with talking and writing. Activities where children make sense of what they read by reframing and retelling stories, support comprehension and an understanding of language structures.

Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' approach is very popular in early years settings and primaries. The approach involves deconstructing and reconstructing stories, picking them apart to identify plot and features, then imitating and innovating by changing key elements.

Even the youngest children can participate in storymaking activities – a reminder that reading does not start with SSP in Reception. The work done by early years practitioners on developing children's phonological awareness, their vocabulary and expressive language, and their knowledge of how books 'work', is all crucial in learning to read.

## WELL-ROUNDED READING TIPS

- Ensure that new vocabulary is embedded for children, by using it in different contexts
- Support language development by ensuring you talk with children, as well as to them
- Parental support is vital – run workshops for parents to teach key ideas and strategies
- Encourage children to articulate ideas verbally, before writing them
- Do lots of 'thinking out loud' to show children how you can structure and construct ideas in your head like a writer
- Encourage children to monitor their own progress, think and talk about what they find difficult, and set themselves targets (metacognition)
- Share information with children about what to read next, giving them ideas for 'if you liked this, you should like this too'.

## Reading comprehension strategies

When working with readers who struggle to understand what they read, it is vital for teachers to identify the source of the problem. Is it about a struggle to decode, or is the issue vocabulary and understanding of language structures?

By supporting children to learn vocabulary, using lots of oral language approaches, teachers can support the development of reading comprehension. To help children conceptualise 'reading' in its widest sense, use graphics to draw children's attention to specific features, actively engaging them with different media and genres (including digital technologies).

## The role of questioning

Questioning plays a central role in learning to read and write, with peer and self-questioning as well as teacher questioning playing their part. The way that teachers use questions supports children to develop their own strategies.

Encourage children to predict, to clarify, to summarise and to activate prior knowledge while they are reading and writing.

Open-ended questions are useful for supporting children to think laterally and make inferences – 'I wonder what is happening here?' is a great opener for talking about books.

## Reading for pleasure

Supporting children to read for pleasure is absolutely central to developing reading, because it means they are far more likely to read outside of school. Create rich, social environments for reading, encouraging children to share recommendations for books that their peers will love too.

Collaborative activities such as shared reading or talking about books can promote a sense of the joy of reading within the peer group. And of course, reading aloud to children is one of the very best ways to engage them and support a growing love of reading. Bringing stories to life is a vital part of the teacher's toolkit – indeed, it is as much a part of their toolkit as knowledge of how to teach phonics. **TP**



*Sue Cowley is an author, teacher trainer and early years teacher. She has helped to run her local early years*

*setting for the past decade. For more information visit [suecowley.co.uk](http://suecowley.co.uk)*







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# Step into England's story



# CONQUER CORE SUBJECTS

**Megan Mansworth** explains how dialogic methods can improve progress in primary English, maths and science

**I**n the classroom, we often do not place enough importance on talk. Barbara Bleiman argues that dialogue is ‘as complicated as writing’ (2021) but whilst we frequently recognise the importance of writing in different contexts in school, we often neglect consideration of the different contexts of talk and the value of talk for learning. Sinclair and Coulthard’s seminal work in classroom discourse analysis (1975) indicated that much classroom dialogue revolved around an initiation-response-feedback pattern where the teacher asks a question (initiating an exchange), the student responds, and then the teacher provides feedback, as in ‘yes’ or ‘not quite’.

There are instances when the use of this pattern makes sense, such as when recapping information or in retrieval practice, but at other times it can mean that we do not enable students to fully develop their ideas. The extensive research of Robin Alexander has indicated that this questioning pattern can lead to closed, one-word answers, acting as a ‘cognitively-restricting ritual’ (Alexander, 2006:14) if it is embedded in classroom practice.

Language, as well as representing our thoughts, helps us to construct ideas (Alexander, 2008:92) and ‘talk mediates the cognitive and cultural spaces between adult and child, among children themselves, between teacher and learner, between society and the individual’ (Alexander, 2008:9). Alexander’s research is supported by that of Neil Mercer who argues that talk can provide a means of collective reasoning (2019). In other words, through making room for extended and structured dialogue in the classroom, we can more easily bridge the gap between the learner and what is to be learned, as well as giving students opportunities to think deeply and in extended ways around a topic.

According to the Education Endowment Foundation, dialogic methods seek to enable students to ‘reason, discuss, argue and explain rather than merely respond’ and to develop ‘higher order thinking

and articulatory’ (EEF, 2020). Their recent review of dialogic teaching found that primary school pupils taught using dialogic methods made on average two months additional progress in English, maths and science, compared to control groups. With dialogic learning, we can seek to have more extended, developed discussions around a particular topic, perhaps by asking a more challenging, conceptually difficult question and then providing students with support to develop detailed verbal responses.

Such structured dialogue can take place on a whole class basis, in pairs, or in small groups. ‘Group work’ is sometimes denigrated as a tool of pedagogy in the ‘knowledge-rich’ classroom. At the time of writing, I have just read the knowledge-rich curriculum statement of an academy trust (to remain anonymous here) which discourages group work in favour of a narrow range of other methods that it now states are more ‘research-based’. Group work can be done badly – like any pedagogical method. Often, ‘group work gone wrong’ might involve minimal framing from the teacher, leading to students’ conversations veering off-topic. But any pedagogical method can be implemented badly and if we resist all forms of group work simply because this can be practised poorly, we risk abandoning a highly useful opportunity for developing critical thought.

To counter the potential for group discussion to be ineffective, we can provide students with rules or a clear structure for

classroom talk. Critical, exploratory discussion can be difficult so providing a framework for students can ‘represent a kind of freedom’ (Mercer et al, 2004:375) rather than a constraint, providing them with the tools to converse deeply around a topic. When facilitating effective peer or classroom discussion, we might provide phrases such as:

- One criticism of your viewpoint could be...
- I agree that... however...
- I would develop this point further by...
- The aspect of your argument I most agree with is...
- The point I agreed with the least was...
- Some people might agree that... but ....

It can also be useful to provide students with opportunities to develop their ideas or arguments individually before sharing their ideas with the group, or to reflect on a resource before the discussion, in order to ensure confidence in participation. Well-planned talk can be eminently knowledge-rich, and helps us move away from an IRF pattern and towards a richer level of discourse. **TP**



*Megan Mansworth is an experienced teacher and leader. This article can be found in her new book, **Teach to the Top: Aiming High for Every Learner** (£15, John Catt Educational).*



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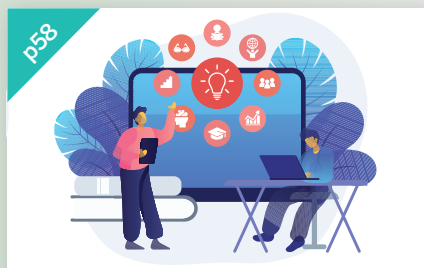
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# CPD & Research SPECIAL

## INSIDE THIS SECTION



Tried and tested approaches to improving behaviour



How CPD changed my view of teaching



The best way to explore edtech research



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## Room for IMPROVEMENT

There is a lot of educational research around, but how can you figure out where to look and what to ask?

**DR JULIAN GRENIER**

I vividly remember the first time I went to a conference about using research in the classroom. It was the early 2000s. The conference was in a huge, grand hall in Islington with around 500 people. There were stalls with piles of books and leaflets about brain science. After a frankly dizzying set of PowerPoint slides and videos showing how synapses fire in brains and make connections, we were all told to stand up. "Right," said the charismatic course leader. "We're going to activate your brains now.

innovations. So, you feel under pressure to keep up and try out the latest thing you've seen online, or heard about from the school up the road. As a school leader, I get at least 50 emails a week from companies and private educational consultants. They are all trying to sell me their latest products or services. I ignore them.

I am not suggesting that you should just stick to your old ways. There is always room for improvement in every classroom. But before you try anything new out, here are a few tips.

***"Everything works somewhere, and nothing works everywhere"***

First, you have to hydrate your brain. That's why we've given everyone a bottle of water."

After a quick swig, we had to follow him making a slightly strange set of movements. We rubbed our stomachs, did something to 'activate the brain button', and so on.

We were being trained to follow a research-informed primary programme called 'Brain Gym'. It was an impressive, entertaining and enjoyable day of training, with one flaw. It turns out that Brain Gym was nonsense. It had never been rigorously evaluated. The science behind it was, at best, dubious.

Brain Gym has been debunked, but similar fads continue to get attention in schools. There is always a lot of noise about the latest

### What's your problem?

Firstly, think hard about the problems you are facing in your classroom. It is all too easy to get sucked into trying out a solution to a problem you don't have. For example, it might be important to think about the barriers to learning that some of your pupils face. If every year there is a group of pupils who don't progress well in their reading, then that's your problem. You probably do not need a whole new approach to teaching English that will take up a huge amount of time and energy to put into practice. You might need a well-evidenced intervention that you or your TA can be trained to deliver to help a small group of pupils catch up with the rest.





## WHERE TO FIND RELIABLE RESEARCH

- The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) reviews a huge amount of research and distils it into its Teaching and Learning Toolkit that looks at a wide range of approaches. It tells you how reliable the research is, and how costly it will be to put the evidence into action. The EEF's researchers review thousands of research projects and academic papers to create their summaries. See [tinyurl.com/tp-EEFresearch](https://tinyurl.com/tp-EEFresearch)
- The Chartered College of Teaching has many excellent resources and training programmes for its members. See [tinyurl.com/tp-Chartered](https://tinyurl.com/tp-Chartered)
- The EEF funds Research Schools across England, which can help you to put different approaches into action. Find your nearest Research School at [tinyurl.com/tp-ResearchSchool](https://tinyurl.com/tp-ResearchSchool)
- If you are not in the position to drive whole-school change, then the EEF's Guidance Reports contain many practical ideas. See them at [tinyurl.com/tp-EEFguidance](https://tinyurl.com/tp-EEFguidance)

## Demand evidence

Next, you might spend some time exploring the evidence about catch-up reading programmes. You can safely ignore much of the 'research' that people try to sell you, or that gets liked and shared on social media. We should have a high bar for 'evidence' in education. Our pupils' life chances depend on the education we give them. So you should think about evidence like a doctor would. That means asking some questions. How robust is the research behind the approach? Has it been tried in several schools, at least some of which are similar to your own? Was there a comparison group of pupils who did not get the new approach? Was there a significant difference in outcomes between the two groups?

Even when the evidence looks strong, you should remain cautious. You might consider the 'costs' of the new approach. How much training will be involved? Will you need to buy new equipment? How much of your time will be spent in extra planning or assessment work? Teachers are always hard-pressed. If you have to

spend more time doing new things, then you will have less time and energy for other things. But, the things you stop doing may be even more important for your pupils' progress than the new approach you are bringing in.

## Be practical

My final note of caution is that you should make sure there is enough help for you to put the new approach into action. It is hard to manage change well. I am sure almost everyone reading this has experienced some big, shiny new approach that launched with a bang in September, only to fizzle out slowly during the long, dark days of January and February. A year later and it's forgotten. I have made this mistake countless times as a school leader.

I am not against change. I am merely cautious about checking everything out before making big commitments of time, money and teacher energy. Before you go into the woods of educational research, get the best guide you can.

## Talk it out

School culture is also important. We should be talking about things that go wrong in our classes, so we can learn from them, rather than trying to cover things up. Our schools need to have a 'growth environment' so we can get better at putting the evidence into action over the course of our careers. It is heartening to see that the new Early Career Framework has a strong focus on evidence-informed practice. By giving new teachers a two-year period to consolidate and develop their professional skills and knowledge, it allows for deeper thinking about evidence-informed practice.

Teaching will never be an entirely research-based profession. We should not seek programmes with manuals to follow dutifully, even if they are based on research. Great teaching is all about a set of complex professional skills. You

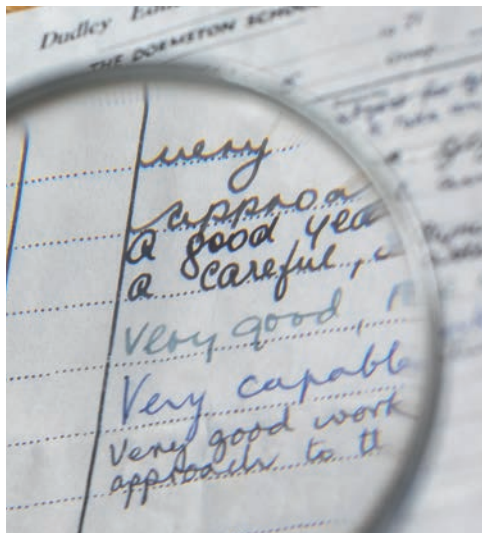
need to know your pupils and their families. You need to develop the right relationships. You need to have an instinct for when something is going wrong, or for when pupils might need more help than you expected. Schools are complex, messy places. That's why Professor Dylan Wiliam famously stated that we should stop looking for 'magic bullets' to solve our classroom problems. He argued that "What works?" is rarely the right question, because everything works somewhere, and nothing works everywhere. In education, the right question is, "Under what conditions does this work?" **TP**



*Dr Julian Grenier, is director of East London Research School and headteacher*

*of Sheringham Nursery School and Children's Centre.*

## PARTNER CONTENT



## ASK THE EXPERT

# “Ready for a deep dive?”

**Glynis Frater** explains how school and curriculum leaders can build a sequential and knowledge-rich curriculum from Early Years to Y6 and beyond

How clear and coherent is your rationale for what will be included in curriculum design?

Curriculum leaders should understand the rationale and be a part of designing curriculum content linked to the National Curriculum standards. Choices as to what essential knowledge and skills will be taught should reflect the local context and the ambition the school has for all its pupils. Knowing the answers to challenging questions is essential and will be enhanced through focused and well-informed CPD.

What strategies are used to ensure that the curriculum design or intent is shared and fully understood by all?

A culture needs to exist where there is a shared commitment to ensure that the curriculum rationale (intent) is translated into knowledge progression, sequencing and prioritising reading and mathematical fluency. This requires curriculum leaders to have a profound understanding of a range of curriculum principles and how school leaders define success. CPD that steers those with curriculum responsibility towards articulating the essential curriculum concepts and principles will deliver high quality outcomes.

How does curriculum mapping sequence learning and allow pupils to access deep knowledge?

A deep dive into the choices all curriculum leaders make will reveal how coherent and well-planned the curriculum is in terms of depth and breadth. Subject leaders and their teams need the knowledge, expertise and practical skill to deliver a sequenced and progressive high-quality curriculum. Focused



### EXPERT PROFILE

**Name:** Glynis Frater

**Job title:** Director of Curriculum and Coaching for Learning Cultures Ltd

**Area of expertise:** Writer, teacher and expert in curriculum design and delivery as well as a qualified coach

**Best part of my job:** Designing and writing books, materials, resources and presentations that bring CPD to life

training in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment will provide the language and the tools to create a seamless sequence of learning.

How is assessment designed to shape future learning, progression and achievement?

Assessment requires systems to ascertain the impact curriculum implementation is having on how pupils are deepening their knowledge, acquiring a range of core and thinking skills and making connections across the wider curriculum. Assessment must be reliable, consistent and well-informed. Learning together through high-quality CPD will build cohesion, accuracy and confidence in the process.

How do senior leaders demonstrate that all staff have the expertise to deliver the curriculum intent where high quality outcomes are assured?

Subject leaders are pivotal in translating curriculum intent and empowering their teams to deliver high-quality pedagogy and learning. They need expertise, practical skills and resources to build exceptional teams. CPD with Learning Cultures is the start of a journey that will ensure all staff and their pupils achieve their full potential.

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# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Research shows these approaches to teacher-student relationships are a great way to manage behaviour issues, says **Nikki Cunningham-Smith**...

*"I know you won't come down from the climbing frame for Mrs Cunningham-Smith, Tom, but I hear my twin Mrs Smith-Cunningham is in my office waiting for you."*

*"The one who does everything backwards?"*

*"Yep."*

*"The same one who drank her water upside down last time?"*

*"Same one."*

*"What do you think she's going to do today?"*

*"I'm not sure, but I heard she was struggling to write the date on her whiteboard because it keeps coming out as a mirror image."*

Tom, climbing down from the frame: *"OOOO I can read mirror images, my brother always writes rude words on the bus backwards so that people outside can read it, so I'm dead good at reading words backwards, shall I help her?"*

*"Sure why not.... we'll talk about why those words aren't great to use later shall we?"*

*"I'm not talking to you about anything."*

*"Will you talk to Mrs Smith-Cunningham about it?"*

*"... Yeah...ok."*

The joy of a double barrel name right there, immediate alter ego. But this is a tale of Tom, a boy I had zero relationship with. There had been so many negative incidents as I worked with him as the head of his school, and he only saw me as the person that turned up when things were going drastically wrong for him. He was in Y2 but had the savvy of a Y10.

I was at a total loss one day after having spent another afternoon trying to get him to follow my instructions and to stop disrupting the learning of others, that I decided the only

thing I could do was somehow start again with him. And that is how on that cold winter's afternoon, my twin Mrs Smith-Cunningham was born.

She asked the questions that I, Mrs C-S, neglected to. Mrs S-C knew that his favourite team was Liverpool; Mrs C-S didn't. Mrs S-C knew that he liked to pretend that his tea was hot chocolate, but that he didn't really like chocolate; Mrs C-S didn't. Mrs S-C knew

that his brother was the most important person to him in the world and if he wasn't at school he'd be by his side; but Mrs C-S knew that his brother wasn't the best role model so Tom couldn't talk to her about him because she might tell Tom all the things his brother did were naughty. Mrs S-C wouldn't do that – she liked to hear the stories of what they got up to, although sometimes she did say that she would have to tell Mrs C-S, but that was ok because Mrs S-C didn't make a big deal about it.

I would meet Tom at my office, running ahead to put on the yellow jumper and changing my hair to the way Mrs S-C always wore it.

## All about relationships

Now, this is not me telling you that the best behaviour management strategy to employ is to split yourself in half (although that may be useful) and create a new character (although that may be desirable!). I'm telling you that when considering the latest research in primary years regarding behaviour, there is one recurring





theme that is continually shoe-horning itself into the narrative. Throughout many journals, think pieces and podcasts, no matter how it's framed, in order to foster positive learning environments, we're told the key is relationships.

You may be thinking that investment in pupil relationships is not new, and you're right, but I will always shout from the rooftops that it's at the heart of making a difference. With all this being said, time is so precious within our spaces, the kind of example seen in Tom's case isn't always possible. (That was an intervention I could put in place as a non-teaching head of school.) So where and how are you going to find the time to work on those teacher-student relationship (TSR) opportunities?

## Applying the research

If we think of a child creating a barrier to a teacher delivering content, we are bound to see non-compliant classroom behaviours (NCCB).

Unfortunately, students with non-compliant classroom behaviour are at risk of being socially excluded from their class. Recently, classmates' attitudes have been identified as the central indicator of the social participation of pupils with non-compliant behaviour. (Loeper et al 2021).

In short, this means it's more likely that these pupils are going to illicit attention in negative ways when they can't build relationships with peers due to 'bad' behaviour. This makes sense. If they can get a response from the teacher – and, ultimately, the attention they're craving – by behaving badly, they are bound to enter a vicious cycle. These habits are hard to break, because the

positives of gaining attention outweigh the negatives.

So, what can we do about it?

Research has also shown that children engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) benefit in positive behaviour outcomes once back in the classroom (Graham et al 2021).

However, the recommended time of 60 minutes is not always available within the curriculum, despite evidence supporting the benefits of regular breaks on physical, social, emotional, psychological and cognitive outcomes. The research goes on to look at the benefits of using breaktime as part of this 60 minutes, and shows that the correct equipment and space, but – most interestingly – adult intervention, resulted in more vigorous play.

By using your break and lunchtime duties to become involved in pupils' play, you are creating extra opportunities to exit that teacher persona and add some dimension and depth to

your relationship.

Here are some quick breaktime ideas for you to develop your TSR and use MVPA with all of your pupils, but particularly with those who you may be struggling to find an 'in' with:

## Learn a dance

The TikTok revolution means that a lot of our pupils are constantly moving and shaking through their days, so jump on the latest dance challenge with them.

## Old-school games

Anyone for cat's cradle? Can you create a bigger version with skipping ropes? Still got your pogs at the back of your parents' garage? Give pupils an insight into what the playground looked like in your day, and in doing so remind the children that you once were just like them.

## Embrace new skills

For example, find Double Dutch tutorials on YouTube, figure out how to get the kit (a nice letter written to the head should do the trick!) then learn together, and go through the trials, tribulation and elations together.

## If all else fails...

There is a new show on TV that has some great Korean childhood games that you could teach your pupils. There may be some elements of it you might want to keep out of the playground, though... **TP**



**Nikki Cunningham-Smith** is an assistant headteacher and trained SENCO

developing an outreach strategy to support the reduction of permanent exclusions in Gloucestershire.



# How CPD changed MY VIEW OF TEACHING

**Emma Jane Smith** discusses her initial fear of teaching philosophy, and how a well-designed CPD programme helped her love it

**F**or many people, the word ‘philosophy’ probably conjures up images of bearded old men in ancient Greece, debating the mysteries of life. This is certainly how I viewed it when it was suggested we introduce Philosophy for Children (P4C) into our curriculum.

How would we find time for it? What possible impact could it have on our pupils in one of the most deprived areas of the country? But it did have an impact. From pupils treating each other with greater respect, to their ability to really think about their answers across other subjects, it was clear – even in the early days – that something special was happening.

However, the journey that led us to become the first Gold Award-winning P4C school in Merseyside has been one in which staff have also changed the way we think and teach, and it involved a lot of carefully planned CPD.

## Early scepticism

When in 2017 David Harrop – one of our then assistant headteachers – announced he was introducing P4C to Middlefield, my heart sank.

Timetables were already congested and this was something else we were going to have to fit in. But as teachers we get on with things and give it our best. I’m glad we did.

The school signed up for a training and support

programme from the P4C charity SAPERE, delivered by Julie McCann of School Improvement Liverpool. Our first two-day inset consisted of SAPERE’s Level 1 foundation training with lots of hands-on activities, including the chance to participate in similar P4C sessions, or enquiries, that we’d be facilitating. That helped me get to grips with what it would be like for the children to take part in an enquiry, and helped me to think about the kinds of thinking skills – critical, creative, collaborative and caring thinking – that we were setting out to develop.

I admit, though, I was nervous. What would happen in an actual enquiry in the classroom? How would the children respond?

## Teacher to facilitator

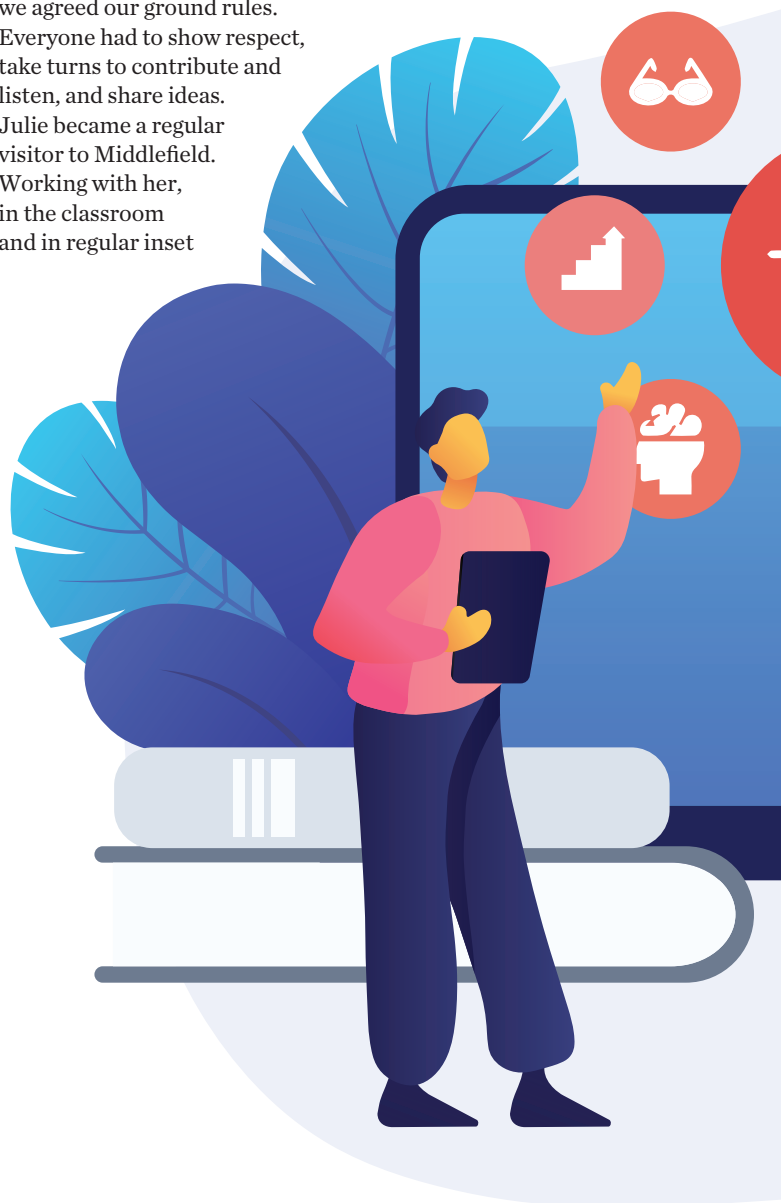
We started teaching P4C for up to one hour a week, from Nursery to Year 6. One of the programme’s challenges is that you don’t teach it in a conventional sense. You’re more of a facilitator, helping to guide the discussion – like Fiona Bruce on Question Time.

This was out of my comfort zone. I had to adapt my teaching style, to ‘let go’ a little. But as my confidence grew, I began to enjoy it. Dialogues in my classroom included ‘can you have bravery without fear?’, ‘nature vs nurture’, and ‘is it right for humans to interfere with life?’.

We explored big concepts such as friendship, fear, justice, and gender.

But it was not just about what we discussed, but how we discussed it. As a group, we agreed our ground rules. Everyone had to show respect, take turns to contribute and listen, and share ideas. Julie became a regular visitor to Middlefield. Working with her, in the classroom and in regular inset

sessions, our confidence grew. She gave us ideas for enquiries and suggestions about how to incorporate P4C into the curriculum. We picked up techniques to develop





questioning and thinking skills, and tools to deal with enquiries that got ‘stuck’ or took an unexpected turn. We became skilled in encouraging children to think beyond their own experiences, to identify assumptions and consider evidence, and to disagree respectfully and with reasons.

### Having an impact

I was genuinely surprised at how engaged the children were – and how much I enjoyed facilitating P4C, especially listening to the views of those children usually less likely to speak up.

*“I had to adapt my teaching style, to ‘let go’ a little. But as my confidence grew, I began to enjoy it”*

I particularly liked how some EAL or SEN children could turn a question on its head, coming at it from a different perspective and thinking outside the box. We all began to spot ripples of P4C in our own teaching. It began to crop up in other subjects; moral questions in RE; discussing thoughts,

feelings and actions of characters in English; and in maths as part of problem solving and reasoning.

### Supporting one another

In summer 2018, our assistant head and I took part in SAPERE’s Level 2A training with Julie. This two-day course focused on developing our facilitation skills but also on helping us to support our Level 1-trained colleagues. Level 2A training focused on enabling us to take enquiries to another level with more thought and discussion required. During this training, we explored concept development exercises to use as activities in P4C to broaden children’s thinking. Back in school, I delivered similar training to staff and we took part in all the concept activities before trying them in our classrooms with the children.

### Changed view

With Level 2A training under my belt, I began to take a more active role in how P4C was delivered.

Now we had seen the difference it was making to staff and students, we dedicated ourselves to achieving SAPERE’s Gold Award.

In 2019, I took SAPERE’s Level 2B course, again with Julie and which was hosted at Middlefield. One of

the most valuable parts of this two-day training was the focus on navigating challenging issues which might arise during an enquiry. Along with other teachers from across Liverpool, we each devised our own philosophical enquiries with Julie as facilitator. She also taught us how to support our colleagues with delivery and how to create a culture of open dialogue among teaching staff about P4C to promote their own CPD.

This all gave me the confidence to plan an enquiry on stereotypes, which led to a dialogue about the language of discrimination – and we’ve since seen a decrease in the number of reported incidents of homophobic language in school.

I felt ready, when the opportunity arose in Spring 2020, to take over as P4C Lead. I’ve now organised a number of whole staff insets. Some were led by Julie but more recently I’ve adopted that role. As part of our Gold Award submission and using what I’d learned in my training so far, I was able to write our P4C policy (which is on our school website). P4C CPD is now timetabled annually and all new starters are trained to Level 1, with at least two staff (one for each Key Stage) due to complete their training to 2B by the end of the academic year.

Our P4C CPD is an ongoing process. The continued commitment to growing and sustaining P4C through CPD is really valued by our team, and by new members of staff. We know that we have a long-term commitment to remaining a P4C school and we can plan for progress, while deepening our skills and knowledge. **TP**



*Emma Jane Smith is P4C lead at the Middlefield Primary School in Liverpool.*



# RESEARCH – HELP OR HINDRANCE?

**Gordon Reid** shares his top tips on choosing the right edtech solution for your school

**B**ack in March 2020, educators were faced with a level of disruption to classroom teaching that no one was

fully prepared for.

Overnight, new methods of teaching and learning were brought in to help combat the new challenges we had to face, with lessons delivered from our kitchens, children taught from home with support from their siblings and parents, and our ability to adapt and react quickly and efficiently put to the test. It became immediately clear that technology had to be how we were going to make the new remote normal work as best we could.

Many of us were no doubt already familiar with various edtech solutions as they were becoming more and more embedded in our classrooms and daily teaching plans. And we might have also noticed just how much opinion was beginning to surface on how beneficial the right solution could be for schools. A report from the Westminster think-tank, Reform back in 2018, championed its potential to 'improve outcomes of every pupil... particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.' While the potential for edtech became more apparent to – in the words of Brookings researchers – particularly reward 'disadvantaged or underserved communities as a unifying force that encourages collaboration.'

With so much research and opinion out there, it was and still is hard to navigate what to take on board and what to ignore. What might spark a great conversation in your next departmental meeting and what might go down like a lead balloon? There's a lot of research out there, particularly surrounding edtech, and it's only increasing, with the recent pandemic sparking the launch of numerous studies on the loss of learning and how technology can support recovery.



So how do you sift through the reports and guidance to get to what's sound, useful and relevant to you? Especially when you're already bombarded with information overload at school and at home? Here's a few of my top tips for engaging with edtech research to get you started:

- **Go broad.** You want to start, as you would with anything these days, by searching online. You'll encounter a variety of results from academic sources, news media outlets, books, small think-tanks, blogs and charitable organisations. You'll uncover results from all across the globe, and that's OK. Edtech solutions are often distributed globally, and trends and insights uncovered in research studies often have a wider relevance than they may have previously.
- **Take note of the details.** There are three key factors I always look for when I come across research: The authors, the dates the research was conducted and published, and the sample size where applicable. Are they experts in their field? Is it recent enough to be relevant? Are the findings based on enough respondents?
- **Save your favourites.** After looking through your search results, have a look on Twitter and LinkedIn, too – both are great

places to find articles and thought-pieces on edtech. Your friends and colleagues may share things that they've come across; you might hear something mentioned at an event; or you might see research referenced on the news – all are great sources for you to explore in order to narrow down what you want to bookmark and refer to later. There's never any

harm in opening yourself up to a variety of perspectives so you can start to spot what resonates with you.

• **Embed into your schedule.** We have such busy days as teachers, it can be hard to make time to look ahead, to think about the reasons behind what we do and why we do it, but if you can, try and book some time out to refer to some of the sources you've saved. There's every chance you'll get derailed and have to cover a colleague's class, but if not, you might just stumble across something that could spark an idea for your curriculum or change the course of your planning for the better.

In the fast-moving landscape that is edtech, and like anything in education, it's so valuable to keep an ear to the ground for what might be happening now and what could unfold in the future. Let the researchers do the work for you and then sample what you need so that you can remain aware, implement change, and look ahead. **TP**



*Gordon Reid is a principal teacher in North Lanarkshire and Co-owner at G&C Education.*



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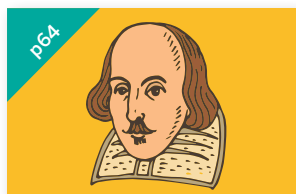
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Author/illustrator Ed Vere, and the CLPE's Charlotte Hacking, talk about the power of pictures for literacy



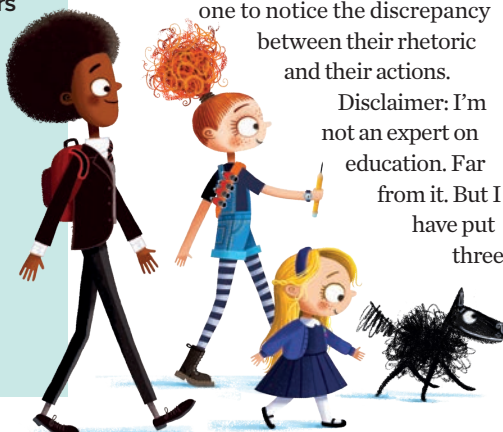
p73

We're delighted to announce the winners of the 2021 Teach Primary Book Awards. Get ready to find your new favourite story!

## →→→ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### BETTER COMPREHENSION – WITH BEANO!

Beano has been the nation's favourite comic for over 80 years, so why not invite some of its best-loved characters into your classroom? Plazoom's Comic Comprehension packs link Beano stories with retrieval, inference and vocabulary questions, plus a fun writing activity – try them with a FREE trial at [bit.ly/PlazoomComicComprehension](http://bit.ly/PlazoomComicComprehension)



## Meet the AUTHOR

Award-winning author **Rob Biddulph** on why the arts are just as important as STEM, and the positive impact of cross-subject projects

Eighteen months ago, I broke a Guinness World Record for the largest ever online art class when over 45,000 people simultaneously drew a whale with me. The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, awarded me a Point of Light award, saying “you inspired the creative spirit of the nation with millions of families tuning in to your #DrawWithRob series and spending special time together honing their artistic skills. So on behalf of the whole country, I am delighted to recognise your service to others.”

This is the same government that is cutting funding for arts courses in the UK by 50% across higher education institutions. And it's the same government that backed an ad campaign suggesting that dancers should retrain to work in cyber. I'm sure I'm not the only one to notice the discrepancy between their rhetoric and their actions.

Disclaimer: I'm not an expert on education. Far from it. But I have put three

daughters through the state system (two of them are still in it). In our experience, particularly with our eldest daughter, there was an unspoken yet quietly insistent suggestion that all paths should lead to that holiest of grails, an academic degree at a Russell Group university. To be clear, I am not blaming teachers in any way. As far as I'm concerned it's an entirely legislative issue. Nevertheless, it can be incredibly demotivating for students, like my daughters, with a more artistic bent. At various points, my girls have been made to feel like they are also-rans in their own school which, unsurprisingly, gets my goat.

### Dousing the spark

My poor old goat. It's always getting got. And the chipping away at arts funding in schools is one of the chief culprits. In February 2021, the Gov.uk website said: “The upshot (in the increase in STEM subjects being studied) has been a steady decline in the number of hours and staff dedicated to teaching arts subjects in schools (DfE, 2019) and a reduction in the number of young people opting for arts subjects at GCSE and beyond (CLA, 2019).” What a tragedy. There are so many children who arrive at school with a genuine talent in an artistic discipline, and they are crying out for someone to light a fire beneath it. But instead, that spark gets doused.





The talent is dismissed, and the children are surreptitiously steered in another direction before it has a chance to flourish. It's infuriating.

Not everyone is cut out to be a STEM person and operate in an analytical, academic environment. In fact, I think that putting all of our eggs into the STEM basket is an extraordinarily short-sighted thing to do, particularly in this age of automation. Surely, it's the creative jobs that are the least vulnerable to the relentless march of AI. After all, you can't get a robot to dance the perfect Argentine Tango or paint *Guernica*.

The kernel at the heart of the whole STEM vs The Arts problem is, I believe, people's inclination to separate the two. For some reason, we have started to believe the notion that science and art are mutually exclusive, which, of course, they're not. In fact, they're mutually dependent. In order for them to be fully functional they need to operate together and support one another.

## Science and creativity

In 1878, the first-ever winner of the Nobel prize in Chemistry, Jacobus Henricus Van 't Hoff, put forward the idea that scientific imagination correlates with creativity outside of science. 'Anyone can make rote observations,' he said, 'but it takes leaps of imagination to come up with hypotheses and the experiments to test them.' Indeed, many of the best-known scientists throughout history had artistic inclinations. Newton was a painter, Galileo was a poet, and, according to one study, nearly all Nobel laureates in the sciences practice some form of art as adults.

Leonardo da Vinci, a man who was pretty decent with a paintbrush but also knew a thing or two about engineering, agrees. He advised us to "Study the science

of art. Study the art of science". Another rather bright chap, Albert Einstein, also chips in. "The greatest scientists are always artists as well". When big brains like theirs seem so certain about it, I for one think we should listen.

The fact that this kind of historical precedent exists gives me hope that, in the future, we might include art in STEM - making it STEAM. Hopefully this movement, which has already gained some traction, will come to fruition sooner rather than later. It's certainly been a long time coming. Whichever way you cut it, the fusion between art and science is a very real thing, and I believe that the government has a responsibility to impart that information to our kids via the education system. So many career paths involve a combination of logical and creative skills: architects, product designers, marketers, software developers, advertisers, therapists, researchers, you name it – a combination of STEM and arts can only benefit, or even be integral to, a multitude of career options.

## Full STEAM ahead

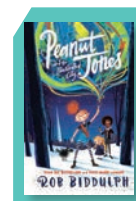
In practice, schools employing cross-subject projects are already seeing amazing results, including an increase in attendance and higher grades across the board. Bridgemary School in Hampshire, for example, has now employed a Director of STEAM, and as a result they have noticed an upshot of loans from the library and a decrease in behavioural referrals.

Dame Nancy Rothwell, chair of the Russell Group of universities, speaking at the Times Higher Education University Impact Forum in 2021 said, 'I had a fascinating conversation with someone who runs a big gaming company. He asked about our graduates. I said: 'Presumably,

you want our computer science graduates.' He said: 'No, I want your experts in drama, creative writing, history, global cultures – creative people. We can do all the rest.' I wish my eldest daughter's school had known this.

Look, this argument is not new, but it's one that I hope can inspire the government in the years to come. And it was one of the motivators that inspired me to write my debut fiction novel, *Peanut Jones and the Illustrated City*, in which the artistic protagonist is forced into a STEM-focused school by her accountant mother. One of Peanut's companions, Rockwell, has strengths that lie in these logic-based subjects, though the underlying theme of the story is, as you can probably guess, that it's their combined knowledge and passion for these disciplines that is required to solve problems. It takes the two of them working in tandem to realise that one doesn't function particularly well without the other.

All this being said, the truth is that I didn't set out for my book to be a polemic about the government's defunding of the arts. But if, through this story, I can wave a flag to let people know that they matter, that they're as important as the STEM subjects, and that they're here to stay, then I'll happily do that. I do have hope that the careers officers of the future will feel able to advise their charges to follow their hearts and nurture their talents, whatever they may be. And, as I say in my book, once you choose hope, everything is possible. **TP**



**Rob's latest book, *Peanut Jones and the Illustrated City* (£12.99 HB, Macmillan Children's Books), is out now.**

# WHERE THERE'S A WILL: HOW TO TEACH SHAKESPEARE IN KS2

Can primary school children really make sense of the Bard? Absolutely, insists **Sue Drury**...

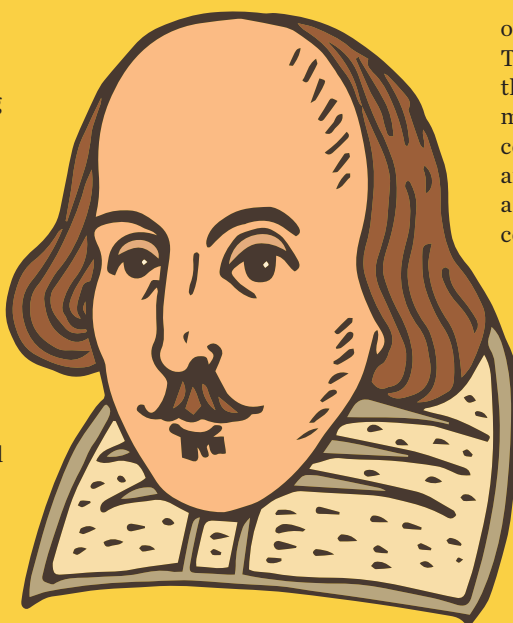
**K**S2 be or not to be? That's not really the question – because actually, if you are wondering when a student should first learn about Shakespeare, the answer is that there is no definitive lower limit. Given Will's fabled inability to spell his own name consistently, you even might think that you could get away with it in KS1, where phonetically plausible spellings are more acceptable. However, if you would rather not cry havoc, it's probably best to stick to KS2, especially UKS2, by which time pupils should have a broader vocabulary and a better understanding of figurative language.

## Life and work

Start with some basic facts about William Shakespeare.

Who was this man that everyone raves about? Well, he was an English playwright who was born in the West Midlands in 1564 and died in 1616; add his life to any timeline you have on display in your classroom. And then dig around with pupils to see what else you can find out about him.

Not only did he give us some of the best loved plays in the world ever, Shakespeare also had a massive impact on the English language. His vocabulary was greater than any other writer, and when he couldn't put his finger on the right word or phrase, he would just make one up. Many of his sayings are still very much in use today – you can have great fun hunting for examples with your class (see how many you can spot on this page, too). What's more, his works have influenced musicians from Leonard Bernstein to the Dire Straits to Taylor Swift. There, that'll make them sit up and take notice.



## THREE GREAT KS2 SHAKESPEARE RESOURCES TO TRY

**Shakespeare's sonnets analysis and writing worksheets:** [bit.ly/TPPlazoomSonnets](http://bit.ly/TPPlazoomSonnets)

**Shakespearean idioms worksheets and sorting cards:** [bit.ly/TPPlazoomIdioms](http://bit.ly/TPPlazoomIdioms)

**Shakespeare's amazing insults worksheets:** [bit.ly/TPPlazoomInsults](http://bit.ly/TPPlazoomInsults)

## Shakespeare's sonnets

Alongside a whole heap of plays, Shakespeare also wrote 154 sonnets – 14-lined poems with ten syllables per line. As well as being an important part of his output, these are also a great way to introduce pupils to his writing in shorter bursts (see the panel for resource ideas). Short, snappy phrases that perfectly express a great deal with very few words were one

of Shakespeare's trademarks. These idioms were so enduring that we use many of them today, mostly without realising who first coined them; 'lie low', 'good riddance' and 'green-eyed monster' are just a few classic examples; could you collect more, and create a class display?

## All the world's a stage

Now, no one wants to encourage anyone to be mean. But you have to admit, Shakespeare really did relish a good insult. Sometimes vicious, sometimes weird, they were invariably interesting and very often pretty funny. So, if you want to get your poisonous bunch-backed toads and bolting-hutches of beastliness a good workout for their clay brains, a lesson on Shakespearean insults is bound to go down well, both in terms of stretching inference skills as pupils try and work out what particular epithets might have meant – and firing imaginations as they come up with their own versions.

Finally, if you're feeling really bold, you could always try staging a child-friendly version of a Shakespeare play as your end of year production – or even taking part in the fantastic Shakespeare Schools Festival, organised every year by the charity Coram SSF ([shakespeareschools.org](http://shakespeareschools.org)).

Hey nonny-nonny! In one fell swoop, that's a lot of bardish ideas with which to shake up your classroom. And if you've been able to spot all the Shakespeare quotes in this piece... then all's well that ends well. **TP**



*Sue Drury is literacy lead at Plazoom, the expert literacy resources website. Find more advice at [plazoom.com/blog](http://plazoom.com/blog)*





# Orchard's Aesop's Fables

Help pupils grasp the concept of inference, and what a moral is, using these beautiful recreations of classic fables...

**AIDAN SEVERS**

Aesop's fables are classics – and deservedly so. They've been a staple of English teaching in primary schools for many a year now and they're set to stick around for a while longer. And what better than a collection of the stories retold by renowned children's author Michael Morpurgo and

prolific illustrator Emma Chichester Clark?

This beautiful edition provides thoughtful yet concise versions of fables such as The Hare and the Tortoise, The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg, and The Lion and the Mouse, as well as many other lesser-known tales. Over almost 100 pages and 20 stories, the fables are

told through a captivating interplay between text and image.

Aesop's fables are a great way to promote discussion about a range of topics but that's not all that these famous fables have to offer. Ideal for lower KS2 classes but certainly adaptable for both older and younger children, this book is perfect for your English lessons.

## Sharing and talking about the book

With each story spanning just a handful of pages, it is of course best to take one at a time, reading each from start to finish in one sitting.

Before you read, share a summary of the story without mentioning the moral. If you think there will be any words or ideas that the children might not understand, spend some time pre-teaching these before you get into the story. As you read, try to keep interruptions to a minimum: don't ask questions, just let the children get into the story.

Once read, discuss the details of the story, asking simple retrieval questions to ensure that the children know and understand the main points of the plot and that they can identify cause and effect of the events. Summarise the story once more and then talk about what the story teaches its reader. Explain to children that this can be called a moral.

Children will love to hear the same stories over again too, so don't hesitate to re-read them – these fables are ideal for retelling and acting out too, so the more familiar children are with the plot, the better.

The animals featured in the story are a well-known cast of characters – it wouldn't be too hard to build a small collection of soft toys and puppets to represent the creatures, which could then be used in storytelling sessions.

When it comes to discussions, Aesop's fables are full of opportunities for talking about moral dilemmas.

Once children understand the concept of a moral, there are so many things to talk about:

- What do you think the moral of this story is?

## GET YOUR FREE AESOP'S FABLES RESOURCES FROM **plazoom** HERE:



**KS1 Text Types: writing planners and model texts**  
[tinyurl.com/tp-KS1fables](http://tinyurl.com/tp-KS1fables)

**KS2 Text Types: writing planners and model texts**  
[tinyurl.com/tp-KS2fables](http://tinyurl.com/tp-KS2fables)

- Can you think of a time when this story might have helped you to do the right thing?
- Have you ever had a similar experience to the ones the animals in the fables had?
- How do stories help us to learn new things?
- Why do you think Aesop wanted to tell stories with moral messages?
- How does this story teach you to try and try again until you succeed?
- How does this story teach you to plan carefully?
- What does this story teach us about the true meaning of happiness?
- Which is most important: cleverness or strength?
- Does the author think greediness is good or bad?

## Activities

### What's their motive?

One aspect of reading comprehension is inference-making. It is something that some children find difficult to do and can be hard to teach. It's helpful for teachers to know that there are many different things that we can make inferences about. If we think about just the characters in a story, we can make inferences about how they feel, why they feel a particular way, why they act or behave in a certain way, why they say certain things, why they say or do things in a certain way (their motives), and what they think.

While reading a few fables over a number of weeks, pick one of the above, and focus on it. Let's take

## Take it further →→→

Once children understand the concept of a motive – what causes someone to do something – they can explore motives in other areas of the curriculum.

### WRITING

When children are writing their own stories, ask them to think about why a character does something. Demonstrate to the children how to

add extra details into the story to show what motivates the character to carry out that action.

### HISTORY

What motivated the historical characters they are studying to do what they are

famous for? Why did Mary Seacole want to help injured soldiers? Why did Alexander Bell invent the telephone? Teachers and children can explore the historical evidence that helps us to understand why famous figures did what they did.



Illustrations:  
Emma  
Chichester Clark



making inferences about motives based on actions as an example.

Explain to the children that we can ask 'why' about each of the character's actions: why does the character act in this way? Sometimes the answer is easy to find (this is simple retrieval) and sometimes it is more difficult and we will have to infer an answer using information in the text and using things that we already know.

When introducing making inferences about motives, begin by supporting the children's answers by using multiple choice questions. Model answering these questions, showing children where the evidence is in the text and discussing why the wrong answers are wrong:

***Lion only opens one eye. Why might he have done this?***

- *Because his other eye didn't work*
- *Because he only had one eye*
- *Because he was sleepy and lazy*
- *Because the mouse was running on him*

This is the correct answer because there is no evidence of the first two and the fourth one doesn't explain why he opened one eye and not two. The third answer is most likely – children will need to bring their own experience of just waking up and finding it difficult to open both eyes. Discuss the fact that he might also have opened one eye because his nose is close to his eyes and it is easier to see something close if you only open one eye. For both these correct scenarios children could act it out to identify with it.

Model a second question:

***Lion waits for a moment before catching Mouse. Why might he have done this?***

- *Because he was still too tired to move*
- *Because he wants to make sure that he catches Mouse*
- *Because he was furious at being woken*
- *Because the mouse was tiny*

This is the correct answer because it makes sense of the phrase 'waited his moment' in the context of him trying to catch the mouse, which is the main point of the sentence. The sentence is not about Lion being tired (A1); being furious (A3) might suggest that he would react quickly (the opposite to what he does do); and the mouse's size has nothing to do with his waiting.

**Expand inference skills**

Once you have modelled these, provide the children with some questions where they are able to practise the exact same skills in the exact same format, for example:

***Mouse says 'I'll pay you back one day'. Why does he say this?***

- *Because he had loads of money*
- *Because he didn't mean to wake Lion*
- *Because he wanted Lion to let him go*
- *Because he owed Lion some money*

In subsequent lessons, with other fables, continue to focus on working out the character's motives based on their actions, but scaffold the questions and answers less. For example, the above question could become the following:

***Mouse says 'I'll pay you back one day'. Why does he say this?***  
(With no multiple choice.)

Or

**What does mouse say that shows he wants lion to let him go?** (Children

## Loved this? Try these...

- ❖ *Stone Soup* by Alan Durant and Dale Blankenaar, Tiny Owl
- ❖ *Mighty Min* by Melissa Castrillón, Alison Green Books
- ❖ *Beyond the Fence* by Maria Gulemetova, Child's Play
- ❖ *The Fate of Fausto* by Oliver Jeffers, HarperCollins
- ❖ *All the Ways to be Smart* by Davina Bell, Scribble
- ❖ *Along Came a Different* by Tom McLaughlin, Bloomsbury
- ❖ *Sam and Dave Dig a Hole* by Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen, Candlewick Press
- ❖ *A Squash and A Squeeze* by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, MacMillan Children's Books

have to locate what mouse says and does in order to support the assertion in the question that mouse wants to be freed.)

This process can be carried out for many different kinds of inference, for example, what happened (where details are not given explicitly and retrieval skills can't be used); why something happened; where something happened; when something happened; how something happened; why something happened in a certain way; what was unusual or different about what happened or how something has come to be.



*Aidan Severs is currently a primary deputy head in an all-through school in Bradford. In January he will be working with teachers and leaders as a consultant, having set up Aidan Severs Consulting. You can book him to work with your school and read his blog articles at [aidansevers.com](http://aidansevers.com)*

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children don't always realise why they and other children around them do the things they do. They are not always metacognitively aware of the more subconscious thought patterns that lead to actions. Having explored the motives of characters in stories, children will be more able to hold discussions about why they or their peers did certain things, allowing better conflict resolution and improved evaluation of their work.

Having explored morals in Aesop's

fables, children will also be more able to discuss morals in other contexts.

### PSHCE

Many current issues are often discussed in the classroom, with children holding different opinions. You can now have these discussions with morals in mind. Children can consider whether or not the outcomes of particular news stories are moral or not: should President Trump's wall between the US and Mexico be removed? Should

migrants be allowed to cross the English Channel?

### HISTORY

It's not only current issues that can be discussed in this way. There are plenty of moral issues that can be explored in the most popular primary history units. Should Britain have helped France and Belgium leading to the start of World War 1? Why was the slave trade wrong? Did the important people of Egypt deserve such grand burials?

# The power of PICTURES

Pictures help us to both understand and communicate meaning, but in classrooms where the written word is prioritised, how do we recognise the importance of visual literacy?

ED VERE AND CHARLOTTE HACKING

**A**s a writer who also draws, I'm interested in how we connect with another person through words and pictures. How we engage, how we animate, how we get an idea to live in another mind. When I read to children, I'm endlessly amazed by the power of a picture book. That a character is grippingly alive for those kids. An inky drawing of an enormous, lonely gorilla playing a piano, transforms into a living breathing being, deserving of love. It blows my mind. Every time.

There is something very special about that space in between pictures and words. A place which asks your imagination to fill the gap. Pictures don't simply illustrate the words – they tell their own story, on a multitude of levels. If we make time to examine them.

From the moment a child comes into the world they are searching for visual clues. We understand complex expressions and emotions through drawings from a very early age, in ways we can't yet do with the written word or spoken language. Trying to understand if you are friend or foe, through facial expression and body language. Pictures speak this language fluently. They intimate emotions, feelings and nuances that words cannot because of this sophisticated visual vocabulary (which we are

constantly building). Pictures are open to interpretation – there's nothing concrete to get right or wrong – which means they're open to discussion.

By the time a child arrives at primary school they're able to use this visual vocabulary creatively when they 'read' pictures and when they draw, yet we don't harness either. Worse still, most children have given up

visually. We must learn how to engage them, so they don't come to believe, as I did, that they aren't worth much.

As an author, I'm struck by how we ask children to complete literacy tasks... how sterile it can be and how far away it is from how I and many other authors actually find our ideas as we write. Rather than writing, many of us draw to generate our ideas; to map out the world of our books, to develop our characters.

In an age where we are beginning to understand how important good mental health is, it feels careless to be letting the habit of drawing slip out of our children's hands. Neuroscience shows us that the right hemisphere of the brain is where it's all going on as far as our emotions are concerned. It's the site of non-verbal communication and it also happens to be the side of the brain that we use when we are drawing. 'The right brain hears the music, not the words, of what passes between people' (Allan Schore).

There is a beautiful video you may have seen on the internet; Oliver Sacks' music and memory project 'Alive Inside', which works with Alzheimer's sufferers. The video shows Henry, in a nursing home for 10 years and completely inert. Unresponsive and closed in on himself. Henry is then given an iPod containing his favourite music. Immediately he lights up, his face assumes expression, his

***“Most children have given up drawing by the age of nine or 10, believing there's a right and wrong way – there isn't”***

drawing by the age of nine or 10, believing there's a right and wrong way – there isn't. In doing so, they lose a vital form of self-expression which they don't have another outlet for. This is careless of us, especially in these times where we're supposedly more aware than ever of emotional wellbeing.

I struggled enormously with literacy projects at school; English comprehension was an unending nightmare. I just didn't get it. Drawing was another matter. Some children are academic thinkers – others, just as bright, think in other ways; spatially or

The Power of Pictures programme shows how to place drawing into the writing process. We (author/illustrators) show teachers exactly how we draw to create a terrain in which we can then write.



Fig.1





Fig.2

eyes open wide, and he starts to sing. The effect doesn't stop when the headphones come off. Henry, normally mute, is quite voluble – he is animated, he has come to life. 'Kant called music the quickening art – and Henry is being quickened... being brought to life,' says Sacks. In a very similar way, pictures and drawing can reach across divides. They engage.

## Ideas in practice

When we read visual texts, the words only tell one part of the story. Additional details about characters, settings, relationships and story events are often more richly conveyed in what the illustrator chooses to place in the image. Allow time for children to closely read illustrations, encouraging them to look at elements such as characters' facial expressions, body positions, props, background settings (or lack of them), choices of colour, scale and perspective, and the way our eye is led across the page. All these things contribute to a deeper understanding of what's been read. Picturebooks are designed for readers to stop and pore over, and go back and re-read as meanings unfold. Multiple readings of a picturebook are a good thing – at least three times is needed to begin to unlock the full meaning. (See fig.1)

## Time for discussion

Picture books are often a lot more sophisticated than you'd expect, too. Texts such

as *How to Be a Lion* have allowed children to have rich and nuanced discussions around complex themes such as nature and nurture, difference, masculinity and self-acceptance. With older children, their extended life experiences mean that they can make connections based on personal experiences that they would not have done when they were younger. (See fig.2)

## Ideas and meaning

In their earliest years, children use drawing freely to communicate ideas, but as they get older it is still important to allow pupils to think and represent their ideas this way. It helps them to formulate, develop and extend their thinking, and create authentic characters, settings or plot ideas. Author/illustrator draw-along videos, such as those on CLPE's website, show children how to create and shape characters through illustration, and will give them ideas to build characters of their own. (See fig.3) **TP**



Fig.3

## PICTUREBOOKS TO DEVELOP VISUAL LITERACY ACROSS THE PRIMARY YEARS:

### *Wild* by Emily Hughes

Hughes' illustrations communicate so much more than the text on the page in this tale of childhood, nature and nurture. Children will have rich discussion around the themes of the book and how these relate to their own lives.



### *A Mouse Called Julian* by Joe Todd-Stanton

A charming, humorous and comforting tale sharing how friendships can be forged when you least expect them. Rich and evocative illustrations draw the reader in and communicate layers of meaning beyond the words on the page.



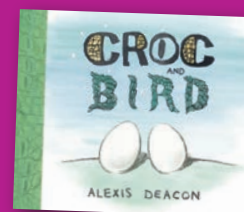
### *Grandad's Island* by Benji Davies

A sensitive story about the loss of a loved one, which is moving and uplifting at the same time. The illustrations make it unnecessary for the words to be explicit about what may be reality and what may be imagination.



### *Croc and Bird* by Alexis Deacon

A touching, humorous and emotive story exploring the true meaning of family. Deacon's sophisticated illustrations allow children to engage in rich discussions around the themes of nature and nurture.



*Ed Vere is an award-winning author and illustrator. Alongside Charlotte Hacking, learning programmes leader at the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE), he devised The Power of Pictures programme, which focuses on developing children's visual literacy skills through reading picturebooks and incorporating illustration into the writing process. Find out more at [tinyurl.com/tp-PowerOfPictures](http://tinyurl.com/tp-PowerOfPictures)*



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MICHELLE GARDINER,  
KS2 TEACHER

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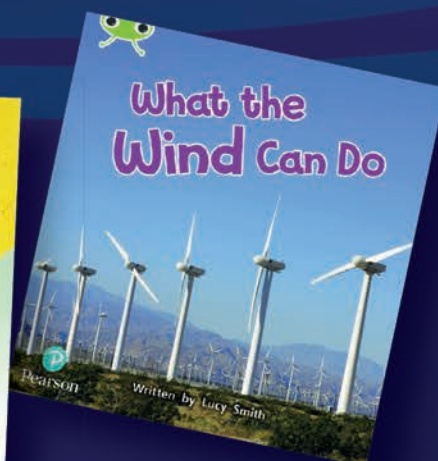
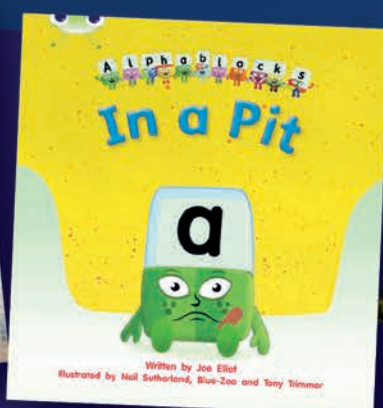
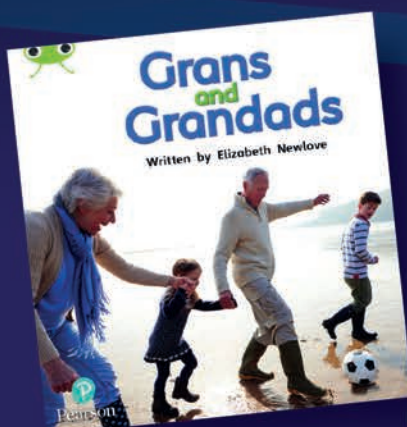


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Discover the best children's books to share in your classroom – and beyond

**T**he annual Teach Primary Book Awards are always a glorious celebration of the very best the world of children's writing has to offer – and this year has been no exception. From the arrival of the first entries, back in June, through the hugely challenging process of shortlisting, to the final verdicts of our fantastic judges, it has been, as ever, a journey full of surprises and delight.

Unlike other literary reward schemes, the Teach Primary Book Awards don't just recognise exceptional writing and beautiful illustration (although these are, of course, attributes shared by all the shortlisted titles) – they also take into account factors that are particularly significant for teachers who are looking for books they can share with pupils, and use to create and teach outstanding and unforgettable lessons. To this end, alongside the words and pictures, our judges also considered such factors as learning opportunities, points for discussion, emotional complexity and language play when deciding on their scores. We are thrilled to be able to share the results of their assessments with you now; 32 stunning titles that we know will enhance library shelves, inspire writing, entice reluctant readers and nourish bookworms. Enjoy!

"I have really enjoyed reading all of the books. There are certainly titles to support teaching and learning within the classroom and I will be passing these on to teachers, as well as adding them to some of our recommended lists!"

*Judge, Leah Chin*

Educational manager at Tales on Moon Lane

## Meet the judges



**KONNIE HUQ** (judging our non-fiction category) is a multitasking television and radio presenter, screenwriter and children's author. Her novel *Cookie and the Most Annoying Boy in the World* was shortlisted for last year's Teach Primary Book Awards.



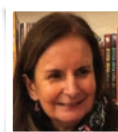
**LIZ FLANAGAN** writes for children and young adults, having been a lifelong reader of children's books. Her debut novel *Eden Summer* was nominated for the Carnegie Medal.



**BROUGH GIRLING** co-founder of the Readathon charity. A qualified teacher, he has written over 30 children's books, broadcast widely and lectured in children's reading from Canada to Cairo. He was head of the Children's Book Foundation in London and founding editor of the Young Telegraph.



**MEGAN SMITH** is a book lover who works on the Young Readers Programme – the National Literacy Trust's flagship reading for enjoyment programme.



**LEAH CHIN** has been the educational manager at Tales on Moon Lane, having worked there for 12 years following several years as a nursery teacher.



**DAN SMITH** led three lives growing up: the day-to-day humdrum of boarding school, finding adventure in the padi fields of Asia and the jungles of Brazil, and in a world of his own, making up stories. He now spends his time writing books for adults and children.



# RECEPTION

## WINNER

### KEY CRITERIA

Memorable illustration

Read-aloud-ability

Opportunities  
for discussion

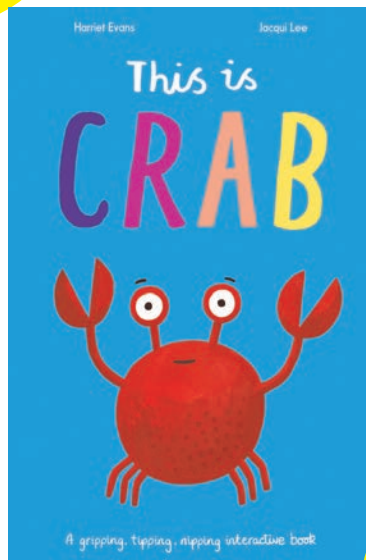
Encourages language  
play and development



### This is Crab

**Harriet Evans**  
(Caterpillar Books, Little Tiger Group)

Proof that a printed book can be every bit as interactive as any screen-based game, this delightful story encourages children to join in on every spread – counting, wagging their fingers, rubbing the pictures, shaking the pages, and much more – developing their communication and fine motor skills. Jacqui Lee's bold, bright illustrations are adorable, and Harriet Evans is a marvellous narrator; together, they have created something truly special.



*"Gorgeously interactive, this book invites the reader to be an engaged and active participant in the reading. It's huge fun, with lovely, bright, vibrant illustrations"*

Liz Flanagan



### Runner up



**Bad Apple,**  
**Huw Lewis Jones and Ben Sanders**  
(Thames & Hudson)

Apple really is a nasty piece of fruit – stealing Pear's chair, drinking Pea's tea, and getting up to all kinds of rhyming shenanigans before going a step too far and eating Snake's cake... Children will love the shameless naughtiness and relish the rhymes; but what on Earth will happen when Apple meets Orange?

*"Really love this! The illustrations are basic but suit the story perfectly, and there's lots to talk about"*

Dan Smith

### Also shortlisted

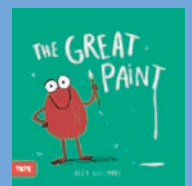
**IMAGINE!**  
**Patricia Forde**  
(Little Island Books)



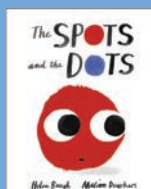
**WHEN THE SUN GOES HOME**  
**Momoko Abe**  
(Hachette Children's Group)



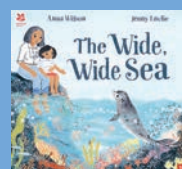
**THE GREAT PAINT**  
**Alex Willmore**  
(Tate Publishing)



**THE SPOTS AND THE DOTS**  
**Helen Baugh**  
(Andersen Press)



**NATIONAL TRUST: THE WIDE, WIDE SEA**  
**Anna Wilson & Jenny Løvlie**  
(Nosy Crow)



**A LITTLE BIT WORRIED**  
**Ciara Gavin and Tim Warnes**  
(Little Tiger Press)







# KEY STAGE 1

## WINNER

### KEY CRITERIA

Breadth of appeal

Use of illustration

Pacy, engaging story

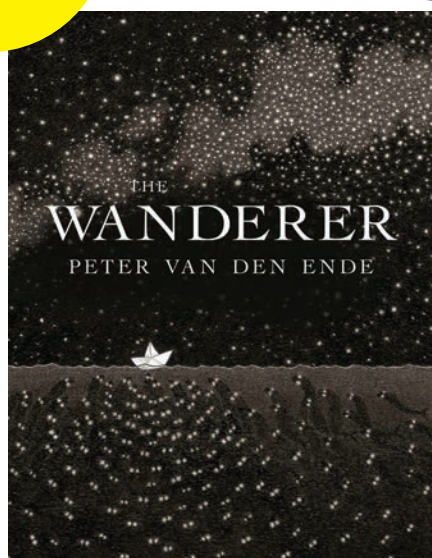
Learning opportunities



### The Wanderer

Peter Van Den Ende  
(Pushkin Children's Books)

Without a single word, Peter Van Den Ende uses art to tell an incredible story; following the journey of a little paper boat through a succession of strange, wonderful – and occasionally frightening – scenes. Dreamlike (perhaps nightmarish in places) and haunting, this is a book that children and adults alike will come back to time and time again, finding new details and adding layers to the narrative with every read. It's an extraordinary work, surely destined to become a classic, and a profoundly exciting prospect for any teacher.



*"Stunning, original, unforgettable. It should really be in a category of its own for 'the most astounding and disturbing book without words you've ever opened'!"*

Brough Girling



### Pizazz vs the New Kid

Sophy Henn  
(Simon & Schuster Children's)

In this follow up to Henn's first story about Pizazz, things really heat up for the reluctant schoolgirl superhero when a potential rival appears on the scene – and once again, the mix of prose and comic-book panels keeps the hilarious adventure bouncing along at a rollicking pace.

### Runner up

*"Zany, witty, with comic type illustrations – this has great appeal"*

Leah Chin

### Also shortlisted

**MAGNIFICENT MABEL AND THE EGG AND SPOON RACE**  
Ruth Quayle & Julia Christians (Nosy Crow)



**AN ALIEN IN THE JAM FACTORY**  
Chrissie Sains (Walker Books)



**MONSTER MAX AND THE BOBBLE HAT OF FORGETTING**  
Robin Bennett (Firefly Press)



**LOTTIE LOVES NATURE: BEE-WARE!**  
Jane Clarke (Five Quills)



**I WISH YOU MORE**  
Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld (Chronicle Books)



**WILD IS THE WIND**  
Grahame Baker-Smith (Bonnier Books UK)





# KEY STAGE 2

## KEY CRITERIA

Originality

Compelling plot

Emotional depth

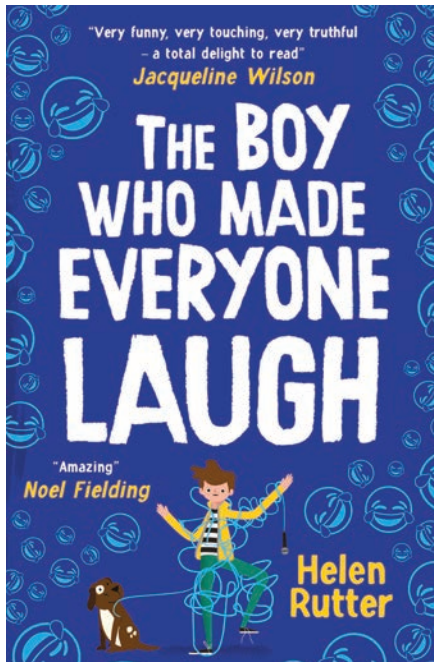
Something to think about?

## WINNER



*"A heart-warming, moving story about overcoming adversity with adorable memorable characters – I loved it!"*

Liz Flanagan



### The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh

Helen Rutter (Scholastic)

Funny, tender, and full of the kind of perceptive observation that can only come from lived experience, Helen Rutter's debut novel is a triumph. The protagonist, Billy Plimpton, is an eleven-year-old boy with dreams of becoming a stand-up comedian – but if he's going to achieve his ambition, he'll have to overcome multiple obstacles, including a school bully... and a stammer. This is a book for any child struggling to find their voice, and a celebration of what it means to be proud of exactly who you are.

## Runner up

### The Life and Time of Lonny Quicke

Kirsty Applebaum (Nosy Crow)

This captivating story is based on a fascinating premise: what if someone had the power to extend the lives of others – but only at the cost of shortening their own? It's a tale that will keep readers gripped, and leave them with plenty to talk about.

*"This story tackles big questions in a fresh and interesting way. Very thoughtful."*

Megan Smith



## Also shortlisted

**A GIRL CALLED JOY**  
Jenny Valentine  
(Simon & Schuster Children's)



**BETWEEN SEA AND SKY**  
Nicola Penfold  
(Stripes Publishing)



**THE VALLEY OF LOST SECRETS**  
Lesley Parr  
(Bloomsbury)



**RUMAYSA: A FAIRYTALE**  
Radiya Hafiza  
(Macmillan Children's Books)



**CRATER LAKE EVOLUTION**  
Jennifer Killick  
(Firefly Press)



**WHEN WE GOT LOST IN DREAMLAND**  
Ross Welford  
(HarperCollins Children's Books)







# NON-FICTION

## WINNER

### KEY CRITERIA

Quality of information

Presentation

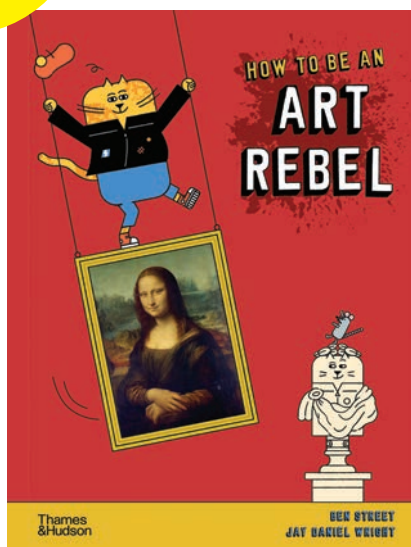
Is the writing entertaining and age-appropriate?

Will it provoke further curiosity?

### How to be an Art Rebel

Ben Street (Thames & Hudson)

"Art can make us think about scary things like death, and what it feels like to be happy. It can tell us stories, challenge our ideas, and make us feel understood." So says the edgy, feline narrator of this irreverent yet hugely informative book; a fantastic introduction to the art world for children that never lectures, but rather, empowers young readers with the knowledge and understanding they need to form their own opinions – and express them with confidence.



*"Entertaining and engaging, humorous and visually appealing"*

Konnie Huq



### It's Her Story: Rosa Parks

Lauren Burke (Sunbird Books)

Packed with information and insight, this short but comprehensive graphic novel does a fantastic job of contextualising Rosa Parks' life, helping readers to understand just how brave and transformative her act of rebellion was, and why it remains so important to remember.

### Runner up

*"I really enjoyed this book; it felt a bit like watching a biopic!"*

Konnie Huq

### Also shortlisted

#### WILD CHILD: A JOURNEY THROUGH NATURE

Dara McNulty  
(Macmillan Children's Books)



#### QUEENS: 3,000 YEARS OF THE MOST INCREDIBLE WOMEN IN HISTORY

Victoria Crossman  
(Scholastic)



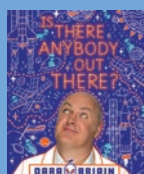
#### THIS IS OUR WORLD

Tracey Turner  
(Kingfisher)



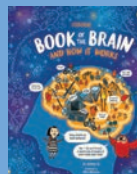
#### IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

Dara Ó Briain  
(Scholastic)



#### USBORNE BOOK OF THE BRAIN AND HOW IT WORKS

Dr Betina Ip (Usborne)



#### ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET... GOLD!

Scott Allen (Nosy Crow)



# Book CLUB

*We review five new titles that your class will love*



## **Group Hug**

**by Jean Reidy, ill. Joey Chou**

**(£7.99, Scallywag Press)**

This sweet picturebook of a host of animal friends – slug, beetle, mouse, bear, et al – as they comfort one another through tricky days with hugs. Beautifully illustrated in a wholesome and affecting style by Joey Chou, the book is a warm reminder of how far a hug can go when you're not feeling your best.

With simple, rhyming language, this story is perfect for your younger or less-confident readers, and great to read out loud. Older or more confident readers might enjoy finding the trickier words – such as 'porcupine', 'skittered', and 'lumbered'. These are a great place to start when teaching synonyms, too.

If that wasn't enough, the overarching theme of togetherness and acceptance is one that never gets old, and can be a gentle starting point for discussions on diversity.



## **The Rapping Princess**

**by Hannah Lee and Allen Fatimaharan**

**(£6.99, Faber)**

Have you ever wished you had a talent you couldn't quite grasp? Well, so has Princess Shiloh, the only one of her sisters who can't sing. Every other princess in the kingdom has the voice of an angel, and Shiloh feels alone and inadequate until she hears princes rapping, and realises she can do it brilliantly!

A lovely, upbeat tale of finding your own voice (literally and figuratively), this picturebook will appeal both to the confident and the not-so-sure-of-themselves in your class. With bright illustrations throughout, this is a great one for storytime in class or at home, and sends the lovely message that there isn't only one way to do things – often, when we look a little harder at ourselves, we find we can do much more than we imagine.



## **The Stardust That Made Us**

**by Colin Stuart, ill. Ximo Abadía**  
**(£16.99 HB, Big Picture Press)**

A startling journey through the periodic table and beyond, this is a children's book that will likely appeal to many adults, too. Described on the cover as 'a visual exploration of chemistry, atoms, elements and the universe', this is a tome that even the most science-averse will find curious.

Bursting with colourful illustrations from Ximo Abadía, the book's large size means that the information contained within isn't overwhelming, but broken up into bitesize chunks, perfect for dipping in and out of, or for sparking a lesson idea. From alkali metals and the Big Bang, to pioneering women and fizzing fireworks, there is plenty to learn and enjoy here. Still not convinced? Have a dip into these pages and see if you can find how a urine experiment changed chemistry forever (for the gross-out crowd), or how Thor's hammer relates to the periodic table...



## →→→ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

**plazoom**

### WAGOLL TEXTS FOR OUTSTANDING WRITING

Real Writing, from Plazoom, is a brilliant, whole-school writing curriculum, based on beautiful model texts by published children's authors, with fully resourced teaching sequences covering every objective in the NC for KS1 and KS2. Why not take a FREE 14-day trial now, at [plazoom.com/model-texts](http://plazoom.com/model-texts)



## Meet the author

**BEN MILLER ON WRITING  
FOR KIDS, TEACHER  
PARENTS, AND  
SCIENCE FUN...**



Faye Thomas Photography

**What's it like writing for kids, as opposed to performing for adults?**

For me there really is no difference. Children don't want

to watch or read stuff that's just for children. They're interested in everything. And if you just focus on writing a good story, rather than a kids' story, you can help improve literacy, emotional intelligence, articulacy, everything. Children hear conversations all the time with words they don't understand, but they're experts at singling out the important parts, or understanding emotional undercurrents.

**What was it like having teachers for parents?**

It's the thing that's had the most impact on me, and my writing, I think. My parents read so many stories to me when I was young, and that's my happy place. That's why I love writing stories, and the place I'd always go back to is sitting on my dad's knee, with him reading to me.

**How have you included your love of science in your writing?**

I find science wonderful and extraordinary. Though I suspect I'm probably not a typical scientist, in that I don't necessarily think science is 'true' in any objective sense. I mean, scientific theories are very, very useful descriptions of the world, but I don't see them as more than that. They're just mathematical descriptions, so they're just as invented as anything else, really. My interest in science is quite childlike, I think. Popping scientific facts into my stories just comes naturally, and hopefully the story they're wrapped up in will make them more memorable, too.

**How I Became a Dog Called Midnight, and Diary of a Christmas Elf by Ben Miller are out now (£12.99 HB, Simon & Schuster Children's Books).**



**KS1/2**

### **A Field Guide to Leaflings**

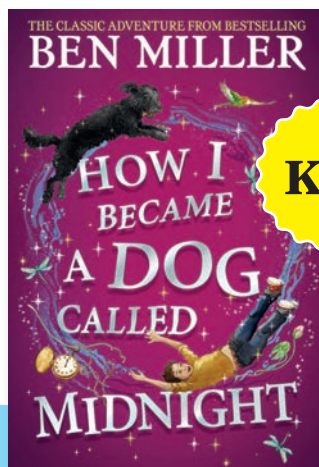
**by Owen Churcher and Niamh Sharkey**

**(£12.99 HB, Templar Books)**

A mix of fun storytelling and facts, this gorgeous book introduces children to different kinds of trees and their environments, through the world of the Leaflings – minuscule creatures that take care of the trees.

The beautifully-illustrated pages introduce specimens from the well-known Oak and Holly, to more exotic trees such as Japan's Sakura (cherry blossom) and the Amazon's Kapok. As well as containing facts about the trees themselves, each spread also includes some background on local wildlife, and biological processes such as photosynthesis. But the most entertaining part of the book is its liftable flaps, containing extra tidbits, such as 'How the Kiwi lost its wings', as part of the story of New Zealand's Kauri tree, and 'Cloud leopards', contained within the mountain of China's Huangshan Pine.

Perfect for group reading, or as a starter for science, geography, and 'the world around us' lessons, this will be a sure-fire favourite with pupils and teachers alike.



**KS2**

### **How I Became a Dog Called Midnight**

**by Ben Miller**

**(£12.99 HB, Simon & Schuster)**

Meet George. He lives with his dad Gabe in a gamekeeper's cottage, where his dad works for a family who have a very soppy very large, dog called Midnight. All is well, until one night Midnight escapes into George's garden, and upon chasing him, he and George both fall into the fountain. All of a sudden, George is no longer George – he's turned into Midnight the dog!

But that's not all – George's miserable neighbour Clive is determined to get his hands on the magical fountain and make some money, so now the race is on for Midnight and George to swap back to their own bodies before the clock strikes 12.

With the humour and feeling so many will recognise from comedian and children's author Ben Miller, this lovely story is sure to bring out the giggles and gasps. And, illustrated in energetic black and white drawings by Daniela Jaglenka Terrazzini, there is a whiff of the modern classic about this one.

# AUTHOR IN YOUR CLASSROOM

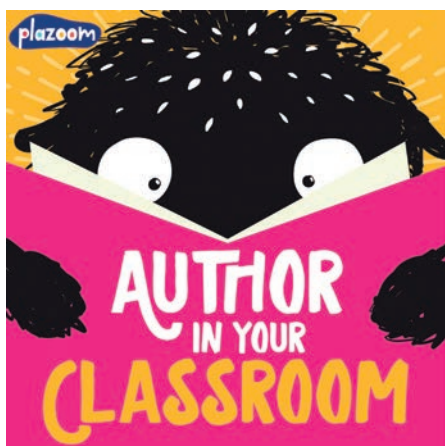
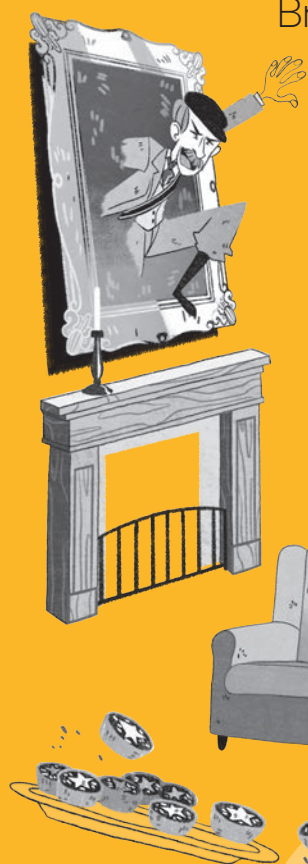


Bring author **Catherine Doyle** directly into your classroom – via a free podcast and downloadable resources...

**F**ancy a virtual visit from a real author? Luckily for you, Catherine Doyle, author of the Storm Keeper Trilogy, is ready and waiting to share her thoughts, ideas and inspirations with your budding wordsmiths, via our free literacy podcast. The experience doesn't end there, either; we've created some amazing free teaching resources to download at [plazoom.com](http://plazoom.com), so you can continue your reading adventure in the classroom.

Who doesn't love a bit of magic, especially at Christmas? Well, so does Catherine Doyle, and in her recent book *The Miracle on Ebenezer Street*, she was able to reimagine her favourite festive story – Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* – for the 21st century. Taking the theme of moving through time and space to learn an important life lesson, Catherine introduces us to ten-year-old George, who lives in modern-day London with his dad, Hugo, and really misses his mum.

In this episode, Catherine talks us through her inspiration for her book, and why stories full of magic and humour feel like her 'homeland'. She also shares ideas for how your pupils can create their own believable magical tales, and that there's a surprising amount to learn from Muppets...



## HOW TO USE THE PODCAST



Search for 'Author in your Classroom' podcast wherever you listen to podcasts



Play it in your classroom in one go, or in shorter chunks



Pause the podcast to talk about the points being raised, using our teaching notes



## THREE THINGS KIDS WILL LEARN FROM THE PODCAST

plazoom

### 1 READ, READ, AND READ SOME MORE

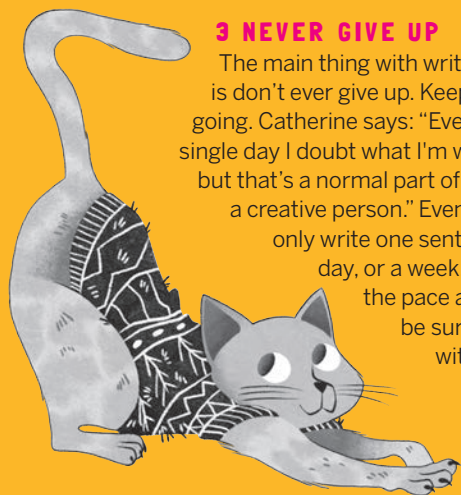
Before you start writing, says Catherine, the best thing you can do is read, read, read and read. The more you read, the more you soak up the ability to tell stories. You should also write down all your ideas as soon as you get them, as you'll never know when they'll come in handy for your next story! If you can have a bit of a plan about what you're going to say and how you're going to say it, before you start properly writing, too, your story is likely to flow better.

### 2 WHO DO YOU KNOW?

If you've got a great idea for a story, but aren't sure where to start with creating realistic characters, mine your own life for inspiration! Strong characters can help make a story more believable, says Catherine, especially if you're including magical elements. Why not have a think about the people you know – a sibling, grandparent, or even a pet! – and use them as the basis for your characters. Change the names and nobody will ever know...

### 3 NEVER GIVE UP

The main thing with writing, is don't ever give up. Keep going. Catherine says: "Every single day I doubt what I'm writing, but that's a normal part of being a creative person." Even if you only write one sentence a day, or a week, keep up the pace and you'll be surprised with where you end up, and what you discover. Writing should be fun, but persistence is key!



## How to download the resources



To accompany the podcast, teaching experts at Plazoom have created free resources that you can use to develop your pupils' writing. The teaching pack includes teacher notes, book extracts, a PowerPoint, planning sheets and beautifully designed elements for a working wall display.

In this teaching sequence, children will have the opportunity to write their own Christmas story of redemption, where a character can learn a lesson and embrace the spirit of the festive season. Extracts from the podcast are suggested to introduce each section of the teaching sequence, providing an excellent way to connect what the children are learning with the work of an accomplished author.

DOWNLOAD THEM AT  
[TINYURL.COM/AIYC-CD](https://tinyurl.com/aiyc-cd)

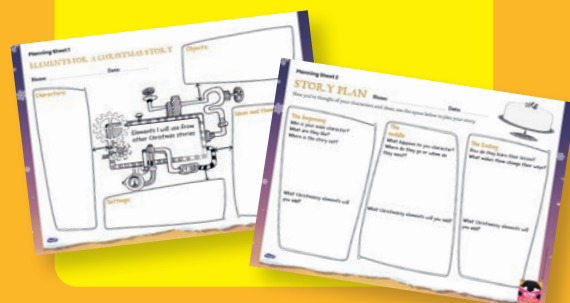
## PREVIOUS EPISODES



**LAUREN CHILD,** author and illustrator, has great advice for young writers who want to create their own characters, and what it's like bringing someone else's words to life. Download the teaching resources to help your pupils find their own cast of characters, and to be patient if their story is taking a long time to develop.



**JACQUELINE WILSON,** much-loved author and former children's laureate, explores using familiar characters from your favourite stories and placing them in new surroundings. Download the teaching resources to guide pupils in thinking about how their characters might react to the new places that they visit using role play.







## MY MONEY WEEK

**13 - 17 June 2022**

My Money Week is a fantastic way to get children excited about money matters!

Brand new **FREE** quality marked resources are released every Summer Term to support teachers to deliver high quality financial education.

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[www.y-e.org.uk/MMW/](http://www.y-e.org.uk/MMW/)

**SCAN ME**






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## Q&amp;A

# 'Award-winning online CPD for the whole team'

A valuable and accessible toolkit of professional development opportunities for teachers and TAs



## 30 SECOND BRIEFING

TT Education's award-winning professional development and school improvement support is easier to access than ever with the exclusive School Improvement Club.

### How can TT Education's School Improvement Club benefit my school?

When you join our growing network of schools who are committed to outstanding professional development, you will be providing your teachers with award-winning CPD and support at a fraction of the usual price. Having been awarded School Improvement Provider of the Year for the past three years, we provide the very highest level of support for our member schools.

### What CPD do members have access to?

As an exclusive benefit of our School Improvement Club, every member of staff in your school can gain unlimited on-demand access to TT Education's growing portfolio of over 200 courses and regularly added new content will be available to you immediately. That's all of your CPD – for the entire year – sorted.

Our team of experienced consultants will also provide you with an in-school support day, which is tailored to the requirements of your school.

### Wow! Are there any other benefits?

Of course! With all this great CPD, you'll need a way to manage and track it. That's why membership gives you access to School CPD Tracker, our powerful performance management software.

You'll also receive a digital resource bank of our acclaimed progression guides, covering all core and foundation subjects.



### What do schools say about the School Improvement Club?

"The varied range of support from CPD courses, one-to-one consultations, online training and short webinars that we have engaged in, has provided a valuable toolkit of professional development opportunities for our teachers and teaching assistants. The exceptional



**ABOUT DAVID:**  
David Maytham is the chief executive officer of TT Education



#### Contact:

[www.tteducation.co.uk](http://www.tteducation.co.uk)

01206 625 626

[info@tteducation.co.uk](mailto:info@tteducation.co.uk)

training quality and tailored support has made TT Education an invaluable partner in raising our quality of education and has direct impact in our classrooms."

— Kerry Hill, Headteacher, Eyres Monsell Primary School

### This all sounds great! How can I become a member?

Becoming a member is as simple as could be! All we need is your go-ahead and your staff can start receiving their benefits. Contact our friendly head office team to receive your personalised quote – prices start at just £2,999 per year, depending upon the size of your school.

We would love to hear from you!

## Need to know

- + Award-winning online CPD for the whole team (over 200 courses!)
- + Personalised in-school support, tailored to your school's specific goals
- + Other exclusive benefits from TT Education, named School Improvement Provider of the Year



## WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- Independence and confidence in making notes
- That learning is a process, not achieved in a single lesson
- How to identify relevant information
- Why summarising – rather than copying – helps learning
- That quantity doesn't equal quality in our learning!

# Note-taking for knowledge – without the pain



Taking effective notes is key for learning and recall, says **Matthew Lane**, but how to do it without stress?

@MrMJLane [theteachinglane.co.uk](http://theteachinglane.co.uk)

Sometimes we need children to see and internalise new content upon which to base later learning. This might be as background, or to inform later writing or other work. This learning might be from a PowerPoint, a video or researching on a website – and that means note-taking. But how do we help children to craft notes that are purposeful, logically structured, and easily interrogated at a later date? At my school, we have successfully implemented using Cornell Notes – developed at Cornell University – to support children in this process.



## START HERE

Note-taking is a vital skill for learning and a great skill for children in later life. Yet how do we teach and support it? This was the question answered

by Walter Paul at Cornell University in the 1940s. His 'two-column' system is based upon synthesis and summarising of content in one column that is then indexed and summarised as key words in the second column. This double summarising means students spend learning time reading or watching and thinking about the content and less time writing. And – most importantly – it stops children blindly copying out a text!



## MAIN LESSON

### 1| WHY SHOULD YOU USE CORNELL NOTES IN YOUR LESSONS?

Regardless of age or ability, Cornell Notes aid children in recording the key learning from knowledge-rich content. This reduces teacher workload, and less lesson time is taken explaining the activity as the format can be repeated with different content. As a generative learning activity, Cornell Notes keeps children thinking (and therefore engaged) for the whole lesson. The new learning is broken into small pieces and students do not become

overwhelmed by the additional information.

### 2| HOW DO CORNELL NOTES WORK?

Children read or view a portion of content and then summarise it into a couple of sentences in the bigger column. Then these are summarised into one or two key words in the smaller column. The process takes 2-3mins, which is then repeated as needed until all the content has been reviewed. Some of the writing could also be achieved through drawing pictures.

How much content should pupils summarise? One paragraph or a few minutes of video is sufficient.





**“Regardless of age or ability, Cornell Notes aid children in recording the key learning from knowledge-rich content.”**

Each note should contain one key idea that students have spent a few minutes focusing on before moving onto the next one. The purpose of the exercise is that children spend 80 percent of the lesson thinking about the content and 20 percent writing or drawing. Once the main notes have been recorded it is time for the indexing note. This is a key word or small picture that aids in navigation of the notes later. The process of writing the key words gives time for children to review their notes and think afresh about the content. The process of listening, thinking and then recording keeps the lesson moving at pace.

When it comes to writing, give pupils a line or word count. Aim for a word count that is about 10 percent of the original content. This is where modelling at the start of the lesson is vital. E.g. ask:

- What is the key point?
- What is the most important thing to remember from this?

You could also record the key points using pictures. This is great for younger children or reluctant writers – just be mindful that pictures are kept simple, and effort is put into their meaning rather than format.

At the end of each page of note-taking, children should do some form of summarising. This is where they re-read

their notes and pick out the key take-away points. This gives a third opportunity for children to engage with the content and generate more learning. This is best done after the lesson and makes great early morning work or a starter for the follow-on lesson.

### **3 HOW DO I DIFFERENTIATE?**

With the help of teachers at my school, I developed six formats for Cornell Notes that progress from mostly pictures, to structured notes with given key words and free-note-taking. They are designed to be used in tandem, with two or three templates being deployed in a lesson. For instance, you may use Template 4 (with lots of given key words and structure) for most children, with a few more able students given Template 6 (no scaffold at all). SEN could be given Template 3 to reduce the writing or Template 2 where notes are mostly done through pictures. The numbering is not linked to year group, just stage in the progression.

Download all six templates for free at [tinyurl.com/CornellNotes](http://tinyurl.com/CornellNotes)

*Matthew Lane is a primary teacher in Norfolk. He implemented Cornell Notes as part of research into generative learning. You can read more about this at his website.*

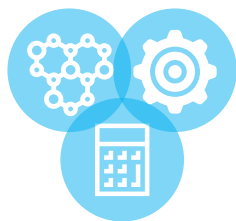
## **EXTENDING THE LESSON**



- Mix and match templates, giving students the option to choose which one they want to use as they become more confident with the process
- Suggest children use the margin in their exercise books for indexing learning. This is great for maths where key methods are recorded or in English to bookmark parts of their story writing
- Limit length for speedier writers. Ask them to use just one line for each paragraph
- Note-take as you watch. Usually, you may have children watch a video through once and then a second, paused viewing for note-taking. Instead, challenge children to record their notes in the first viewing which they can then refine and edit in the second viewing. The faster pace will reduce their writing time.

## **USEFUL QUESTIONS**

- What is the key point here?
- What is the most important thing to remember from this?
- What is the most important idea to recall from this part of the lesson?



## WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- To ask relevant questions and use different types of scientific enquiries to answer them
- To set up simple practical enquiries, comparative, and fair tests
- To identify the forces acting on a pendulum

# Investigate pendulum patterns in KS2



Explore pendulum swing patterns with this activity from *15-Minute STEM Book 2* by **Emily Hunt**

[@HowtoSTEM](#) [howtostem.co.uk](http://howtostem.co.uk)

Engineers use pendulums in their constructions for lots of things, from everyday clocks to amusement park rides. In this lesson, children will learn what a pendulum is, and build upon this knowledge by creating and experimenting with their own salt pendulum. They will explore the patterns created by the pendulum and the forces involved in the swing, such as gravity and kinetic energy. Pupils will also make real-world links to the practical applications of pendulums, and the role they play in day-to-day objects.



## START HERE

Begin by displaying three images for the children to discuss: a playground swing, a swing boat ride at an amusement park and a wrecking ball. What do these images have in common? Encourage the children to think about how each of these objects moves. They might identify that each object swings back and forth under its own weight. Explain that each image is an example of a pendulum. A pendulum is a weight suspended from a pivot (central point) so it can swing freely. Can they think of any other places where we might find a pendulum? Examples include grandfather clocks and earthquake seismometers.



## MAIN LESSON

### 1 | CREATING A SALT PENDULUM

In order to find out more about pendulums, we are going to create our own. Gather up the equipment needed for the experiment: fine salt or sand, a paper cup, string, a hole punch or sharp pencil, a timer, and plastic sheeting or a large tray. Then head outside and ask the children to find a low-hanging branch or similar that we can suspend our pendulum from. You could take this opportunity to ask who has remembered what 'pivot' means, and that in the case of our salt pendulum, the pivot will be the branch and the

weight will be a cupful of salt. Revisit terms if needs be.

Take the paper cup and punch four evenly spaced holes around the edges of the top of the cup using a hole punch or sharp pencil. Then tie a long piece of string around a low hanging branch so that the string hangs downwards. Attach the cup to the string on the branch by threading four shorter pieces of string of equal length through each of the holes and tying them to the longer piece of string.

Finally, place plastic sheeting or a tray underneath the cup to catch the salt (unless you are working on a surface that can be swept clean afterwards). Tell the children that we will use this





**“A pendulum is a weight suspended from a pivot (central point) so it can swing freely”**

surface to observe the patterns created by the pendulum.

## 2 | PENDULUM PATTERNS

Now that we have created our pendulum, we are ready to test it and see what happens! Pierce a small hole (about 3mm wide) in the bottom of the cup for the salt to escape through. Then place a finger over the hole as you tip the salt/sand into the cup. Explain to pupils that we will start by pulling back the pendulum and releasing it without pushing. This replicates the movement of the objects in the images of the playground swing, swing boat ride at an amusement part, and wrecking ball that the children discussed at the beginning of the lesson.

Ask the children what pattern they predict that the salt/sand will create on the surface below? Allow some time for discussion. Remove your finger, swing the cup and test the children's predictions.

Next, tell the class that we will start the pendulum swing with a push in a circular motion. What pattern do they predict that the salt will create on the surface below? How might it differ from when we swung the pendulum in a straight line? Refill the cup with salt or sand, and swing the cup to test the children's new predictions.

The pendulum will create many different patterns depending on the swing. These include straight lines when we simply let it go and elliptical

(oval) shapes when we give it a circular swing that steadily reduce in size as the swing declines. The pattern traced out is called a Lissajous curve (pronounced 'lee-sah-zhoo').

## 3 | PENDULUM FORCES

Ask pupils what forces they think are involved when the pendulum swings. Explain that when we let the pendulum go, gravity pulls it down. Having raised it up against gravity, the weight has stored (potential) energy, which changes to kinetic (movement) energy as the pendulum falls.

As it swings back up again, kinetic energy decreases (it slows down) and its potential energy increases again. The back-and-forth movement of the pendulum is called oscillation.

Frictional forces (from the air, and between attachment points) take away this energy, resulting in the amplitude (size) of the swings declining over time until it eventually stops.

When you get back into the classroom, try making a working wall display using the vocabulary pupils have learned, and have them draw pictures or diagrams of what the words mean.

*Emily Hunt is an experienced primary teacher, senior leader and author of the 15-Minute STEM book series (Crown House Publishing). The series is available at [crownhouse.co.uk/15-minute-stem-series](http://crownhouse.co.uk/15-minute-stem-series). Emily also blogs and shares STEM activities on her website [HowToSTEM](http://HowToSTEM).*

## EXTENDING THE LESSON

- Repeat the experiment with shorter or longer pieces of string. Ask the children what they think will happen to the pattern if you shorten or lengthen the string. Why do they think this is?
- Investigate with pupils how the weight of the pendulum affects the time it takes to swing back and forth. How does this happen? You can try adding more or less salt or sand to the cup to demonstrate.
- Lastly, try altering the force with which you swing the pendulum. Ask the class to predict what will happen to the pattern if we swing it more gently or more forcefully.

## USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What patterns can we see in a pendulum swing?
- What forces are involved in a pendulum swing?
- What are some ways that an engineer might be able to use a pendulum?



## WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

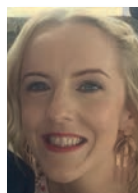
- The importance of having compassion towards others

• Shared responsibilities we all have for caring for other people and living things

- Consequences of not adhering to rules and laws

- Recognising there are human rights that are there to protect everyone

# Explore compassion and empathy



Get children thinking about others with examples of real-life activism, by **Michelle Casey**

Learning to have compassion towards others is an important life quality to develop within children. In this lesson, children will develop empathy towards other people and their situation or reasons for doing something. They will explore why people choose to take part in protests and why this action in itself can be polarising and divisive. This lesson is a thought-provoking way of encouraging children to see compassion in action. It will also touch on consequences of actions and human rights.



## START HERE

Show the children a clip of a peaceful protest by Insulate Britain. *The Telegraph* has a good option here: [tinyurl.com/tp-TelegraphInsulateBritain](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/03/15/insulate-britain-protest/)

Gauge the children's response. What do they think these people are doing? Why are they doing it? At this point, the children may believe there is nothing really wrong with what the people are doing: they are protesting peacefully, no one is being hurt and they are giving up their time for a valuable cause.

Now show them another clip. This one shows a similar peaceful protest, but this time there is a lady who is trying to reach her elderly mother and she cannot get through the barricade the protesters have made. The BBC has a good option here: [tinyurl.com/tp-BBCInsulateBritain](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-67444444)

**TEACHER'S NOTE:** Take care to review this video before showing it to the class as you may think some language or scenes are unsuitable for your pupils.

Allow time for feedback on the clip.



## MAIN LESSON

### 1 | THINKING ABOUT THE EFFECTS

Explain the fundamental mission of Insulate Britain: the campaigners are demanding the government insulate all UK homes by 2030 to make them more energy-efficient, to meet the UK climate change targets under the Paris Agreement. Britain has some of the most energy inefficient homes in Europe and this makes up almost 15 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK.

The activists recognise that traditional protest methods like strikes, sit-ins, occupations and blockades have more impact than less disruptive protests such as marches,

demonstrations or petitions. This can make them unpopular with the general public.

Read or show the children some information/quotes in relation to the activists.

For example:

'The first lorry, hurtling towards the T-junction, did not look like it was going to stop: it ground to a halt inches from the faces of three activists.' — *The Guardian*

'Ministers have waxed apoplectic at "eco-warriors" who are "destroying people's lives", and Boris Johnson has called for new powers to "insulate them snugly in prison".' — *The Guardian*

'Efforts were made to avoid critical sites such as hospitals and schools, said another activist, who also





asked to remain anonymous.’  
— *The Guardian*

“My three-year-old daughter has a bad ear infection. I needed to get her medication. A journey that would normally take me twenty minutes took me an hour and twenty minutes. I’m livid. They have no consideration for human lives.” — Mum, Shay Kaur speaking on the *Jeremy Vine On 5* show.

Discuss the quotes above. Elicit the children’s responses to the fact that this civil disobedience in the name of climate change can land people in prison. Do they think that’s fair? Do they have a right to protest? Look at the human rights document at [tinyurl.com/tp-HumanRights](https://tinyurl.com/tp-HumanRights). Draw pupils’ attention to nos. 19 and 20.

Are these protestors

destroying people’s lives as some ministers claim?

## 2 | ROLEPLAY

Remind children of the impact climate change will have. The BBC has a useful article demonstrating this at [tinyurl.com/tp-BBCClimatechange](https://tinyurl.com/tp-BBCClimatechange). You can highlight effects such as:

- More frequent and intense extreme weather, for example hotter summers, increased rainfall
- Impact on farming – hotter summers stunt the growth of crops-eventually we won’t have the foods we want, or we will have to pay a lot more for them.

By asking leading questions, encourage the children to reflect on this on a human level. Allow

them to understand the impact of extreme heat on the elderly, those with breathing conditions, infants and farmers trying to earn a living.

Display a thought bubble on the board to move onto the next part of the lesson. Alongside this display a list of ‘roles’. Some possibilities:

- Police officer
- Farmer
- Protester
- Hospital worker
- Lorry driver
- Member of parliament
- Person with a vital hospital appointment
- Person who suffers from chronic asthma

Each child should be allocated a role then think about the question: ‘what are your thoughts on climate change protests?’

## 3 | SHARE IDEAS

Children can work in core groups of four, five or six – whatever works best for the class. When they have been allocated a role, they can move to work with other children with the same role and brainstorm ideas for their response. They can make notes on a whiteboard. After a few minutes, ask the children to go back and feed back to their core group. A few pupils can share their thoughts in their role with the class. You can ask the class questions to draw them out in their role and really get them to reflect on this person’s point of view.

As an independent written task, children could be given a speech bubble template and allocated a different role. They could then write their response in this new role into the speech bubble. Having had plenty of discussion time, hopefully ideas for their response will come easily.

*Michelle Casey is a primary school teacher and freelance writer based in Surrey.*

## EXTENDING THE LESSON

- Look more closely at the Paris Agreement and identify two or three of the main points. You can download the full agreement at [tinyurl.com/tp-ParisAgreement](https://tinyurl.com/tp-ParisAgreement) and there’s a great summary on the UN climate change website: [tinyurl.com/tp-UNClimateChange](https://tinyurl.com/tp-UNClimateChange)
- In the lesson, we have looked mostly at Insulate Britain. Pick another climate change activist group and do some research on them: look at their mission statement and how they hope to achieve it.
- Writing activity: should people be punished for trying to encourage the government to implement changes which will benefit all?

## USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Do people have a right to protest?
- In what way are these protesters showing compassion?
- Do you think the lady in the second video is feeling the protesters’ compassion?
- In what way are the protesters vulnerable?
- Is it fair that these activists are being punished and vilified?
- Although these activists are protesting peacefully, are they causing problems? (Mention issues like traffic jams, late deliveries, people missing work and possibly pay, impact on

# MATHS Flex



## Maths practice with a difference

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# Top of the class

Resources and activities to bring fresh inspiration into your classroom

## Transform financial education

Money Heroes is an award-winning free programme from Young Money, supported by HSBC UK, which seeks to transform financial education for primary children, aged 3–11, in school and at home. Offering a range of resources, tools and guidance, including storybooks and games, ensures that children have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills across the core themes from the Young Money Primary Financial Education Planning Framework. We're also offering schools free in-house teacher training and bespoke 1:1 mentoring support to guide the planning and delivery of financial education within schools. [moneyheroes.org.uk](http://moneyheroes.org.uk)



1



2



## Create writing experts with STABILO

STABILO specialises in ergonomic shaped pens and pencils which are specifically designed for left and right handers. Learning to write is an important skill to master and with the EASY Start range of handwriting pens and pencils this can be made EASY. Within the range you'll find something suitable for all school ages and abilities. Also, the EASYgraph and the EASYoriginal are not only loved by kids but they are also approved by UK teachers. [stabilo.com/uk](http://stabilo.com/uk)



3

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Find out how Success for All can transform reading results, by visiting our website and booking on to a free webinar. [fft.org.uk/phonics](http://fft.org.uk/phonics)

## Perfect pens

GIOTTO Turbo Color Fibre pens school pack consists of 144pcs of bright vivid colours ideal for schools. Long-lasting super-resistant nib Ø 2.8mm. The pens benefit from a ventilated cap, tightfitting nib, choke-free stopper, water-based ink, and you can use soap and water to remove from skin. Machine-wash at 40° C on a standard programme. Extra-long cap-off. Safe and compliant with European certifications for children's toys. Includes 12pcs of each of the following colours: medium yellow, orange, pink, scarlet red, brown, light green, cinnabar green, ash grey, sky blue, ultramarine blue, violet, and black.

[giottocolours.co.uk/sample](http://giottocolours.co.uk/sample)

4



5



## Sports premium

Timotay Playscapes creates inspirational outdoor spaces for schools and Early Years settings.

To support the Sport Premium initiative, it has developed a proven range of engaging products that will motivate children and increase participation in sports and help to reduce obesity. Contact Timotay for your free inspiration guide and consultation at

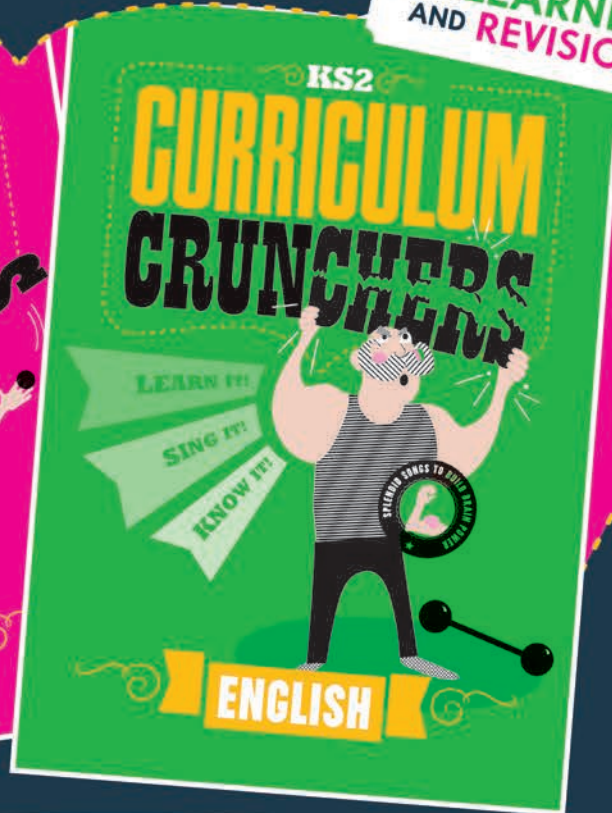
[enquiries@timotayplayscapes.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@timotayplayscapes.co.uk)



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STABILO EASYoriginal is the first ergonomic rollerball specially designed for left or right handers. The grip promotes the dynamic tripod grip and the design also helps create a relaxed hold which prevents fatigue and pain while writing. It's extremely

easy to refill and the tip doesn't blot or scratch. The pens include a space for a name so pupils can identify their own.

STABILO EASYgraph is the first ergonomic pencil specially designed for left or right handers. The triangular design creates a relaxed hold for little hands with its non-slip grip moulds and promotes the dynamic tripod grip. STABILO power felt tip pens give deep colour and coverage and have an extremely long cap-off time of up to eight weeks without drying out.

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\*Competition closes at 5pm on 20th November 2021. Winner will be notified within 21 days. Full terms and conditions available at [teachwire.net](http://teachwire.net)

## FINANCE

# Money Heroes

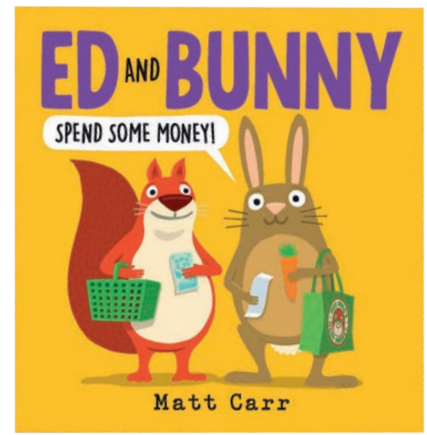
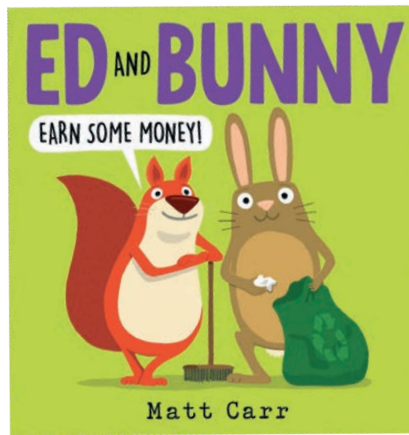
A free programme that seeks to educate primary children about the sound management of their personal finances



## AT A GLANCE

- Created by Young Money and supported by HSBC UK
- Well-pitched resources for KS1 and KS2 children
- Storybooks written by well-established authors
- Includes activities and a board game
- Easily available via a bespoke online platform

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



As Mr Banks from Mary Poppins will tell you, being sensible and careful with money is not a particularly enchanting subject for anyone, let alone children. Nevertheless, it is extremely important that young people receive an appropriate financial education. This is especially true in these days of click-to-buy amidst the siren calls of instant gratification.

Of course, schools are now required to make sure their curriculum prepares children for the realities and responsibilities of life. So, how can you make this topic appealing for children who might not give tuppence for saving but happily blow their cash on bird seed and kites?

Fortunately for teachers, Young Money, part of Young Enterprise, has a long track record of offering the knowledge, resources and training they need to bring money matters to life for primary children. Backed by HSBC UK, they have now developed Money Heroes to help parents and teachers develop children's financial capability skills.

Money Heroes comprises books and activities that deliver important financial lessons about things like saving and budgeting for young people. They have even teamed up with Orchard Toys to create a shopping board game to accompany some of them.

For KS1 children, they offer Ed and Bunny books which look at earning and spending money. As you would hope, they are bright, cheerful and very accessible. Somehow, author and designer Matt Carr has managed to convey all the right messages without being too preachy. He has even managed to weave in some helpful thoughts on kindness and friendship.

KS2 children get three stories in one lively and appealing book, written by E.L. Norry. I really liked the way she conveyed difficult issues, including families falling on harder times, in such a positive yet realistic light. I imagine there are many difficult and even angry conversations within households that could have been avoided by sharing these well-pitched tales beforehand.

When it comes to potential savings, time must come close to the top of the wish-list for teachers so they will, no doubt, find the ready-made, full activities particularly attractive. Nevertheless, schools will also be delighted to discover that the books, games and activities are all free if acquired through the programme's website.

In one of the stories, it is very wisely pointed out that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is. Money Heroes might just be the exception that proves the rule.

**teach  
PRIMARY**

## VERDICT

- ✓ Created by financial education experts
- ✓ Helps to develop good financial habits from an early age
- ✓ Free teacher training available
- ✓ Saves teachers' precious time
- ✓ Further free resources available online
- ✓ Fun and engaging stories
- ✓ Related shopping board game available from Orchard Toys

## UPGRADE IF...

You need to offer your children a quality introduction to financial matters in an appealing and accessible way.

Money Heroes resources are available for free through their online platform at [moneyheroes.org.uk](http://moneyheroes.org.uk)



LITERACY

# Comprehension Ninja – Fiction & Poetry

A year-by-year series of books designed to improve core reading comprehension skills



## AT A GLANCE

- A mixture of specially commissioned texts and extracts from well-loved authors
- Focused targeting of key comprehension skills
- Concentrated practise of various question types
- 24 texts per book
- Clear and appealing photocopiable activities

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



It's probably the Turtles' fault. Thanks to the popularity of certain fictional teenage marine reptiles, the word Ninja is everywhere these days. You can see the attraction of using it for a set of primary-level teaching resources. That said, it might be doubly appropriate for the Comprehension Ninja series from Bloomsbury, created by Andrew Jennings and Adam Bushnell.

As martial arts experts, Ninjas had to train hard and maintain focus in order to perfect their skills before putting them to the test. Much the same is true of the approach championed by this set of resources.

Each book in this series, which goes from ages 5–6 to ages 10–11, encourages the teaching of specific comprehension skills. In the first half, it allows children to practise each skill exclusively before moving on. In the second section, it mixes them up somewhat in order to make the questions for each text more representative of what might be found in standard tests.

The skills covered include the retrieval of facts, the meaning of words in context and the sequencing of events. There is also the chance to practise tackling particular question types, such as find and copy, true or false, and multiple choice.

Curiously, they don't specifically cover other content domains such as inference and prediction, which I would have thought were particularly well-suited to fiction and poetry. Instead, they merely suggest that their extracts could also be used to teach those skills. Perhaps they are covered elsewhere in their Ninja collections, such as their sister series of books for non-fiction texts.

Nevertheless, for what they do seek to address, these really are very powerful resources. The texts are a mixture of extracts from published works by familiar names such as Michael Morpurgo and Onjali Q. Raúf, as well as ones that have been specially commissioned. Just as importantly, they are lively, engaging and cover a wide range of genres and topics relevant to each key stage.

The texts have been carefully chosen for each age group, and increase in length and complexity across the six books in the series. There is also some progression in the difficulty of the questions. Mercifully, all the activities are photocopiable so teachers can look forward to plenty of guilt-free use. With dedication and discipline, their pupils should soon have the skills they need to ninja their way through the bulk of their reading tests.

## teach PRIMARY

## VERDICT

- ✓ Engaging, well-chosen texts
- ✓ Recognisable authors, including Michael Morpurgo and Onjali Q. Raúf
- ✓ Sharp focus on specific skills
- ✓ Questions are representative of standard tests
- ✓ Photocopiable activities
- ✓ Progression throughout the year groups
- ✓ Saves teachers' time
- ✓ A powerful yet flexible teaching resource

## UPGRADE IF...

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RRP £24.99 per book. [www.bloomsbury.com/uk](http://www.bloomsbury.com/uk)

## TECHNOLOGY ➔

# Samsung Galaxy Tab A7

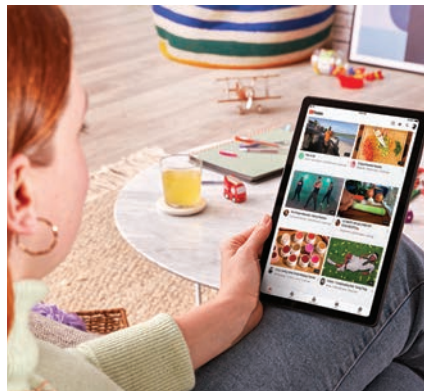
Slim, lightweight tablet with plenty of storage and defence-grade security



## AT A GLANCE

- Sleek, functional, stylish tablet, perfect for any educational setting
- 10.4" screen with stunning visuals; only weighs 476g
- Powerful processing speeds
- Intuitive and easy to use for all ages and technological abilities

REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES



In the right hands, the right piece of equipment can really impact the learning of young people and empower teachers to deliver engaging and interactive lessons. The Samsung Galaxy Tab A7 is a seriously powerful tablet that could have that instant impact.

Samsung's most recent Galaxy range boasts a number of devices perfect for education. The Galaxy Tab A7 tablet is sleek, stylish and hugely functional, making it perfect for classrooms. The impressively sized 10.4" screen means that it is usable but not cumbersome. Weighing in at 476g, the tablet isn't heavy and is well suited to small hands. The tablet is also great for teachers – it can be stored easily and packs some serious computational punch for its size.

The Galaxy Tab A7 is an intuitive tablet that boasts simple and logical command steps to execute functions. The actions on the tablet soon become habitual and after just a few minutes of acclimatisation, students (and adults!) can access the basic functions and use the apps loaded onto the tablet. Even for those accustomed to other types of tablet, navigating the Galaxy Tab A7 becomes second nature quickly. The smoothness and efficiency of the Android software is clearly evident.

The Galaxy Tab A7 comes with 32GB of storage and has rapid charging functionality, meaning that it can be used for a variety of tasks in a day. If you need more storage, there is capacity for an additional memory

card of up to 1TB.

The tablet boasts defence-grade security. Your private data is protected from malware and malicious attacks by the Knox security platform. In addition, the Galaxy Tab A7 boasts a number of restrictive functions to ensure that learners are accessing the right materials during learning time.

Integrating the Galaxy Tab A7 into lessons couldn't be easier. Used as a single tablet, or in conjunction with other pieces of technology, it can unlock so much potential for learners. Samsung has made the networking functions simple to set up, meaning you can quickly prepare and distribute the technology, reducing lost learning time. The actual speed of the processor puts mountains of information and apps at the fingertips of pupils.

The Galaxy Tab A7 can be fully integrated with the wider Samsung ecosystem. This brings additional levels of collaboration into the classroom, with interactive whiteboards, digital flipcharts and numerous other functions accessible without a computer connection. If your school is part of a MAT or if children have to complete distance learning for any reason, Samsung devices help you to empower students to continue to learn, wherever they are.

If students have the right kit, it makes their learning more efficient and the job of the teacher less stressful. The Galaxy Tab A7 is a win-win.

## teach PRIMARY

## VERDICT

- ✓ Exceptional functionality and versatility
- ✓ Designed with students and teachers in mind
- ✓ Powerful tool for integrating technology into learning
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Loaded with features out of the box, but also easily adapted for your context

## UPGRADE IF...

You want to boost the use of technology in your classroom, or want to support staff to help children who require specialist provision.

Visit Samsung Experience Stores to explore the range or get in touch on 0333 344 1916 or email [samsungexperiencestores@prs-and.com](mailto:samsungexperiencestores@prs-and.com)



PSHE



# The Amazing Edie Eckhart

A wonderful story by comedian Rosie Jones, targeting disability stereotypes with a fun tale



SCAN ME

Scan the QR code to access Edie Eckhart school resources for your class!

## AT A GLANCE

- A lighthearted book aimed at KS2 students
- A realistic fictional take on the challenges of young people moving to high school
- Told through the eyes of 11-year-old Edie Eckhart
- Written by comedian Rosie Jones
- Heartwarming, funny and unendingly endearing

REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES



Children's literature is flourishing, now more than ever. Young people, as well as their teachers and their parents have a huge range to choose from... but *The Amazing Edie Eckhart* is one that has stood out for me this year. In fact, I'd go as far as to say it is one of the best things I have read in a long while.

Written by TV comedian, Rosie Jones, the story follows the 11-year-old protagonist Edie Eckhart. Edie is about to start high school and the narrative follows her trials and tribulations of acclimatising to the changes from primary school. Edie has cerebral palsy, meaning she speaks slowly and trips over, all traits that she takes in her stride.

*The Amazing Edie Eckhart* is such a lighthearted book but deals with significant and challenging issues that Edie faces. The realism of the characterisation and the narrative make the story completely relatable to the target audience and there is so much relevance in the way in which the feelings are portrayed.

Edie starts high school and finds herself separated from her best friend, Oscar. As such Edie is exposed to

situations and has experiences that she didn't first anticipate, finding herself in a plethora of situations every child does when they move up to high school!

There is, of course, so much more to the story. Through Edie, the reader is brought into the world of a child with a disability. From Jones' own experiences of cerebral palsy, readers are drawn in the challenges that young people with disabilities face in school – something that in many cases can be misunderstood and for me, is massively underrepresented in children's literature. Jones uses Edie perfectly show that disabilities don't have to be debilitating I love that Edie's disability doesn't define her.

*The Amazing Edie Eckhart* adds a new voice to the established go-to titles that so many children read. We need more books like this that challenge stereotypes while completely conforming with the realities that the target readers face. Not only is this an empowering book for all those who live with disabilities, it is a book that shows life is a challenge for all young people, whoever they are... but it's a lot of fun too!

teach  
PRIMARY

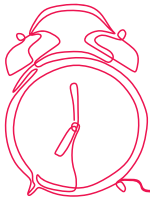
## VERDICT

- ✓ A brilliant book to widen the understanding of learners about transition
- ✓ Brilliantly written, highly engaging
- ✓ Deals with challenges in an open and honest way
- ✓ Challenges stereotypes and stigma around disability

## UPGRADE IF...

You are looking for a text that will both make students laugh and learn about the realities of life in one sitting!

£6.99. See [hachettechildrens.co.uk](http://hachettechildrens.co.uk) for details



# DAY in the LIFE



A one-day diary from first alarm to lights out

## WAKING UP

I don't need an alarm, as I have my own personal wake-up call every morning at around six when my five-year-old bursts into my room!



**KYRSTIE STUBBS IS PRINCIPAL AT BOOTHROYD PRIMARY ACADEMY**

 @KyrstieStubbs



## MY MORNING

I like to walk round the school in the morning to get a chance to see the pupils or to catch up with staff. Then I tend to try get through emails and tick at least ONE thing off my to-do list – I'm not always successful in this but I try.



## LUNCHTIME

I have started doing an office workout during the day as I knew I wasn't getting enough exercise! It's hard to leave school sometimes so I devised a workout I can do at my desk or chair and do reps throughout the day – it only takes five minutes here and there!



## MY AFTERNOON

I try to reserve afternoons for coaching or more strategic or creative work – it's the stuff I love!



## MY EVENING

I have made it a rule not to take work home, so when I get back between five and six, I'm a mum first and foremost. I try to focus on my wellbeing more these days and cook, read or play with my daughter or go for a walk.



## BEDTIME

I am always in bed by 10! I tend to read in bed if I haven't already fallen asleep on the sofa which I do more than I care to admit!

## QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

❖ **Career plan B?** If I wasn't a teacher, I would love to have a café/bar bookshop but I have a feeling I would end up buying more than I sold! One day maybe!

❖ **Must-listen?** I have been to see the amazing band Inglorious, this month, with Nathan James as the lead singer who toured in *War of the Worlds*. I was listening to their new albums all month prior to the concert!

❖ **Must-read?** *Songbird* – Christy Lefteri

*The Girls* – Lisa Jewell

*White Tears, Brown Scars* – Ruby Hamad

❖ **Twitter hero?** So many, but @censoredhead speaks for many of us in their blogs to the DfE, and there are so many teachers who willingly share resources. I also love the way @secretheadteacher supports leaders to enable them to see it as a job not a life.



**SAMSUNG**

# Galaxy Tab A7 Lite



**The new Samsung Galaxy Tab A7**  
Gives you the freedom to work and learn anywhere.

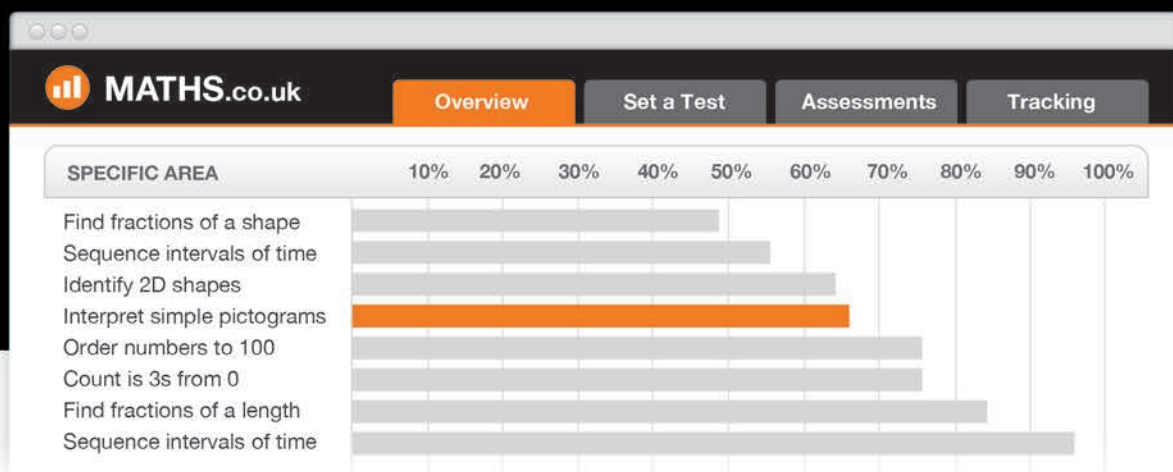
To hear about bespoke pricing, volume discounts and payment terms for schools, contact our Business Solutions Experts today quoting 'TABLET' on 0333 344 1916, or [samsungexperiencestores@prs-and.com](mailto:samsungexperiencestores@prs-and.com)

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