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*How to be a
music maestro*

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Subitising
Soup

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MATHS

PROBABILITY LESSON



ISSUE: 16.2
PRICE: £4.99



Aashika's breaking news

It started with a trip to Sky Academy Studios. A chance to go behind the scenes, to get to grips with the cameras, and present from behind a Sky desk.

But ever since she set foot backstage, Aashika has been obsessed with becoming a news reader. Now she's documenting everything from the family breakfast to her little brother's haircut.

It's this creativity that Sky Academy Studios was built to inspire. Since its launch in 2012, it's opened the minds of over 166,000 children, developing their curiosity, collaboration and communication and providing an experience they might never have accessed.

Giving young people, just like Aashika, the belief they can have a future in film and TV.



believe in better

Hello!



How's it going? Hopefully the gloomy winter weather hasn't dampened your spirits too much, and you're looking forward to spring, which should be with us any day now!

I was lucky enough to have an illuminating experience last month as I ventured out on Teach Primary's first school visit since the pandemic began. I got acquainted with Charles Dickens Primary School in South London, and learned all about how they have embedded the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child into their curriculum, as well as their democratic approach to wellbeing and radical no-marking policy. Read all about what I found from page 29.

We're also celebrating the joy and creativity that music brings to the classroom in this issue, looking at the more-common-than-you'd-think problem of music anxiety, and how to get over it on page 78; an intro to teaching musical notation on page 75; an exploration of the humble clap on page 81; and the four ruling principles of a brilliant music lesson on page 70.

If you're getting involved in British Science Week with your class from 11–20 March, take a look at the brilliant free resources we've got on offer, too: learn to move things with your mind (sort of) like Matilda on page 84; create your own Subitising Soup with help from page 21; and check out an interactive probability investigation with dice on page 86.

I'm also delighted to introduce our brand-new Plazoom section, in partnership with our friends over at the literacy resources site. We've got a roundup of classroom hacks, advice from a literacy expert, and free resources to keep your children engaged and enthralled. As always, do get in touch if you have any stories, ideas or lessons you'd like to share – we're always delighted to shine a light on the fabulous work you're all doing.

So, with best wishes and until next time,

Charley

Charley Rogers, editor

 @TeachPrimaryEd1

*Don't miss our
next issue, on sale
8th April*

POWERED BY...



MATTHEW MCCRUM

on why he came out to his class, and how it has encouraged conversations about respect and empathy

“We as LGBTQIA+ practitioners should be visible to the children we teach”

p15



ELEANOR REGAN

explains why KS2 SATs are 'distorting and damaging', and that we should switch to online tests instead

“This switch in assessment would be a genuine step forward for education”

p25



JAMES CLEMENTS

shares his 'marvellous morphology' lesson plan, helping kids understand prefixes and suffixes

“Morphemes provide a logical way of working out the meaning of an unfamiliar word”

p90



SATs

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from just
£2.50 for
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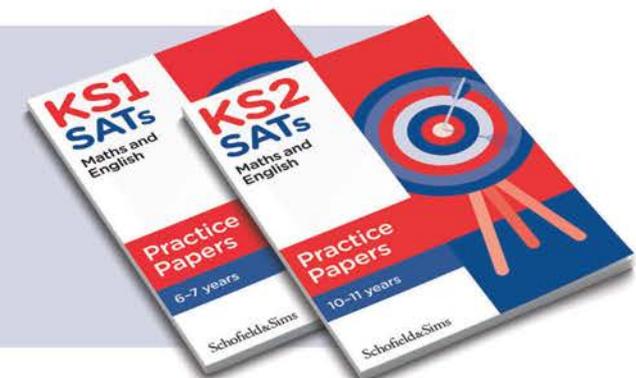
Revision Guides
for child-friendly
explanations and
worked examples



10-Minute Tests
for timed practice
of SATs-style
questions



Practice Papers
for an up-to-date
and realistic test
experience



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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.



teachwire.net
facebook.com/teachwire
twitter.com/teachprimary
charley.rogers@theteachco.com

EDITOR:

Charley Rogers,
charley.rogers@
theteachco.com

GROUP EDITOR:

Joe Carter,
joe.carter@
theteachco.com,
01206 505925

HEAD OF COMMERCIAL SOLUTIONS:

Richard Stebbing,
richard.stebbing@
theteachco.com

EDUCATION MANAGER:

Hayley Rackham,
hayley.rackham@
theteachco.com,

PRODUCT MANAGER:

Samantha Law,
samantha.law@
theteachco.com,
01206 505499

DEPUTY PRODUCT MANAGER:

Katie Harvey-Jones,
katie.jones@
theteachco.com,
01206 505477

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER:

Hannah Jones,
hannah.jones@theteachco.
com, 01206 505924

ACCOUNT MANAGER

Demi Maynard,
demi.maynard@
theteachco.com,
01206 505962

ART EDITOR:

Richard Allen

DESIGNERS:

Adam Barford, Luke Rogers,
Kevin Dennis & Ben Kemp

PHOTOGRAPHY:

CliQQ Photography,
cliqq.co.uk

ACCOUNTS:

01206 505995

DESIGN & REPROGRAPHICS:

Ace Pre-Press
01206 508608

SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT:

Andrea Turner

CUSTOMER SERVICES:

aceville@dctmedia.co.uk
0800 904 7000

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Helen Tudor

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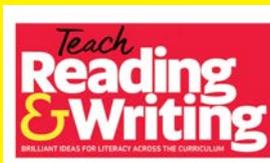
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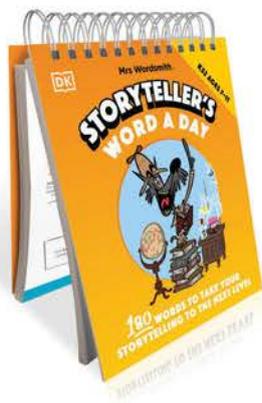
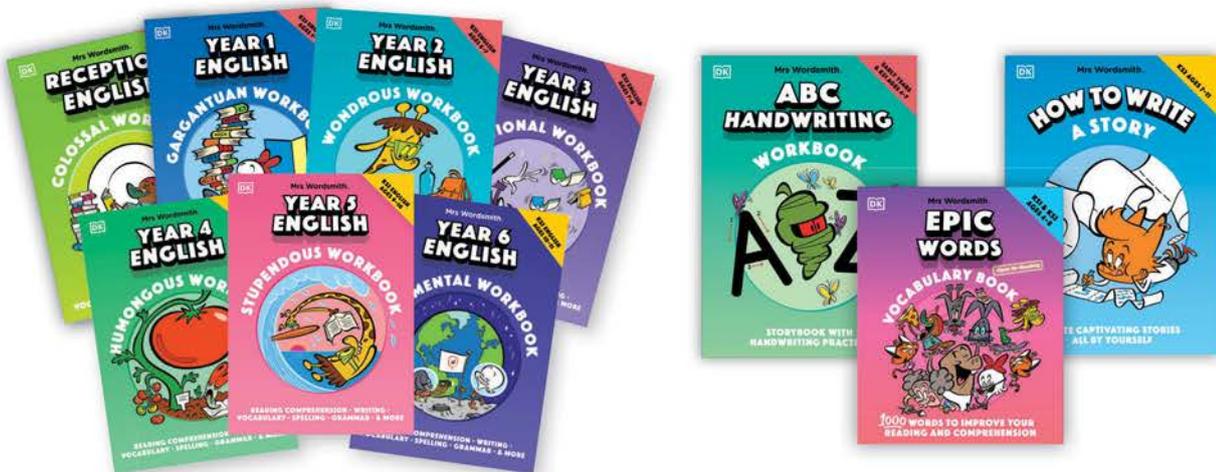


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To find out more head to [DK.com/MrsWordsmith](https://www.dk.com/MrsWordsmith)

Breaktime

News | Interviews | Ideas | Resources | Research



Level up pupil premium

Teach First has released a new report calling for the government to level up the country by increasing and expanding the pupil premium in four ways. These are: aligning the early years pupil premium rate with the current primary school rate; restoring pupil premium rates to 2015-16 real-term levels for primary and secondary; creating a new pupil premium subcategory for 'persistently disadvantaged' pupils who have been eligible for free school meals for 80% or more of their school life; and extending the premium to include those aged between 16 and 19 in full-time education.

Read the full proposal at tinyurl.com/tp-TeachFirstPremium

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



WEB LEGENDS

Google and Parent Zone have launched a new online safety curriculum for seven–11-year-olds as part of their Be Internet Legends programme. The resources support both the national Online Media Literacy Strategy and the RSE curriculum. tinyurl.com/tp-InternetLegends



TEACH HANDBALL

England Handball has launched a new, free Teach Handball Hub, providing information and resources to help teachers introduce the sport in their schools. The Hub includes lesson plans, activity and session ideas, and information on rules and equipment. tinyurl.com/tp-HandballHub



UP, UP AND AWAY

Celebrate British Science Week (5–14 March) with free resources from the UK Space Agency and NASA Perseverance. Try a Moon Camp Challenge, become a climate detective, or even train like a real-life astronaut! Find all these activities and more at tinyurl.com/tp-Space

→→→ TODAY'S **TOP** **RESOURCES**



Power their vocabulary

Help pupils build a rich and broad vocabulary from Reception to Year 6 and beyond, with Word Whoosh! from Plazoom. These powerful resource packs are designed to clarify and extend children's understanding of tier 2 words, enabling them to make more ambitious and accurate language choices when speaking and writing.

Try Word Shoosh! today at bit.ly/PlazoomWhoosh



Q & A



Ryland Englehart

Director

What was primary school like for you?

It was a mixed experience: I attended a Waldorf school from grades 1-7 (approx. Y2-Y8) with mostly the same 12 students. I loved their very hands-on approach to learning. Then, when I started attending public school in the eighth grade, I discovered I had different patterns of learning (what some people refer to as learning disabilities). This experience helped me build emotional intelligence through the relationships I formed with my teachers.

How would you like teachers to use the film in the classroom?

Enthusiasm is contagious – in the best sense of the word. My prayer is that teachers see this message as an enlivening pathway forward, and that they breathe that passion and life energy into the curriculum.

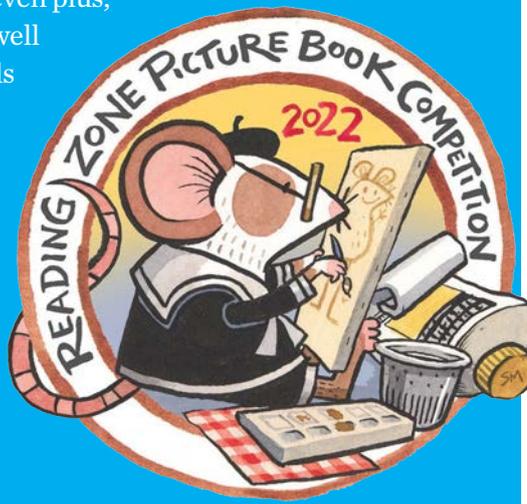
What was the most shocking thing you learned while making Kiss the Ground?

The most shocking (and the most hopeful) thing I learned is that the solution to balancing our climate can be found in nature. My other big ‘a-ha!’ moment was understanding the difference between regeneration and sustainability. We can’t sustain what’s broken. Humanity’s true north star can be found in regeneration.

Ryland Englehart is the director of the climate film, *Kiss the Ground*, narrated by Woody Harrelson. For a free 45-minute educational cut of the film, and associated resources via the National Science Teachers’ Association (NSTA), visit tinyurl.com/tp-KissTheGround

Picturebook competition 2022

Book review site ReadingZone has launched a competition for children aged four–18, challenging them to create their very own picturebook inspired by World Book Day (3 March). The competition will be judged by author and illustrator Sarah McIntyre, who will choose winners across three categories (Young Creators – ages four to six years; Primary – ages seven plus; and Secondary – 11 plus), as well as one overall winner. Schools will have access to a range of ReadingZone resources created with Sarah, including tips and film material, to help children and young people get started on their projects. Entries are open until 23 April. Find out more at tinyurl.com/tp-ReadingZoneComp



Children’s Parliament meets PM

On Wednesday 2 February, 270 children from Penzance, Edinburgh, London and Manchester gathered across Britain to discuss climate change, Covid-19 response and technology in a 1.5-hour online session with PM Boris Johnson. The meeting was a feature of The Wakelet Microsoft 365 Children’s Parliament, and was hosted by independent school, Saint Pierre primary. The late MP Sir David Amess was formerly patron of the Children’s Parliament, and now his daughter Katie Amess has taken over the role. Ms Amess also presented the prime minister with a report from the Parliament, focused on climate change.



77%

MORE CHILDREN REQUIRED SPECIALIST TREATMENT FOR SEVERE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN 2021, COMPARED WITH 2017, SHOWS AN ANALYSIS FROM THE BBC

Look ahead | Book ahead

AUTISM AWARENESS

World Autism Acceptance Week takes place from 28 March – 3 April. Find 60 fab fundraising ideas for your class at tinyurl.com/tp-AutismAwareness



PJS FOR PANCAN

Wear your pyjamas to school and raise awareness (and funds) for Pancreatic Cancer on 16 April. Get your downloadable pack at tinyurl.com/tp-PJsPanCan





FOR THE THRILL OF LEARNING



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7 NEWS STORIES

you might have missed

COMMONWEALTH CONNECTIONS

Pupils from 60 schools across the West Midlands took part in a video call with children in Sri Lanka in February, at the official launch of Commonwealth Connections – a partnership between the British Council and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. The project linked pupils in the UK with schools across 10 Commonwealth countries, and children from each country took turns to perform demonstrations over a live video link. Six schools in the Dudley area connected with six schools in Sri Lanka, with the former performing a fusion dance, and the latter showing off a traditional routine. The children were joined by Commonwealth Championships gold medallist Tom Davis and Paralympic gold medallist Liz Johnson, both of whom are mentors for the Youth Sport Trust. Find out more about the programme at tinyurl.com/tp-BCconnections

HUNGRY CHILDREN

Up to 1.45 million children who are ineligible for free school meals (FSM) in the UK face going hungry unless the rules are changed, analysis from the *i* newspaper shows. Currently, families on universal credit can claim FSM for their children in England if their household income, excluding welfare payments, is less than £7,400 a year. Similar caps are set in Scotland and Wales. Anne Longfield, former Children's Commissioner for England, told the *i*: "While less well-off households who are currently not in receipt of FSM will increasingly feel the pinch of these increases in spending, it will not impact on their eligibility. Rolling out FSM to all families in receipt of universal credit would make a huge difference to thousands of children." Read more at tinyurl.com/tp-FSMpoverty

FIGHTING COVID

At least two-thirds of children in the UK aged eight and above likely have antibodies for Covid-19, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has found. Numbers show that between 63.3 per cent and 72.7 per cent of children aged between eight and 11 years would have tested positive for antibodies in the week beginning 10 January 2022. The presence of antibodies suggests someone has either been vaccinated, or has contracted the virus in the past. Since only a small number of children in this age bracket have been vaccinated in the UK, figures suggest that almost every child in the group will have antibodies due to a coronavirus infection. See more figures at tinyurl.com/tp-Antibodies



MONEY MATTERS

Children need to begin their financial education in primary school, MP Robert Halfon has written for the *Financial Times*. The cost-of-living crisis should 'give pause to consider long-term solutions for families' financial instability,' he says, and that 'too many adults continue to lack the basic skills which underpin financial capability'. He suggests that numeracy and financial education should start earlier, citing research by the Money and Pensions Service, which shows that 'children's money habits are formed from as early as age seven'. Halfon seems to suggest that financial literacy should be added to the National Curriculum in England, from which it is currently absent. Read more at tinyurl.com/tp-FTfinancial

MAKING PROGRESS

The third annual State of the Nation report from the Department for Education (DfE) reveals that the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in England is gradually improving, despite existing challenges. The report shows that there is a link between regular attendance at school and college and positive wellbeing across all groups of children and young people, highlighting the positive impact of face-to-face learning. For the first time, it also provides data on their views about wider society, including worries about staying safe online. The new report comes as nearly 400 mental health support teams will be accessible to almost three million school and college pupils in England by 2023. Find out more at tinyurl.com/tp-StateOfNation22

ATTENDANCE CHALLENGES

A new report from Ofsted looks at different aspects of pupil attendance, and how schools tackle the challenges they face with this issue. It claims that schools that improve attendance from a low baseline, maintain high levels of attendance and minimise persistent absence, all have different starting points and take slightly different approaches. However, these approaches have similar features, which Ofsted summarises as 'Listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate'. A statement from the National Association for Special Educational Needs (nasen) has pointed out the contradictory nature of this phrasing, and argues it could also be at odds with the current attendance consultation, which 'seems to promote a more punitive, less empathetic and supportive approach'. Read more at tinyurl.com/tp-nasenAttendance

'KICK IN THE TEETH' FOR TEACHERS

NASUWT – The Teachers' Union has formally rejected the government's latest pay offer for teachers. The NASUWT, along with other education unions, rejected the offer as 'it fails to address the rising cost of living, represents yet a further continuation of the real-terms erosion of teachers' salaries, and fails to adequately recognise the significant contribution teachers have made, and are continuing to make every day during the ongoing pandemic,' a statement on the union's website states. Dr Patrick Roach, NASUWT general secretary, said: "The failure of ministers and employers to make a credible offer to teachers is a kick in the teeth to teachers continuing to serve on the frontline of this pandemic." Read more at tinyurl.com/tp-NASUWTPay



6 WAYS to write rhyming poems

This format is difficult enough when you are a poet, so here are some ideas to help your pupils grasp the concept...

1 | First off, some general advice: always give the children rough paper to work on and stress that neat writing and spelling are not important at this stage. Just get ideas down as quickly as possible. Work alongside the children. Tell them you're learning, too, and that it will take several goes to write the poem. You can correct spelling and presentation together in groups or as a class once it's written. Remember that rhyme includes alliteration; repeated vowel sounds (assonance as in bread and heavy); repeated consonants, as in dump and damp; and internal rhyme – where the rhyme is not at the end of the line.

2 | A good way to overcome clunky rhymes or lines that don't make sense is to not write the final line last. For example, using a hamster as our theme, a poem could start *I have a hamster / His name is [blank]*. In the third and fourth lines, describe some things the hamster does, e.g: *He runs on his wheel / He bites my finger*. Now go back and find a name that rhymes with 'finger'. Sometimes a name will suggest itself. If not, make one up. Singer? Slinger? Pinger? Then, your poem reads: *I have a hamster / His name is Slinger / He runs on his wheel / He bites my finger*. You've effectively hidden the clunky rhyme in line two.

3 | Writing lists can help when composing a poem on a particular theme. Choose a subject – for example, winter – then ask for words or phrases that suggest the season: snow, robins, icicles, cold, chilly, Christmas, etc. Give pupils just four minutes to write as many words as they can. They must write fast – you want quantity over quality. Once the time is up, combine all the children's lists and get everyone to look for words that rhyme with them. Your poem can be long or short, it can tell a story or just hint at your theme. The only rule is that it must make sense.



Roger Stevens has published over forty books for children, and is a National Poetry Day Ambassador. Roger's new book *Razzmatazz* (£7.99, Otter Barry Books), illustrated by Mike Smith, is out now.

4 | Tongue twisters work well with KS1. Think of a subject that is going to be easy to rhyme, and with a first letter that will lend itself to alliteration. For example, if we use 'snail', we could start with the first line *'In the garden I found a snail'*. Once you have your opening, add a new adjective beginning with S for each new line, e.g: *It was a smelly snail / A silly, smelly snail / A slow, silly, smelly snail / A sniffly, slow, silly, smelly snail...* and so on. For the final line, think of how your poem story could end, e.g: *And it got squashed on the street by a steamroller*. For some strange reason, children often come up with violent endings!

5 | If you're stuck for a subject, try polling the class to pick a place. You can use Pie Corbett's brilliant poem 'A Chance in France' for inspiration: *Stay at home, Mum said / But I took a chance in France / Was grey for the day in St Tropez / Forgot what I did in Madrid...* Grab an atlas or map book and have a go. Which places lend themselves best to rhymes? You can also employ the list technique here to find a bank of rhyming words for your location before you get going. What magical experiences can you cook up for different places in the world?

6 | A common suggestion for writers is to 'stick with what you know'. Why not ask students to tell you about their hobbies, favourite games, or sports, then find names of friends or family members that rhyme with these activities. Get the children to work with pairing the activities and names in different combinations until they come up with something they're happy with. This should not only give the class a giggle, but will also teach the essential role of editing: don't forget that when writing a poem, it's crucial to cross out, change your mind, and go off at a tangent. It's all part of the process.

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*In UK user trials 95% of teachers approved the use of STABILO EASYgraph pencils and STABILO EASYoriginal pens in their schools



'THAT'S SO GAY!' IS THIS THE LAST SCHOOL TABOO?

Matthew McCrum explains why he came out to his class, and how it inspired discussions about respect and friendship...

 @5GsPlz

How often have you heard a child, an adult you expected better of, or even yourself, use 'gay' to mean something rubbish, or as an insult? I'm hoping the answer isn't very often at all.

Sadly, in my seven years as a primary teacher, I've heard it multiple times a term, and it has never failed to feel like a punch to the gut. I've told myself over and over that the children don't know they're insulting me and they wouldn't dream of doing it on purpose. But that's just the thing, isn't it? Children haven't been on the Earth particularly long and are experimenting with language – I recently had to deal with children calling each other 'lesbians' as an insult, for instance, without any real knowledge of what the term lesbian actually means.

Picture it. Wirral. Lunchtime, November 2021 (this is a weak *Golden*

Girls reference and is not dampening any assumptions that I'm an obviously outwardly-gay man). You know what it's like after lunch; you've hurriedly eaten and you need to go back to teach. On this particular day, I was out of luck. The midday staff approached me and my already-shocked stomach lurched... what now? I learned that Bobby (not his real name) had been calling people 'gay'. I was torn between my instinct to groan about lost learning time – because this would involve 'A Talk' – and the positive side of being able to discuss the issue with my class. I chose the latter.

So, I explained to the children that a child had used the word 'gay' and asked them if they knew what it meant. They did. They also began to share anecdotes about family members or people they knew who also identified as gay. We discussed how you can be hurting someone's feelings without even

realising it, and that unlike some other characteristics or identities, you can't tell whether someone is gay just from looking at them.

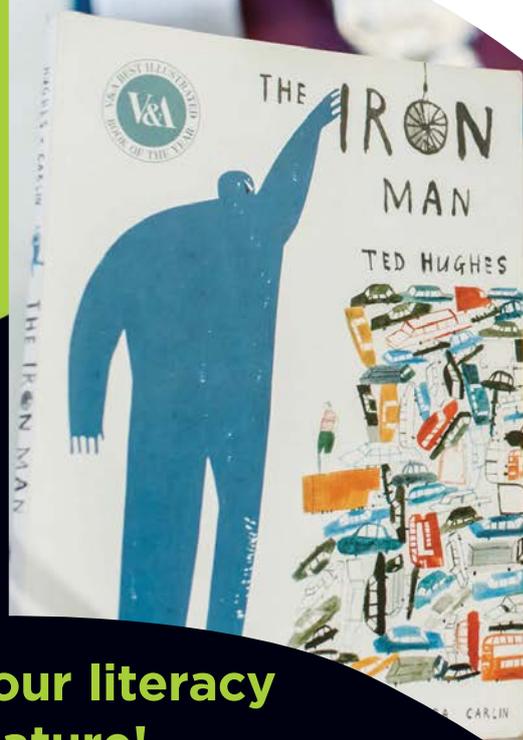
A boy helpfully suggested that using 'gay' as an insult insulted his mother because she is in a same-sex relationship. There were murmurs of agreement. But I didn't feel that one group of boys were quite getting my message, so I asked them, "Do you know who else you are insulting when you use that word that way?" Blank looks. "Me". Cue the genuine gasp from some children. And smiles. But not pitying smiles or smirks; seemingly genuine beaming.

I'd never been 'out' to the kids in my school or class before. I considered that my business. But the fact that I didn't talk about it did suggest that it's an inappropriate subject to discuss with a teacher; a statement I don't agree with. I always knew I wouldn't lie about it if one of the pupils asked, because we as LGBTQIA+ practitioners should be visible to the children we teach, and sometimes our colleagues. Before I was a teacher, I worked as a TA and heard a teacher respond to a child's use of the word 'gay' with, "Don't say that. That's a bad word." I longed to speak to the child in a more supportive way, and explain that it's not the word that's bad, but how you use it.

I've since had two sets of parents thank me for sharing this fact about myself with their children, as it enabled them to have conversations at home. Not everyone will agree with my point of view, and some will say it's inappropriate to share. But I say it's just being visible for those children who may feel confused and alone; maybe they'll remember when their teacher told them about being gay. Hopefully, most children in the class will remember it as the day they learned how language that doesn't affect you can affect others. We need to share these experiences not only for LGBTQIA+ children, but for everyone. It's the only way things will change.

Let me leave you with a story of hope for that change: I recently explained to my class that I'd heard someone refer to a pair of trainers as 'gay'. A boy spoke up and said, "Well that doesn't make sense – trainers don't have a gender." If all the children we teach are as wise as that boy, I think the world will be in safe hands.

Matthew is a primary school teacher originally from Northern Ireland but living and teaching in Merseyside.



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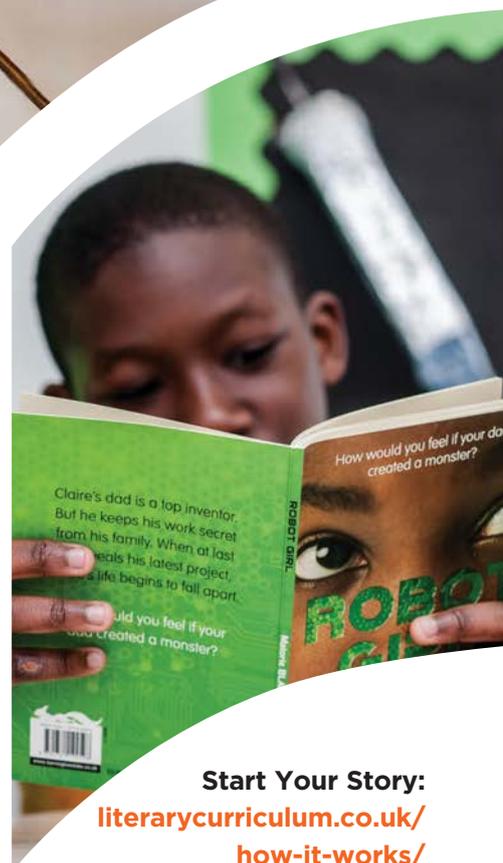


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Ofsted isn't acting as a force for good or improvement, but as a dreaded Sword of Damocles over education

Simon Smith

smithsmm.wordpress.com [@smithsmm](https://twitter.com/smithsmm)



Picture this. It's the winter of 2021, and in my one-form entry school, eight staff are off sick. Eight!

These staff are fully jabbed, and yet are so poorly that they can't move – fatigued to the point of constant bed rest. Three of them are already beyond the 10-days-off mark, and are still far too ill to come to work.

My supply budget is shot (it wasn't very big to begin with) and I'm seeing the worst attendance in my eight years at the school; even so, at 93 per cent during the second autumn term, I know we're still an awful lot better off than many primaries.

And yet, amongst this melange of less-than-ideal circumstances, looms Ofsted.

After two years locked in the cupboard, the dreaded inspectorate is back – not as a force for good or improvement, but as a dark villain wielding its Sword of Damocles.

Ofsted seems to have no understanding of what we've been through over the past 24 months. I've seen heads in recent terms more worried than they've ever been, and so much is being done in the name of HMI that you can smell the burnout a mile off.

For instance, if you're a small primary, the workload for all staff is immense. Yet, from reports it seems that Ofsted is leaping on every inconsistency, and taking no account of the sterling work done over the last two years. Meanwhile, other services have been so overwhelmed that schools have been left to pick up the slack. Mental health, speech and language, early interventions and social care are all running beyond capacity – don't even start me on SEND. But these are all necessary services, and so if they're not provided elsewhere, schools feel they have to try and do something, for the good of the pupils. If only we could hand the government our non-negotiables!

I bet you can already hear those sanctimonious voices at this point, too, saying "Don't do anything just for Ofsted," but actually there is a significant amount of self-preservation that goes into jumping through the hoops.

Every day is a fresh challenge, and to be honest I've had to become much better at compartmentalising the stresses and not losing sight of the job. As have many in my position.



“Ofsted seems to have no understanding of what we've been through over the past 24 months.”

But despite all this effort from teachers up and down the country, MPs are blaming schools, and trying to instate laws that make it a lot more difficult for us to close. What a kick in the teeth. I don't disagree that kids should be in school, but the rhetoric stings when the government itself has done practically nothing to keep schools open safely.

There have been barely any mitigations – the CO2 monitor rollout was totally tone-deaf, masks have only just been mandated in secondaries two years into the pandemic, not to mention, to add insult to injury, recent comments about schools feeding children instead of educating them.

On top of all that, exams and SATs are planned to go ahead. They will be far from fair. Personally, it saddens me to feel those pressures returning to KS2. I'm sure many of you would agree that circumstances were

much better for Year 6, and often made children more ready for secondary school, by leaving out SATs. Not having to cram for standardised tests meant time for a broader curriculum offer, and we didn't have a post-SATs drop-off in engagement (and attendance).

So, where does this leave me? Sat here at five o'clock in the morning, laughing at it all. Because what else can I do? Who knows the eventual toll this will take on us, or where we'll be at the end of it. Like most teachers and heads across the UK, I will plough on and try and do what's best for my pupils and my staff.

All I know for sure is it's laugh or cry right now, and the former scares my colleagues less. **TP**

Simon Smith is a principal and teacher at the Enquire Trust.



DON'T REFER TO TAS AS 'ONE-TO-ONES'

It's misleading for SEND pupils – we need to adopt EYFS' 'key person' instead

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In many schools, the default response to a child with SEND is to provide them with teaching assistant (TA) support: the higher the level of need, the greater the amount of TA time.

Frequently, this TA is spoken of as a 'one-to-one'. However, by referring to them in this way we set expectations in parents and teachers that are unlikely to be met, and more importantly do not promote children's learning or independence.

Too often a parent is told, or believes, that their child is going to receive one-to-one support if or when they get an education and health care plan (EHCP). However, there are few – and in the current economic climate increasingly fewer – EHCPs that provide 32.5 hours (full time) support. This means that in reality, very few children are going to receive one-to-one attention throughout the day. But the current language we use leads parents

to both expect this is what their child will receive, and believe that it is what they need if they are to be successful in school.

Equally, when senior leaders talk about a one-to-one attached to a child, this influences a teacher's expectation that the child both needs this level of support and cannot manage in school without it. Teachers therefore feel that they are not being adequately supported when this doesn't come to fruition.

Implicit within this is a belief that a child with SEND cannot and should not be independent. Yet very few adults have another person with them constantly. Providing they are properly supervised, the same should be true for children, and in fact the SEND Code of Practice focuses on preparation for independence and adulthood. Although this seems a long way off for a primary school-aged child, we still need to support them to become independent learners, enabling them to

tackle tasks on their own and allow them to experience success and failure. Providing this for all children is a key element of an inclusive environment.

There is a danger, then, that speaking of 'one-to-ones' leads to segregation masquerading as inclusion. Back in 2009, the DfE's deployment and impact of support staff in schools (DISS) project identified that spending more time with a TA did not promote a child's progress, and in fact inhibited it. Yet, some teachers still feel that if a child has a TA, then their provision becomes the TA's responsibility. Often the TA develops both ownership of and expertise about the child, which effectively excludes others from supporting them or their learning, and separates the pupil from the main classroom teaching. This can lead to the effective 'outsourcing' of learning from the teacher to a paraprofessional, the TA.

At this point, parents can feel ambiguous or confused, as they want their child to have the same teacher time as other learners. Although TAs provide an essential role in the classroom, parents are often unhappy with their child being taught a curriculum delivered largely by the paraprofessional.

TAs should supplement rather than replace the teacher. There are further issues when the expert TA leaves or is ill, and the learner is left without support.

It is vital, therefore, that we build 'a team around the child' where expertise and knowledge is shared. This model is already present in the 'key person' system in Early Years classes. The key person is the main contact and 'holds the child in mind'. But they are also part of a wider team that shares the education, information and care of the child.

This simple language change can support and promote an inclusive approach to SEND provision, where children's needs can be met without them being separated from the class teacher. Using the term 'key person' in place of 'one-to-one' provides the support and security that many parents need around a child with SEND, while removing the implication and expectation that the child will work with one person to the exclusion of others. It promotes the idea that their support is provided by a team of adults drawing on a range of expertise – which is what primary education is all about. **TP**

Sara Alston is an independent consultant and trainer with SEA Inclusion and Safeguarding, and a practising SENCo.

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

A letter to... *Teachers fed up of behaviour charts*

Heather Lucas explains why zone boards don't work, and what you can do instead...



How do you balance the complexity of pedagogy with the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs of every pupil? Do you reflect on why you teach? How does this affect your approach to classroom behaviour?

It's a lot to think about. Your answer might centre on measurable academic progression, a wider view of the child's overall healthy development, or maybe it includes considerations of your own wellbeing. The complexity of the issue may also lead you to accept established 'behaviourist' methods. Rooted in 1940's psychology, this approach shapes surface behaviours by rewarding and punishing. It is seductively simple.

For example, zone boards. These are the various public displays where pupil names will be moved up or down a scale depending on behavioural criteria set by adults. A move up (possibly to the 'green zone' or 'sunshine') is intended to reward the child by recognising compliance, and a move down (often to the 'red zone' or 'rain cloud') is a public punishment for non-compliance.

Don't get me wrong, I once used these with great enthusiasm. But through experience, I have found they really don't work, especially for the children who need them most. These are the children whose names keep appearing on the red zone

time and time again; the repetitive pattern shows us that this system does nothing at all to help pupils build the skills they need.

According to child psychologist Dr Ross Greene, 'kids do well if they can' and we know all children have a biological imperative to feel safe, to belong and learn to some extent. Children will also do their best to adapt, even sometimes at a cost to their own healthy development and learning. Zone boards and the like therefore also have a wider and less visible impact on the class, such as producing children who are complying out of a fear-based motivation to avoid the shame of the red zone, which ends up depleting both their relational trust and academic potential.

Another casualty of the zone board is the child who learns to engage just for the extrinsic rewards; they are likely to get bored and then crave reward inflation, reducing their potential to develop a more robust, intrinsic love of learning. More widely, the simple application of rewards and punishments teaches children not to think but to comply. This might make them more vulnerable to grooming or condition them into complying only when being checked, (like adults who speed between cameras!).

We should, instead of these behaviour charts, try engaging with developmental needs through relationships, which build collaborative value-based learning. A chart can never do this. You don't need it; you are the resource. It is, however, a nuanced journey rather than a tool, and requires an

open, curious, non-judgmental mind, an open heart and a capacity for reflection and the longer view. Dr Bruce Perry's '3 R's' of Regulation, Relationship and Reason is a good place to start.

Begin with emotional regulation: are you emotionally steady with enough capacity to approach challenges – both for the pupil and yourself? You need to be calm and thoughtful to get a calm and thoughtful child. Next, you need to interpret the state of the student's emotional regulation, and prioritise re-establishing 'felt safety' and social engagement through your relationship with them. This is a nuanced process, but once relational connection and trust is founded, you can then move onto reason with a greater capacity for progress.

Reason is where skill building happens collaboratively. If you have taken a child through the cycle of 'rupture and repair', this meaningful connection will give you a better opportunity to scaffold development of new or unsteady skills. Make sure to ask yourself if you are targeting the right type and amount of challenge for this child in this moment.

So, rather than relying on the superficial and fragile application of rewards and punishments, we should ditch the zone boards and start to invest in a sequenced approach to behaviour. We'll likely see better outcomes, and might even find a deeper and richer answer to the question 'Why do I teach?'

From Heather



Heather Lucas is a SEMH specialist supporting primary schools, based in West Sussex and Hampshire. This article is inspired by the Facebook page 'Heidi and Me. Our Neurodiversity Journey.'

 @HLucas8

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Pick a subject

GRAMMAR

Verbs

To achieve the expected standard, you need to know what verbs are and how to use them.

What you need to know

- Verbs are actions or states happening now, in the past, or in the future.
- Actions can be things you can see happening (e.g. run, jump, build, explore, answer) or they can be 'invisible' actions (e.g. think, imagine, hear, like, love).
- Frequently used verbs are be – am, is, are, was; have – have, has, had.

Let's practise

Underline two verbs in the sentence below.
It was my birthday so I visited the zoo yesterday as a treat.

1 Read the question and read it again. What is it asking? The question is asking you to find two verbs.

2 Look for the easiest verb to spot. This is usually a verb to name an action. Visited is an action. Underline visited.

3 Check if there is a verb to describe a state. These are often forms of have or be. Was is a form of the verb be. Underline was.

4 Check that you have underlined two verbs. It was my birthday so I visited the zoo yesterday as a treat.

Try this

1 Tick the box to show the verb in the sentence below.
My baby sister sleeps in the afternoon.

2 Circle the two verbs in the sentence below.
Leaves fall from the trees in autumn but they grow again in the spring.

3 Underline all the verbs in the sentences below.
Alisha likes cakes and she is a good baker. Yesterday, she made some lovely buns for us.

Top tip

You may be asked to change the tense of a verb (see page 34 for more information).

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FICTION

1 I will tell Demetrius to make him jealous. The word *jealous* is closest in meaning to ...
Tick one.

contented.
envious.
angry.
worthy.

2 Draw lines to match each sentence to the character that said it.

Hermia	Let's go to my aunt's.
Lysander	I want Demetrius to love me.
Helena	I don't want to marry Demetrius.
Snug	Closing time!

3 This text tells you that Hermia doesn't want to marry Demetrius. Give two key details that tell you this.

1. _____
2. _____

4 Who seems to be in charge of the Mechanicals' play?
Tick one.

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TEST 1 PAPER 2: REASONING

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Total marks: /35

Test 1, Paper 2: Reasoning

1 Circle all the prime numbers.
15 1 19 2 11 21

2 Write the letters of the shapes in the correct position on the Carroll diagram.

	Fewer than 6 vertices	6 or more vertices	A	B
1 square face			C	D
No square faces			E	

1 mark

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How I do it

Spark mathematical thinking outdoors with your own subitise soup...

SARAH WILCOX & JOANNE HARBOTTLE

1

Begin by placing natural resources from around the garden into the mud kitchen (or whatever outside space you have available). We used twigs, grass cuttings, leaves, etc, and a variety of different pots for our children to explore. By using natural resources, it encourages pupils to use their surroundings in their play and consider different uses for them. A big stick makes a brilliant stirring utensil – but a damp leaf not so much.



Do you remember the sheer enjoyment and fascination of mud when you were a child? Well, here at Redgate Primary we pride ourselves on our outdoor learning practice – the messier the better! The mud kitchen is, and always will be, a fantastic tool for learning. We are forever looking for opportunities to take our learning outside; we love to show that maths is everywhere. So when thinking of ways to extend subitising in our Reception class, the mud kitchen seemed the perfect place to start. After observing the benefits of outdoor learning, Sarah, our trainee teacher, was inspired to create her very own ‘subitising soup’. After all, who doesn’t love getting messy?



2

Now add ready-made ‘Subitise Soup’ recipes. They can be really simple – we used just three ingredients with quantities shown as numbers on a die. Model using subitising skills to add the correct number of twigs, cups of water and pinches of grass, then let the children have a go. We found pupils were quickly adding the correct quantities to their soup and mixing away eagerly.

To extend their independent learning, provide blank sheets for the children to make their own Subitise Soup recipes, rolling dice to obtain quantities. Encouraging the children to write down their recipe provides an opportunity for assessment – have they correctly identified the number being represented on the dice?

3

4

Encourage the children to compare their recipes and the soup they make. We found that the children quickly made observations of quantity by subitising independently, and were able to reason: “My soup is thicker than hers because I only added two cups of water but she added five and five is more than two!” This provides the perfect opportunity to show off their maths mastery skills, too.



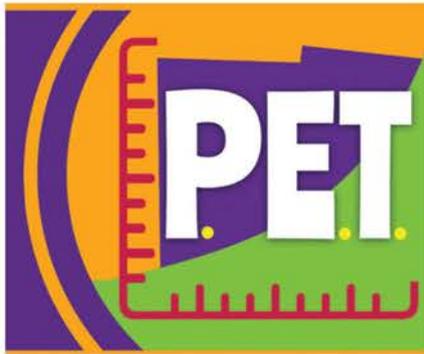
The aim of this lesson is for children to subitise, however there are endless learning opportunities. To adapt, try swapping dice for numicon pieces, or add acorns in the autumn or dandelions in the summer – just use what you have available. And most importantly, it’s every teacher’s dream... marvelously messy mud!

5



Sarah Wilcox (right) is a trainee teacher with a passion for EYFS and outdoor learning, and Joanne Harbottle is a Reception teacher and geography lead at Redgate Primary School.

[@_MissWilcox](#) and [@Recepredgate](#)



THE PUPIL ENRICHMENT TRACKER

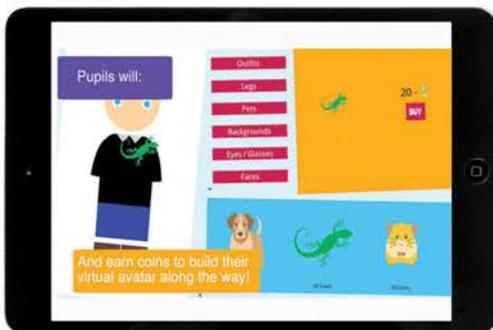
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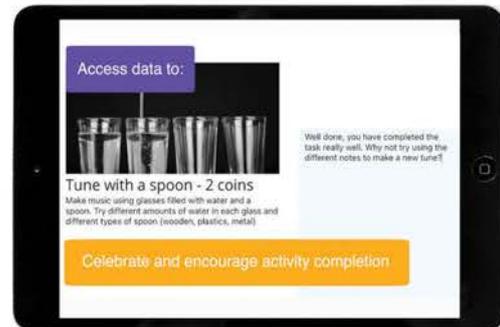
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← STEP 2

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REASONS TO TRY...

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1 IT'S FLEXIBLE

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2 DEVELOP ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Research shows that enrichment activities help young people build resilience, self-esteem and confidence – all key skills they will need as they progress through life. Students displaying these skills are proven to perform better in school settings and attain higher grades.

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evidence of pupil premium, SEND facilities or development in students with English as an additional language.

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PET has a positive impact on students' attitudes towards learning, and can help children to reflect and feel rewarded for taking part in activities, all while you get to capture your pupils' successes over the year and keep an eye on their progress.

KEY POINTS

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UNDERCOVER TEACHER

Our anonymous educator gets something off their chest

Three highlighters, two stamps, and a sheet of stickers. It's marking nonsense

I am sitting at my laptop reflecting on this week's Ofsted inspection. It was a two-day visit, with four subject deep dives amongst a host of other things. It was my eighth Ofsted experience in 25 years.

The inspection team was ruthless; thorough but fair. Teaching across the school was good or better. In fact, it's mostly good or better all the time. Staff are very supportive and have space to plan and create quality lessons.

However, I've not experienced this in lots of schools I've worked in. Workload is often sky-high and the pressure to 'prove' progress and teacher impact is immense.

Fortunately, as is the case in many schools now, our head does not insist on 'proving' progress in books. Our marking and feedback can be summed up in one sentence (almost!) – 'Teachers are trusted to give feedback to pupils how they see fit.'

Of course, this isn't our marking and feedback policy, but it might as well be! I've never been trusted so much in my whole career. If I want to reward children with stickers or house points, I can. If I decide to mark work in depth twice a week, I can – but I don't *have* to. I can choose to write 'Well done' if I wish, without repercussions from SLT. If I want to use a green highlighter to indicate something good, I can – but (you've guessed it) I don't have to.

The encouragement of freedom and autonomy means I can make my own professional judgements on how best to mark and feed back to pupils.

So I still find it astonishing that teachers in some schools – including many I've worked in – insist on marking and feedback policies that are almost unsustainable to enforce without affecting work-life balance.

In several schools, I have been told to write two stars and a wish (two positive comments and something to improve) in every single book. If you didn't write them, you would be put on a support plan for not following the 'non-negotiables'. I remember challenging a head once; I said I had lost count of the amount of feedback I had given the whole class and individual pupils. Why did I need to write two stars and a wish twice a week? "Because it's all

about the books and proving to Ofsted that teachers are giving feedback," I was told.

These policies are, frankly, absurd. How about having to highlight the learning objective in green or orange to let the pupils know if the teacher thought they had 'got it'? (Yes, one school insisted on this); or having to use three different coloured pens to give written feedback in books? No thanks.

Imagine being told you must 'deep mark' at least once a week regardless of whether the work needs it or not? Pointless. Or having to write 'VF' in books every day to prove when you speak to children, with a written commentary of what was said? A waste of time.



"I still find it astonishing that teachers in some schools insist on marking and feedback policies that are almost unsustainable to enforce"

At no point during this most recent visit did an inspector ask me why I hadn't used a verbal feedback stamper at least three times a week. Can you imagine the report? *'The standard of work was great but there was no evidence that teachers talk to the children.'* Ridiculous.

No one quizzed me about not creating lengthy learning objective slips with accompanying success criteria to stick in books, either. The children just write a simple title. The hours of time I now save not creating these slips is amazing. But some heads insist teachers do it because "It makes the books look nice," or "The children won't know what they are learning if we don't do them." The Ofsted comments would be laughable: *'The children understood the learning in the lesson and produced quality work. What a shame the*

teachers don't spend hours every week producing learning objective slips to stick in books. Tut-tut.'

Ofsted simply doesn't care about any of this. They don't care how or when you give feedback. This week, the HMI team saw teachers who, because of a very sensible marking and feedback policy, had time to plan and create great lessons. They hadn't spent hours and hours proving their impact in books. And how refreshing it has been. Thank you current headteacher! **TP**

The writer has taught in five schools across a 20-year career.



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KS2 SATS ARE ‘DISTORTING AND DAMAGING’

The primary assessment system is failing our children, says Eleanor Regan, so we need to switch to online, adaptive tests

[@EDSKthinktank](https://twitter.com/EDSKthinktank) [edsk.org](https://www.edsk.org)

With Covid-19 triggering the collapse of our national assessment system over the past two years, pre-existing debates about the future of primary school assessments have received more and more interest.

It would be unfair to claim the current system has no benefits – for example, England’s most recent performance in the Progress in Reading International Literacy Study (PIRLS) showed that Year 5 students were significantly above the international median score in reading. This impressive performance should not be overlooked. That said, our primary assessment system is not without its faults.

The current approach is having a distorting and damaging effect on schools. Overbearing one-off tests such as SATs inevitably encourage a narrowing of

the curriculum, and school leaders and teachers are put in an impossible position. Knowing there is only this one chance to show that pupils have met a certain standard encourages them to focus heavily on the topics being tested, which can limit curriculum time for non-tested subjects such as sport and art. There is something wrong when the demands of the assessment system mean sacrificing a well-rounded education.

Another problem is that one-size-fits-all assessments can affect pupil motivation. While there is mixed evidence about how stressful tests like SATs are for children, previous research has found that most young learners are indeed aware that their SATs results contribute to an ‘official’ judgement of them. Pupils may feel they have ‘failed’ even if they have in fact made perfectly acceptable progress, which could alter their attitude towards learning. Children

should not have their self-esteem undermined by standardised exams that are somehow expected to suit pupils of all abilities.

Clearly, improvements to the current system could and should be made – but how? Our latest report at education think tank EDSK concludes that moving towards online ‘adaptive’ testing would be a sensible step. These computer-based tests automatically adjust the difficulty of questions to match a pupil’s performance, with a correct answer leading to a harder question, and an incorrect answer leading to an easier question. The research suggests that scrapping existing assessments and moving to online adaptive tests for reading, numeracy, and spelling, punctuation and grammar will generate significant improvements.

For instance, low impact and shorter adaptive tests would help to reduce the current distorting effects of one-off exams. Our report recommends that pupils would take these tests approximately once every two years, providing regular updates on how they are performing throughout primary school, and relieving the pressures of one-off assessments. Each test would last for around 30 minutes, with the results compiled, distributed and analysed electronically – meaning no additional burden on teachers. The results would be shared with schools to update them on how children are performing and to support high-quality teaching and learning. Parents would also be provided with a report at the end of Years 2, 4 and 6 showing their child’s most recent results, ensuring they have a strong understanding of progress.

Other countries are already making use of the advantages that online adaptive testing offers. In Denmark all national tests for primary and junior secondary students are online and adaptive – and they have been since 2010. Wales has recently replaced its paper-based national tests in numeracy and reading for learners in Years 2 to 9 with online adaptive assessments, and Australia is making a similar move. A successful transition is evidently possible.

We know that many primary school children are already receiving a high-quality education. Nonetheless, this switch in assessment would be a genuine step forward in the way we gauge what pupils know and understand. With adaptive tests offering a solution to many of the problems in our current system, the time has come for England to get behind this exciting and innovative approach.

Eleanor Regan is a researcher and report co-author at the EDSK think tank.



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 School profile


Name: Charles Dickens Primary School
Headteacher: Michael Eggleton
Location: Southwark, London
Ofsted rating: Outstanding
Size: Approx 483 pupils
Extra info: Part of The Charter Schools Educational Trust

Michael Eggleton, Headteacher

“It’s important for children to have their voices heard”

Pupils are actively encouraged to understand their own rights as humans and citizens at this South London primary...



If I asked you what knowledge or skills you'd most like your pupils to take away from their primary experience, what would you say? Perhaps self-confidence, awareness of the world around them, or respect for themselves and others? Well, Charles Dickens Primary School prides itself on providing all this and more.

As I approached the school on a grey day in January, the buzz of morning London traffic around me, I almost missed the entrance. Tucked away down an unassuming side street in Southwark, this neat and modest building belies the significance of what's inside...

Back in 2016, Charles Dickens became a Rights Respecting School, for which it adopted the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child (or UNCRC for short). The Convention is a series of articles outlining the rights that children legally have as humans and as citizens. It includes some stipulations that you might expect, such as the right to an education, and to shelter and food, but also some more modern developments, such as the right to information from the media, and the right to express their feelings in all matters relating to them. The UNCRC also stipulates that governments must 'actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention'. Charles Dickens Primary is certainly doing that.

"We knew that our children were getting a good quality education," explains headteacher Michael Eggleton, "but also that that's not the case for everyone in the world, so it's good to open their eyes to how privileged they are, and how we can support others."

That's not to say a lot of the children at the school aren't disadvantaged, says Michael, or that they don't have certain areas they need to work through, but the staff wanted pupils to be able to learn about other areas of the planet, and hear about things they may not otherwise have come across. It was decided that the UNCRC would be a perfect lens through which to view these issues.

EMBEDDING CHANGE

Instead of just surfacing these globally conscious conversations through PSHE lessons, at Charles Dickens knowing your rights is embedded throughout the entire curriculum. "We're a knowledge-rich school," explains Michael, "and once we had decided we were going to pursue the Rights Respecting School route, we thought the best way to embed it would be to make our own curriculum booklets." These booklets not only provide a deep knowledge for pupils in every subject, but also seamlessly embed the Rights of the Child into lessons. Deputy head David Windle elaborates: "It's all woven in. One booklet, which covers the Amazon Rainforest, is about logging and deforestation, and empowering people to make changes. Another classic Year 5 topic looks at the abolition of slavery, however it's not just about the history, but the personal empowerment as well, which leads to social change."

Societal change and influence are not only theoretical at

Charles Dickens. Children are encouraged and supported to play an active role in their community, and have taken part in projects such as protest marches and sending letters to MPs to oppose development over local park land, (it worked – the park is still there). A major moment of activism also happened for Year 6 children when they were invited to speak with prime minister Boris Johnson ahead of his trip to Norway for a climate conference in 2021. Michael says: "The children had written letters to the prime minister about the conference, and were subsequently able to interview him on the topic. It was important for them to have their voices heard like that." Ongoing community projects have also seen Charles Dickens pupils grow vegetables and donate them to Dickens Pantry, a community foodbank run from the school that supports local families. For impact closer to home, when the primary was undergoing redevelopment, children lobbied for changes to their toilets, to allow a more open space combined with the privacy of cubicles. And this isn't just lip service – these changes have come to fruition, demonstrating the power of democracy here.

But surely all these extra activities take precious time away from an already-packed curriculum? Not really, says Michael. "Any change is always a challenge, but because we have created the curriculum booklets, everything is laid out for teachers and they don't have any extra reading to do," he says. Teachers no longer even need to take training for the approach, because it's been fully distilled into the curriculum, and new staff have everything they need from day one in the booklets.

ENCOURAGING AGENCY

What is entirely evident at Charles Dickens Primary School is the high level of agency at play; both for the staff and for pupils. The school has been judged as Outstanding by Ofsted since 2008, which has allowed a certain amount of freedom in their approach, and



Pupil voice



Teo

By learning about our rights, we can really change things, so we can try and stop stuff like deforestation. It makes me happy to make a difference in the community.



Rayah

We all have rights, and through what we learn at school, we know what they are, and that everybody has the same rights as us. It makes me feel safer, both in school and outside of school.



Sofia

I'm on the School Council, which is great because we really have a say in what goes on. It can be a lot of pressure though – I like to make sure I've made the right decision for everyone!



Suheera

We've learned that some children in the world don't have what we have, so it's important that we share, donate, and not waste anything. We need to help each other out.



means that staff are able to adapt their provision to the needs of the class.

All this to say, the UNCRC doesn't just have an impact on the children's school activities. It is a wide-ranging benefit that will hopefully carry through their lives, into secondary school and beyond. "The great thing is that children know how to stay safe, what they should expect from us as adults, and how to tell when something isn't quite right," explains Michael. From a safeguarding point of view, this is hugely helpful – both for the school, and for children and their parents.

Daniella Jamois, one of the assistant heads at Charles Dickens and current Reception teacher, says that teaching children about their rights and responsibilities helps to strengthen the local community, and bring different kinds of families together. "We're a very mixed community," says Daniella, "and so there are pupils in social housing who live in close proximity to those who might have much fancier accommodation. Their parents often have very different professional backgrounds too, so the school has become a real hub for them to mix and learn to understand each other, and we have a very strong parent community." There are quite a few teachers who have been at Charles Dickens for the long haul, explains Daniella, and as such they've taught several siblings from the same family, and so have very strong links with parents and carers.

But it hasn't always been the smoothest ride. "When we began using UNCRC, some parents were a little bit fearful," says Michael. "A bit worried that we were putting too much ownership on the children to understand their own rights, and that perhaps they might even use that as a weapon against their caregivers. There was the odd occasion where children had tried to use lines at home like "I know my rights! I don't have to brush my teeth!" But, of course, that's a misconception, and once we fine-tuned our communication with parents, and they understood we weren't teaching their kids that they could stay up and eat chocolate all night, they were on board." Michael chuckles. "Now they're aware we're teaching the children about our responsibility as carers and teachers to keep them safe and give them what they need, and in turn, that pupils must respect their responsibility to work with us."

POSITIVITY BREEDS POSITIVITY

It makes sense then, that another of the Charles Dickens Primary School hats, alongside Rights Respecting School and Research School, is Behaviour Hub. Last summer, the Department for Education (DfE), along with its lead behaviour advisor, Tom Bennett, began identifying schools who were marked as Outstanding by Ofsted, and had very strong behaviour, to lead as support hubs for the rest of the country. The leadership team at Charles Dickens decided to apply, based on their strong record. "The newspapers at the time were reporting on the idea that behaviour hub schools were these zero-tolerance, no-talking-in-corridors, sent-home-for-imperfect-uniform –type environments," Michael explains. "But that's not what we're about, and not actually what the hub is about, either. There may have been some schools that were quite hard-line, but certainly not all of them." The aim of the game for Charles Dickens, says Michael, is for children to be "safe and respectful".

This goes for the staff, too. In order to help maintain work-life balance and wellbeing for teachers, the school has a no marking

SPECIALIST LEARNING

As well as embedding the UNCRC within the main curriculum, Charles Dickens Primary also employs specialist teachers for subjects such as music, PE, French, and art. "We think it's essential that our children get access to this kind of cultural capital, no matter their background," says Michael. "We have after-school clubs for things like karate, boxing and street dance, which are all free, and we provide heavily-subsidised music lessons." The goal over the next three years, says Michael, is to double the amount of music lessons on offer, using Pupil Premium funding to make as many free as possible. "We want all pupils to have a fighting chance," he explains, "and part of that is offering subjects their peers in independent schools may have – traditionally – better access to, as well as making sure they're as qualified as possible for secondary school scholarships, if that's their goal." A dedicated, specialist music teacher and rehearsal space means that every child has a chance at picking up an instrument. "Depending on the day, you could walk in and see every single pupil with an instrument in their hand," says Michael proudly.

On top of this, Charles Dickens also has a dedicated art studio, where children are encouraged to get messy and explore their creativity, and a spacious, purpose-build gym, where coaches from Southwark Gymnastics teach classes every week.





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policy. It might sound radical, but as Michael explains, children still get the feedback they need, without teachers having to spend hours of their own time poring through books: “Around five years ago, we were part of a study looking at the efficacy of marking,” he says. “When we delved into it, the average teacher was spending three hours after school every day marking, and we started to wonder about its true impact for children.” For a primary setting, Michael explains, after-the-fact marking meant that children had to be able to both read the comments and be able to effectively respond to them, which wasn’t always possible. Instead, he says, after looking at a variety of methods, the school decided the best evidence was for live marking: “So, giving feedback to the children when they’re in the classroom – whether that’s writing out challenges on the board and finding a common solution as a class, or the teacher walking around while pupils are working and providing in-the-moment comments.” This allows children to react immediately to feedback, explains Michael, increasing its efficacy, and means that teachers can spend their after-school time prepping for lessons or winding down, rather than endlessly marking. After some trialling, teachers found that children not receiving after-school marking in books weren’t at any disadvantage, academically. Rather, they were performing at exactly the same level as they were when their books were marked every day. However, the big difference, says Michael, is that staff had three extra hours each day, so could focus on assisting children that perhaps needed more support, or building in additional resources or intervention groups.

WORKING TOGETHER

This kind of freedom and professional agency plays a huge part in maintaining happy staff, says Daniella, who herself has been at the school for over 14 years. “I love the fact that if you have a passion, the senior leadership are very open to you exploring that, so really working from your strengths. I think that’s why the staff turnover here is so low,” she says. One of the passions that Daniella is able to pursue through her role at Charles Dickens is environmentalism, which she has demonstrated through setting up a Forest School. “We incorporate



Meet the staff



DANIELLA JAMOIS
ASSISTANT HEAD &
RECEPTION TEACHER

We have such a strong community here. There are all sorts of children, from all sorts of backgrounds on roll, and we’re a real hub, allowing for that community crossover. We have a strong parent community, too, and we’re very close to a popular park where children play after school, so it all ties in together.



LUCIA NARVAEZ
YEAR 3 TEACHER

It’s my first year of teaching, and it’s been great. The school is very welcoming, and everyone is so supportive. Lots is done for you, like with the booklets, so you can spend your PPA time actually adjusting to the needs of your class, which is really valuable. The children are so passionate too; they love a good discussion.



ROBERT PAUL, YEAR 4
TEACHER & YEAR LEADER

It’s always great, during School Council elections, how seriously the children take the exercise, and how empowered they are by it all. They write and perform a speech if they’d like to be a councillor; they all listen to one another, and then they vote. They really respect the democratic process – it’s lovely to see.



AGGIE MESMAIN
EARLY HELP MANAGER

I’ve worked at Charles Dickens for 35 years, so I’ve seen a lot of changes – all for the better! The children know their rights, what to expect from adults and each other, and how to talk about it all; obviously depending on their age. I’ve realised how much input children can have in their own lives – as of course they should!

it all into the curriculum,” she explains, “teaching the children about where their food comes from. They understand that without this attention to nature, their futures are in jeopardy, and that the way we produce food is a problem.” Pupils take on a lot of responsibility within the school grounds, looking after allotment gardens and so forth, which has helped build a very strong environmental literacy. They even sometimes sell the produce they grow – and eggs from the school chickens – at Borough Market.

This is all part of the Rights Respecting School, too, explains Daniella, in that the children want their voices heard on environmental matters. “I also run the Eco Council,” she says, “so I meet up once a week with the Eco Councillors, and they decide what they’d like everyone to focus on for the coming week.” These focuses could be anything from litter in the playground to the use of cars in Central London, and pupils are free to not only air their thoughts and grievances, but to put actions into place. “We write up their ideas for the weekly focus,” explains Daniella, “and they deliver that to the rest of the school through an assembly. Of course, due to restrictions at the moment, we’re not having big assemblies, so the councillors are just delivering their ideas in class. But the important thing is that the children are having their voices heard.”

The team at Charles Dickens Primary School, then, leads by example; teachers give pupils the room and the agency to express their feelings and opinions, and in turn, children are (as much as children can be) well behaved, eager to learn, and from what I can see, pretty woke. I get the feeling that Mr Dickens himself would approve. As he wrote in his novel *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*: ‘No man can expect his children to respect what he degrades.’ **TP**



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Partnership grant opportunity
"Whiskers" Research Project

The Royal Society Schools Engagement team, working with the Primary Science Teaching Trust, is currently providing an exciting opportunity for primary schools to become involved in a research project that has a school's citizen science component, along with the potential for schools to develop their own projects from this.

The project
Dr Robyn Grant, a Royal Society Science Research Fellow, is carrying out a project, 'Metaphysics: molecular evolution and the evolution of the brain', to explore the effect of different cellular structures, proteins and genes on the way that the brain works. She will use this research to make recommendations to help school children design and create their own 'brain' models, which has applications for scientific replication experiments where visual information is better available or retained, such as in memory and learning, environmental monitoring and earth and climate science.

During the project, the research team will explore animal models working with primary school children across the UK. They will also produce an accessible book and school science resources to demonstrate how an understanding of the natural world can improve our lives and our knowledge.

"We will demonstrate in our project that science and research are important in everyday life. Our...

We would like to encourage schools to develop your children's own knowledge to be related to Dr Grant's project with support from a Royal Society Partnership Grant. The Partnership Grants scheme is a special way to secure funding for a project that is not covered by your school and the particular project makes the process much simpler for the following reasons:

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- This new initiative will give students an opportunity to become involved in and contribute to real world research that is not covered by the curriculum.

Work with the PSTT and Dr Robyn Grant. This grant project will involve up to 15 primary schools across the UK.

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Improve maths outcomes

Deputy head Lorna Blackhurst and head Gordon Farquhar on working with Whizz Education to support ongoing progression in maths

GETTING STARTED

King James Academy's relationship with Whizz Education started in 2020. We wanted to support our teachers better to help them improve maths learning outcomes. Maths brought down our combined assessment results in 2020, so we decided to adopt a new approach. This included various changes as part of a bigger plan, one of which was working with Whizz Education.

As leading educationalists dedicated to helping schools improve learning outcomes in maths, Whizz Education was the perfect partner – we held initial meetings to discuss our strategic goals, design our implementation plan and agree on targets.

The result was the creation of an educational plan that used the awarded-winning virtual tutor Maths-Whizz as an enabler to provide tailored and engaging maths lessons for each child, along with a library of teaching resources to support strategic lesson planning and delivery.



WHAT WE DID

Initially, we arranged a teacher capacity-building programme to upskill staff to work with the blended learning programme; then we piloted the virtual tutor for 12 weeks before enabling access for all 308 Key Stage 2 students across 12 Year 5 and 6 classes. We expected students to achieve three progressions per week using Maths-Whizz, which equals just one hour per week of homework to support in-class teaching.

Fortunately, we had worked closely with Whizz's education success partners to complete our implementation plan before the start of the second spring lockdown in 2021. This meant our teachers could deliver remote live lessons, with teachers assigning homework via Maths-Whizz, so that learning was as 'normal' as possible.

As a result, Maths-Whizz became a vital part of our isolation provision. It was great to know that every homework session was purposeful and impacted learning outcomes positively, both during lockdown and when children returned to school.

HOW WE IMPROVED

The teachers' resources and activity plans mean that children can build on topics they study in class to develop their maths fluency.

For pupils, the virtual tutor itself is fun and engaging. They like the bright colours and avatars. It also automatically pitches work at the right level for the individual, covering all the elements of the curriculum, enabling them to make progress tailored to their own pace and ability. Pupils say it doesn't feel like homework, and the accessibility, rewards and competitions keep them motivated to succeed.

We use Whizz's data output along with qualitative observations to draw tangible insights, ensuring progress is made and that we are meeting our target of 50 per cent of children achieving age-related expectations (ARE) in maths within the academic year.



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THE PLACE: King James Academy Royston, Hertfordshire, is part of a large multi-academy trust that has worked with Whizz Education for many years.



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We believe that for edtech to work successfully, it needs to be included as part of a broader strategic plan tied to clear objectives. Data needs to be analysed, monitored and acted upon, enabling teachers to deliver the best learning outcomes possible within mixed ability environments. Whizz Education has provided a consultative and strategic programme, and despite the challenges of delivering lessons during the pandemic, we've doubled the number of children meeting ARE.

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Sensory strategies FOR YOUR CLASS

Listening to music, running a lap, taking a deep breath... Dr Ivana Lessner Listiakova explains how to help pupils stay calm and focused

Do you have a child in your class that appears to be slow, unmotivated or daydreaming; keeps running around, jumping up from their chair, or rocking; gets angry at other children out of the blue; chews their pencils and bites their nails, or avoids active participation?

Yes? Then this article is for you. Aside from being problematic to an organised and peaceful classroom, challenging behaviour, difficulties paying attention and problems with emotional regulation may be caused by unmet sensory processing needs, which can result in undue stress on both pupil and teacher, and can get in the way of meaningful learning.

We have seven sensory systems: visual – sight; auditory – hearing; olfactory – smell; gustatory – taste; tactile – touch; proprioception – body awareness; and vestibular – balance. They all play a part in effective learning.

To be able to learn and coordinate our movements, we need our nervous system to process all the information it receives, so it can be used purposefully in meaningful activities.

For example, writing your name. In order for a child to develop this skill, firstly they need to be sitting still. They need to be able to hold the pencil, apply the right pressure and have muscle control over the shapes. Only then can they form the letters on paper. At the same time, the child needs to filter out any excess information that is not crucial to the moment. These could include the sounds of chairs on the floor, voices of other children, seeing other objects on

the table and on the walls, and feeling their clothes touching their body.

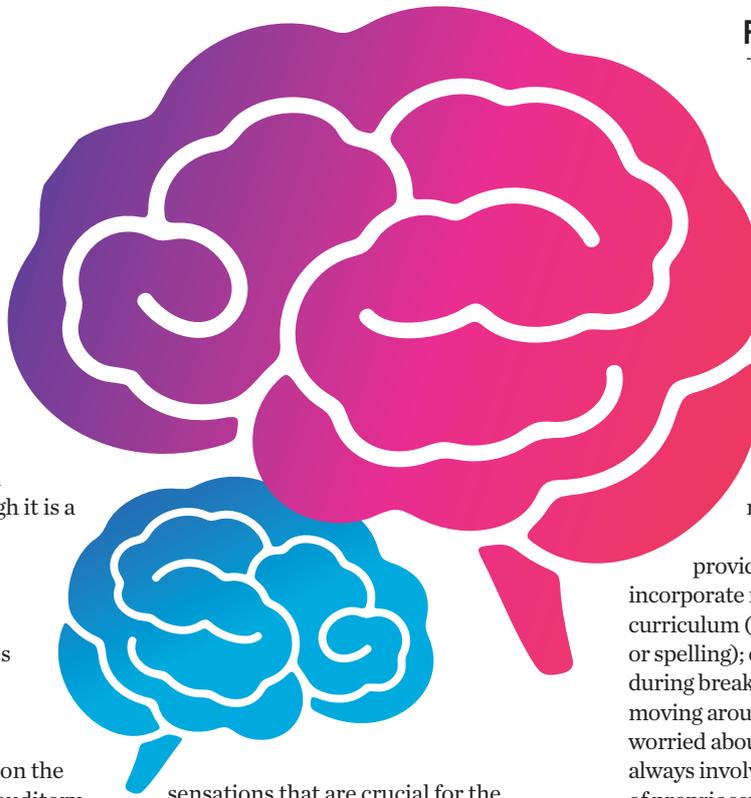
Designing sensory strategies

Managing pupils' sensory processing needs can go a long way to helping them settle into learning, and effective way to do so is to use sensory strategies. These are adjustments we can put in place in the classroom to modify a child's environment or required tasks. However, it's not always as straightforward as it sounds. To design effective strategies for the school environment, we need a good assessment of the sensory needs of individual children, and a good understanding of how sensory processing works in general. These starting points enable us to tailor strategies which identify individual needs.

Hypersensitivity and hyposensitivity

There are two ends to the range of sensory sensitivity – **hypersensitive** and **hyposensitive**. In other words, children who run, jump around and cannot sit still, and children who daydream and are happy in their slower world.

Hypersensitive children let too much information into their sensory processing system and can become easily overwhelmed. This can result in fight, flight or freeze responses, and pupils are likely to protect themselves against experiences they perceive as threatening or stressful. This can lead to heightened anxiety, irritable reactions for 'no apparent reason' and difficulties in emotional



regulation. The response can also become externalised in challenging behaviour such as hitting other children, screaming, etc.

When the reaction of the child is not to fight, but rather to escape the situation, they might refuse to do something, which again can be considered challenging behaviour, although it is a natural protective reaction. If children do not have the opportunity to avoid overwhelming stimuli, they can sometimes find themselves in meltdowns or complete shutdowns.

Higher sensitivity (and reactivity) is typical for pupils on the autism spectrum. It is mainly auditory, visual and tactile hypersensitivity (defensiveness), but sensitivity to touch is also common for children who appear hyperactive – they are often over vigilant because they want to avoid accidental touch.

In contrast, hyposensitive children may need additional input to feed their brain with information that can be processed and used effectively in everyday tasks. In these cases, it is common to see difficulties in fine and gross motor skills, organisation, planning and attention, which can sometimes lead to frustration.

To put it another way, it might seem as if a wall exists between the child and the world, and that we need to manually input sensory information to reach them. We can use sensory strategies to provide opportunities for the pupil to experience

sensations that are crucial for the development of skills many of us take for granted, such as sitting, writing, drawing, cutting with scissors, using kitchen utensils, getting dressed, playing football etc. But to do all of this with confidence and without hurting ourselves, we need our sensory systems to be working in unison.

Through providing sensory experience we can design activities that use sensory discrimination. For examples, see Fig.1.

What can we do in class?

One of the most obvious issues is when a child simply isn't paying attention. However, this could be for a number of reasons. Our attention, or activity (arousal) level is naturally regulated by vestibular inputs. For instance, when we want to calm down and fall asleep, slow, regular rocking

can help. On the other hand, when we need to wake up, we engage in activities that include movement (especially movement of the head). Both hyperactive and hypoactive pupils can benefit from the same vestibular strategies. Either way, all children can sometimes use a boost and regulation of their attention.

For 'fidgety' pupils, we can provide movement breaks or incorporate movement into the curriculum (e.g. squats while doing maths or spelling); encourage active movement during breaks; and not punish children for moving around the classroom. If you are worried about pupils becoming agitated, always involve activities that include a lot of proprioception. This regulates the brain, organises and calms, while allowing them to maintain optimal levels of activity.

Proprioceptive activities include muscle work such as climbing, hanging, pushing the walls, or pushing yourself up from a chair; carrying heavy beanbags, backpacks or floor mats; building forts from heavy materials; squats, push ups or wheelbarrows.

In cases of high sensitivity, you could try:

- Removing sensory inputs that bother the child
- Providing the pupil with a sense of control over the situation – e.g. letting them sit near a wall where they are protected from the back and can see the rest of the room
- Creating opportunities for proprioceptive input
- Giving tools to the child that they can use independently that a) help eliminate the bothering sensation (e.g. ear defenders, sunglasses, long sleeves/short sleeves), and b) add more proprioception when the child starts getting anxious (e.g. chewing necklace or pencil top).

Remember, these strategies target sensory processing through fun, purposeful activities that are meaningful to the child because they are part of everyday life, play and learning. I hope they help you support your pupils and their learning. **TP**



Dr Ivana Lessner Listiakova is a senior lecturer in childhood studies at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Suffolk..

SENSORY SYSTEM	PROVIDING SENSORY EXPERIENCE	USING SENSORY EXPERIENCE
Tactile system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing in sand, water, mud, clay and other natural materials • Finger painting • Swimming, massage, walking on grass barefoot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for objects in a bean bag without looking • Cutting, tracing, fitting puzzles and building blocks
Auditory system	Listening to music, the sounds of nature, people speaking or singing	Learning rhymes, matching the same sounds, or matching sounds with pictures of animals
Visual system	Looking at pictures, colours and lights	Playing 'I spy...' and 'find the difference', reading, tracing, puzzles, mazes

Fig. 1

MEDIUM TERM PLAN

KS2
D&T

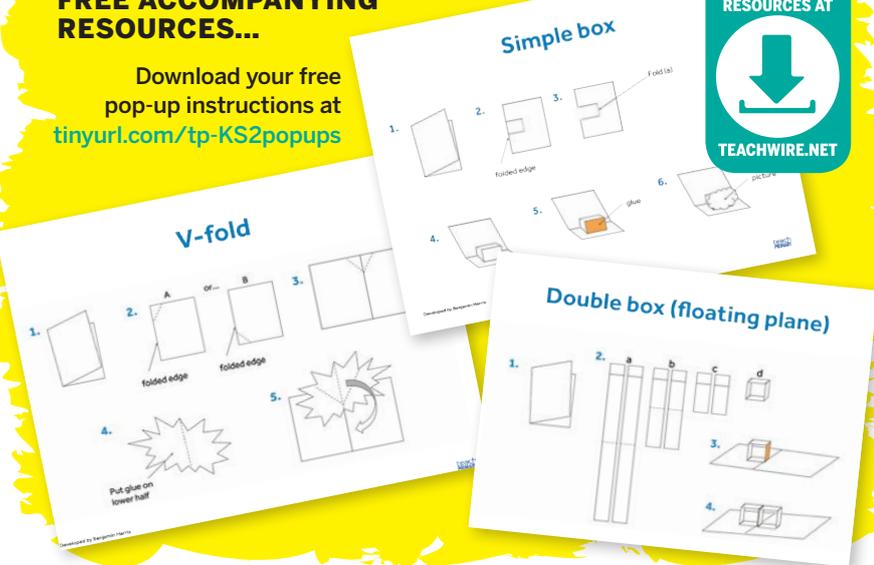
A NEW DIMENSION

BENJAMIN HARRIS

This unit is ideal for use with any year group from Y2 to Y6. It explores three of the most common pop-up designs, and how to make them. Depending on the age and ability of the children, the plan can be extended by creating a more elaborate pop-up design for each page (e.g. some Year 6 children might combine different pop-ups on the same page) or by gluing the pop-ups together to create a book with a card cover. All three of the designs are fairly straightforward to make, and introduce children to the two basic techniques that are apparent in all pop-up structures, whether simple or complex. By exploring these models, children also learn some crucial technical paper skills, such as accurate measuring and cutting, and above all, folding, which is key for any pop-up to work effectively.

FREE ACCOMPANYING RESOURCES...

Download your free pop-up instructions at tinyurl.com/tp-KS2popups



find any examples of these in the books or videos they've seen. The V-folds should be easy to spot, as they make a V shape where they meet the pages of the book.

Finally, ask the children to write down:

- ideas they've had in the lesson for their own pop-ups
- annotated diagrams showing V-fold and Box shapes
- a list of things they think are important when making an effective pop-up.



Assessment

Can pupils articulate what they like or don't like about pop-ups? Can they identify the difference between pop-ups and paper mechanisms? Can the children offer simple suggestions about how pop-ups work?

WEEK 2

Learning objective:

- To create and test a prototype V-fold pop-up

To begin the lesson, show pupils a completed version of this pop-up style, either via a physical book or video.

Next, demonstrate step by step how children can construct their own V-fold. You can find diagrammatic instructions in the resource download for this unit (tinyurl.com/KS2popups). If you're a visual learner, they'll really help! The best way to show the process is to make one yourself while pupils copy you. Make sure you're explicit in teaching each step:

1. Fold an A4 sheet of paper in half. Use a ruler to press along the fold, reinforcing it. Open the paper up again and fold the other way along the same crease. Repeat up to three times. This breaks the fibres of the paper or

WEEK 1

Learning objective:

- To understand three basic pop-up techniques

Begin the lesson by sharing a selection of pop-up books with the children. Emphasise how fragile and special they are, and discuss the fact that pop-ups are one of the few kinds of books that can't yet be replicated online.

You can also share video demonstrations with pupils, especially if you don't have any physical pop-up books to hand. Check some out at tinyurl.com/tp-PopupVid1 (Haunted House), tinyurl.com/tp-PopupVid2 (Popville) and tinyurl.com/tp-PopupVid3 (Dinosaurs).

Next, get the children to explore the books and/or videos either by themselves or in small groups, and ask them:

- Which is your favourite pop-up page of all? Why?
- How do the pop-ups seem to work?
- Can you see any mechanisms that move but are NOT pop-ups?



Make a clear distinction between pop-ups and paper mechanisms. A pop-up does exactly what it says on the tin – it pops out of the book using the energy drawn from pulling two pages apart. A paper mechanism, on the other hand, may be a slide, a rotation, or a flap of paper. A pop-up book may have examples of both!

Now show your class samples of the V-fold and Box pop-ups they'll be making in later lessons. Ask if they can

card, and makes the fold smooth and flexible.

2. With the folded edge on the left, make another, diagonal fold along the top left corner. Make sure the crease is flexible - refolding as in step one.
3. Open the sheet, to see a V-shaped crease. When you fold the sheet closed again, push the 'V' in towards the inside of the folded sheet. When you reopen the sheet, the 'V' should pop out.
4. Next, make a picture to add to your V-fold. Draw your image on a separate piece of card (making sure it fits within the 'V'), fold it in half horizontally, and put glue on the back of the picture, but only at the bottom.
5. Align the fold on the picture with the centre crease of the V-fold. Glue the two pieces together, then open the whole thing a few times to create flexibility.

Allow the children to make a few prototypes and encourage them to change the size and position of the V-fold and picture. What problems do they encounter? You can use mini plenaries to discuss challenges during the lesson.

To record the learning, pupils can stick their pop-ups into their exercise books, and annotate them with details about the problems and solutions they encountered throughout the prototype process.



Assessment

Can children demonstrate how to make a flexible fold? Can they create a smooth and strong pop-up movement? When the cards are closed, do the pop-ups stick out or are they well hidden?

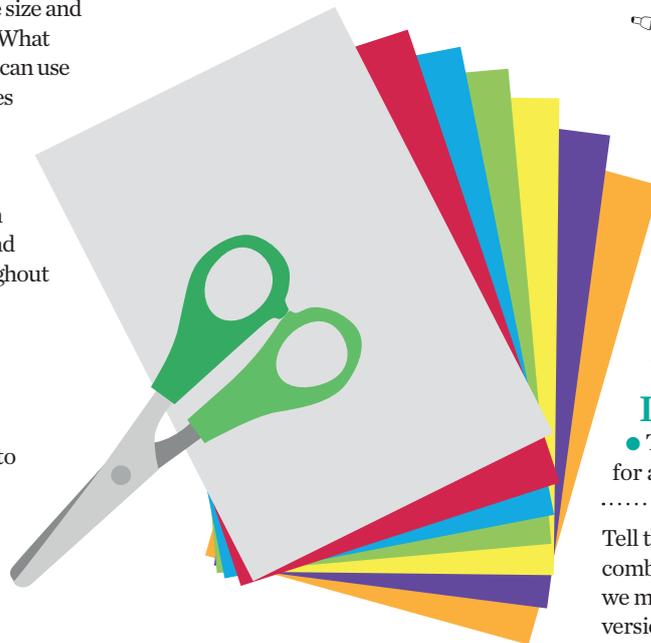
WEEK 3 Learning objective:

- To create and test a prototype Box pop-up

First, remind children of how to make an effective fold. Explain that in this session, they will be making another basic but widely used pop-up technique: the Box. This design uses only one fold, but also incorporates cuts.

As in the last lesson, demonstrate step by step how to make the fold, making your own version along with the class.

1. Fold an A4 sheet of paper or card in half.
2. From the folded edge, measure two lines of equal length (5cm) reaching towards the unfolded edge. Ensure as best as you can that the lines are parallel with the side edges



Assessment

Can children make appropriate adjustments to their work as they figure out challenges and solutions? Can pupils readily make connections between the size of their picture and how to hide it inside the paper fold?

WEEK 4 Learning objective:

- To combine simple pop-up techniques for a more complex product.

Tell the children that today we will be combining two Box structures – one that we made last lesson, and a slightly different version, to create a Floating Plane.

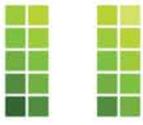
Show the class a completed version of the pop-up, and once again demonstrate the process step by step. The children will need one A4 sheet of paper or card, and two strips of card (1cm wide, cut from the long edge of an A4 sheet).

1. Fold the A4 sheet of paper or card in half.
2. With both strips of card lined up in front of you, mark a line 1cm from the top of each strip. These sections will form the tabs.
3. Fold the strip (nearly) in half, folding the bottom up to the line you've just drawn. Now fold them again, taking the newly formed bottom of the folded strip up to the line again.
4. Open the strip of card fully, and refold back and forth a few times to make the creases flexible. Next, put some glue on the tab, fold it over, and attach the other end of the strip to make a square box. Repeat for the second strip.

of the paper and that they're not too far from each other (5cm again works well).

3. Now, fold the paper between the ends of these incisions. Repeat a few times and press with a ruler to make the fold strong and flexible.
4. Open the paper up and push the box flat against the inside of the sheet as you fold it closed. There will now be a gap in the closed paper shape. Press hard where the fold is to make it more flexible.
5. When you reopen the paper half way, you should see a pop-up box.
6. Put glue on the right side of the box (marked orange on the visual instructions), and stick on a picture of the children's choosing, lining up the bottom of the picture with the bottom of the box. Stick prototypes into books and annotate as before.





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Assessment

Can children identify which pop-up techniques they are using? Have pop-ups been effectively designed to enhance text? Can the pupils readily identify potential problems in the planned construction of their designs?

WEEK 6

Learning objective:

- Build and evaluate your pop-up book design.

Ask the children to follow the plans they made last time. This will take more than one lesson if they have chosen to make more than two designs.

When the children have made their pop-ups, they can glue the back of each page to the next, creating a book. Make sure to glue especially carefully along the spines, as this is where a lot of the strain will focus.

To make covers, cut out pieces of thicker card, slightly bigger than the A5 folded sheets, decorate them, and glue them to the front and back of the pop-up book. These keep pages from being torn.

Finally, have a publication celebration where everyone reads each other's books. Lead the children to answer questions such as:

- Which pop-ups are your favourites?
- What would you do differently next time?
- How could you use these pop-up ideas in future (e.g. making birthday invitations/Christmas cards etc)?



Assessment

How consistently accurate are children's constructions of the different pop-ups, when left to their own design and making process? Do the pop-ups reflect the intent of the story? E.g. is there a surprise in the story that is enhanced by an equally surprising pop-up?



Ben Harris teaches Y6 and is English lead at Dunmow St Mary's Primary in Essex. In 2021, his class were awarded the UKLA 'Our Class Loves this Book' prize.

@one_to_read

afewtoread.blogspot.com

5. Line up one of the boxes with the crease on the folded sheet of paper, with the long edge of the box facing away, and glue it in place. The box strip should now be standing up. Apply more glue to the side of the strip that's perpendicular to the sheet and closest to the fold.

6. Glue the other box directly opposite the first, mirroring its position. Carefully close the sheet of paper and press over the surface. The glue on the first box should stick to the second box. This is a good way to check that the pop-ups are lined up when pages are closed. When you reopen the sheet, the two boxes should pop up to create one structure that goes across the crease in the sheet of paper. See the download for visual instructions.

7. Lastly, draw a picture on a separate piece of card. Cut it out and fold it in half, horizontally (bottom to top, not side to side). Stick the picture to the pop-up by putting glue on the top portion of the two boxes, and lining up the fold in the picture with the crease where the two boxes meet. Close the sheet then reopen (with the folded edge facing away from you), and the picture should be sitting accurately on top of the pop-ups. This produces a 'plane' that appears to be floating above the sheet of paper. You could discuss key vocabulary (such as plane, perpendicular, etc) with the class. Again, allow children to make a few prototypes and encourage experimentation with sizes and shapes of cuts. Sometimes the pictures don't cover the two boxes. Remind pupils that their pop-up mechanism (here, the two boxes) should ideally be hidden.



Assessment

Can children make connections between the size of their cut-out picture and the length of the pop-up boxes? Are the two strips folded accurately, leaving a 'tab' at the end?

WEEK 5

Learning objective:

- Design your own pop-up book, using techniques you've learned.

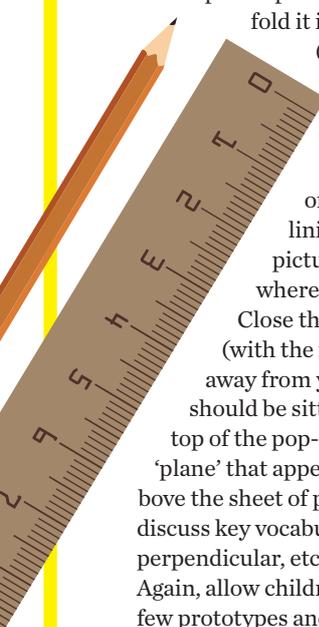
Tell the class that they are going to make a pop-up book of their own by writing a story and designing and making the pop-ups. Depending on the age of the children, you may wish to adjust the number of pop-ups to be more manageable.

Ask the pupils what they would like to write a book about. This doesn't have to be fiction – I've seen some great poetry and non-fiction pop-ups too! Allow them time to write the text.

Get the children to design their pages in their DT books. Give them time to design not just the pop-ups but also where the text will go on each page. This is important, as the pop-up should enhance the text in some way (refer to Matthew Reinhart's T-Rex placed in the book for maximum impact, at tinyurl.com/tp-PopupVid3).

Encourage pupils to label the drawings they make with details about whether the techniques are V-fold, Box pop-up, or Floating Plane. You could also ask older children to consider potential problems in the construction process and how they will tackle them.

Finally, ask the children to talk about their plans for the book and to show their designs. What does the rest of the class think? What suggestions have they got? Which parts are other children looking forward to seeing as pop-ups? Why?



Lead GENERATION

From associations and curriculum to Ofsted and observations, this is your guide to the what, why and how of subject leadership

MATTHEW LANE

Leading a subject is a very contextual beast. At secondary it means you could be running a large department of multiple staff, all focused on one area. Whereas at primary, you're more likely to be coordinating the whole school of class teachers, and you might even be in charge of two or three subjects. So, what do you do when the headteacher knocks on your door and asks you to lead for the first time?

What should I know?

You may not have a degree in your assigned subject, but even if you do, it's time to get learning. First off, check the National Curriculum so you have a solid grasp of what is expected and any nuances. It may be that there is no National Curriculum for your subject and in this case, you need to refer to your Trust or a Local Agreed Syllabus for information. Check if there are legal entitlements or conditions, too. This is especially important if leading PE or RE.

Hopefully you will have the previous lead to go to and ask for help and advice. But if you don't, for whatever reason, fear not: there are solid communities around each subject. Many associations offer great benefits for joining, such as magazines, access to CPD and special events to enhance your subject knowledge. There will be benefits for your school too,

so ensure you ask the head to pay for this membership. You can find a directory from the Council for Subject Associations at tinyurl.com/tp-CFSAdirectory

However, don't expect to learn everything at once. Ask around the staffroom – you may find that someone has led your subject in the past. If not, find out who leads in neighbouring or cluster schools and visit them to get a rough guide on what to do and where to start.

What's going on?

How do you know what is already going on in your subject? Start digging into the documentation (if there is any). Is there a clear outline of the curriculum? Do you have a map to call upon that lists the topics or units being covered by each year-group? For some subjects, you could have six year-groups each with six units of six lessons per year. That is 216 lessons to keep track of and understand! While this might sound daunting, all the information should already be out there in lesson plans and presentations by the class teachers. Go and ask for it and collect it all into one document for your (and Ofsted's) reference. If there are any gaps, at least you then know where to focus your energy.

Once you have this base, think about pedagogical approaches and how you assess your subject. What does the available data show you? What does your subject look like in younger or older year groups? Again, this is a time to be inquisitive and ask other teachers how they deliver their lessons and assess learning.

As for official accountability, while we don't do our jobs for Ofsted, you will also need answers for the three 'I's. What is the *intent* (or aim) of your subject? How is this being *implemented* through your school's curriculum? And how are you measuring the *impact* of this learning? How do you know if the impact of the learning is meeting your intent? Many web and magazine pages are filled with ideas and guidance on writing your three 'I's. NASUWT is a good place to start; Teacher Toolkit and the government blog have useful info, too.

Kicking the tires

Now you know the theory, it's time to see your subject in action. This means looking at books and visiting lessons – and trying not to make yourself unpopular in the process. A



great way to do this is to think of yourself as a curious tourist; watch carefully, ask light and positive questions (you can find suggestions at **[LINK]**) and give your colleagues space to show off about their teaching. Ensure that feedback is timely and in-person wherever possible.

You can send an email with what you liked – who doesn't love good news in their inbox – but present your questions and suggestions face-to-face or via video call. You can then judge the mood and tailor the delivery – rather than your email inadvertently causing upset at an inopportune moment.

How do you lead?

Libraries of books have been written about leadership

(my favourites are in the side bar), but the core tenets are integrity, respect and communication.

Integrity means writing a plan and trusting in your staff to deliver it. This doesn't have to be full of bells and whistles – while SLT or your Twitter community might have some great ideas, make sure to only include those that will work for your school. It's also useful to ask yourself if new initiatives are genuinely supporting your staff, or if they just make you look good. As a subject lead, you'll often find yourself stuck in the middle of demands from higher up, and the needs of the teaching staff. Knowing your subject well, and earning the respect of your

team will stand you in good stead.

A large part of earning this respect is embracing humility. Ensure you give credit where credit is due, own up to your mistakes, and shoulder the blame if something goes wrong. Nobody likes having to admit when things have gone awry, but part of our responsibility is to lead by example, and step up when needed.

This means having respect for others as well. Are you meeting the targets you expect of your fellow teachers? Are you giving people the time and support to meet your expectations? And are they aware of what you're asking of them? Communication can make it or break it for you as a leader. If you need something from your team, tell them in person, follow it up with a clear email and deadline, then send a polite reminder nearer the time. And on the subject of emails, forward on resources from subject associations to everyone. While the majority might delete it, someone may well find it helpful, and it shows you are thinking about your subject year-round rather than just when you are asked to do lesson observations.

Work worth doing

Theodore Roosevelt summed up what it means to be a subject leader when he said "Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." Striving to gain subject knowledge and taking the time to know how your team delivers it gives you the integrity you need to succeed as a leader. **TP**



Matthew Lane is a primary teacher and subject leader in Norfolk.

[@MrMJLane](https://twitter.com/MrMJLane)
theteachinglane.co.uk

FIVE OF MY FAVOURITE LEADERSHIP READS

1 *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* – Stephen R. Covey

'Designed to inspire and motivate people of all ages and occupations to solve their professional or personal problems. Covey provides a simple, principle-based framework to help individuals to take advantage of the opportunities that change creates.'

2 *Leading Change* – John Kotter

'This bestselling business book serves as both visionary guide and practical toolkit on how to approach the difficult yet crucial work of leading change.'

3 *The Advantage* – Patrick Lencioni

'Lencioni brings together his vast experience and many of the themes cultivated in his other best-selling books and delivers a first: a cohesive and comprehensive exploration of the unique advantage organisational health provides.'

4 *Royal Navy Way of Leadership* – Andrew St George

'St George writes about how to plan and execute, how to exercise judgment and how to motivate people. Everything in the book is here because it works, tested over thousands of hours of hard training, rigorous assessment and absolute measurement.'

5 *The researchED Guide to Leadership* – Stuart Lock

'This book takes a fresh view that domain-specific knowledge and expertise is vital to running schools well and argues that we tend to underestimate the knowledge required to do this complex job efficiently.'



Universal screening – MISGUIDED OR MASTERSTROKE?

Matt Hancock's call for dyslexia screening is well-intentioned, says **Liz Hawker** – but does it go far enough?

When Matt Hancock chose dyslexia as a platform to return to the public eye in December 2021, reactions were mixed. Without warning, he was suddenly back, and with the “quiet scandal” of four in five dyslexic children going undiagnosed, he called for universal dyslexia screening at primary schools to prevent more “slipping through the cracks”.

But for many still furious at Hancock's breach of pandemic rules, his pleas for universal screening fell on deaf ears. So, was this a breakthrough for dyslexia or a misguided move?

Blunt tools

Few would argue that screening is a bad idea. For mum Anita Robinson in Kent, early detection made all the difference. “It can be incredibly frustrating with the pressures of home reading and spelling,” she explains. “Being able to adapt our support from an early age has helped our relationship with our younger daughter and her own transition through different year groups.”

But the thing is, dyslexia is not a one-size-fits-all condition, and each child's needs can vary greatly. Although digital screeners may be free or inexpensive, there's an important catch: they are only blunt tools. Screener results cannot be taken as a diagnosis and only full psychometric

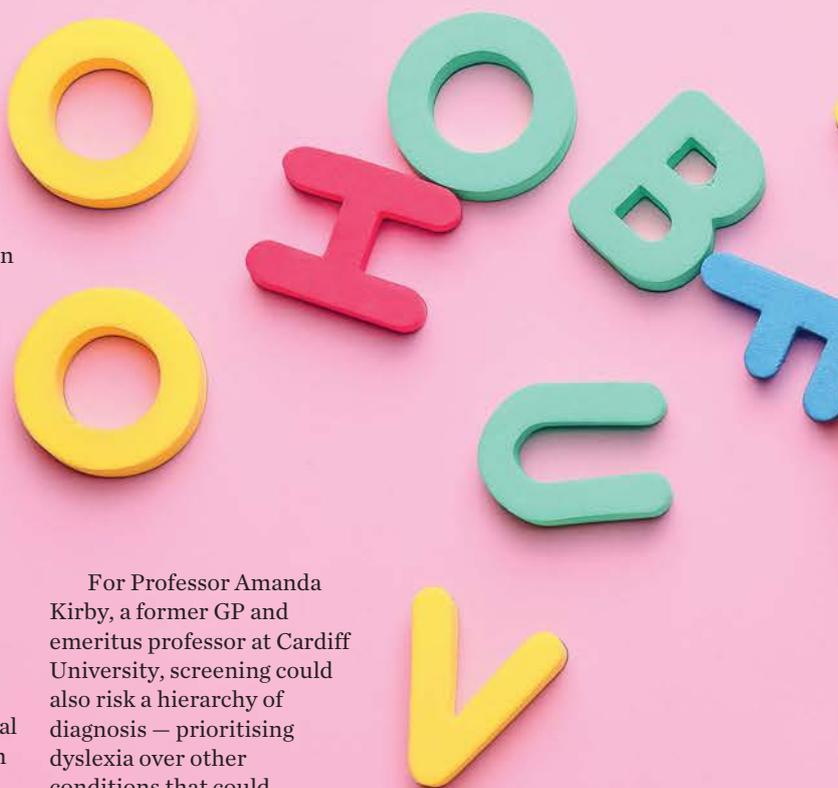
assessment can secure access arrangements for exams, etc. The use of universal screening without sufficient follow-up could lead to confusion for pupils and families, and an ineffectual, time-consuming process for schools, further compounding teacher and pupil stress.

A hierarchy of diagnosis

So why screen only for dyslexia? The latest government statistics for SEND in 2021 show lower figures for dyslexia than speech, language and communication, moderate learning difficulty, and mental health. For Education Health and Care plans, the greatest need is autism.

Mostly it comes down to machines and money: the worry here is that the government will prioritise dyslexia over other medical SEND conditions, just because there is a cheap online tool available to tick a box.

“Universal screening without follow up could lead to confusion for pupils and families”



For Professor Amanda Kirby, a former GP and emeritus professor at Cardiff University, screening could also risk a hierarchy of diagnosis – prioritising dyslexia over other conditions that could then go unrecognised:

“Rather than screening all learners, we should focus on those we know to be at greater risk. Hardly any children have neat challenges associated with one condition,” she argues. “In terms of neurodevelopmental conditions, dyslexia often co-occurs with ADHD, dyscalculia, dyspraxia (DCD), developmental language disorder (DLD), and autistic spectrum condition (ASC).”

So, what can we do to provide support in the classroom?

Multisensory teaching

Dyslexia difficulties extend to all subjects, not just

English, so adapting practice across all your teaching will pay dividends. Your most successful strategy is memorable multisensory learning – and it's completely free. All too often, visual and auditory methods dominate once pupils leave Foundation Stage: why drop kinaesthetic learning when dyslexia affects memory, auditory processing and visual processing? Phonics teaching is also abandoned too soon, when its multisensory methods can help with more complex language in Key Stage 2.

Whatever the learning objective, create an ethos of ‘see it, say it, do it’. Take plant

fertilisation and pollination in Key Stage 2, for example. Diagrams and videos show the process, but pupils need multi-sensory learning to internalise and recall the terminology – after all, it is complex to spell as well as to define.

As you introduce each new word, slash each syllable on the board and get pupils to stamp their feet and say each one, loudly, quietly and in distinctive voices. Get them to act out the process or tell a

endings, like ‘nectar’ and ‘anther’, use contrasting colours on the board and adopt a silly spelling voice for the final sound, exaggerating the ‘a’ and ‘e’ vowels to highlight the contrast. Make these into memory hooks: to ensure the learning sticks, get pupils to do this every time they use the word.

Prosodic cues

Prosody is another free, effective multisensory tool. Like much punctuation, full stops and commas can be indistinct on the page and difficult to discriminate for pupils with dyslexia, leading to

trace a pitch curve in the air then use body punctuation to punch the full stop (reminding pupils that a comma here would break the rule).

Use this strategy with other forms of punctuation in silly sentences – humour makes a great memory hook and deflects from pupils’ anxiety.

The free digital toolbox

Much assistive technology is also free and can transform dyslexic pupils’ progress. If you have tablets in class, make sure you have embedded Microsoft 365’s free Immersive Reader. It reads selected text out loud, highlighting each word as it goes, and is

particularly effective for proofreading and enriching vocabulary with its picture

5 dyslexia support ideas

1 Train pupils to finger track when reading or being read to – always stopping at punctuation marks to reinforce their function.

2 Teach pupils to cover and reveal syllables of a word using their finger; this reduces guesswork and makes longer words more approachable.

3 Don’t ask pupils to read out loud unless they volunteer to. When reading to the class, slow your pace and use the most expressive voice possible to accentuate meaning.

4 Use memory hooks. In geometry, for example, ‘scalene’ rhymes with ‘lean’ to reflect the appearance of its unequal angles.

5 Keep keywords on the board for the whole lesson, not just the input.

partner what it means in their own words.

You can get physical with phonology, too. Turn your back, and ‘air write’ each syllable, syncing each grapheme sound out loud as you trace the word in syllables. Build in repetition by getting pupils to write the key words on each other’s backs, their own forearms, or on the desk, always saying each sound as they trace the letter shapes.

It’s also useful to zoom in on similarities and differences. Encourage pupils to overenunciate the ‘tion’ suffix sound in ‘fertilisation’ and ‘pollination’ as they trace the ending in the air. When similar words have different

omission or comma splicing. Use the rise, fall and pause of your voice as a cue to where a sentence ends and a full stop belongs (or a semi-colon for older learners). Make it kinaesthetic as well as auditory: as you say a sentence out loud,

dictionary and word-class colour coding. Dyslexic and EAL pupils may also struggle to read instructions or information on the whiteboard. With the Office Lens app, they can capture text from any surface, convert into other languages if needed and have it read back to them. All you need is headphones or earphones for many pupils to use this technology at once.

For research online, show pupils their options for assistive settings; most browsers now offer screen magnification, text-to-speech, background colours and the Open Dyslexia typeface as an add-on.

If using video, remember subtitling, the easiest free tool in the box. It reinforces sound-spelling correspondence and boosts comprehension and recall, great for dyslexic pupils and also those with ADHD, ADD, hearing impairment and auditory processing disorder. **TP**



Liz Hawker is a SEND specialist, accredited assessor and parent in Kent.

 @hawker1

INSIDE THIS SECTION



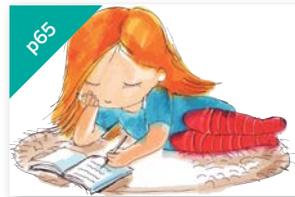
Carey Fluker-Hunt explores Jelly Had a Wobble as a vehicle for discussing wellbeing in KS1



Ciara Gibson talks us through how pandemic restrictions spurred creativity at school



Experts from The National Literacy Trust on how to encourage reluctant girl readers



How to help your KS2 class understand the requirements of diary writing, by Sue Drury

→→→ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

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This beautiful set of discussion cards from Plazoom is the perfect way to encourage children in KS2 to express their thoughts and opinions at the start of a new year – reflecting on past experiences, and considering future aspirations. Try it for free at bit.ly/PlazoomCards



Meet the AUTHOR

Helen Rutter on how we can use books to 'shine a brighter light' into the lives of young carers, and why support at school means so much

The term 'young carer' seems relatively new to me. I'm pretty sure that when I was at school (many years ago) the term didn't exist. Had it existed, there is a chance that I would have been classified as one, as my mum had M.E. for most of my childhood. In my latest book – *The Boy Whose Wishes Came True* – a young carer, Archie Crumb, is at its heart. However, I'm not sure that either Archie or I would ever have described ourselves this way.

I wonder whether it is the resistance or blindness to our own situations that can make it hard for us to spot and support young people who take on caring responsibilities and roles. If they don't recognise that is what they are doing, then how can they reach out and get the available help? If all you have ever known is a mum who feels sad or ill a lot of the time and spends long periods in bed, or if you have an older sibling who cannot cope alone and needs your support, then that is your normality. You don't necessarily know to talk about it, let alone ask for help. Unless you see an alternative, how would you know that there was help available, or that you even deserved such help?

To label or not?

I know that I never felt the need to 'reach out' and as me and my mum coped pretty well, I doubt there

were any particular signs that my teachers would have spotted. It may well be that I would not have needed any support from anyone and that the label would not have been positive. We coped, and I turned out alright (although when I am sobbing at my typewriter as I churn out more unprocessed emotions into a book, I do sometimes wonder). But maybe chatting to someone about my mum's illness as a child would have been nice – useful even. I'll never know.

There are cases where I imagine it is crystal clear, where the state is already involved and help is offered from all available avenues. I suppose what interests me, and why I wrote it into this book, are the stories where it's not so clear. When it's not obvious to the rest of the world that someone is struggling, or when a child is dealing with things only just within their capabilities. It is instances where the lines are blurred and the cracks are just about covered up, or the façade is strong, that interest me most. It is easy to see how in these cases teachers, friends and neighbours may not want to 'intrude' or 'stick their nose in' as things don't look 'too bad' and there might be a chance they are wrong and could cause upset or offence.

When deciding if we should take action, I wonder whether our cultural propensity to politeness comes into play, or whether it is a universally tough call. I don't know.



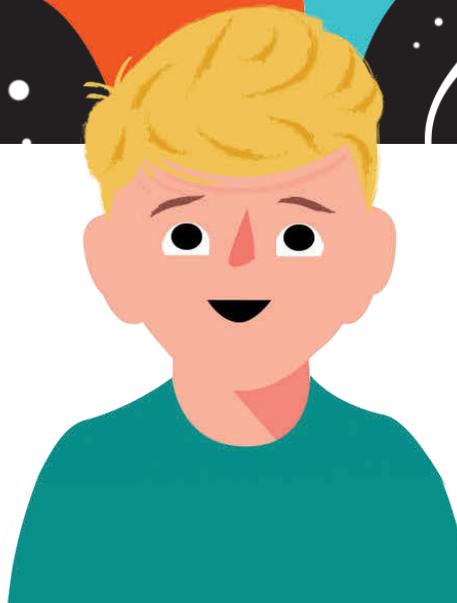
Illustrations by Andrew Bannecker

What I do know is that it is hard. I've taught kids drama for many years, and as you will know, when you ask children to express ideas through storytelling, all sorts of things come out. Knowing when a story of a little girl feeling sad and a parent shouting at them is based on a perfectly normal truth, stemming from a functional family experience, and when it is based on something darker feels incredibly difficult. As teachers, it is tough deciding whether to follow up on something that is said, written, or even based on a feeling you have. It comes down to instincts, but are our instincts always strong enough? I'm sure there are times when the phone call home has been unnecessary, embarrassing or potentially full of conflict, as well as times when a call that was never made would have been incredibly helpful.

Support in school

There are a number of factors that may help to flag a young carer, according to UK charity Family Action (family-action.org.uk) but it is important to remember some young people may not display any of these behaviours:

- poor and erratic attendance
- underachievement
- poor or missing homework
- aggression
- lack of cooperation or withdrawn behaviour
- lack of parental interaction with school
- reluctance to talk about home life.



Schools can also help support these pupils in a number of ways:

- appointing a named member of staff as 'young carers lead' to implement a young carers' policy
- grace for lateness
- use of the office phone to call home
- flexibility on homework deadlines
- time for students to speak one-to-one to a support worker
- peer support groups
- improved communication on transition to continue to support young carers from primary into secondary school
- a card that young carers can show to identify themselves, so they don't have to repeatedly explain their circumstances

Thinking about my younger self in relation to Archie Crumb's story and those of so many young carers (recognised or

otherwise), I think that had a teacher asked me if I was okay and if my mum was okay, yes, I may have shrugged it off and said that everything was fine. But deep down I would have felt seen and understood.

I guess that's what recognising and labelling these things is all about. It's about shining a brighter light into the cracks and onto those cases that might be missed; the kids that just look a bit scruffy or are always yawning; the ones who seem so much older than their years. Our kids need to feel seen and even if their story sits just outside the line of intervention, a kind word and some extra space and time for them could make a world of difference.

I hope that *The Boy Whose Wishes Came True* will connect with kids who may be struggling and who are looking for the words to ask for the help that they need. Feeling represented in books and reading stories about issues that they may be experiencing will hopefully help to open up lines of communication in the classroom and at home.



The Boy Whose Wishes Came True by Helen Rutter (£6.99, Scholastic) is out now.



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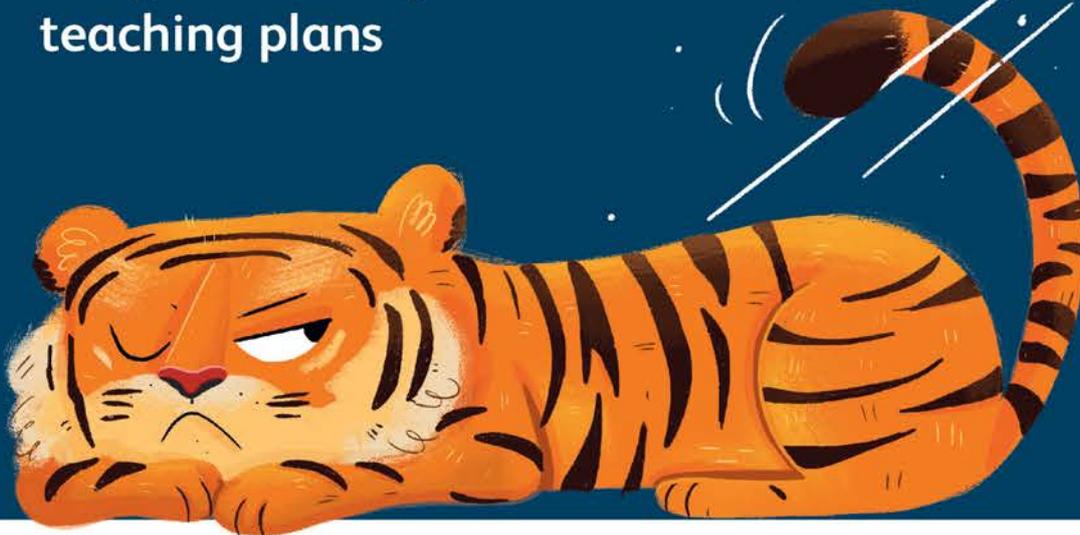


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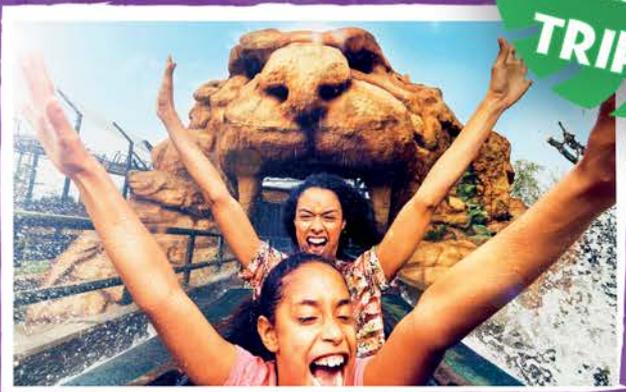
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Illustrations by Tom Knight

When Jelly Had a Wobble

Explore overcoming negative emotion and feelings with this bright and uplifting picturebook by **Michelle Robinson** and **Tom Knight**

CAREY FLUKER HUNT

If you'd like a fun-filled way to grab children's attention and fire thoughtful discussions about emotional wellbeing, then Jelly's story will give you a head start. A madcap food-themed premise sets the scene for a rhyming rollercoaster of a tale, but there's plenty of heart and depth in this story, too, as it explores how we

react to challenges and how we can help each other to be stronger than we think.

Anxiety affects us all, and self-doubt can really sap our confidence. We don't have to enjoy the limelight – we're all different, and not everyone wants to be the star of the show. But we do need to understand ourselves so that we can

support each other and deal with the challenges that come our way.

Tom Knight's expressive characters help children connect with this emotional landscape, creating fertile ground for rich and rewarding discussions about wellbeing and empathy, and the setting and storyline are full of possibilities for cross-curricular activities.



Sharing and talking about the book

This book is perfect for some audience participation, so it's worth checking that everyone knows the 'jelly on a plate' rhyme before you begin!

Once they've enjoyed the story, children will want to talk about it. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- *What did you enjoy most about this book? Did it remind you of anything?*
- *Have you ever felt anxious? Where were you, and what happened?*
- *How would you help a worried friend?*
- *Why does the compere say that Jelly "represents us all"?*
- *Which food would you vote into the Kitchen Hall of Fame?*
- *Could Jelly turn himself into a healthier treat? How?*
- *Jelly focuses on his anxiety and self-doubt. What do Jelly's friends tell us about his character? How would you describe him?*
- *Who would you recommend this book to, and why? What would you tell them about it?*

Practical activities

We all have feelings

"You worry about everything, but that's because you care. We all get anxious sometimes, it's a feeling we all share."

Copy Jelly's expressions and gestures from the pictures. What do they tell us about his feelings? Have you ever been worried or anxious? Talk about your experiences.



What helps us understand how other people feel? For example, we might observe their facial expressions, watch how they move, listen to what they say, ask questions, and imagine how we'd feel in their place.

We may share the same emotions, but that doesn't mean we experience them identically, or see the world in the same way. Talk about other points of view, and the idea of empathy. How do the other characters in this book feel about the award ceremony? Is Jelly the only one who's feeling nervous?

How do Jelly's friends know how he's feeling? How do they help themselves to help him? For example: they understand that he might not feel the same as them; they listen to him without judging; they empathise; they show him that they care; they offer a different perspective; they focus on the positives; they suggest practical things he can do to feel better; they support him while he has a go.

How many emotions can you spot in this book? List them (happy, sad, excited...) then expand your vocabulary by finding synonyms. Create word families (happy – delighted, glad, content...) and find an eye-catching way to display them. You could make a mobile, for example, by painting starburst shapes with feel-good colours and patterns, then write a happy word on every shape.

Dealing with anxiety

"Jelly's belly did a flip..."

What does 'having a wobble' mean? What makes you scared or anxious?

Draw the outline of a person on a large sheet of paper. Around it, write or draw things that worry you or make you anxious. Inside it, write or draw how these things make you feel.

What can you do to help yourself feel better? How can other people support you? Share thoughts and tactics, then list your ideas for coping with anxiety.

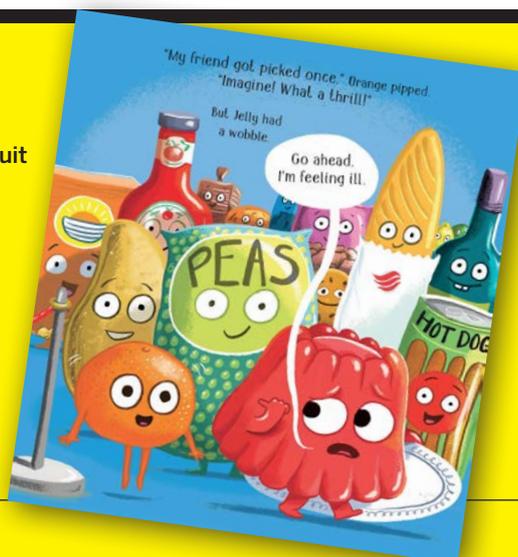
Take it further → → →

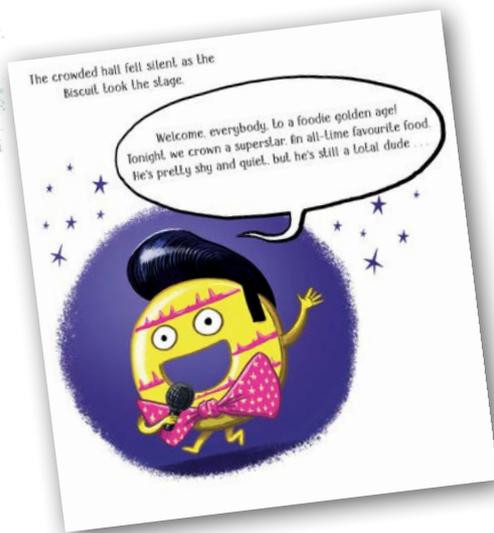
INVESTIGATING JELLY FLAVOURS

Can you identify differently-flavoured jellies by taste alone? Test lots of people, then analyse your data and present it in the form of a table, graph or diagram.

Jelly thinks he's lacking in nutrition and calls himself "silly and frivolous". What does he mean, and why does he think this? Is it OK to eat 'frivolous' food?

Use vegetarian jelly powder, fruit juice and fresh fruit to investigate different ways of making and serving a healthier pudding. Try different combinations, or make small changes to your recipe and note the results. Which recipe do you like best, and why? Keep careful records of your findings and share them as an oral presentation or written report.





Paint large-scale characters on rolls of paper and cut them out. Write your ideas for coping with anxiety on white card speech-bubbles, then display each figure with a speech-bubble in a group, as though they're offering advice.

Jelly has agreed to say a few words at the next award ceremony. Sit him in the hotseat and play the roles of helpful friends. What's he worried about, and how will you support him? What advice will you give?

The quiet type

"It's really not my thing. I'd rather put my jim-jams on and have a nice night in..."

What does this book tell us about Jelly's personality? Find evidence in the text. What information do the pictures add? How would you describe Jelly?

Do you love crowds and noise and being the centre of attention, or do you prefer quiet locations and activities? We don't have to like the same things, and it's important to know and value our true selves. But it can be good to step outside our comfort zone, like Jelly, and try something different.

Draw yourself in your comfort zone, surrounded by activities, places and objects you enjoy. Around the outside, add things

that feel more challenging. What does your picture say about you? Write about it.

Could you set yourself a challenge? Think of something that feels daunting but achievable, then go for it!

What's your favourite food? Look at the endpapers and talk about the characters featured in the Kitchen Hall of Fame. What foods do they represent? What are your favourite foods, and which would you vote Best in Show?

Design a survey to discover which are the Top Ten foods in your school. Draw portraits of these foods, then display them in your Kitchen Hall of Fame.

Ask for volunteers to roleplay your Top Ten foods, then host a ceremony and present awards, appointing champions to introduce each food and explain why it's been chosen.

Centre of attention

Look at the picture of Jelly receiving his award. Describe what you can see, then talk about the composition of the picture. For example, how close are we to the action, and how does this make us feel? Where is the light falling?

How does it illuminate Jelly and the other characters, and what effect does this create?

How do you think Jelly is feeling in this picture? Add sticky notes to show his thoughts.

Being in the limelight and having the spotlight on you mean that you've got everyone's attention. Some people like this, but others find it uncomfortable. Have you ever been the centre of attention? Was it exciting, or did it make you anxious? Talk about your experiences. Why do people react differently to the same event? Why is it

Loved this? Try these...

- ❖ *The Worrysaurus* by Rachel Bright and Chris Chatterton, Orchard Books
- ❖ *Ruby's Worry* by Tom Percival, Bloomsbury
- ❖ *Albert Talbot, Master of Disguise* by Ben Manley and Aurelie Guillerey, Two Hoots
- ❖ *The Day the Banana Went Bad* by Michelle Robinson and Tom Knight, Scholastic
- ❖ *The Runaway Pea* by Kjartan Poskitt and Alex Willmore, Simon and Schuster
- ❖ *Kitchen Disco* by Clare Foges and Al Murphy, Faber

important to understand that other people may not feel the same as you?

Create and take part in a 'limelight' challenge, such as public speaking. Support each other by talking about how you feel, cheering each other on and congratulating everyone for taking part.

Fun with words

"Wibble wobble, wibble wobble, jelly on a plate..."

This traditional rhyme adds lots of energy to Jelly's story. What other nonsense rhymes do you know? Can you find more? Learn your favourites by heart and give a spoken word performance.



Carey Fluker Hunt is a freelance writer, creative learning consultant and founder of *Cast of Thousands* (castofthousands.co.uk), a teachers' resource featuring a selection

of the best children's books and related cross-curricular activities.

SUPERMARKET CHARACTERS

Visit a supermarket to discover what foods are stocked and how they're packaged and stored. How is the shop organised? What foods are found in which locations? Can you draw a plan? Choose a topic to investigate more closely, then write about your investigation or present your findings orally.

Look closely at the pictures and talk about how Tom Knight brings his characters to life. Collect food packaged in interestingly-shaped tins

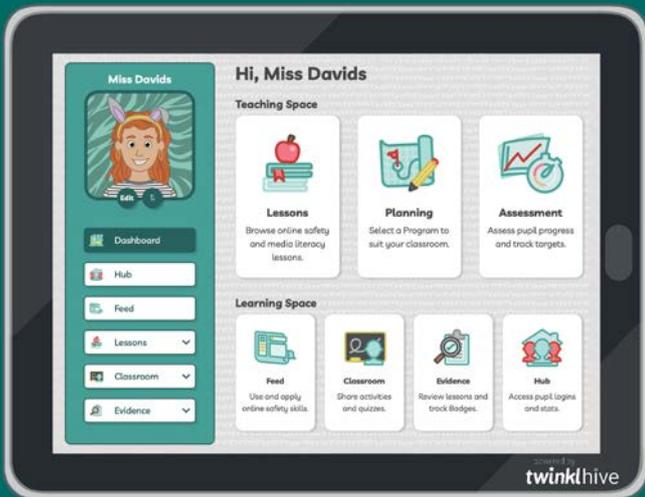
and boxes. Measure them and cut new paper labels. Decorate them, then stick them onto your packages to create a gang of 'foody characters'. Complete questionnaires to discover their personalities and backstories, then write and illustrate a series of character profiles.

What kind of stories do your characters enjoy? What stories would they like to take part in? Discuss possibilities, then write or tell the story that one of your characters has chosen.

"DID THEY REALLY CALL MY NAME?"

Ask children to help you organise an Award Ceremony inspired by this book. You'll need invitations, refreshments and a seating plan – and what about a beautifully illustrated souvenir programme? Invite everyone to get dressed up for the occasion, then roll out the red carpet, take photos and present every child with a gold paper crown. Frame your photos to create your own Hall of Fame, then write a news report about your event.

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Celebrate science

British Science Week, a 10-day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) is coming up this year on 11–20 March! The Week is run by the British Science Association (BSA), a charity whose work includes encouraging and supporting STEM

education for all children. The BSA provides resources to help schools celebrate, including activity packs tailored to different age groups. The primary pack is full of fun, hands-on activities themed around 'growth' which can be adapted for ages between five and 11. The pack also has loads of advice and information on planning your own British Science Week events, including asking a volunteer guest speaker to come and talk to the children about their work in real-world science. Find out more and download a free activity pack from bsa.sc/British-Science-Week-22-home



1



2

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3

Transform financial education

Money Heroes is an award-winning free programme from Young Money, supported by HSBC UK, seeking to transform financial education for primary children aged 3–11, in school and at home, with a range of resources, tools and guidance; including storybooks and games, hosted on a bespoke platform. Money Heroes is committed to giving children the tools they need to develop their financial capability as they grow older. That's why it is offering schools free in-house teacher training and 1:1 mentoring support to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to help children succeed. moneyheroes.org.uk

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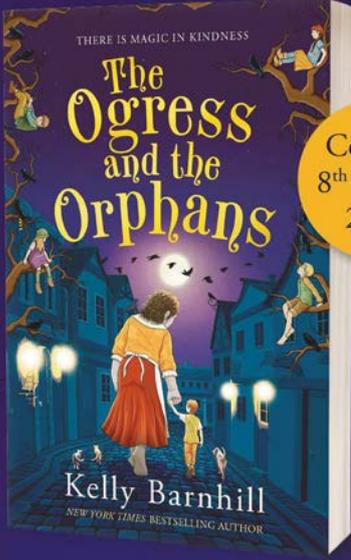


5

Gamified phonics

Mrs Wordsmith Phonics Blah Blah Blah Card Game from DK is hilariously fun and perfect for kids who are just starting to learn to read. Developed with teachers and phonics experts, and aligned to the Key Stage 1 curriculum, it helps kids master decoding words using phonics with three decks of increasing difficulty. Race to get rid of your cards by matching sounds and letters, and play wild cards to trip up your opponents! Three decks featuring over 300 cards, covering 40 sound-letter correspondences. Easy to play with two players or more! To find out more email sales@uk.dk.com

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Take it OUTSIDE

How cancelled trips and a ban on singing didn't stop this school getting creative with the arts post lockdown...

CIARA GIBSON

Working within the pandemic restrictions over the last two years hasn't been easy. Initially, a lot of the rules seemed stifling and antithetical to a functioning classroom. But what if we could use this unique set of circumstances to unleash our (and our pupils') creativity, and see the challenges as an opportunity for innovation?

At our school, the arts play an essential role, in literacy and beyond. Post-lockdown, though we couldn't take part in our usual activities like artist visits and singing, we decided to find other ways to express our creativity. Between ideas gathered from online and some plans of our own, we decided to use our arts provision to explore the strangeness of the world we were living in.

We already worked mainly outside, which is handy for social distancing and fresh air, and we're fortunate that our school garden and surrounding area provides a wealth of natural materials with which to play and create, minimising the need for sharing resources. However, even in the sparsest school settings, your pupils will find something to use (we have had many excellent images made using gravel!). Here are some of our arts ideas with a difference...

Mark making

Drawing can be a great start to any creative session, and for this activity pupils created their own mark-making toolkit using a mixture of items including twigs, seed pods and leaves, natural paint (made from ground charcoal and water) and a range of chalk pastels. Often, we can be focused on the end product of arts sessions (or handwriting), which has its place, but it's equally important to spend time just exploring and enjoying materials. This session offered pupils the opportunity to find their own materials and explore



the environment around them. Simple exploratory mark making is a great way of engaging pupils (and staff) who might have some anxiety around drawing as well.

Words and images

The arts offer the perfect way to explore emotion and understand ourselves and each other better. Health and wellbeing have been at the forefront of everyone's mind during the pandemic, so when planning how to reconnect with each other after lockdown we wanted to include a range of arts-based experiences through the term.

We began by exploring what different emotions felt like, visualising shapes, colours, textures and forms using objects such as leaves and twigs found outside. The temporary nature of the work (best avoid windy days!) encouraged the pupils to be more relaxed and experimental with their ideas. Creating these sculptures provided an excellent opportunity to discuss more difficult emotions and how to deal with them, too.

Sounds and movement

We were keen to consider how to bring sounds and movement safely into our learning post-lockdown, too. Dancing is always popular with our pupils, especially creative dance, and it's important that we can support and encourage their enthusiasm without feeling the need to perform or be dance specialists (although learning to salsa together via YouTube was one of our highlights!).

After talking through some ideas, we decided to create our own musical (without the singing) of *Red Riding Hood*. After drawing out a storymap, pupils chose characters, and found well-known songs to represent them. Working in small groups they developed short dances in the playground before putting it all together into a film to share with families. Dancing outside in Scotland is not

without its negatives, but pupils are now adept at moving in full waterproofs and wellies!

As well as allowing the pupils to connect with each other, these activities have offered us a great way to reengage families, who have really enjoyed seeing the children's creative work after a full-on period of home learning.

While we are hopeful that the situation will improve this year, and we can return to some of our usual activities, we have also been looking for engaging, online opportunities to keep us inspired. One thing we're planning into June 2022 is Access All Arts Week from Sky Arts, which includes a programme of free learning materials. Check it out at accessallarts.skyarts.uk **TP**



Ciara Gibson lives and works in Highland Perthshire and has been teaching for 16 years.

FORGOTTEN GIRLS

We need to be mindful of not letting reluctant girl readers slip through the net

DR CHRISTINA CLARK AND FIONA EVANS

When it comes to reading, it's easy to assume all girls love to pick up a book and get lost in a story. And many do. But reluctant girl readers do exist (quite a few, actually), and in terms of research and policy, they are often overlooked. This group is – surprisingly to many – sizeable, and this makes its oversight even more interesting.

In December 2021 the National Literacy Trust published a new report, 'Forgotten Girls: The Reluctant Girl Reader', which showed that over two in five of the 21,000 girls who took part in our annual literacy survey don't enjoy reading. This roughly translates to two million girls in 2020/2021. Furthermore, one in 10 girls also said that they rarely or never read in their free time.

So, what can you do to help engage these millions of reluctant girl readers? First of all, talk to them! It sounds simple, but so often we miss out this step and plough in with well-meaning recommendations or book lists to try and encourage them. We cannot match a book to a child without knowing in considerable detail what that child is into and therefore what might appeal. And often they surprise us! They reveal an undisclosed hobby for scuba-diving or that they are particularly interested in guinea pigs... who knew? It is a terrible, stereotypical mistake to assume that girls prefer fiction to non-fiction or fairies to sharks, but equally unhelpful to ban them from fairy books or stories

about dance and make-up, if that is what they like.

A second – and more powerful – tack is to leave the recommendation to someone else whose opinion they might value more than yours. Getting children to recommend titles to each other through a book-sharing and discussion moment each week can lead to greater engagement, especially when you have a group who

share interests. This seems to work best when done in a fun, social context rather than

through written reviews. This is also an opportunity to make reading seem cool by identifying the influencers in your class and supporting their book choice and recommendations. Often having several copies of a book that has been recommended by a classmate who is held in high esteem can encourage others to read it together, and to enjoy the sense of shared experience and belonging that can create.

materials can be transformative for some reluctant girl readers. At the same time, the variety of titles available for readers of all abilities, backgrounds and interests in the UK is growing all the time, so it may as much be a case of building better bridges between these girls and books that will resonate with them. If you're lucky enough to have a school or public librarian you can consult, or a local bookshop, you can't beat asking the experts for advice on titles for all tastes.

However, our report shows that the discussion around reluctant girl readers is complex. Girls read, or don't read, for a multitude of reasons, so one solution will not fit all. Future initiatives should aim to promote reading in a way that reflects this complexity, understanding that different motivations will work for different girls. We and our partners are calling on policymakers, researchers and everyone involved in the education of girls to consider and support all reluctant and struggling readers, and remember that this can be a problem regardless of gender. **TP**

Dr Christina Clark is executive director of research, and Fiona Evans is executive director of schools programmes, both at the National Literacy Trust.

“Make reading seem cool by identifying the influencers in your class”

Thirdly, let reluctant readers choose for themselves. We all decide what we want to read based on a complex interplay of interest, energy level, time, place and the perceived reward we will get.

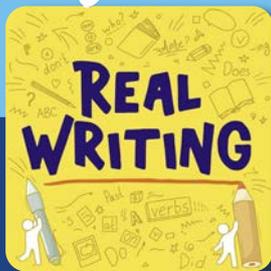
Children need many more opportunities to choose on their own than we probably give them. This is where the school library and the public library come in. The power of browsing cannot be underestimated, but it does take time and this needs to be built into the timetable and into reading sessions in class or in the library.

Teachers and young people also tell us that improving access to diverse reading





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- ✓ Inspire children to produce exceptional work with outstanding WAGOLLS and effective teaching sequences



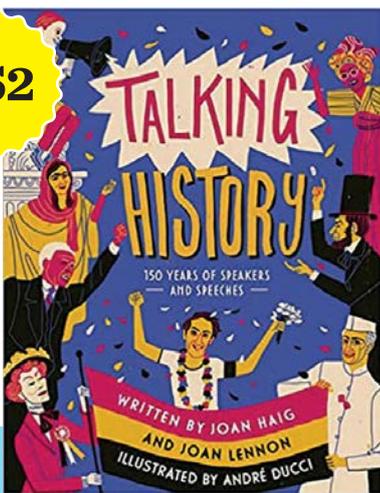
Find out more:

www.plazoom.com/offers/real-progress

Book CLUB

We review five new titles that your class will love

KS2

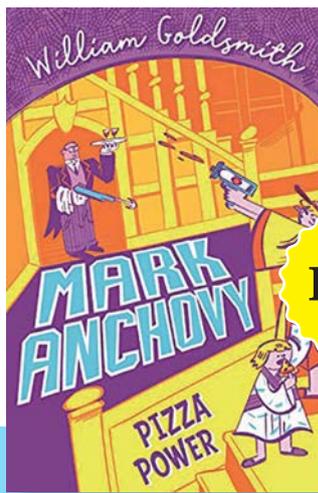


Talking History

by Joan Haig and Joan Lennon,
ill. André Ducci

(£15.99 HB, Templar Books)

We all know that words can change the world, but sometimes we need to borrow someone else's to really get the message across. This colourfully illustrated tome explores key speeches through history, from The Gettysburg Address to Greta Thunberg's rousing climate protests. Each of the 16 speakers is introduced with a famous quotation, followed by a dive into their historical context. Haig and Lennon explore the events leading up to each speech and the resulting impact. Spreads are broken up into digestible chunks of text, providing key information in a readable format, and punctuated by André Ducci's comic-strip-like illustrations. The book also contains an informative glossary to help extend vocabulary and introduce concepts such as braille. An inspiring volume to energise your history, literacy, or citizenship lessons.



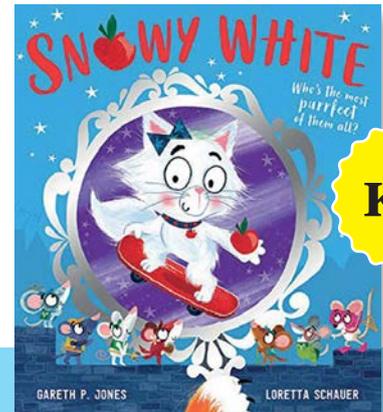
KS2

Mark Anchovy: Pizza Power

by William Goldsmith

(£6.99, Piccadilly Press)

Detectives? Check. Gameshows? Check. Killer fridges... Check. Pizza-delivery-boy-turned-detective Colin Kingsley (aka Mark Anchovy) is back! And this time he and his molten-tomato-purée gun are on the case of a missing former gameshow host, Lord Bobo, who is being persued by an evil butler, Witherknife. The mystery takes Anchovy to Japan – an exciting challenge – though perhaps not as challenging as having to train his new apprentice... his sister Alicia! In this new adventure, Anchovy falls foul of familiar rivals such as his nemesis, Mr Hogstein, and meets a few new faces along the way. From lucky fishcakes to Alicia trying to come up with her very own code name, the third instalment in the popular Mark Anchovy series is just as funny and food-filled as you would expect.



KS1

Snowy White

by Gareth P. Jones,
ill. Loretta Schauer

(£7.99, Farshore)

What would happen if Snow White met Top Cat? Throw in a moral about the importance of inner beauty (and recycling) and you've got the eponymous Snowy White. A humorous twist on the classic Grimm's fairy tale – but much more palatable – this bright and cheerful picturebook will delight KS1 classes. Kingsley thinks he's all that in the neighbourhood, but he's messy, vain, and a little bit rude. He and his gang are certainly not popular with the hardworking mice that keep the place clean. When Snowy White turns up, Kingsley's faithful 'crystal ball' (spoiler: it's not one) changes its tune and decides the new, clean, kind cat is the fairest one of all. Now Kingsley has a decision to make... get rid of Snowy White, or change his ways? With funny rhymes, expressive illustrations, and a loveable villain, *Snowy White* is sure to be a story time winner.

→→→ **RECOMMENDED**

RESOURCES



GET SPELLING SORTED!

With Plazoom's Spelling Workouts resource collection, you get bright, engaging worksheets covering every spelling pattern, CEW and SSW

from Y1 to Y6 – giving children the chance to embed their learning and put it into action in a fun, creative context. Take a look for yourself, at tinyurl.com/SpellingWorkouts



Meet the author

SABINE ADEYINKA ON BOARDING SCHOOL, CROCODILES, AND LEARNING SLANG



What (or who) inspired the character of Jummy?

I had a friend in primary school who could not afford

to go to secondary school. She was smart and bright but had to sell oranges for a living after primary school. I wished I could have changed the situation for her but I couldn't, and it really bothered me. I went to boarding school in Nigeria myself and loved all the food, camaraderie and activities we got up to, like midnight feasts and running from snakes and scorpions!

How would you like to see teachers using the book in the classroom?

The book lends itself well to the teaching of geography; for example, the rivers of Africa that are used for the names of the girls' dorms – Nile, Niger, Senegal, Congo and Limpopo.

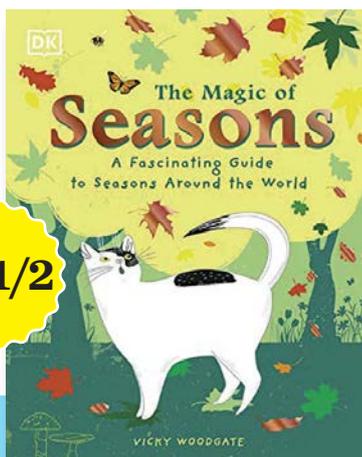
Also, the presence of a river in the story – Shine-shine River – and its many animals such as crocodiles, are a great starting point for learning about Nigeria. Other wildlife makes an appearance too, like scorpions, lizards, and owls, so there's lots for animal-lovers in your class to get stuck into.

It is also a good tool to teach about inequalities, education and standing up for others.

What would you like children to learn from the use of Nigerian dialect in the story?

I'd like pupils to get an insight into the diversity that comes from communicating with different people from different places. For example, Jummy uses pidgin English to communicate with Caro, but then learns plenty of new slang in school.

Jummy at the River School by Sabine Adeyinka is out now in paperback (£7.99, Chicken House)

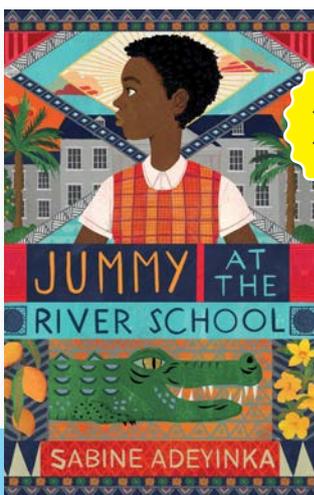


KS1/2

The Magic of Seasons by Vicky Woodgate

(£9.99 HB, DK)

Sick of the cold and grey weather? Want to remember the joys of spring, the adventures of summer and winter's cosy evenings? Look no further. Packed with info and beautiful full-page illustrations by the author, *The Magic of Seasons* is a love letter to everything our glorious world has to offer. Take the paw of trusted feline guide Mimi Cat, and find out awesome facts about nature, wildlife, weather and more. You may be surprised at all you learn... Did you know that: bees have five eyes, sheep can recognise over 50 faces of other sheep, and the biggest snowball fight ever had 7,861 players!? Flick to the back pages to find a fun, mag-style personality quiz, and a range of activity ideas you can share with your class, from making a seed bomb to trying out apple prints.



KS2

Jummy at the River School

by Sabine Adeyinka
(£6.99, Chicken House)

Jummy is delighted when she is accepted to one of the finest boarding schools in Nigeria – the prestigious River School by the Shine-Shine River. However, her best friend Caro isn't so lucky, and has to stay behind to help her family. School is everything Jummy has ever dreamed of; she makes new friends, and takes part in glorious escapades like midnight feasts and sports prizes. However, when Caro turns up at the River School to work instead of learn, their class differences are suddenly all too apparent, and Jummy has to bring all her pals together to help out. A tale of the true power of friendship, and a wonderful insight into 1990s Nigerian school culture, dialect and delicious food, Sabine Adeyinka's debut novel is a brilliant introduction to difficult topics like inequality and poverty, all wrapped up in a delightful pre-teen caper.



LOGITECH'S LATEST LAUNCH THE LOGITECH PEN

Designed for young children and teenagers

With optimum comfort, shape and size, the Logitech Pen is thicker to fit neatly in smaller hands of students, has a rugged grip for easy use, and is 'roll-proof' so it is less likely to be lost.

Logitech for Education ignites the full potential of students, and inspires a love of digital learning through solutions designed with and for students and teachers. Committed to developing simple, affordable tools, Logitech for Education aims to embrace learning for all students, spark focus and stamina, empower teachers, extend schools' current technology investments, and infuse magic in learning.

In line with the rising demand for touch screen Chromebooks, Logitech for Education's latest launch of Logitech Pen further shows this commitment. Logitech Pen is the first USI-compatible stylus from Logitech, and the first digital stylus designed for young children and teenagers. It unlocks the full potential of Chromebooks in the classroom - helping students aged five years and above express, engage and connect.

Easy to deploy and use, the digital stylus is 'Works with Chromebook' Certified - meeting Google's compatibility standards and works seamlessly with all Chromebooks that support USI. It supports 4,096 levels of pressure sensitivity for exceptional clarity with line thickness and precision, and works with hundreds of Chromebook apps - helping students learn, create, sketch and design.

The Logitech Pen is also tough and durable - built to withstand the day-to-day needs of students in any learning environment. Its aluminum body is bend and drop resistant up to four feet (1.2m) - passing military standards - and is liquid-resistant. It is also designed and tested to withstand disinfecting after each use - supporting safe, and long-term shared use.

Learn more at logitech.com/en-gb/education/pen-features



Dear DIARY

Do your pupils fully understand the features required for writing an effective first-person recount, asks Sue Drury...

SUE DRURY

What image does 'diary writing' conjure up for you?

Sensitive Victorians secretly committing their most private thoughts to the ribbon-bound pages of a dusty old notebook? Explorers noting down their experiences for the sake of posterity?

It's true that diaries have provided us with some of our most valued historical sources – from Samuel Pepys to Anne Frank. But that doesn't mean they are an archaic form of writing; after all, much of today's social media usage is simply the current incarnation of recording your own thoughts and experiences.

Diary writing is a genre that should be taken seriously. Here some ideas for helping you ensure that your class produce something more interesting than a description of their lunch...

Consider the purpose

A diary entry is essentially a form of recount, giving an account of events that have happened. The difference is that it provides scope for adding a personal perspective, emotions, and possibly an explanation or two where required.

As a result, it can create a very powerful and emotionally charged piece of writing, which is why it often requires a certain maturity of thought and dexterity with language.

Find great models

As with any other form of writing, each child needs

to be exposed to a wealth of good model texts in order to help them learn what will be expected of them. Diary entry examples, both factual and fictional, are fairly easy to source. Why not see if you can find some that relate to topics you are covering in other areas of the curriculum?

Remember tenses

Obviously, your pupils' age and ability will influence what you can expect from them but, at KS2, features of a diary entry should cover fairly specific territory.

First, there will be the consistent and appropriate use of the past tense, perhaps with some present tense forms if the context dictates it. However, this will also be a good opportunity for them to play with progressive forms of both tenses and possibly perfect forms.

Share the structure

After a brief introduction, the text should be organised in chronological order, as this is the most sensible way to show how the events unfolded.

This could also be a good exercise in paragraphing, whereby every shift in time, place or

subject is denoted by a change in paragraph. Topic sentences will be invaluable in alerting the reader to the nature of that change.

Finally, there should be a closing comment to round off the piece satisfactorily; even an expressed desire to repeat the experience at some time in the future will do.

Build skills

Being a reflective genre, diary entries are ideal for encouraging pupils to think carefully about their own writing skills. They could focus on their use of conjunctions, adverbials and prepositions to express time, place and cause in a way that helps their writing flow, for instance.

Alternatively, they could challenge themselves to use noun phrases and expanded noun phrases to add greater clarity. Of course, you might not want to tackle every objective at once, but there is clearly scope to address issues with which your class might need extra practice.

Create links

Remember, there is nothing to say that a pupil's recount needs to be about their own experiences. Just as they can learn a great deal by reading the diaries of significant people from history, they can also embed knowledge of other subjects by writing imagined journals of key figures relevant to that topic. **TP**

3 RESOURCES TO SUPPORT DIARY WRITING



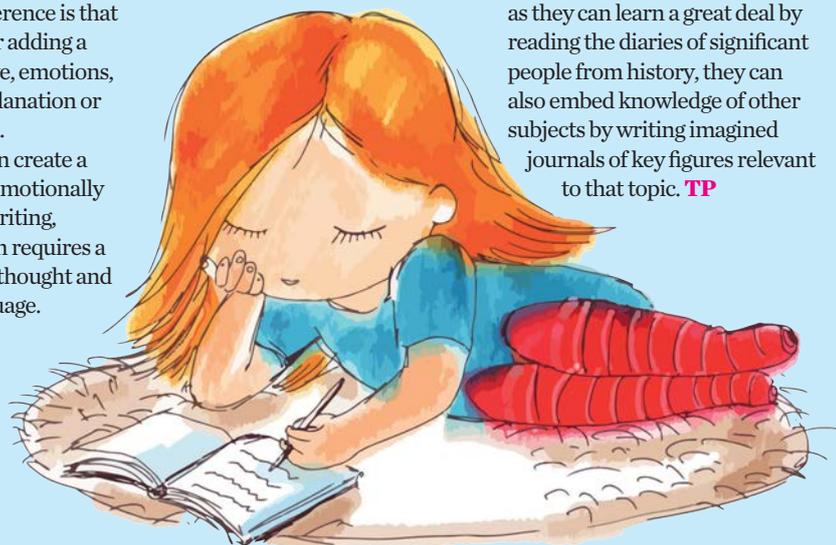
bit.ly/Plazoomemotions
Encourage nuanced language around emotions with these ordering adjectives worksheets



bit.ly/PlazoomTAFdiary
This KS2 diary writing pack includes a model text, planning sheets, features checklist and more



bit.ly/PlazoomAnning
Use a fictional diary entry by Mary Anning to inspire writing



Sue Drury is literacy lead at Plazoom, the expert literacy resources website. Find more advice at plazoom.com/blog

plazoom.com/blog



Sue says...

Got a classroom question? Our resident literacy expert is here to help...



Q How can we give children confidence to try out new vocabulary without the concern of spelling it all correctly?

Matthew Lane, primary teacher, Norfolk

A Many children love to discover and use new words in their writing, but some are more hesitant, often due to a fear of not knowing how to spell the word or use it accurately. There are a few ways you can get round this to encourage those reluctant young writers:

- Celebrate when pupils take risks with their writing and test new ideas. Developing a positive ethos around experimentation will encourage those who may need a little more reassurance that it's OK to try new things, and that your classroom is a safe space to do so.
- Build in regular, short opportunities where children can write for pleasure, knowing that the work will not be marked. This might help those who are less confident to be more adventurous (Plazoom's Write Now! collection of creative writing prompts is a fantastic source of inspiration (bit.ly/PlazoomPrompts).
- Model underlining words you want to check the spelling of during shared and modelled writing. This shows your pupils it's OK to have a go and check later, rather than slowing down your 'writing flow.'
- Introduce new vocabulary in the classroom each week. Plazoom has a brilliant whole-school resource collection called Word Whoosh! (bit.ly/PlazoomWhoosh) to help with this. Encourage pupils to use new vocabulary when both speaking and writing, celebrating every time it is used correctly; and share new words that you learn, too!

Sue is literacy lead at plazoom.com, with over 20 years' teaching and mentoring experience.

The plazoom Room

Ideas, techniques and resources for all your literacy needs

Make a connection

Earth Day takes place on April 22nd every year – so why not download this FREE resource pack, created in association with Animal Planet magazine, and plan a series of lessons for LKS2 that will encourage children to think about the impact of human behaviour on the planet, with plenty of opportunities for cross-curricular writing?

The pack is based on *A Whale's Journey* – an original story by children's author Jo Franklin. After an initial 'hook' activity, there are suggestions for eight fully resourced activities, culminating in an extended writing task in which pupils are encouraged to come up with their own tales, inspired by the model text.

FREE RESOURCE
Download it at bit.ly/PlazoomWhale



Did you know...?

- The world's first Earth Day was in 1970, in America, and 20 million people took part.
- The Earth Day 2022 theme is: Invest in Our Planet. What Will You Do?
- About one billion people recognise Earth Day each year!

3 more Earth Day ideas

1 'The Pros and Cons of Plastic' – discursive writing teaching sequence with model text for Year 6

bit.ly/PlazoomPlastic

2 'Sir David Attenborough' – comprehension and writing pack with model text for KS2

bit.ly/PlazoomDA

3 'Letters from the Lorax' – KS1 activities pack with an environmental theme

bit.ly/PlazoomLorax





Print your own...

...Bookmarks! With a jazzy design on one side, and a list of useful spelling rules and vocabulary on the other, these will do more than help pupils keep their place while reading. Follow the link to download your FREE designed templates, and print off as many as you like for your class.

Find yours at bit.ly/KS2bookmarks



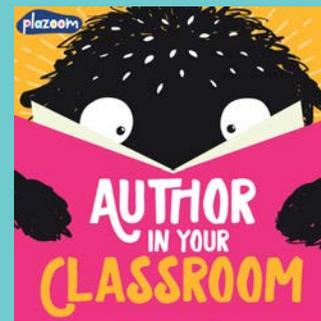
Keen to share topical issues with your pupils, but don't know where to start? We've got you. From Boris Johnson's apology speech to celebrating Emma Raducanu, there are resource packs to suit every taste. In this edition, we look at the story of Douglas Wolk, who vowed to read every single Marvel comic in existence, and has written about them for a book called *All of the Marvels*. Challenge your class to come up with their own superhero, or debate the recent slew of movies that insist on glorifying beings we could never emulate. Download everything you need, for free, at bit.ly/WhatAMarvel

If you'd like to extend your comic experience, why not check out our free lesson plan from Richard Ruddick, about using graphic novels to help develop your KS1 pupils' writing skills. Find it at bit.ly/KS1comic



Liz Pichon studied graphic design and has worked as an art director in the music industry.

Her freelance design work has appeared on a range of products and she has written and illustrated a number of picture books, including *My Big Brother Boris*.



Create a supervillain with Liz Pichon! Bring Liz directly into your classroom – via a free podcast and downloadable resources – to help your class learn about fantastic baddies we love to despise. In this episode, Liz discusses her new book *Shoe Wars*; a hilarious story that was inspired by a real falling out between two brothers who made shoes. Liz discusses where her ideas for stories come from and why it is so much fun creating villains and the story world that they live in.

Listen to this episode and download your free teaching resources at bit.ly/SupervillainsLP

Hack your class!



No small whiteboard? No problem

Simply use a whiteboard pen and write straight on the table (be sure to check on a small area first). Great for quick extension questions in maths or for collecting vocab ideas.



On the topic of losing things ...

Place Velcro on the back of any remote controls for projectors, sound and anything else you use, then attach to the wall.

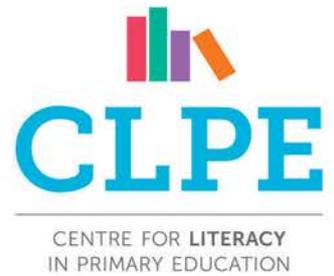


Lost glue lids

Keep a stash of glue lids in your drawer. You can guarantee that at least one lid will be lost during the week – and it's always from one of the new ones you've just put out!



★★★★★
The CLPE School Membership has been awarded 5 stars in the English category of the Teach Primary Awards 2021



Build a book-based curriculum in your primary school with the CLPE's whole School Membership

The CLPE School Membership includes access to:

- Over 230 Power of Reading teaching sequences based on tried and tested children's books
- Home learning teaching resources
- CLPE's curriculum maps to show how to plan a text based curriculum
- Priority access to book CLPE conferences and events
- Access to all free membership resources and content
- One free place on one of our webinars, allowing a member of your school to enhance their subject knowledge with CLPE experts*
- Exclusive discount on books through Peters
- Termly Membership Magazine

The CLPE School Membership supports teachers under immense pressure and offers ideas and structure for their literacy curriculum, to raise literacy standards and develop a love of reading and writing.

Join the thousands of schools enhancing their curriculum with the CLPE School Membership.
www.clpe.org.uk/membership

The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) is a UK based children's literacy charity working with primary schools. The CLPE's mission is to raise the literacy achievement of children by putting quality children's literature at the heart of all learning.

CLPE also provide training, consultancy and INSET to support its book-based learning approach. Discover more on their website: www.clpe.org.uk



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[CLPE](https://www.facebook.com/CLPE)

★★★★★
"The judges were extremely impressed by the innovative, flexible and holistic nature of this resource. We all agreed that it would have a significant impact on learning and supports teachers' understanding and practice. It is also extremely cost-effective." UKLA

*Only available on selected webinars. See website for more details.

Spice up your READING JOURNALS

From scripting film trailers to designing covers, pupils are exploring the wonders of books in the classroom – every day

STEPH ELLIOTT

As a big reader and book blogger myself, I am a massive fan of encouraging my children to think about and reflect on what they're reading. One of the things I inherited when I moved into Year 6 was reading journals, and I have embraced them, but I've also changed them slightly based on my own vision.

I wanted to make the journals an integral part of our everyday lives in the class and become something that we shared and enjoyed together. It's so important that stories are part of school life and I really think reading journals are helping to encourage the joy of books in my classroom.

How does it work?

Each child has a reading journal – a jotter-sized book – and every half term, I stick in a new set of activities. I expect a certain number of activities to be completed, but this changes half term by half term, and child by child. You know your pupils; you know (and they should know)

what is expected of them. For example, my desired number of activities completed this half term is five – I know there are some children who will meet this (as I expect them to) and I know there will be some children who, for a range of reasons, will complete only three or four. I know my children well and I have high expectations of them all, so five activities in a seven-week half term is more than doable.

Every afternoon after lunch, we have a 15-minute reading slot. Without fail, every day, we all read (including me!). In those 15 minutes, pupils may choose to read, or, if they've finished a book, they can use that time to complete a reading journal task. Once they've completed the activity, they pop it in the box for me or my TA to mark.

Tasks can vary massively, but all journal activities are designed to make children think a little deeper about what they're reading. It could be anything from 'Write a letter to the author about your thoughts' to 'Design a new front cover', or even 'Write the voice-over for a film trailer based on the book'.

Each child gets the same sheet of activities at the start of a half term and we have the same high expectations for each child. What they produce based on that task can vary a lot, too! As you can imagine, some activities take longer than others and some are more involved, but the children can complete the activities in any order they wish. I ask pupils

not to do the same activity more than once, though, so I can see a range of responses to their tasks.

Making it fun

One thing that's important to me is that children are allowed to read books for the enjoyment of reading. With that in mind, they are not expected to do a task on every book they finish. However, if my children do choose to do an activity around every book, that's fine with me.

I think these reading journal tasks have added an abundance of chances for pupils to think and talk about the books they're reading. It's made them more conscious of the authors, the genres and the types of titles they read. They complete journals on all kinds of books, including graphic novels, novels, non-fiction and poetry. There's no limit to the journals, and you can get out of them whatever you and your class are willing to put into them.

I love reading them, too, because it really helps me to see what the children have taken from the books: they open conversations about stories; they help me recommend books to pupils; and they allow my children and I an opportunity to make reading an integral part of our classroom life.

It really is that simple. Do they need some training? Yes. Do they need reminders about expectations? Yes. But make it a habit and they will embrace it. I've gone from having a few reluctant readers (not a phrase I like) to having a class of 31 children who read every single day. I hold this 15 minutes of daily reading very dear – and it's something I think every classroom should have. I would be MUCH aggrieved if someone tried to take it away from me! **TP**



Steph Elliott is a Y6 class teacher in a one form entry school in Newcastle. She has a passion for maths and all things books.

 @eenalol

 alittlebutalot.com

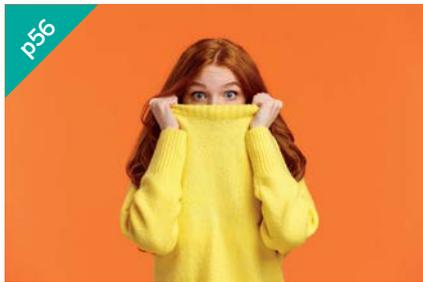
MUSIC SPECIAL

INSIDE THIS SECTION



p53

Dr Eddie Dobson on how to introduce graphic notation to your class



p56

What is music anxiety and how can you overcome it? Ben Connor explains



p59

John Finney dissects the humble clap and its role in the classroom...



Don't miss our health & wellbeing special, on sale 8th April 2022

How to MASTER MUSIC

Ideas to bring a whole new level of enjoyment and engagement to your classroom, from **Vaughan Fleischfresser...**

A quick search on the benefits of music will present you with incontrovertible evidence that it should be at the forefront of any child's education. However, taking those first steps to including it in your day-to-day teaching can be a daunting one, especially if you think that music 'isn't your thing'. Well, today, I'm here to tell you that it can be your thing. All it takes is a love of music and a willingness to have a go.

When I made the unexpected move from secondary music teaching to primary, I had to start anew, and it was these four guiding principles that got me started: get them moving; get them singing; get them creating; get them sharing. So, here are some practical tips to help you use these principles to fill your classroom with musical delight...

1 Get them moving

Children love to dance and express themselves physically. You can tie this into your classroom learning through various different activities. For example, choose a song that you love, or one that your pupils love, or both. Music that has a strong and obvious beat would be best. Start by letting the pupils move freely to the sounds. Once they've had some freedom to express themselves, it's time to focus more explicitly on the beat, which is the continuous pulse felt throughout a piece of music. First, tap specific parts of your body for eight beats, or pulses, at a

time – thighs, tummy, head, clap, or stamp. Then, as the children grow in confidence, reduce the number of beats on each part of the body to four, then two. Once the children grow in confidence, you can create different patterns to add levels of interest and challenge. Finally, let the children take the lead and run the activity. Have them take turns at coming to the front and leading as above. They love this!

2 Get them singing

Singing is such a wonderful way of building confidence and a sense of togetherness. The benefits for mental health and wellbeing are numerous, too. Children, especially those in the early years, love to sing, but often this is lost

simply through a lack of engagement. Therefore, I implore you to do all you can to normalise singing in your classroom and in your school. You don't need to be an expert; you just need to be willing to have a go. My wife would be the first to tell you that I'm not the

best singer in the world, but I love it and I instil in my pupils a mantra of singing being for enjoyment. There are countless subscription-based websites that provide ready-made, topic and unit-based songs for you, so all you need to do is create a supportive and encouraging environment and sing with your children every day. Googling 'singing resources for primary schools' is a great first step.

YouTube is another useful resource for singing with your pupils. I have found in schools where singing isn't a part of the culture, starting with 'karaoke time' is a safe jump-off point. Pupils love it as it's fun and pressure-free, and you can

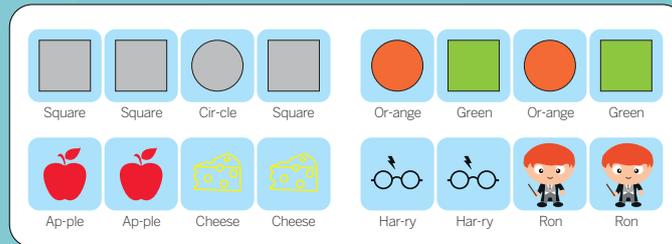


Fig.1 easily find tracks on YouTube. Have a go, make it enjoyable, and make it normal.

3 Get them creating

When given the opportunity, children create the most wonderful music, and this can easily be weaved throughout your teaching. A great starting point is patterns, which can be turned into rhythms, and then into melodies. Choose one- or two-syllable words linked to the topic of the day.

For example, you might use shapes, colours, food, or character names from books (see Fig.1). The one-syllable word becomes a long sound, while the two-syllable word becomes

two shorter sounds. Get your children to put them in patterns of four beats and clap the syllables while saying the words in time.

Pupils can also play along with percussion instruments if you have any lying around. If you don't have instruments, be creative with classroom objects, like pencils. Finally, you can combine patterns together to create longer ones, and even look at texture and structure by getting different groups to perform their patterns at different times.

4 Get them sharing

Music is very personal, and you can learn so much about someone by sharing and talking about it together. To give you an example, I once worked in a rural primary school where I started 'Music Lunch' on a Friday. Pupils would bring their food along, and we would listen to music chosen by them, and talk about why they liked it and why others may or may not like what they'd chosen.

This time became so popular I had to create a weekly schedule of year levels and sharers so that it could remain manageable.

It was my favourite time of the week. If you don't have the time or capacity for a lunchtime group,

you can adapt this for a classroom-specific activity – 'imaginative listening'.

To start, choose a piece of instrumental music – BBC Ten Pieces is a great resource – and get your children to listen to the track and create a story in their head inspired by what they've heard. 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' by Edvard Greig is a good starting point, as this piece of music goes from quiet to loud, slow to fast, and from peaceful to dramatic, all in the space of a couple of minutes. Children come up with the most wonderful stories having listened to it.

As they say, the journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step, and so it is with teaching music. Hopefully, I've given you one or two ideas that you'd be willing to try with your pupils. From experience, they'll thank you in abundance for doing so. Music needn't take time away from your day. On the contrary, it can enhance your time and give you more meaningful ways to engage, energise, and enthuse your pupils. Looking for a way to start the day? Why not try 'get them moving' or 'get them singing'. Finding it hard to settle your class after a break? Try some 'imaginative listening' from 'get them sharing'. Looking for some different ways to approach or consolidate content in class? Have a go at one of the activities suggested in 'get them creating'.

And remember, music is for everyone. Aim to include music in your class over the coming days, weeks, or months, and I can assure you that it will build your confidence and that of your pupils, as well as bringing new layers of joyous and beneficial learning to you all. Break a leg! **TP**



Vaughan Fleischfresser is currently a music teacher at Edinburgh Academy Junior School. He is also a former music education teaching fellow at the University of Edinburgh.

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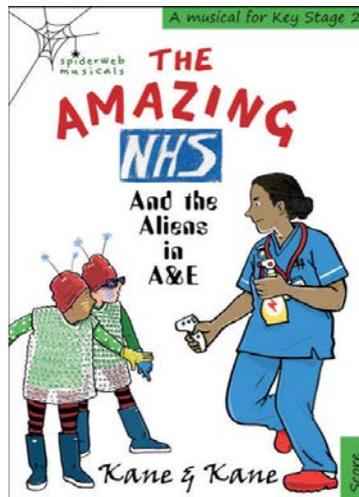
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Expert resources and activities to get you in the musical mood

1

Thank you NHS!

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2



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Hal Leonard's Essential Elements Music Class (EEMC) is the new online solution for primary music that everyone's talking about. Inspiring and simple to use, EEMC provides a bank of learning resources for over 500 of the best-known songs from pop, film, and musical theatre. Songs that children know and love are appropriately arranged and bursting with interactive tools. EEMC also offers ready-made classroom music lessons for ages six–11, digital whole-class instrumental methods, and a host of interactive learning tools such as a virtual music-book library, listening maps, and classroom playlists. With whole-school access for only £99/year, EEMC offers affordable access to hundreds of popular song resources to enhance singing strategies, and so much more! Discover more at eemusicclass.co.uk



3

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drumsforschools.com

4 REASONS TO TRY... Melva digital programme

A fun, creative digital intervention supporting KS2 children and their adults to talk openly about and better understand their mental health and wellbeing

1 THE PROGRAMME
Consisting of an online portal with an episodic film; activities; lesson plans; and a choose-your-own-adventure digital game with an interactive activity booklet, resources and user guide; the Melva digital programme is a meaningful and revolutionary way to invest in mental health education in your school.



2 THE RESEARCH
Melva was created in response to the 2017 Green Paper, 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision'; and the pandemic's impact on wellbeing. It focuses on early intervention, supporting children to develop resilience, positive emotional responses and a shared understanding of how to look after yourself and others.

3 THE IMPACT
Melva introduces new child-friendly language and a safe way to explore mental wellbeing. By entering Melva's world as an active participant, children experiment through the characters, discover their autonomy, develop empathy, increase their understanding of healthy relationships, learn practical mental health strategies and have fun, too.

4 THE DESIGN
The unique Melva programme is ready-made, easily implemented and curriculum-aligned. It has a flexible delivery model and a user guide full of guidance, developed with teachers and education professionals, reflecting their busy workload, while enabling an impactful whole-school approach to wellbeing.

Contact:
Find out more at melva.org.uk or email Rachel.Horton@mortalfools.org.uk



At a glance

- Public Health England announced in 2021 that 1/6 children have a diagnosable mental health condition.
- Melva is a new way to support children's mental wellbeing and has engaged thousands.
- The programme meaningfully scaffolds achieving the aims of the statutory RSHE curriculum.

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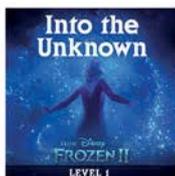
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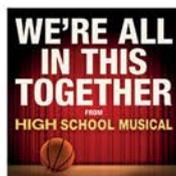
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Shaping sounds and **SOUNDING SHAPES**

- Splat! Bang! Whoosh! Help pupils link music and pictures to introduce graphic notation

DR EDDIE DOBSON

It's fun to imagine what a sound might look like – and now the National Curriculum is asking KS1 and KS2 children to find visuals to represent their sounds.

I was excited to see this as it offers a path towards music notation, opening up the possibility that we can represent sounds in ways that come so much more naturally to a child. I can't help think of my own pre-schooler's enjoyment of that satisfying 'splat splat' as her dripping paintbrush slobbers a splodge of redblueyellow paint across the table. I ask her to tell me what it sounds like and after a moment (squelching red between hands) she blows a raspberry and laughs. Perfect!

Just like this joyful interpretation of paint, musical notation attempts to harness

and replicate sound, but it's also imperfect, and that is beautifully liberating.

When it comes to documenting and reproducing sounds, only a recording can provide an accurate representation. The notation of sound is only ever an approximation, a transduction (transcription and reduction) that is never the same when reproduced in performance. Graphic notation helps us to celebrate that freedom.

Teaching this somewhat complex idea in the primary classroom might sound difficult, but there are many ways to engage children, and introduce them to the concept of sound as shapes and shapes as sound.

Sounding shapes

Looking beyond Western music, we see many cultures that have developed methods of notation. In the 1950s, a lot of divergent forms of visual sound representation were created to show, complement or inspire sound. One excellent example of this is Cardew's *Treatise* (from the mid 1960s) – a graphic score featuring 193 pages of shapes inviting free interpretation. You can view a performance by the KYMATIC ensemble, with a score, at tinyurl.com/tp-KYMATIC

You could develop a more active lesson inspired by this clip. Play it silently and ask the children to imagine what sound a flat line might make. You could offer some suggestions, then provide the class with



instruments and invite them to respond to other shapes, such as a small dot, and then a wavy line. How are they different? Play them a brief extract from Treaties and ask if it sounded how they thought it would. Encourage them to describe how the flat line sounded in this recording.

Finally, present them with these shapes from the National Curriculum and invite sound responses.

At this point you can introduce the Patatap interactive website (tinyurl.com/tp-Patatap), which creates sounds and shapes together when you press keys on a computer keyboard. It is a really fun interface and lovely stepping stone towards the children organising and performing shapes themselves.

Other animated examples to use include Ligeti – Artikulation (tinyurl.com/tp-Artikulation) and Cathy Berberian – Stripsody, which includes vocal words (tinyurl.com/tp-Stripsody). The two pieces are very different, so take a moment to talk about what is being used to make each sound (e.g. a computer or a voice) and what works well (e.g. ‘gloopy’ noises on the computer, and words and shouts from the voice). Also point out what the notations have in common: how low and high notes are presented, how we see changes in pitch, and how note lengths are shown in each example. Ask the children how the sounds made them feel and why. I would hope Berberian’s piece brings some laughter and spontaneous responses.

If you’re interested in some more specific activities, try these:

1 Soundlings (baby sounds)

Create and cut out a simple set of shapes (different size dots, stars, different types of lines, arrow heads, droplet shapes, etc).

Organise children into small groups and ask them to agree what sound each of these shapes makes, and hear them perform the sounds. You might check that similar shapes have sounds that are also similar, but not exactly the same.

Ask each group to arrange their shapes on the floor, in a line from one end of the room to the other – moving (jumping/hopping/wriggling) from one shape to another

“Notation is imperfect, and that’s beautifully liberating”

making its sound. If there are several groups you can make a big circle from the shapes, or rearrange as parallel lines. Children can take it in turns moving across the score one at a time, or several can do it at once. Experiment by asking them to move in time to a steady beat. You know best what is possible!

Next, ask pupils to make a composition out of these shapes. How can we make it more enjoyable, more surprising, more alarming, more like a trip to the seaside? Should we introduce new sound shapes, and what would they look/sound like?

You might also talk about contrast, asking the children to think about how that should be drawn (thicker lines, colour, spiky outline) for louder and quieter, higher and lower, busy and still, short and long.

It would be fun to conclude this activity with the children drawing and cutting out their own sound shapes. Ask them to allocate each shape a sound, and organise them into very short pieces to be performed.

You might find it interesting to end by looking at Composer Eliza Lauren’s Graphic Score Exchange (tinyurl.com/tp-Graphic-ScoreExchange). I would select examples that are really different in their use of material, such as Michael Karr’s and Ethan Cadwell’s.

2 Organisound (a soundling organ)

Here we invite children to create sounds before shapes.

Using only the body, ask pupils to create three sounds per group. These sounds could be vocal (shhhhhhhh, t, hummmmmm, pop, shout) or percussive (hand clap, foot stomp). Providing a steady tempo and simple time signature, ask each group to create and memorise a four-bar piece. You might find Andrew Smith’s guide sheet helpful (tinyurl.com/tp-Creat-ateGraphicScore).

Next, ask pupils to create shapes for these sounds – taking inspiration from the previous activity and the videos they’ve seen – and then to draw them out on large pieces of paper or card. They can use one of the graphic scores for ideas about

where to place their sounds on the page.

Now rotate the groups so that they are looking at a score created by other children. Ask them to look at the shapes and agree on sounds, and how they can follow the score (for example from one side to the other, in a circle, randomly reading shapes as they please). After they’ve had time to explore and practice, invite each group to perform their version of the score.

Finally, try organising the scores as a circle around the room, and allocate a group to each piece of paper. Stand in the middle and point at a group for them to start their performance. You could point at more than one group at once and keep going until all of the children have performed their piece. You could also invite pupils to take your role as conductor.

3 Compose and share

It would be lovely for the children to spend some time working out their own compositions, sounds and scores. As an extension activity, you could submit them to Eliza Lauren’s Graphic Score Exchange. I know that I would really love to see and hear the results, so don’t hesitate to send them to me too if you do the activity. **TP**



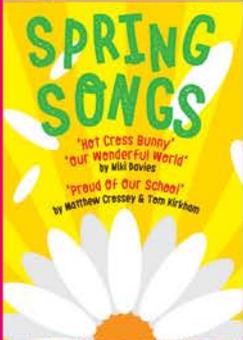
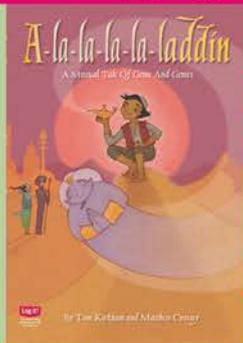
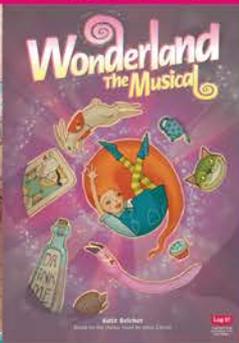
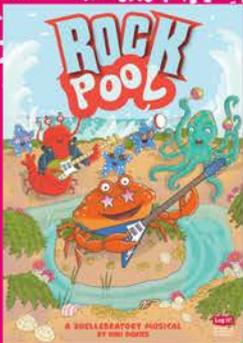
Dr Eddie Dobson is a sound designer and composer, and lecturer at the University of Huddersfield.



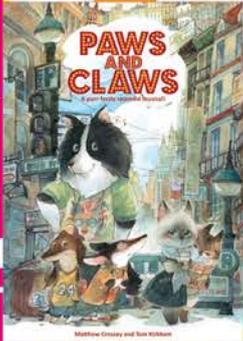
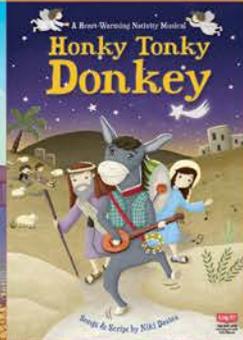
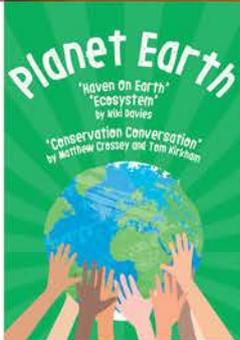
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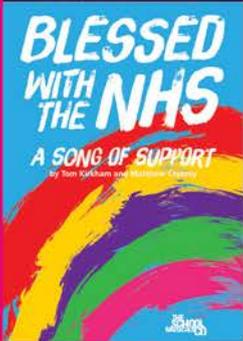
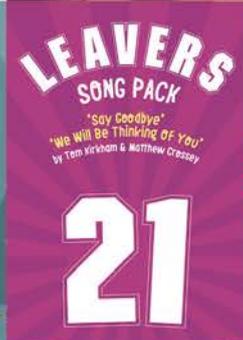
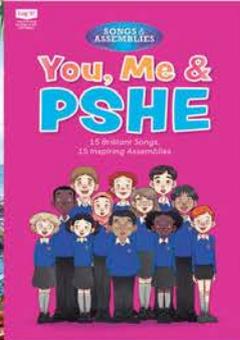
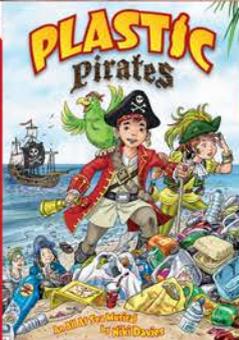
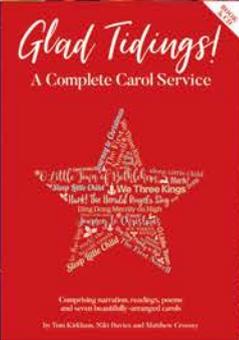
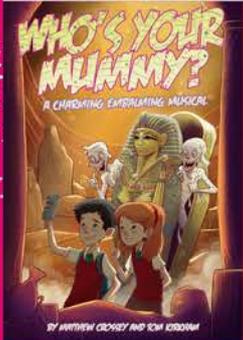
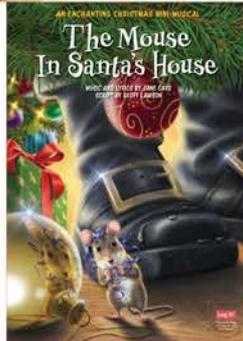
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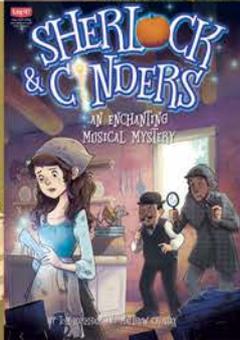
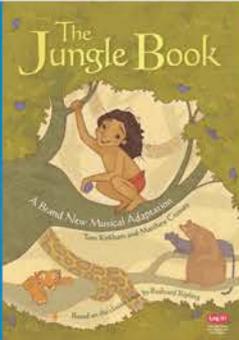
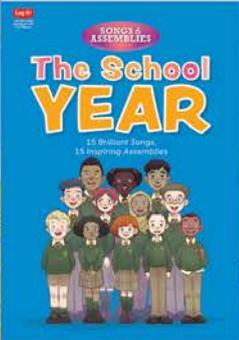
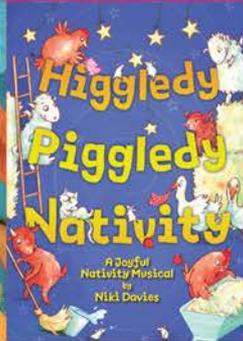
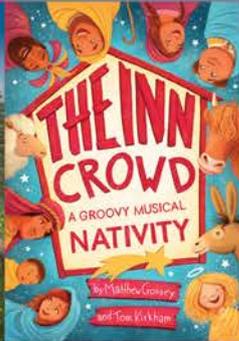
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A few of my FAVOURITE THINGS...

What is music anxiety, why is it so common,
and how do you overcome it?

BEN CONNOR

The first thing that drew me to primary teaching was being able to shift from one subject to the other. It's a joy. One minute you're teaching about the past participle, the next creating a papier mâché model. However, the expectation for you to be an authority in so many different areas, and feel confident teaching them all, can leave you feeling more like a Jack-of-all-trades.

The pressure of increased focus on the wider curriculum in recent Ofsted inspections has only made this worse. Primary teachers and leaders are expected to have thorough knowledge of 13 different subjects, and to treat each one as vital to a child's development. There are some subjects (and you know which ones I am talking about!) that have historically been seen as less important and consequently 'disposable'.

PSCHE, MFL and music are often the victims, and so frequently disappear from timetables or end up being given to the PPA cover teacher. A recent online poll I ran found that nearly half of primary teachers said that they would 'avoid teaching music where possible'.

So, why is this? What makes teaching music so nerve-wracking?

I have two theories:

The first is the fear of performing. Teaching is often more acting than anything. We stand in front of our class (the audience) and perform from a script (the Scheme of Work). We act the part, playing a role with Miss Honey-esque standards of jollity and calm, despite what is going on in our private lives.

It is just that though: a part. Like drama, music often requires you to put yourself in a different kind of spotlight. It is difficult to teach the subject without demonstrating rhythms (not too bad) or having to sing in front of your class and colleagues (awful!). Even as a trained singer and experienced performer myself, this can be daunting. While children often have no issue with singing confidently in front of their peers, a lot of adults feel out of their comfort zone beyond the odd karaoke number. And liquid courage isn't recommended when teaching!

This fear can be compounded by a lack of knowledge (my second theory). As with a lot of the foundation subjects, we don't spend a great deal of time teaching music. It's often relegated to a 30-minute slot once a week, if not passed to someone else.

As a previously-maligned subject, you might not have a strong background knowledge of music, and it's not often covered in depth in initial teacher training (ITT). Like all things, if you aren't practicing the skill regularly, it's easy to lose confidence. Unless you have musical training outside of your



role, it can feel difficult to understand and subsequently difficult to teach. When you lack confidence in your own skills and knowledge, teaching a class full of pupils isn't easy! As a practical subject, it's also much more difficult to access CPD and unlike more book-based subjects like geography or history, it's not simply a question of learning a few facts.

In the age of deep-dives, schools can't afford for subjects

like music to disappear off the timetable. But how do we get nervous, busy staff to teach them? Here are some music lesson quick-wins that you can use to help start you on your journey to becoming a maestro:

“Don't clap this one back”

An ever-popular game in every primary class I have ever worked in. I'm not sure where this game originated, how long it has been around, or if it simply just survived the meteor that killed the dinosaurs, but it is always a winner.

How it works: simply clap rhythms for your class to echo. Start simple with four long beats of equal length and see if they can copy. Start to throw in some shorter, quicker beats or a mixture of rhythms.

When you clap the rhythm that matches the phrase

“Don't clap this one back” (long, long, short-short, long), pupils must remain silent. Anyone who claps is out!

Hear it, clap it, write it

Building on the previous game, ask the children to come up with their own symbols for different durations. When you clap a rhythm, the children have to write the rhythm down using their own 'notation'. A longer note might be a stick man and a shorter note might be an exclamation mark. This is a simple way to introduce formal notation. Children might come up with some daft pictures for their notes, which keeps it fun.

Body percussion circle game

This is the body percussion version of “I went to the market and I bought...”. Stand in a circle with the class or split them into a few groups. Get one child to create a short rhythm using body percussion (stamp, click, clap, slap knees, etc) and then ask a second child to add a new one. Continue building the rhythm around the room with each child adding something new. This building rhythm goes around the room until someone gets it wrong and they are out. **TP**



Ben Connor is a primary deputy headteacher at a school in Bury, Greater Manchester. He has been teaching for 13 years in various schools and currently leads on curriculum and teaching & learning.

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3 ways to combat music anxiety



You AREN'T the star!

No one is

expecting you to go straight from teaching to Broadway, and Simon Cowell isn't going to pop out from behind your TA with a big red button. Children, especially younger children, can be very kind and are often impressed by even limited skills. Fake it till you make it and remember; teaching IS a performance so you are just extending your repertoire.



Do your homework

If you were struggling with an element of

maths or geography, you wouldn't just ignore that lesson and move on. There are always ways to improve your skills or knowledge. Why not find out who is the budding Gareth Malone in your school, cluster, or MAT, and ask them for advice? You could also search out local or national CPD opportunities, for example Music Mark (musicmark.org.uk).



Use the children

Own up – tell the children

you find this tricky, or embarrassing. Ask if anyone in the class is a musician or singer and use them as a model for the others. Most classes have their own Shirley Temple or Justin Bieber who will step forward into the bright lights and lead for you. Often pupils who are your 'low prior attainers' in core subjects have skills in other areas, and this could be their moment to shine.

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Clap your HANDS

From a basic call to attention to an exploratory medium, this humble action has many applications in the classroom, argues **John Finney...**

One of my favourite primary school stories is of a teacher back in the '50s – Sybil Marshall – clapping her hands to get the class' attention. It was a simple yet effective clap and as recounted to me, remains a vivid memory for those she taught.

Sybil's clap may have been little more than a perfunctory action, but in one school in Hertfordshire in the 21st century, it is rather more than that. It is music.

Here, and across many other schools, pupils echo their teacher clapping a rhythm. It's a useful tool, as clapping is likely to break through other noise, free hands, and create a readiness to listen. In the case of our school, this is a consistent practice throughout year groups. By starting in Reception, responding to a clap rhythm becomes a matter of habit and integral to pupils' musical development. It even has the potential to impact on the whole school day.

A first principle

This simple, age-old call-and-response practice is perhaps the most fundamental of all pedagogic principles in music education. In pedagogical terms, it is a form of direct instruction through which musical knowledge is transferred from teacher to pupil. Repetition provides children with a library of musical gestures stored in their long-term memory, which they can later draw upon and reimagine. This is what we call 'musical memory'.

Musical marking

A musical call to attention marks a time of transition – of which there are many throughout the school day. Some of these routines are useful to bring order and discipline to the classroom, such as tidying, and can be well complemented with music and rhythm. For example, when tidying up, your pupils could sing 'This is the way we tidy up' to the tune of 'Here we go round the mulberry bush'. Similarly, 'This is the way we change for PE' works well to the tune of 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?', as does 'What shall we do when we've finished work? Put it in the tray and tidy my pencils'.

Exploring possibilities

The material generated through calls to attention are also useful in focused music lessons. For instance, one of the most commonly used rhythms for call and response is the familiar 'pie, piz-za, piz-za, pie' pattern – in technical terms: crotchet, quaver, quaver, quaver, crotchet.

But whatever rhythm you decide to use, there will be an infinite number of possible variations and extensions you can explore. There is scope to vary speed, dynamics, and even to select an idiomatic pattern that is evocative of a particular musical style or tradition. You could work with the 'pizza pie' rhythm and transform it into a 'za-pie, pie piz-za' phrase and use it as a starting point for making melody. After practicing the rhythm from different starting points a few times, children will know three rhythmic phrases:

The original: 'pie, piz-za, piz-za, pie';
the first transformation: 'za-pie, pie, piz-za';
and the two joined together: 'pie, piz-za, piz-za, pie, za-pie, pie, piz-za'.

Now we have a musical template with which pupils can, combined with their knowledge of pitch, create a melody using

voice, instruments, or clapping hands.

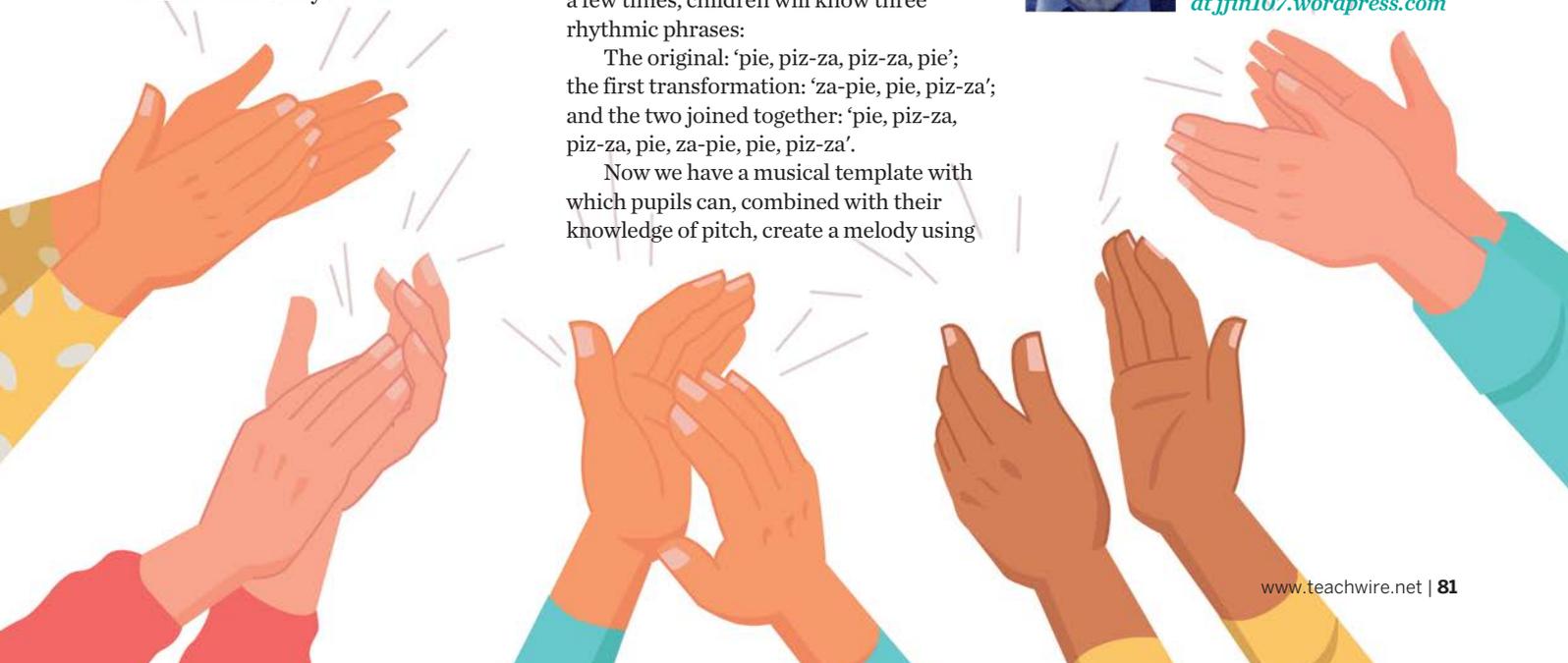
Claps can also grow into other kinds of musical actions – such as slapping knees, patting shoulders, or clicking fingers. You can match up these actions to the 'pizza' rhythm you've established, and experiment with different combinations.

With this play of possibilities comes a growing understanding of the expressive dimensions of music, and how its expressive features create affect and meaning. This is a great discussion point for a class. Together, you and your pupils can discuss and write about musical meaning, and you could even try asking the children to assign particular characteristic phrases to different moods, messages, or intentions. For example, a fast tempo might indicate urgency, a minor triad can signify disappointment and sadness, while a major triad is traditionally associated with happiness.

So, whether it's the ringing of a mesmerising, exotic bell, a low rumble on the keyboard, the swoop of a slide whistle, or multiple hands clapping, the musical call to attention has an integral place in the life of the classroom, and a valuable role in unfolding a musical school day. **TP**



John Finney was formerly senior lecturer in music education at the University of Cambridge. He is currently a primary school governor and writes a blog at jfin107.wordpress.com





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5 REASONS TO TRY... The Pupil Pipeline

Support your class to learn about the importance of one of Earth's most valuable resources



30 SECOND BRIEFING

WaterAid's fun and educational water delivery challenge, the Pupil Pipeline, invites pupils to test their knowledge, creativity and speed to move 10 litres of water over 50 metres in just 20 minutes, spilling as little as possible. The catch? No one is allowed to move from their spot.

1 WELLIES TO WATER PUMPS

Taking part in the Pupil Pipeline can be as simple or as challenging as you like: from wellies and yoghurt pots passed hand-to-hand, to team-constructed guttering and water pumps. Start your pupils thinking about how they could transport the water the most effectively and with the least wasted. You can also get your students thinking about how they could be mindful about using and not wasting water, for example by collecting rainwater and reusing it for watering plants after the challenge.

2 CURRICULUM RESOURCES

WaterAid has developed a range of curriculum-linked teaching resources for the Pupil Pipeline. The resources include ideas of how to design your own water containers and evaluate their effectiveness, introduce the difficulties of going to school in an environment where there is no clean water available nearby, and simple solutions such as collecting rainwater, and examine how WaterAid uses gravity to transport water from one area to another in places where there is no easy access to clean water.

3 GLOBAL WATER CRISIS

Around the world, one in three schools have no clean water or toilets; like 12-year-old Tirusew's

in Finote Selam, Ethiopia, where pupils have to spend the whole day without drinking. The school doesn't have access to water, or anywhere for the children to wash their hands, and there's no working toilets either. Pupils miss classes as they need to walk long

Find out more:
Sign up for a free resource pack at wateraid.org/uk/pipeline-challenge

distances to get water, either going home or trying to fetch water from a nearby river.

4 HELPING OTHERS

By joining the Pupil Pipeline and fundraising for WaterAid, your school will help bring clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to other schools around the world, like Tirusew's in Ethiopia. Ask your pupils to bring in a £2 donation on the day of the challenge (or any other amount of your choice). Raise £36 with your class as part of your Pupil Pipeline challenge and you could help install a school handwashing station for a community in East Africa!

5 DOWNLOADABLE PACK

WaterAid's downloadable educational and fundraising resource pack contains everything for taking part in the Pupil Pipeline with your school: curriculum-linked lesson plans and classroom presentations; stories from Ethiopia and a film to show how your school can help bring clean water to other schools around the world; a detailed teachers' guide; fundraising ideas; and customisable event and fundraising resources, such as posters and a template letter for parents and carers.



KEY POINTS

Taking part in the Pupil Pipeline will get children thinking about the importance of water and the global water crisis.

WaterAid's curriculum-linked teaching resources will bring topics from KS2 science, geography, art, and design & technology to life.

Pupils can learn about the water cycle, make their own rain gauges and water transportation systems using gravity, and design the most efficient water containers.

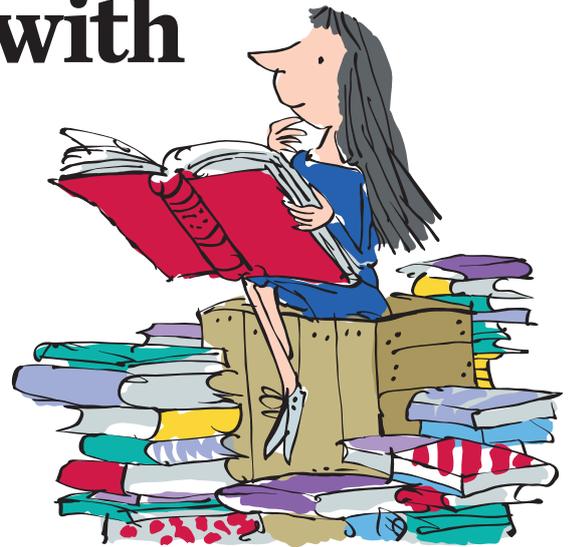
Fundraise for WaterAid as part of the challenge and your school will help bring clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to other schools around the world.

Science



Move things with your mind like Matilda

Using the power of forces, teach children how they can move objects just like Roald Dahl's brilliantly brave heroine



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- How to identify the main types of forces
- How to investigate types of forces and record results
- How to describe the forces using simple diagrams
- Where to see forces at work in daily life

roalddahl.com/create-and-learn

With British Science Week coming up (11–20 March), why not celebrate the joys of forces with your pupils using this *Matilda*-inspired science lesson plan from the Roald Dahl Story Company?

Matilda is a brave little girl with a big brain and mysterious magical powers, which she uses to bring down her horrible headmistress, the dreaded Trunchbull. This lesson explores the way forces can mimic Matilda's incredible powers, and teaches how we can see and identify key forces at work in real life.

ROALD DAHL

START HERE

Begin by reading 'The First Miracle' extract aloud as a class. Discuss Matilda's talent together. What can she do with her mind – and what does this suggest about how powerful she is? Ask children to think about why we can't tip things over with our minds in real life; what is required for an object to move in a scientific world? Next, encourage pupils to look at the images on the 'Force match-up' worksheet. What do the arrows represent? Can they match the diagrams to the force?



MAIN LESSON

1 | INVESTIGATION STATIONS

Set up six 'stations' in the classroom, each demonstrating a different force from the 'Force match-up' worksheet. Try and make sure you're familiar with the experiments and have set up the stations with the required materials before class begins. Print the 'Investigation stations' instruction sheets and place them with the relevant materials to remind the groups what to do at each station.

Now it's time to visit the investigation stations to see how forces really work! Split the class into groups

and instruct each group to choose one of the six stations around the classroom to begin their experiments. They should make a note of their findings as a group on the 'Our findings' worksheet. Give pupils around three to four minutes at each station, including writing time, before you swap to the next activity...

2 | REAL-LIFE SCIENCE

Each station will have hands-on experiments that the children can try out to understand forces in real life. The experiments are as follows:

Magnetic force: For this station you will need two magnets with red and blue ends. Instruct pupils to experiment with the magnets

“Explore the way forces can mimic Matilda’s incredible powers, and teach pupils about how we can see them at work in real life”



EXTENDING THE LESSON

Ask children to share some of the results of their experiments with the class. Use the sentence starters below to help them:

- We looked at a force called...
- In our experiment we saw...
- I think this happened because...
- In real life, we can't move things with our minds because...

To expand the lesson even further, get pupils to design their own force experiments. Prompt them to consider:

- What force they are planning to test and how
- What the expected outcome will be
- How they are planning to record their findings

on the table. What happens when you push together two red ends? What about a red and a blue end?

Friction: Here the groups will need a block of ice, a block of wood and a desk. Ask the children to take turns pushing and letting go of the block of ice along the desk. Once complete, instruct them to repeat the same pushing motion with the wooden block. Which one is easier to push? Why?

Air resistance: This station uses a ping-pong ball and a fan. Get pupils to gently push and release the ping-pong ball along the table and observe how fast it travels. Then repeat the activity with the fan behind the ball. Why does the ping-pong ball travel faster? Ask the groups to see if they can push the ping-pong ball towards the fan.

Gravity & weight: For this experiment you will need a ball and a scrunched-up piece of paper. Instruct the children to drop the ball and the scrunched-up paper at the same time, from the same height. Does one hit the ground first? Do they know why?

Static electricity: The only material needed for this station is a balloon. Ask one member of the group to rub the balloon against their top for a few seconds. What happens if they put the balloon next to their teammate's hair? Can the group create enough static electricity to get the balloon to stick to the wall?

Water resistance: At this station you will need a ball of plasticine, a disk of plasticine, and a jug or large bowl of water. Tell pupils to drop the ball and disk of plasticine into the water

at the same time. Which one hits the bottom first? Why do the different shapes travel at different speeds?

3 INSIDE MATILDA'S WORLD

Finally, ask the children to draw their own force diagrams of the following things: a book falling through the air; one of Mr Wormwood's cars accelerating; the glass on the table in Matilda's classroom. Can they remember what they've discovered through their experiments, and how their findings correspond to the pictures they saw at the beginning of the lesson?

This is an official Roald Dahl lesson plan created by the Roald Dahl Story Company. Official Roald Dahl lesson plans are sponsored by YPO. Discover more at roalddahl.com



Download your free Matilda resources at tinyurl.com/tp-MatildaKS1science

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Can the children come up with one sentence to define what a force is?
- Can they think of other examples of these forces at work in daily life?
- What would happen if there were no forces?



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- How to carry out an investigation in a logical way
- How to test an idea and record the outcomes
- How to find the probability of something happening
- How to use their own and others' results to inform their reasoning

Roll up, roll up – probability with dice



Discussing mathematical chance can be convoluted, so why not try this playful investigation to model frequency and fractions, says

Aidan Severs...



@AidanSevers



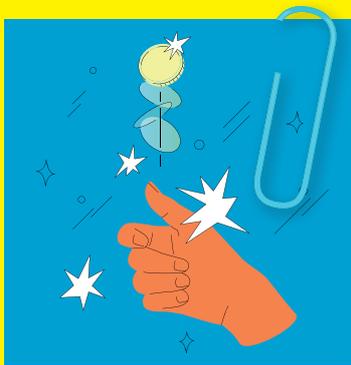
aidansevers.com

This investigation came to me out of the blue in my early years of teaching, when I had a Year 5 class. It was such an immediate hit with pupils that I've repeated it with other groups many times since. While probability perhaps isn't at the top of our priority list for maths objectives, the ability to investigate and think mathematically should be, and that's what is so great about this lesson. Tying it all in to a games-based approach makes it fun, too.



START HERE

Before embarking on the probability investigation involving dice, complete a quicker investigation using a single coin. Show the children how to flip a coin and discuss the probability of heads or tails showing face up. Talk about probability in terms of chance and show children how to record the probability of heads either by saying there is a one in two chance, or by using a fraction – $\frac{1}{2}$. For the fraction, explain that the one represents the chance of getting heads, and the two represents the number of possibilities altogether. You can model the investigative process by flipping a coin a number of times and recording the outcomes – are heads and tails split 50/50?



MAIN LESSON

1 | DICE, DICE, BABY

Using two different coloured dice, find the smallest and largest possible totals when both are rolled. Find other possible totals by asking pupils to give examples of any two numbers the dice could show, and adding them together. Ask which total is the most likely to occur using two dice.

Using a logical approach, model how children can discover all the two-dice combinations that create the same total (e.g. 1+3, 2+2, and 3+1 all have a total of 4). Then have them write out all the possible combinations.

Discuss whether or not 1 + 2 and 2 + 1 should both be included. Talk about whether 2 + 2 should be recorded twice or just once.

The differently coloured dice will show that 1 + 2 and 2 + 1 are different formations, but that 2 + 2 is only one combination: one 2 on the red die, one 2 on the blue die.

2 | FIGURE IT OUT

After finding all possible combinations, ensure children know how many times each total from 2 to 12 occurs (the frequency) and have made a record of this. Model how the frequency gives the probability of each total being thrown. Write these probabilities as fractions, discussing from where the numerator and denominator derive, the denominator being the total number of different possibilities (36). For example: Explain there are 36



combinations because there are six possibilities on each die ($6 \times 6 = 36$).

3 ROLL AGAIN

After finding a probability for each total, discuss how many times the pupils think they should roll the dice in order to test the probabilities: it has to be at least 36 as there are 36 possible combinations. Children can then roll the dice, keeping a tally of the totals on a chart. Ask the class to compare their results with the probabilities they formulated in their table. They could also look at the results of other pupils' tests, showing them that each test has different outcomes, and you can discuss why this is. It is unlikely that any test will correspond exactly to the probabilities; introduce the idea of repeating the experiment with an increased number of rolls. Guide the children to throw their dice another 36 times, adding to their tally, then compare findings to the original probabilities, questioning whether their results after a greater number of rolls bring them closer to those probabilities. This could be repeated, depending on time.

Aidan Severs is an education consultant with over 15 years of teaching experience.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

- Introduce the children to the concept of a 'fair die'. Ask them to carry out tests to find out whether their dice are fair. Get them to roll the dice singly, and record the numbers shown on each roll.
- Pupils could also record their results on a bar graph against the probability, showing the difference between the two.
- Allow the children to play some board games, particularly ones that rely on rolling a 6 to start or to get an extra go. Include some games that employ two dice. Ask the children to record their rolls as they play.
- Ask pupils to design and carry out another fair test which explores the likelihood of something happening. They could use dice with different numbers of sides, for example. Children should be able to work more independently and should be able to apply knowledge and skills learned in this investigation.

Total on 2 dice	Events	Frequency	Probability	Probability as fraction
2	1 + 1	1	1 in 36	1/36
3	1 + 2, 2 + 1	2	2 in 36	2/36 = 1/18
4	1 + 3, 2 + 2, 3 + 1	3	3 in 36	3/36 = 1/12
5	1 + 4, 2 + 3, 3 + 2, 4 + 1	4	4 in 36	4/36 = 1/9
6	1 + 5, 2 + 4, 3 + 3, 4 + 2, 5 + 1	5	5 in 36	5/36
7	1 + 6, 2 + 5, 3 + 4, 4 + 3, 5 + 2, 6 + 1	6	6 in 36	6/36 = 1/6
8	2 + 6, 3 + 5, 4 + 4, 5 + 3, 6 + 2	5	5 in 36	5/36
9	3 + 6, 4 + 5, 5 + 4, 6 + 3	4	4 in 36	4/36 = 1/9
10	4 + 6, 5 + 5, 6 + 4	3	3 in 36	3/36 = 1/12
11	5 + 6, 6 + 5	2	2 in 36	2/36 = 1/18
12	6 + 6	1	1 in 36	1/36

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Why is it useful to know the probability of something happening?
- What does it mean to think logically, and how does this investigation help us to do it?
- How can we make sure our tests are fair?
- How do multiplication and addition skills help you in this investigation?



Banish the Bard's 'boring' reputation...



Playscripts are a great way to introduce pupils to Shakespeare, says **Rose McDermott**

rosemcdermott.com

I have been creating lesson plans around a new book called *Shakespeare for Everyone* (Magic Cat Publishing) which shows children just how accessible Shakespeare can be. Written by Emma Roberts and illustrated by Sarah Tanat-Jones, the idea is that by going behind the scenes and learning more about the historical context, Shakespeare becomes far more approachable. This project can be completely flexible to fit the needs of your pupils. You can use the book alongside this plan, or find Shakespeare resources online to support.

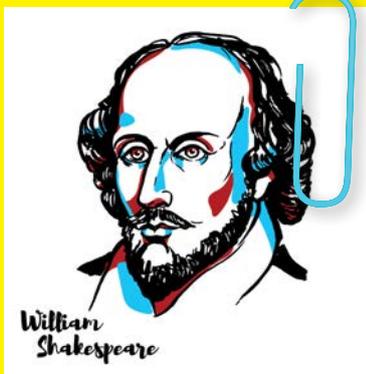
WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- To make inferences from the text
- To develop their summarising and prediction skills
- How to write effectively for a range of purposes and a specific audience
- How to use dialogue to convey information about characters



START HERE

Ask the children what was their first impression of Shakespeare? Were they put off by the language or did they perceive him as 'boring'? After asking the class about their impressions, introduce them to the more interesting aspects – discuss the comedy, the action-packed scenes and the really bad baddies. When children find out about the mystery, belly-laughs, battles, seriously dark villains, love stories (and rude words) they'll want to know more about the tales, but also more about the man who created them because, with plots and characters like that, he's got to be interesting, surely?



MAIN LESSON

1 | READ AND DISCUSS

Give the children time to read two or three summarised plays. I suggest *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *King Lear*, or *Macbeth*.

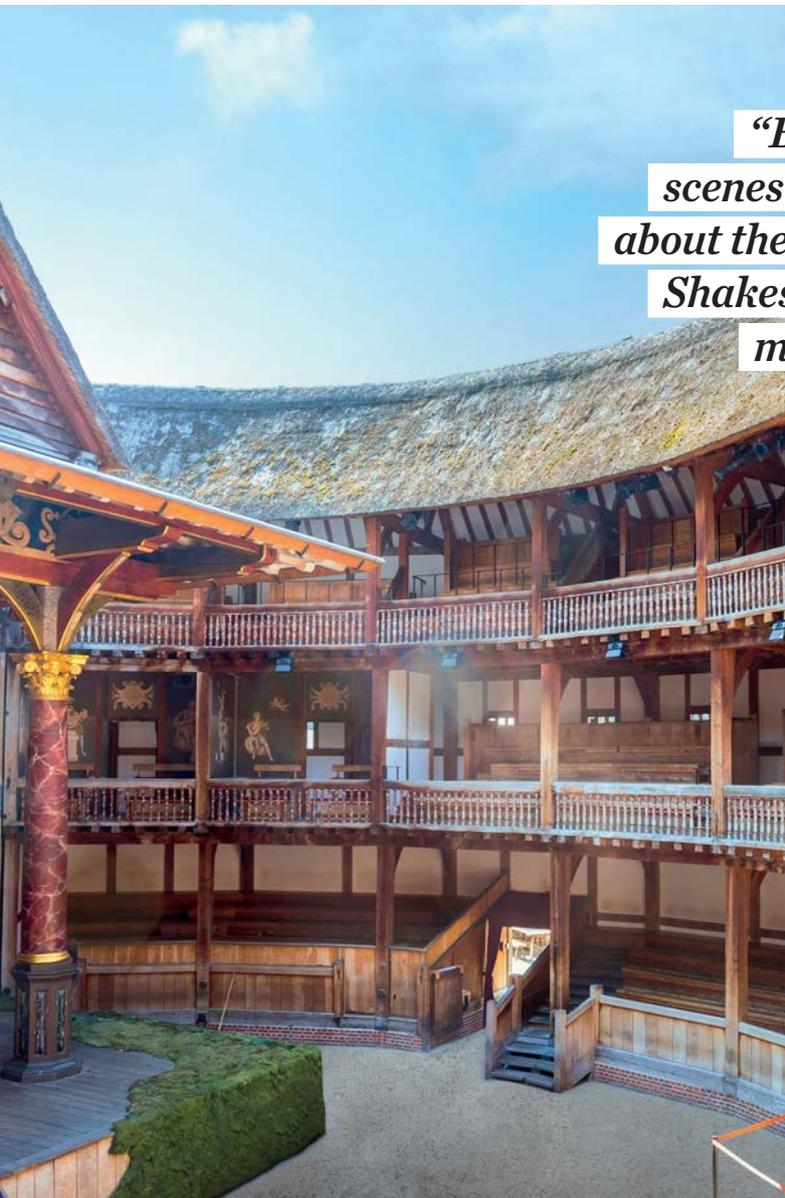
You can find these in *Shakespeare for Everyone*, or online from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (tinyurl.com/tp-ShakespeareSummaries) Read through the summaries in small groups of three or four.

To introduce group discussions, use prompts to discuss which plays the pupils prefer and why. You could ask:

- Which character was most/least like you and why?
- In *King Lear*, Goneril and Regan flatter their father so they can get what they want from him. When have you done that? What might they say to him?
- In *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth feels really guilty. What might she be thinking at that point? When have you felt like that?
- Which story do you think we should turn into a play?

2 | EXPLORE

Using the play pupils would like to develop into their own script, photocopy or print the summary and cut it into sections. Ask the children to put the pieces in the correct order. This will allow you to check their understanding of



“By going behind the scenes and learning more about the historical context, Shakespeare becomes far more approachable”

For example, from the first part of *Macbeth*, you might write: “Macbeth, I must congratulate you again on your wondrous victory on the battlefield!”

Using the ideas in the success criteria grids and the speech bubbles from the ‘Explore’ section, ask the children to pair off and write a scene from the chosen play.

Finally, to give a bit of background, use *Shakespeare for Everyone* – or the internet – to get information on Shakespeare’s theatres. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is a good place for info (tinyurl.com/tp-GlobeTheatre).

Compare with a modern London theatre such as the Barbican.

To clarify pupils’ understanding, ask them to tell you about the theatres in which Shakespeare performed his plays, and then about modern theatres. How are the experiences similar or different? For this verbal investigation, you could talk about types of plays, seat types and viewing areas, the price of tickets, the intended audience, and stage shape.

Rose McDermott is a middle leader at an East London primary school. She regularly consults and writes content for children’s publishers. She has a book due to be released in 2022.

the story. Stick the sections on a large piece of paper and imagine what each character might be saying and thinking at these different points. Use speech and idea bubbles to explore the characters’ thoughts.

At this point, you can either portion one play out into sections through the class, or all pupils can do the whole play. Note: if you’re going to extend the lesson and make the theatre (see sidebar), make sure children limit the number of settings within their play to three.

3 | WRITE

Ask the children what we would expect to see in a playscript. You can lead them to examples such as

brief descriptions at the beginning of each scene; stage directions telling actors what to do (making sure they go in brackets); and writing the speaking character’s name on the left of the page, followed by a colon, e.g. *Macbeth*:

Next, use the pupils’ answers to create your own success criteria grids. These should be displayed throughout the project and can be used to evaluate the scripts at the end.

With these criteria in mind, look back at what you produced from the ‘Explore’ section. The next step is to turn the speech and thought bubbles into a play. If children aren’t sure about the details of the story, they can be creative!

EXTENDING THE LESSON



To really bring the scripts to life, get your class to make their own Shakespeare-style theatres from shoeboxes or similar:

1. Put the shoe box on its side and cut a slot along the length for passing the stick puppets through.
2. Create your backdrops. Different scenes can be painted onto slips of paper and changed using blue tack.
3. Create detail on your stage such as clouds, trees etc. These could be stuck on the base or hung from the top.
4. Then look at the characters who are in your play. Use the book or internet resources to research what they would have worn and sketch some ideas. Draw them, cut them out and attach to a long wooden skewer or lolly stick. It’s time to perform!

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What have you learned about Shakespeare from this book and its illustrations (or your internet resources)?
- Which play do you want to know more about?
- What other writing could we do in this project?
- How could I support you to write this next piece?



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- The concept of morphology and how words are made of smaller parts
- How to use a knowledge of morphemes to make sense of new words
- How suffixes and prefixes can change the meaning of words
- How the English language has changed over time

Develop your morphology superpower



Morphemes can help pupils unlock the meaning of thousands of words, says **James Clements**

 @MrJClements

Anyone who's worked in primary education in the last decade or so will be very familiar with phonemes. Well, there's another way to break up words as well: morphemes (the smallest individual units of meaning). Every word in English is constructed from a combination of roots, prefixes and suffixes, which provide children with a logical way of working out its meaning. In this lesson, pupils will look under the bonnet of language to see how morphology works, before inventing their own words.

START HERE

Show children the word *pneumonoultra microscopisili covolcanoconiosis* and invite volunteers to try and read it aloud. After the inevitable failures,

ask the children how they could figure out how to say it accurately. Hopefully, someone will suggest reading it slowly, sound by sound.

Next, explain that as well as individual sounds, the word can be divided up into small 'chunks' of meaning. Ask the children if they can spot any of these 'chunks' that they recognise from other words (micro, volcano, or ultra, perhaps). Take predictions for the meaning of the word. Tell the class that we'll return to find out if they're right later (oh, the suspense!).



MAIN LESSON

• Explain to the children that the 'chunks' of meaning they were looking for are called *morphemes*. Morphemes can be whole words, like *teacher* or *happy*. Or they can be *roots* – parts of words that need other parts to make complete sense – such as *pneumono* (to do with the lungs) which combines with other morphemes to make *pneumonia*, or *silico* (to do with the element silicon).

Suffixes and prefixes are also morphemes and these are used to change the meaning of a word. For example, the suffix *-osis* can be a condition or a disease (*cirrhosis* – a liver disease, or

halitosis – bad breath).

Ask the class to suggest as many prefixes and suffixes as they can and make a list. Do they know the meaning of them all? Look up any unfamiliar ones. Tell pupils that looking carefully at the prefixes and suffixes in an unfamiliar word can help you to guess its meaning when you're reading. For example, *inter-* would suggest something is between or among something; while *-less* suggests something is without something else.

• Share the words *disgruntled*; *overwhelm* and *underwhelm*; *impervious*; and *unruly*. Now ask children to identify the prefixes in each case. What do the prefixes





“Suffixes and prefixes are also morphemes and these are used to change the meaning of a word”

mean? Do they help to work out the meaning of the words?

- Explain that the roots in all these words are archaic – we don’t tend to use them any longer – and that the ‘opposite versions’ with the prefixes are now far better to know. It would be very rare to describe someone as *gruntled* (happy and content) or *ruly* (easy to control) and it would be strange to just be *whelmed*.

- Share a list of prefixes, suffixes and roots with the class (your own, the children’s suggestions, or the list below) and ask children to combine them

(or think up their own) to make some new or unfamiliar words.

Prefixes: un-, anti-, hyper-, super-, inter-, over-, pre-, non-, de-, semi-, bio-, auto-

Roots: school, brother, run, grow, fall, techno, micro, speak, call, keep, play, believe, alien, robot, change, time, person, amount, base, danger

Suffixes: -est, -less, -ment, -ative, -er, -ial, -able, -scope, -phobia

Based on their knowledge of morphology, what do the pupils’ new words mean? Ask the children to share them with a partner, create a

dictionary definition for each and think up some sentences with their new words in.

- Finally, return to pneumo noultramicroscopic silicovolcanoconiosis. Were the children’s guesses correct? Or would they like to try and guess again based on what they’ve learned in this lesson?

Work through slowly, looking at each morpheme in turn. We have *pneumono* (to do with the lungs), *ultra* (very), *microscopic* (too small to see with the eye), *silico* (made of silicon), *volcano* (fiery or flaming), *coni* (dust), and *osis* (a disease or condition). Explain that is a disease of the lungs caused by breathing in small particles of dust.

Which morphemes helped you to solve the riddle?

James Clements is an education writer and researcher with a fascination for language. His books include Teaching English by the Book, and the forthcoming title On the Write Track, all about the teaching of writing.

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- Use the words you’ve made to inspire some creative writing. Choose one of your new or unusual words and plan a story in which it could feature. For example, can you describe a day at the antischool or explain what happened when an experiment went wrong and your dog became hyperrobotised?
- Practise using your new morphology superpower when reading. If you come across a word you don’t know in a book, look and see if you recognise any of the morphemes that make it up. You might not know all of them, but even one might give you enough of a clue to keep on reading without losing too much meaning.
- Find out about some other archaic or unusual words. Keep a record or display of them in the classroom. Perhaps the class can even take on the challenge of bringing them back into

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Which prefixes and suffixes do you think will unlock the meaning of the most English words?
- Do other languages use prefixes and suffixes in the same way as English?
- Is there anyone you know who speaks another language who can help you?



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LET US STORM YOUR SCREENS!

Vikings invading your whiteboard, archaeologists inspiring some digging, and even medieval medics diagnosing your maladies – all without leaving your classroom. Our selection of pre-recorded and live interactive workshops add colour to any history topic.

VISIT YORK'S LEADING ATTRACTIONS

Pupils will remember their trip to JORVIK Viking Centre forever... especially the sights, sounds, and smells of Viking-age York! Combined with a visit to medieval Barley Hall and learning about archaeology at DIG, this is an inspiring day out.

GET HISTORIC ARTEFACTS IN YOUR CLASSROOM

If you need more than a screen to engage your kinaesthetic learners, our loan boxes, packed with items and replica artefacts from different historical periods – from pre-history to Vikings, Romans to Tudors – are the perfect solution.

PERSONALISED SUPPORT FROM OUR EXPERTS

From visit planning to discussions about your curriculum requirements, at every step of your JORVIK experience you'll find people who are passionate about bring history to life for your pupils!



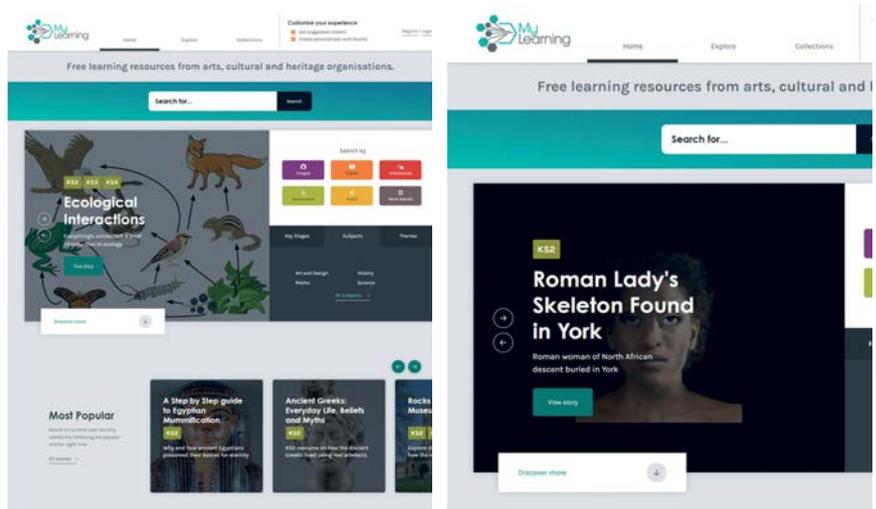
TOPICS →

MyLearning

A free information hub website that offers National Curriculum-linked resources created by experts

AT A GLANCE

- Managed by Leeds Museums and Galleries
- Resources for Key Stages 1 – 4
- Wide variety of topics covering most subject areas
- Content written by educators and checked by experts
- Includes over 250 learning stories, from more than 70 different organisations



REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES

As a primary teacher, you know how excited children get about learning from objects, art and the lives of real people. Having something tangible to look at is so much better for starting conversations and sparking the imagination.

But do you sometimes feel you've done a topic to death? Or perhaps you just want to bring a subject to life by using a stimulus with a genuine human story behind it.

A good starting point would be a museum or gallery but, sadly, many teachers feel they cannot spare the time to traipse around them looking for inspiration, however much they might want to. Luckily there is now MyLearning, which brings them to you.

Managed by Leeds Museums and Galleries, MyLearning is designed to make the wonderful objects held in museums, along with the stories they tell, available to our classrooms. What's more, it's reliable, age-appropriate information, it doesn't cost a penny, and it's mercifully free of advertisements.

As you would hope, it has a sensible filtering system to get to all the KS1 and KS2 content you need. It includes a wealth of stories covering most areas of the curriculum, backed by teacher notes, primary sources and activity ideas. I also

really liked the way these stories are not necessarily the well-known ones but hidden gems that are just as valuable to any teaching topic.

Take the Victorian traveller, writer and photographer Isabella Bird, for example – the first woman to be made a Fellow at the Royal Geographical Society. How refreshing might it be to frame a topic on another country through the perspective of a pioneering explorer who isn't called Dora?

Or how about the amazing Monopoly games that doubled-up as ingenious escape kits for prisoners of war? What a refreshing change from evacuees that could be, while still making WWII relevant to children!

Whether you're searching for a quick visual stimulus for a lesson or a more substantial resource, MyLearning is well worth a look. What's more, if you register with them, you can access extra whistles and bells such as the ability to create 'Work Boards' that can be reused and shared with colleagues.

In an ideal world, we would have all our museums and galleries connected in this way. Hopefully, more will come on board soon. For the time being, though, immerse yourself in MyLearning. There's so much to discover.



VERDICT

- ✓ Fascinating artifacts
- ✓ Helpful supporting materials
- ✓ Simple to navigate
- ✓ Celebrates diversity
- ✓ The joy of the unexpected

UPGRADE IF...

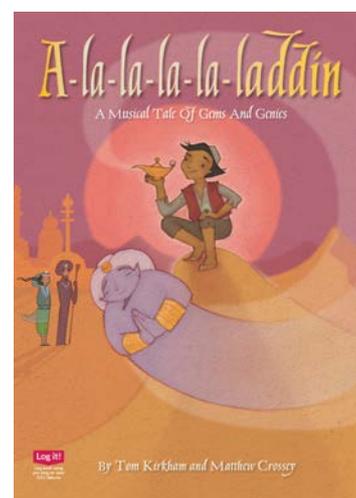
You need to freshen-up your lessons right across the curriculum with little-known, touchingly human stories from our rich history and heritage.

MyLearning is free to access at mylearning.org

MUSIC 

A-la-la-la-la-laddin

A magical, musical show with editable script and original songs



AT A GLANCE

- Fully scripted production for 9–13-year-olds
- An entertaining adaptation of a popular tale
- Comprehensive booklet including scripts, song lyrics, and staging and casting notes
- CD/audio files featuring vocal and non-vocal versions of each song

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



Think you know the story of Aladdin? Think again. For a start, from what I have read, it was not one of the original *1001 Arabian Nights* stories, but was added later. It wasn't even set in the Middle East but in China instead. What's more, Aladdin's mother was still alive and well and there were, in fact, two genies – one from the lamp and one from a ring.

If only to distinguish it from recent screen adaptations, it is pleasing to see that this new version from The School Musicals Company has reintroduced some of those original characters and plot features. Then again, it has taken the old rags-to-riches trope and given it a less materialistic twist. The result is a fresh and engaging take on this familiar tale.

Written by Tom Kirkham and Matthew Cressy, *A-la-la-la-la-laddin* has all the ingredients you need to create an entertaining, fun-to-perform musical show. I would, however, advise schools to take the suggested age range seriously as it does touch on themes that are definitely Upper Key Stage 2 at the youngest. Furthermore, the length, vocabulary and song complexity would also be a challenge for younger age groups.

As you would expect from an award-winning outfit like The School Musicals Company, this is a lively, fast-paced show with plenty of catchy songs. Of course, everyone will have their own particular favourites – mine was *Under My Spell* although I suspect *Song of the Soldiers* will resonate more with the talent on stage. You'll see why.

The script, which is available as an editable version, offers plenty of different roles of varying length so that there is something for everyone, from your most modest market merchants to your pushiest princes and princesses. As well as keeping the story rattling along, it provides plenty of crowd-pleasing chuckles. When banishing the baddies, for example, the Sultan says, "Send them on a night boat to Cairo!" to which the Grand Vizier replies, "But that's madness, sire!" Possibly one for the grandparents but it made me laugh.

What I always appreciate about The School Musicals Company's output is that they think of everything for you, from detailed cast lists (including the number of lines for each performer) to handy staging guidelines. If you want to put on a great show without undue stress, *A-la-la-la-la-laddin* will grant all your wishes; no magical lamp required.

teach
PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Lively, entertaining script
- ✓ Fun, catchy songs
- ✓ Speaking parts for over 30 children
- ✓ Detailed guidance notes
- ✓ Reduces the stress of staging a production

UPGRADE IF...

You want to put on an enchanting musical extravaganza without losing 1001 nights' sleep.

£35.95 RRP theschoolmusicalscompany.com

WRITING 

Logitech Pen

Balance technology with traditional approaches to get the best out of your pupils



logitech | for education

AT A GLANCE

- Works with any USI-enabled Chromebook, tablet and learning app
- Helps fully utilise Chromebook devices and learning apps
- Looks and handles like a traditional pen, making skills transferrable to paper writing
- Versatile and hugely functional for learning



REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES

Technology in primary school classrooms can significantly increase the effectiveness of learning, but there is a fine balance as learners develop emerging skills. The Logitech Pen bridges the gap between traditional school work and the powerful technology available for learners, meaning that teachers can get the best from their pupils.

At first glance, the pen resembles... well, a pen. One of the most impressive features of this piece of kit is that it looks and handles like a traditional pen. As such, it is exceptional for a full range of learners and teachers alike. What's best is that it isn't cumbersome or too dainty; it's perfect for little hands and the soft, non-slip grip means that pupils can easily use the pen regardless of level. The realistic shape and size means that skills are directly translatable to paper writing.

Luckily, the physical aspects of the pen are just the start. The Logitech Pen is designed with no-pair functionality making it easy for students to pick it up and start writing, making it ideal for younger, less technologically literate pupils. On a full charge, the pen has 15 days of regular school use, giving a pupil plenty of time. Impressively, you can get 30 minutes of use with just a 30-second charge, meaning in the likely event that a

student forgets to recharge their pen, it can still be used. Charging is conducted using the same USB-C cable that comes standard with a Chromebook device – it couldn't be more simple.

Designed for a variety of applications, the Logitech Pen works seamlessly with chromeOS and many apps on USI-enabled Chromebooks. This little tool allows pupils and teachers to couple traditional study with new technology, adding to the value, participation and engagement levels in the classroom.

The Logitech Pen also makes a number of different pen strokes. The 4,096 levels of pressure sensitivity give students the ability to write more clearly than they would with fingers or a rubber-tip stylus. Together with a variety of third-party apps that support palm rejection, the Logitech Pen makes it easy for students to work naturally, helping them study efficiently and effectively. Write, highlight, colour... the possibilities are endless.

Tough technology is a must in schools – primary children are notoriously heavy handed with school equipment. The pen is tested to meet military standards, and designed to withstand drops up to four feet (1.2 m). With a spill-resistant design, it will take some serious knocks, making it perfect for secondary school students. In

teach PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Versatile and incredible breadth of application straight out of the packet
- ✓ Easily and quickly charged
- ✓ Adaptable to a number of learners' styles allowing the same individualism as a pen
- ✓ Marries traditional school work with technology
- ✓ Tough and resilient build

UPGRADE IF...

You are looking to utilise your technology and ensure that learners retain the skills required to write normally. Also consider if you are looking to streamline note taking and use of paper in school.

Find out more at tinyurl.com/tp-LogitechPen

MUSIC Include
Empower
Transform

Drums for Schools – world percussion set



A delightful collection of world music instruments supported by teaching resources

AT A GLANCE

- Authentic and appealing instruments
- A range of sets available to suit different school sizes and budgets
- Backed by clear and informative teaching resources
- No prior music skills or training required
- Instructions that build confidence towards whole-class performances



REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES

I'm going to go out on a limb here and suggest that, if you struggle with teaching music in primary school, your discomfort will fall into one of two categories. One is that you worry you are not particularly musical. The other is that you actually love music, which is why you finish each lesson with a sigh of relief and either a massive headache or a funny twitch.

Fortunately, there is something that could restore your confidence or rekindle your passion for the subject. Drums for Schools is an award-winning, specialist provider of instruments and related teacher support. Their attractive, authentic instruments from around the globe can bring many layers of joy to any classroom.

Take their world percussion set, for example. Even the process of unpacking it creates a flutter of excitement, not least because the instruments are so beautiful.

Made from natural materials in a traditional style, they look and feel special and are an education in themselves, just from inspecting how they are made. The Bento shakers, for example, incorporate fruit husks from the breadfruit plant. You can see how the maracas are made from gourds or

coconuts. There are also lovely design details on the handles of lots of them.

As well as producing a rich variety of percussion sounds, the instruments include a few that can generate a tune. The metallophone produces gorgeously clear, resonant notes. I also loved the M'bira thumb piano, both for the warmth of its tone and the appeal of its design.

You'll be glad to learn that set comes with handy booklets that help the teacher make the most of the instruments. These provide interesting insights into their construction and places of origin, along with explanations as to how each one should be played, backed by QR code-linked videos.

More importantly, they suggest a range of activities for using the instruments as a class. These come with full instructions and an easy-to-follow grid notation that makes it absolutely clear who hits what, how and when. Ultimately, they show you how to get the whole group playing a selection of tunes in unison.

As well as hitting curriculum objectives, these activities will help pupils enjoy the real sense of achievement that comes from making music as a group. In fact, I can see it delivering genuine benefits in terms of class cohesion, self-esteem and team-building skills. Beat that!

teach PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Gorgeous to look at
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Fun to play
- ✓ Inspires teacher confidence
- ✓ Remarkably good value

UPGRADE IF...

You want to bring the wow factor to your music lessons and get your class working in harmony. A great value and completely original approach to exploring a range of world music – and culture – in your classroom.

Primary sets from £179 0115 931 4513 drumsforschools.com



DAY in the LIFE



A one-day diary from first alarm to lights out

WAKING UP

I'm often awake before my alarm goes off at 6am, although as each half term draws to a close, I find myself hitting the snooze button a few times before getting up! Before getting out of bed, I always check my phone for messages and email notifications.



SARAH MULLIN IS EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER OF A PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY IN THE WEST MIDLANDS.

@MrsSarahMullin



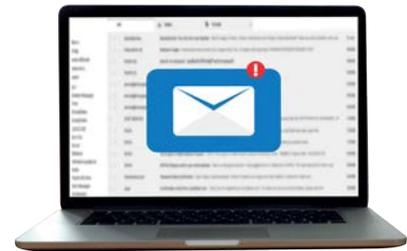
MY MORNING

Mornings are busy! After getting my own three children ready for nursery and school, I arrive at work and meet with the proprietor, headteacher and leadership team so that we are fully briefed for the day. I also chat with staff and pupils, write the weekly newsletter and lead strategic meetings.



MY AFTERNOON

I enjoy popping into lessons to see the children in action. I still love to teach and really enjoy spending time in the classroom. I review pupil progress, offer a listening ear to my DSLs, and make time for our student teachers, ECTs and aspiring school leaders who might want to tell me about an idea they've had, an initiative that went well, or engage in some coaching.



LUNCHTIME

I do miss the days where I could enjoy a lunch break in the staffroom with my colleagues, but now I tend to catch up on my emails and return phone calls. I really try to make efficient use of my time in school so that I can leave at a reasonable hour to be home for my children.

MY EVENING

I like to get home at a reasonable time so I can help my own children with their homework, make their dinner and tuck them into bed. When everyone is fast asleep, I take out my laptop and catch up on my emails. I do work hard during term time so in the holidays I can enjoy family time.



BEDTIME

In the evenings I like to catch up with social media and respond to the messages friends and family have been sending during the day. I also try to do some writing for my EdD thesis – I am hoping to complete my research this year. Sometimes I fall asleep with my laptop by my bed!

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

- ❖ **Career plan B?** Right up until I started university, I was pursuing a career in dentistry. But I changed courses at the last minute to English lit and I am very glad I did. I do think I am in the right job; I'm very proud to be part of the wonderful teaching profession.
- ❖ **Must-watch?** When not cuddled up with my daughter singing along to Cocomelon, I must admit I do love a good series on Netflix. I've recently indulged in *And Just Like That* and *Selling Sunset*!
- ❖ **Must-read?** The research of Prof Kay Fuller, Dr Jill Berry, Dr Pontso Moorosi and Vivienne Porritt, amongst many others, have inspired my own EdD.
- ❖ **Twitter hero?** Prof Dame Alison Peacock (@AlisonMPeacock) and Prof Samantha Twiselton (@samtwiselton) are my edu-idols. Their passion and dedication for supporting professionals (including myself!)



THE GO-TO GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

We are the Go-To-Guide for families. They depend on us for inspirational ideas and suggestions to keep their children occupied, engaged and happy when they spend quality family time together. Families tell us they value our magazines which is why they genuinely appreciate receiving them in their children's school book bags four times a year.

FAMILY FUN

DAYS OUT

**SPARKING
IMAGINATIONS**

**ENGAGING
CONTENT**

**FREE TO ENTER
COMPETITIONS**

// We really look forward to our copy of Raring2go! Magazine. We love the free to enter competitions especially, plus it's always packed with great ideas and suggestions for things to do as a family. **//**
Sarah, Chichester

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

FUN EVENTS

HELPING FAMILIES CREATE MEMORIES

We're on a mission to keep families up to date on what is going on locally to them.

Make sure your families get their copy of Raring2go!

E: info@raring2go.co.uk Tel: 01273 447101 www.raring2go.co.uk

THE REGENERATORS

◆ **BBC Bitesize** ◆

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from BBC Bitesize

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Support your pupils with **quizzes and activities** to get them learning outdoors and in their local environment.

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