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Hello!



Welcome to the latest issue of Teach Primary. I hope you had a restful break after what has no doubt been one of the most challenging half terms for primary teachers. With many children across the country living in areas where they're not currently permitted to visit friends, family or attend their usual extra-curricular activities, school is a welcoming cocoon of normality, and for that you all deserve the highest praise.

This issue is a research and CPD special. Jon Tait explains why you should switch your quick-fire questioning culture for a more reflective hands-down approach on page 62, and on page 68 Dr Ann McCarthy explores how to build cognitive challenge into daily school life to help your most able pupils to flourish.

We're also taking a look at maths from a variety of angles this issue. Find out why competitive timed maths activities could be doing pupils more harm than good (p11), get pupils' heart rates up with a socially-distanced physical fractions lesson (p76) and see how to steer maths lessons away from being a simple recall activity (p35).

I'm delighted to be able to present this year's Teach Primary Book Awards winners. Just as the nation went into lockdown we called out for publishers to send us their very best books for Reception, KS1 and KS2. They rose to the challenge and our brilliant judges then had the difficult task of selecting winners and runners-up – see the results on page 55.

Until next time,

Elaine

Elaine Bennett, Editor

 @editorteach

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

POWERED BY...



DR MONICA GREY gives advice to a teacher who has a classroom full of pupils from many different cultures

“As you talk about aspects of your culture, they will open up about aspects of theirs”

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BETH SMITH explains new advice from the DfE and NCETM about key learning in maths lessons

“It's key to consider consistency of language throughout year groups and topics”

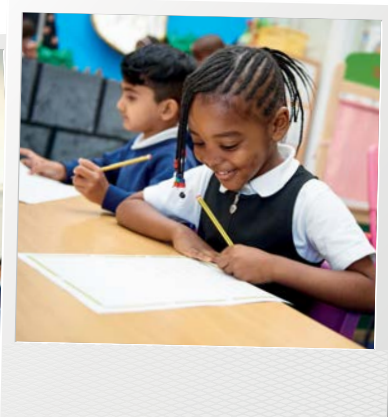
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ZANIB MIAN explores how feeling represented in stories can give children a real reading boost

“I think it is essential that all children know that they can be the heroes in stories too”

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INSPIRING IMAGINATIONS



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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. That's why we host a reader feedback panel every issue to hear from real teachers about what they liked and what they would change. Got feedback? Contact us via the details in the yellow box below.

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PRIMARY**

We want to hear from you!

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



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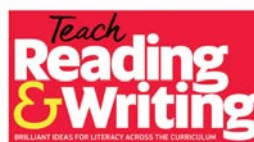
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Inside out

The UK's first ever mental health and wellbeing festival for schools is taking place on 3rd February 2021, during Children's Mental Health Week. It's coinciding with Inside Out Day and aims to reach as many children across the UK as possible by facilitating free virtual sessions between schools and local mental health and wellbeing hosts. Wear an item of clothing inside out on the day to remind children that how we look on the outside is not always how we feel on the inside. Want to get involved? Visit nowandbeyond.org.uk

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



SPEAK OUT

Ant and Dec have joined forces with NSPCC to host a virtual version of its Speak Out, Stay Safe assembly which teaches children what to do if they are anxious about something happening in their life. There are also supporting teaching materials. Visit nspcc.org.uk/speakout



BOOK WORMS

The ReadingZone Live website features over 1,000 free videos of famous children's authors discussing their writing process, plus book extracts, lesson plans, worksheets, activities and comprehension quizzes which mirror those found in KS1 and KS2 SATs papers. Visit readingzone.com



DIAGON ALLEY

Harry Potter Book Night returns in February for its seventh year. The 2021 theme is Diagon Alley, Harry's first introduction to the wizarding world. Sign up for an event kit and share your ideas on Twitter and Facebook using the hashtag #HarryPotterBookNight. Visit harrypotterbooknight.com

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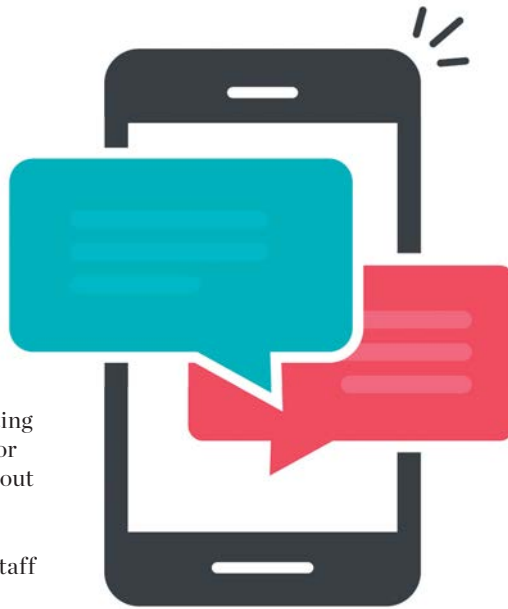
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Sending a message

New research has shown that texting is a promising tool for connecting schools with parents more closely. A recent paper by the Institute of Education Sciences investigated the effects of texting on chronic absenteeism. The research demonstrated that texting can decrease chronic absence rates for pupils. Parents received messages about the benefits of attendance, the consequences of absenteeism, personalised messages from school staff and messages asking parents to set attendance goals for their children for the coming week. Parents then received feedback on how well their children met these goals. Only 12% of parents unsubscribed from the texts during the one-year programme, suggesting it is a sustainable approach. Read more at tinyurl.com/tp-text



Q & A



Martin Roberts TV presenter and author

What was primary school like for you?

I only have happy memories. I remember making paper mache islands, starring in the school play, and leaving a school outing to the panto to find a phonebox so I could call home to find out if our first colour TV had arrived...

How do you think lockdown affected children?

Most children are resilient, but this situation has put untold pressure on all of us. There will be kids that are really struggling to cope with everything that's going on, especially if it's affecting their parents. Children without a supportive life outside school need to know who they can reach out to for help. My book Sadsville aims to get kids talking about how they are feeling. That's the first step for highlighting those that are struggling and pointing them in the right direction to get help.

Why is children's mental health an important issue for you?

I'm a father of two so I've seen first-hand the struggles children go through, and that was before Covid hit. With a nudge in the right direction, most children will make it through to adulthood as happy, rounded individuals. They just need support and someone to share their concerns with. At the end of my book we've included the Childline number. Learning who they can turn to is hugely important for children.

The Martin Roberts Foundation is providing all UK primary schools with a free copy of a special teaching version of storybook Sadsville.



Win £1,000 for your school

Challenge your pupils to innovate for a better world with the ninth annual Raspberry Pi competition. This year's competition is asking children to apply their technology and coding skills to help create a positive future for everyone. Children in Y4-6 are invited to enter and a panel of expert judges will award the winning team with £1,000 for their school. Last year's winners were St Mary's CofE Primary in Horsham who created a system for rewarding pupils for sustainable behaviours. Find out more at tinyurl.com/tp-picomp

* Let's Go Zero

72% OF CURRENT SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN ENGLAND WILL STILL BE IN USE IN THE YEAR 2050*

Look ahead | Book ahead

BIRD'S THE WORD

The RSPB's Big Schools' Birdwatch takes place between 5th January and 22nd February. Help to generate real-life wildlife data. Get a free resource pack at rspb.org.uk/schoolswatch



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8 REASONS to ditch 'quick' maths

Being speedy at sums doesn't necessarily mean you're good at maths, say **Dr Tom Hunt** and **Steve Chinn**

1 | IT'S STRESS-INDUCING

As soon as children enter formal education, they begin to associate being quick at maths with praise. Yet, when teachers are asked why maths learning is so time-based, they often struggle to respond. Sadly, there's plenty of evidence that tells us just how anxiety-provoking 'quick' maths can be. For example, researchers interested in the human stress response sometimes use timed mental arithmetic tasks to induce a stress reaction.

2 | PUPILS FOCUS ON IT TOO MUCH

Children quickly identify perceived hierarchies of ability and will often refer to how quick their classmates are. Grading performance on leaderboards is problematic because the majority of children in a class can't be the fastest. Irrespective of their position within the hierarchy, children will focus on the speed of their response as being the key factor. This reinforces the belief that being good at maths means being quick at it, rather than an emphasis on understanding.

3 | IT LEADS TO MATHS ANXIETY

What purpose does it serve to be a few seconds faster than one's classmates? In our opinion, it only provides more instances of perceived negative experiences, often associated with maths anxiety. A recent study showed how primary children can associate slower maths performance with punishment, such as having to 'see the teacher'.

4 | IT LASTS INTO ADULTHOOD

In a study of over 100 adults, around half thought about time pressure during a computer-based maths task, even when the instructions made no reference to being timed. Those who experienced such thoughts performed significantly worse than those who didn't, suggesting intrusive thoughts about time pressure are counter-productive.

5 | IT IMPACTS PERFORMANCE

Some children enjoy the competitive nature of maths assessments, but these are often pupils who perform well anyway. For most, timed testing only ups the ante for fear of negative evaluation – now there are two ways to fail: being wrong and being slow. It's irrational to emphasise quick responding. Being told to swim faster will not be efficacious if you've not mastered the basics. Indeed, it's likely to lead to panic, and avoidance of swimming in the future.

6 | IT REPRESSES METACOGNITION

Forcing a person to respond quickly gives them less time to choose a strategy or appraise solutions. Doing maths quickly pressurises learners to rush into questions without overthinking and thinking.

7 | IT USES UP WORKING MEMORY

How often are children focusing on the time they are taking, and the perceived negative consequences of 'taking too long', rather than putting their energies into solving the problem? Maths anxiety uses up the working memory resources required for successful problem-solving. We need to protect these resources, rather than suppress them.

8 | IT DEMOTIVATES CHILDREN

In the same way the body needs an appropriate, gentle warm-up before serious exercise, maths lessons require a similar approach. Warming up in an inappropriate way, especially asking for quick responses, does not set up pupils for learning. Indeed, maths anxious children may be apprehensive about even entering a maths class, so the warm-up should be low-pressure. Pupils with high maths anxiety are much more likely to have low maths self-efficacy. Setting them up for failure at the start of a lesson only demotivates children and further reinforces their sense of inadequacy.



Dr Tom Hunt is associate professor of psychology and Steve Chinn is visiting professor at the University of Derby.



The headteacher at my new school trusts his staff and as a result, my teaching has never been better

 @fakeheadteacher  headteacher-newsletter.com

Last academic year, I took a break from class teaching. However, Covid-19 soon put a halt to my plans. Fortunately, I found another teaching job at a local primary school for September this year. I was a little apprehensive, knowing only too well that the workload issues and non-negotiables that had encouraged me to leave teaching temporarily could, once again, become a problem for my mental health.

I nervously spent the first few days asking questions. How should I share the learning objective? When do learning walks occur? What targets will you give me? What are the non-negotiables for all the subjects? How often are pupil progress meetings? How many times should I deep mark? How should my display boards look? I knew I had to get it right and couldn't afford (for my own sanity) to get told off in my first few weeks. I'm a very good teacher but having worked in a toxic school, it still haunts me and has affected my confidence.

To my surprise, colleagues said I needed to relax. "It's not like that here," they said, and they were right. In fact, the headteacher took me to one side and told me that there wouldn't be any lesson observations or formal learning walks, and book scrutinies wouldn't happen for some time, if at all. I was told to give verbal feedback rather than mark books.

The headteacher told me to make sure I went home for PPA, and to leave the building by 4pm on all other days. Of course, Covid-19 has played its part in his decision making, but staff continually tell me the workload pressures don't really exist at the school because the head is passionate about work-life balance and trusts teachers to deliver mostly good lessons.

As a result, my teaching has never been better. I feel more relaxed. I don't panic when the head pops in (to ask how the pupils are and if there's anything he can do for me) and I have more time to plan lessons. I am home by 4.30pm most nights and do very little

work at the weekend. I feel I have a lot more autonomy and feel trusted to do my job. It's a massive shift. This is how it should be.

Since September I've heard from scores of teachers who complain that their SLT are carrying out book scrutinies, formal learning walks and excessive testing and planning pupil progress meetings linked to performance management meetings. I don't understand. I really don't get it. It makes me so cross.

At the moment, staff should be given the space and support they need to get to grips with the emotional demands being placed on them. They're concerned about catching coronavirus. Is it safe at school? Will they pass it on to their own families? They are also trying to cope with life outside of school and the government's ever-changing guidelines.

Teachers at my school are brilliant and very supportive but it's clear they are already very tired. It's a long day. Life at school has significantly changed and for SLT to add the extra scrutiny of how books should look and whether teachers are delivering all-singing, all-dancing lessons at the moment seems inappropriate.

I've seen headteachers on social media defending their decisions to carry out book scrutinies and lesson observations. One said, "I need to make sure the pupils are getting the education they deserve. I am not checking up on staff." Sorry, but yes you are. So what if the margin in one book is only three squares wide? Who cares if one child wrote the short date instead of the long one? Does it matter if the teacher didn't refer to the working wall during a lesson? Who cares if the verbal feedback stamper was only used once during the week?

There will be time for this level of detail again in the future, if you really want to go down that route, but not now. Trust your staff. Support them. Tell them to concentrate on the emotional wellbeing of their pupils. Make this your number one priority. The profession has already lost too many good teachers because of workload and accountability pressures. Let's try to keep hold of the ones we have left. **TP**



"I am home by 4.30pm and do very little work at the weekend"

Q&A

“Bring live history into the classroom”

Dr Chris Tuckley, head of engagement for the JORVIK Group, explains the benefits of virtual visits



30 SECOND BRIEFING

Bring the JORVIK Viking Centre into your school via an immersive, interactive session. Welcome a Viking, medieval medic or archaeologist into your classroom – a risk-free way to travel through time and engage your pupils without having to go anywhere.

What is virtual outreach?

With many schools avoiding trips at the moment because of the Covid-19 pandemic, our educational team at the JORVIK Group has created a series of new ‘virtual’ visits – one-to-one teaching sessions with our expert historic interpreters, delivered pre-recorded or live via a variety of video conferencing platforms. Drawing on a decade of experience in delivering virtual outreach around the world, we teach a class of up to 40 pupils for a 45-minute session and give learners the chance to put their own questions to the host.

What subjects do you cover?

Our ‘live’ historical characters or friendly archaeologist can support your delivery of history, literacy, science and other cross-curricular sessions, using the three attractions in the JORVIK Group as inspiration – JORVIK Viking Centre which portrays everyday life in Viking-age York; Barley Hall, a medieval townhouse once inhabited by York’s Lord Mayor; and DIG: An Archaeological Adventure. Our virtual outreach sessions cover the same curriculum areas as our conventional school visits, and star experts in each area who are skilled at bringing different stories to life, whether that’s warriors and raiding, 15th-century medicine or Roman archaeology.

What age groups does this appeal to?

Our sessions are particularly well-suited for students aged 7-11, but we can adapt to cover a wider range of abilities and ages as required. The



team delivering the sessions are used to handling questions from people of all ages, and are very adept at tailoring their answers to the particular audience

Are other resources available?

Absolutely! For schools close by, we have loan boxes of artefacts and replica items that they can borrow. For those further afield we’ve created a huge amount of online resources to download, including



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teachers’ packs and videos highlighting lots of different parts of our work. We also host ‘Discover from home’ activities on our website which encourage independent learning, ideal for home schooling or extension activities.

What if our internet connection is temperamental?

We love delivering outreach live, as each session includes opportunities for audience participation, but we know that some schools have connectivity issues, so we can also pre-prepare either a custom session or a session from our Virtual Visit library that can be downloaded ahead of time. You can still submit questions from your pupils for a bespoke session too, which can be a great way to further their enquiry skills or gain some inspiration for a creative writing task.

Need to know

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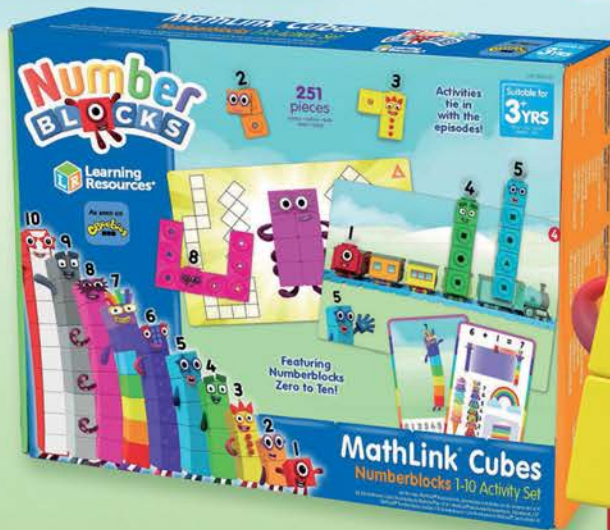
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QUITTING SLT GAVE ME MY LIFE BACK

I was a deputy head by age 26 but gave it all up to get back in the classroom as a supply teacher

 @hayleyjanepeace

In March 2019 I left my position as deputy head of a large primary school in Inverness, a role I'd held for almost three years. I'd built strong and meaningful relationships with children, staff, parents and the wider community. I'd learnt more than I could ever imagine in terms of leadership and pedagogy. I'd led the development and implementation of a new maths scheme, did a stint as acting head, mentored probationers, appointed new staff and supported the nursery through a huge transition. Despite achieving all this, I walked away to join the supply list.

When I became a deputy head I was 26 and extremely ambitious. At that time, I truly believed that success meant reaching the top of the career ladder as quickly as possible. However, I'd started to have a growing realisation that I wasn't

the leader I wanted to be or that the school needed. In fact, I was stressed and often hid away, powering through my to-do list, rather than checking in with my team. I often felt I was asking staff to add to their workload so I could tick items off *my* list. Ultimately I realised that I was avoiding tough conversations because they made me uncomfortable.

My headteacher had such a clear vision for the school. I really wanted to believe in that vision too, and at one time I did, but I'd lost my way. Walking away was the hardest decision I have ever had to make – I'm not usually a quitter. However, if I felt I was lacking integrity, what did my staff think of me? The thought terrified me. How could I expect my team to support a leader that they couldn't believe in?

If I'm honest, I deeply missed being in the classroom. I missed the joy of

watching children learn; the banter; the relationships built on trust and connection. Every child has something unique about them and being in the classroom allowed me to get to know so many funny, caring, challenging young people.

Another key thing that persuaded me to leave leadership was the fact that after returning to work after the birth of my daughter I missed her immensely. Most of the photos I have of us together in 2018 are selfies of us in bed, because that's the only time I spent with her. As a one-year-old she spent long ten-hour days at a childminder. Before becoming a parent I always stayed late at work and was constantly looking for further opportunities. I was ambitious and driven and could afford to be a workaholic. However, when I returned from maternity leave I was no longer the driven, ambitious deputy the school needed. Leaving my position gave me the opportunity to spend more time with my family. Children are only little once and now I get to be a mummy who has time to play, read and laugh with my little girl, and to me that is priceless.

Now I'm back in the classroom as a supply teacher I love finding out what works for each unique group of children. No two schools are the same and I've quickly learnt to adapt lessons to suit the pupils in front of me. Supply teaching has provided me with a fascinating opportunity to explore, learn and grow in a short space of time. It's not all rosy, of course. Sometimes there's no work and that can be disheartening, but fortunately that doesn't happen too often.

When I began the process of leaving leadership I faced some scary truths, but I don't regret my decision. I miss my school and colleagues, of course, and the opportunity to make a big impact on the lives of the children and families I worked with. However, I'll return to leadership when I'm ready with a renewed vision, passion, ambition and drive. Ultimately, I've learnt that leadership is not just rising up the ladder as fast as possible. It's about growing others, standing alongside them and connecting. I hope that I can use my time as a supply teacher to make mistakes and learn, so that when I'm ready to lead again, I'll do so with the greatness that our children deserve. **TP**

Hayley Forbes is a primary supply teacher from Inverness and a former deputy head.

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

A letter to...

*my mother,
Saroj Lal*

You were one of the first BAME primary teachers in Edinburgh and blazed a trail for those that followed



More than seven long months have passed since we said our last goodbyes, on that crisp Wednesday morning back in March. It was such a strange, surreal funeral, and not at all what you probably expected: just me, your darling daughter Kavita, Dad, and your cherished granddaughter, Isha. Sitting alone, the four of us, in a vast, empty chapel. But somehow I think it was meant to be – that our final farewell would turn out to be such a curiously intimate, family affair, echoing our closeness in life, and the love that we shared.

You achieved so much in your career – not least your pioneering work in race relations and as a campaigner for equality – but you left us before we could celebrate one of the most significant anniversaries of all. Just over half a century ago, on 20th August 1970, you began teaching at Edinburgh's South Morningside Primary. After moving to Scotland from India in the late 1960s you were the first BAME teacher at the school – and among the very first in the city.

I can still see you now, about to start your first day as a teacher: adjusting your neatly pressed sari, puckering your lips in the mirror to check your lipstick. You would leave an enduring legacy, both in terms of your impact on your pupils and on the story of BAME educators in Scotland. It seems strange to think, given the current debate around Black Lives Matter, that you began

teaching only a couple of years after the assassination of Martin Luther King and the ensuing race riots across the USA.

It would be hard to underplay just how daunting life must have been for first-generation immigrants from South Asia at that time. They were not always assured of a warm welcome from the host community, even in Scotland with its reputation for tolerance. Making ends meet presented a constant struggle. Racism and prejudice were common, and forging a career was by no means straightforward. But you were determined to make a difference in your adopted homeland: bravely, you decided to train as a teacher, somehow managing to combine the exhausting demands of full-time study with raising two young children, all while living in one cramped room of a shared flat.

In the early 1970s the educational focus was primarily on 'assimilation' rather than multiculturalism: encouraging minority ethnic children to blend in with the host community, rather than embracing the richness – and opportunity – offered by their distinctive cultures and languages. For BAME educators like you, who were keen to nurture a far broader awareness of society in the classroom, there was precious little support in terms of teaching resources. They were at best old-fashioned and at worst they smacked of colonialism and imperialism.

Textbooks, visual aids and reading schemes presented a resolutely white, middle-class, sexist view of the world. There was scarcely a nod to people of colour – and where there was, the portrayal was often

stereotypical, if not borderline racist. You had to be incredibly creative in developing your own resources.

The landscape in which you began teaching 50 years ago and today's Scotland are unquestionably very different places. Our collective awareness of what is (and is not) acceptable have evolved immeasurably. We have, thankfully, made the transition from assimilation to anti-racist education, and – unlike the 1970s – today's BAME teacher has a plethora of materials dedicated to diversity and equality to choose from.

But in the current climate there is little room for complacency. The compelling stories and history of Africa and Asia – of relevance to us all – remain largely unexplored in primary curriculums. While the existence of institutional and playground racism is now acknowledged, there is considerable work to be done. Many BAME educators, unfortunately, still face challenges not dissimilar to those you confronted, and the percentage of BAME teachers in Scotland remains appallingly low.

Mum, you were a trailblazer, and you have passed the torch from your generation to ours. Current teachers have a duty to pass it on – and to ensure that its flame burns even brighter in what will, hopefully, be a brave new world. We are so proud of you – and we know that you will always be proud of us too. We promise to do our best to keep your legacy, and your memory, alive. It's the least we can do.

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Vineet Lal is a literary translator from French to English. Saroj Lal was born in Gujranwala, British India, in 1937.



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STRONG LGBTQ+ ROLE MODELS ARE VITAL

My teachers weren't allowed to talk about same-sex relationships and I didn't even realise I was gay. Inclusive representation changes everything...

 @amieamietay

“No, no, no. That’s a prince!” an eight-year-old boy in the front row cheerfully heckled as we reached the wedding part of our LGBTQ+ friendly show for kids in a London primary school. We were at a crucial point – the two princesses were about to get married. I paused the show. “It’s a princess. They’re both princesses.” He chuckled and said, “No, it’s a prince!”. “It’s definitely a princess,” I assured him. “How do you know?” he asked. “I made the play,” I replied. This answer seemed to satisfy him. He shrugged and allowed us to continue.

Later, back in the classroom, we were making shadow puppets as a follow-up activity to the performance. As always I took the opportunity to circulate and chat to the kids about the show. “What was your favourite part?” The same boy piped up again, saying, “The romance.” I had to hide an almighty grin. Half an hour ago there was a question as to whether two princesses could even get married.

I made the play, *Once Upon a City*, in 2018, with funding from the Arts Council. I’ve since toured to theatres, festivals and schools all over the UK. Over the past couple of years I’ve seen how accepting children are of the LGBTQ+ community. As soon as you explain that some women marry women and some men marry men, there’s never an issue. And there’s an added joy when you meet a child at the end, hopping up and down on one foot, desperate to tell you that they have two mums or two dads.

Some people argue that EYFS or KS1 is too young to start this

work, but I wholeheartedly disagree. Children are presented with a range of narratives, stories and movies featuring heterosexual relationships from a very young age, so it’s vital for them to see same-sex relationships too, otherwise we are telling them that these relationships are different, ‘other’ and in some way shameful.

A major catalyst for me to make this work was growing up without

any LGBTQ+ representation or role models. Knowing the impact that had on my life, I wanted to bring representation to at least a handful of children in the next generation and make their journey a little

easier than mine. Growing up under Thatcher’s Section 28, which stated that local authorities and maintained schools couldn’t promote the teaching of the acceptability of homosexuality, meant that none of my teachers were legally allowed to talk about LGBTQ+ people or same-sex relationships. There was very little representation on TV or in books. What little I did see about gay people was often negative or stereotyped. The result of this was that I didn’t realise I was gay until I was in my mid-twenties. I didn’t hide my sexuality; growing up without representation meant I simply hadn’t realised I was gay.

The introduction of compulsory inclusive sex and relationship education is a huge cause for celebration. I know first-hand the difference this will make to children who grow up to be LGBTQ+, and those that have same-sex parents, a trans family member or a gay aunt or uncle.

This year I further consolidated my theatre work for children by writing a book for teachers who may not be LGBTQ+ and need a little extra support. It contains stories, worksheets and drama activities to make delivering inclusive RSE both easy and really, really fun.

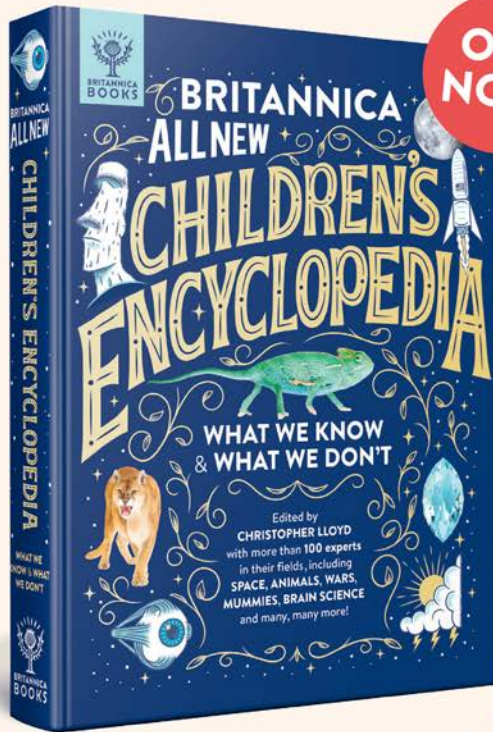
I genuinely believe that inclusive representation changes everything; it shows all children their potential and not just a small cross section. Having strong and successful role models allows pupils to find their true identity sooner and to feel proud of who they are.

I believe the earlier they see those role models, the better. It also builds acceptance and allyship from non-LGBTQ+ friends. When I ask children at the end of a show what they’ve learnt, frequently the answer is that ‘two women can get married.’ I can’t wait for the day when we have nothing to teach children anymore, because it’s just a given. **TP**

Amie Taylor is a writer, theatre maker and author of [The Big Book of LGBTQ+ Activities](#) (Jessica Kingsley Publishers).



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Help! I want my pupils to feel comfortable

Dr Monica Grey offers advice to a teacher who has students from many different cultures

I don't have much experience teaching children from cultures different to my own, but I've just landed a job in a really multicultural school. Around 50% of the children in my class speak English as an additional language and I really want to make sure that I improve their core academic skills without making them feel as if they have to abandon who they are. Any advice?

Your recognition that your own lack of experience could hamper your students' sense of identity, is the first step towards creating a culturally relevant classroom environment. The important thing to remember is that good teachers are good learners. Here's my advice for developing your confidence in teaching children from a variety of cultures, and your pupils' confidence in their cultural selves.

Listen lots

A lot of the work can be done without you actually saying anything to anyone at first. Just by listening to children's conversations you will hear them use their home language, talk about the food they love or how they interact with their older relatives. As you direct your professional curiosity towards their breaktime conversations, you'll learn a huge amount about their culture, but don't forget that what you hear will be filtered through your own cultural lens.

Admit differences

Admitting that you view your students from the perspective of your own culture is really important. Your aim is not to make pupils feel as though they are 'different', but to recognise that everyone has a different way of being. Explaining to your class that your culture is different to theirs

will put them at ease. As you talk about aspects of your culture, they will open up about aspects of theirs.

Ask questions

If there is an aspect of a pupil's culture that you don't understand or that you feel especially interested in, ask them about it. By positioning yourself as a learner, you automatically position them as an expert. This boosts their confidence and, in turn, makes them more open to asking you other work-related questions.

Step back

Who said that the teacher should always be in the teaching role? Every now and then, allow individuals or pairs of students to teach a portion of the class. It could be about a specific aspect of their culture or it could be a part of a science lesson, for instance, using culturally relevant ingredients or equipment.

Do your research

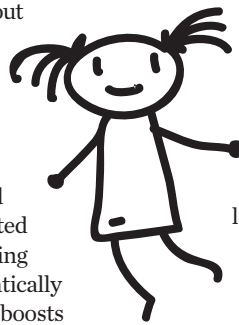
Just like you plan other aspects of your teaching, do the work to find out about traditional stories, maths puzzles or artists that are culturally relevant to your students. You are sure to learn new things, which will make you an excellent example to your students for how to develop a love for learning.

Be sensitive

By showing respect to your students' culture, you boost their confidence. This can be done in simple ways. For instance, greet them in the morning in the language that they speak at home. The key is to be emotionally sensitive towards them and adjust your behaviour accordingly.

Normalise it

It's really important to ensure that your school is a safe place for children to thrive in. Subtle actions done consistently will



have a more lasting effect than grand, one-off projects. For instance, ensuring that you have a variety of reading books that represent your pupils' cultures will have a more lasting impact than a poster project on anti-racism.

Evaluate and reflect

Reflecting on your practice should be an ongoing part of your professional development. By assessing the value of your approaches and being flexible, you'll be able to see what's worked and what hasn't.

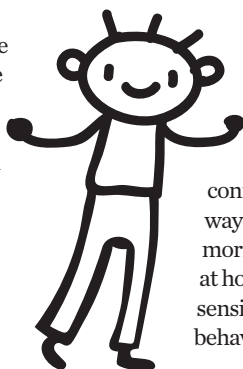
Share good practice

There will be changes that you make that have a positive effect on your pupils and the general classroom environment, so why keep it to yourself? By sharing your good practice with your colleagues through displays, staffroom discussions or meetings, you'll ensure that more children benefit from culturally relevant learning environments.



Remember to smile

This whole process should be enjoyable. If you find that it's making you and your students miserable, then you need to adjust something. Regularly check the joy gauge with your class: the more they enjoy it, the more you and they will gain from it. **TP**



Dr Monica Grey is an educational consultant and specialises in transforming nurseries, schools and other learning environments into culturally relevant safe spaces. She also manages True Vine Academy, an online portal that offers educational products and services.

truevineacademy.com

Guiding LIGHT

New advice from the DfE and NCETM can help you to focus on key learning in maths and support children to build strong foundations

BETH SMITH

For the past few years I've had the pleasure of working with trainee teachers, delivering maths content on a School Direct programme. In addition, this year I'm working with NQTs and RQTs to support their teaching in all areas, including maths. This work has led me to deeply consider how to support new teachers to plan maths effectively. There is now an abundance of maths resources available and I've seen first-hand how this can cause teachers to feel overwhelmed and spend their planning time navigating websites for activities for the children to do.

Rather than planning what children are going to *do* in maths, we need to consider what pupils are going to *learn*. This shift in thought is key, especially for new teachers. We can sometimes spend our planning time collating questions and activities for children to do, without spending enough time thinking about how this links to what pupils are learning. Even if you're using an effective set of questions, the way you deliver the lesson and structure the learning is the key component to children's understanding of maths.

What follows are some key aspects that you should consider when planning maths lessons, regardless of the resources you're using. There are also special considerations to be made this year, related to teaching in a more socially distanced manner.

Starting points

The first key consideration is children's starting points. With disruption to learning, we need to give even more consideration to previous years' learning. White Rose Maths has added recap steps to this year's curriculum to allow you time to go over previous content. It has also produced a Y1-6 progression document to support a teacher's overview of progression through the curriculum. Find it at [tinyurl.com/tp-wrm-progress](https://www.tinyurl.com/tp-wrm-progress).

The National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) has a brilliant national curriculum tool on

its website that allows you to look at blocks of learning and consider what has come before and after. You can also look at suggestions for activities and find articles, videos and exemplifications of learning for your year group. Visit [tinyurl.com/tp-maths-tool](https://www.tinyurl.com/tp-maths-tool).

Another key document is the Ready to Progress criteria, released by the DfE and NCETM in June ([tinyurl.com/tp-ready](https://www.tinyurl.com/tp-ready)). As part of its aim to "summarise the most important knowledge and understanding within each year group and

important connections between these mathematical topics", the document highlights key learning for each year group.

Interestingly, this document was already planned before the disruption to last year's learning had even happened. It links well with NCETM's professional development materials, which bring a coherence to thinking in primary maths and will help you to consider key representations and language to support children to develop their understanding of the structure of maths.



Socially distanced CPA

Representations are the next key aspect that you need to consider when planning. The shift towards concrete and pictorial representations in the past few years has been fantastic and has truly helped children to develop conceptual understanding. However, as we now consider teaching in the middle of a pandemic, I've witnessed teachers struggling to use concrete representations in a classroom where equipment cannot be shared as freely.

Although it won't be easy, it is vital that children continue to have hands-on experiences in order to develop understanding. There are many online tools, animated powerpoints and interactive slides that can model this learning to pupils, although these don't fully replicate the experience of using actual equipment. When planning, think carefully about the key models that children need to use. Use counters or buttons on a place value grid, use squared paper to make Base 10 ones, tens and hundreds, or create ten frames out of egg boxes. Instead of just looking at images of concrete

representations on worksheets or PowerPoint slides, it's vital that children actually use them if they are going to truly understand concepts deeply.

Consistent language

Linked to representation is language. The Ready to Progress criteria features 'language focus' sections throughout. Ensure your maths language is consistent across your school. A noticeable use of language is in Y1, where the document suggests the following:

Language focus

"...seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen... twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two..."

"...seven, eight, nine, one-ten, one-ten-one, one-ten-two, one-ten-three... two-tens, two-tens-one, two-tens-two..."

This use of language supports children to understand the structure of numbers. If you only use the national curriculum objectives to plan, you won't see this language in use. I've worked with Y1 teachers in the past who have been reluctant to introduce this language as it wasn't in the statutory guidance, even though it's vital for helping children to understand how numbers are built, rather than just learning a number name.

It's also key to consider consistency of language throughout year groups and topics. The language we use allows children to make connections between mathematical ideas. As in the NCETM materials, White Rose Maths materials also develop this effective language throughout its schemes to support children's understanding. Take the use of number lines and rounding, for example. Here are two examples from the Y4 programme:

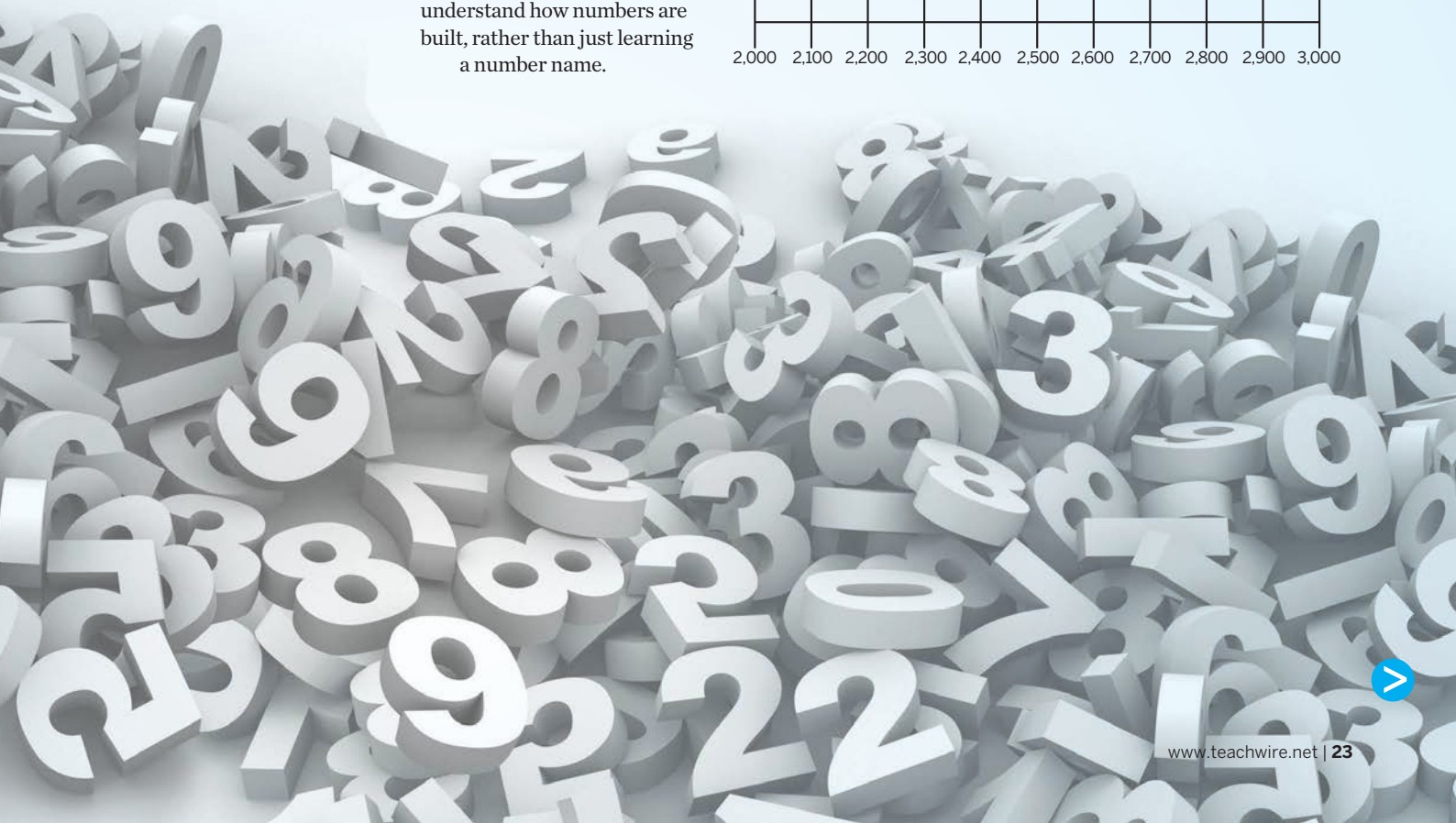
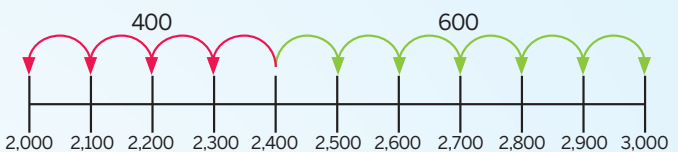
Place 2,500 on the number line.



The previous multiple of 1,000 is 2,000. The next multiple of 1,000 is 3,000. 2,500 is halfway between 2,000 and 3,000.

Round 2,400 to the nearest 1,000:

2,400 is closer to 2,000 than 3,000. 2,400 rounded to the nearest 1,000 is 2,000.



Here, the key language of ‘previous multiple’ and ‘next multiple’ is re-considered in the context of rounding and how close the number is to the multiples. This language is consistent with that in the Ready to Progress criteria, supporting teachers to use the language consistently throughout school.

Making generalisations

Drawing representations and language together, the final aspect we need to consider is how we can plan to focus children’s learning through the use of generalisations. The second aim of the national curriculum is to “reason mathematically by following a line of enquiry, conjecturing relationships and generalisations, and developing an argument, justification or proof using mathematical language.” There has been a big shift in focus towards reasoning since the 2014 curriculum, with teachers asking children to explain their thinking more in both verbal and written ways. However, this is still an area that some teachers can struggle with when planning how this is developed in lessons. In the same way that we teach children procedures and methods, we also need to consider how we develop their reasoning.

One way to do this is to focus on making generalisations. Take a look at this White Rose Maths Y4 image for adding and

subtracting ones, tens, hundreds and thousands (below).

Here, the language ‘always’, ‘sometimes’ and ‘never’ is used to create generalisations. Using place value counters, children can add hundreds

add using the column method, a common misconception is to add from left to right. When reflecting on why this is incorrect, this image explains that we must add right to left because adding can affect the

The latest guidance from the DfE and NCETM, along with other effective resources, can provide you with support to ensure that representations and language are consistent. Always remember to focus

Th	H	T	O
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1000 1000	100 100 100	10 10	1 1 1
	100 100 100		1 1
	100		
←		→	
Sometimes changes when adding 100s	Always changes when adding 100s	Never changes when adding 100s	Never changes when adding 100s

and consider which columns are affected. After completing a few examples, they can draw conclusions under each column. Consider how this language can then be applied to adding and subtracting different powers of ten.

The generalisation here leads us to see that the column we are adding is always changed (unless adding ‘0’). The columns to the right never change, and the columns to the left sometimes change. But why is this generalisation so important? When children

columns to the left. Once we’ve added, the columns to the right are no longer affected. The same applies with subtraction so you can apply the generalisation later in the learning sequence. It’s about making connections and strengthening understanding so that maths becomes interconnected and children can see how key ideas can be built upon.

Key learning

These are some key ideas to think about when you consider your maths planning.

on what the key learning is, and support children in making generalisations which can be referred back to as they build on their strong mathematical foundations. **TP**



Beth Smith is a primary maths specialist for White Rose Maths.

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DIVING HEADFIRST

How to ensure your PE curriculum is top-notch and Ofsted ready

FELICITY GARDINER

It was day five in September when we got the call. I heard my principal utter those dreaded words: “We’ve chosen to have a deep dive in PE.” I immediately launched into panic mode. Once the initial thoughts of “How do I do this?” and “Do I know enough?” had passed, I set about getting myself prepared (well, as best I could with half a day’s notice).

I took over as sport and PE lead at my school in 2016 when we underwent academisation. It was a challenging time: half of our PE was being delivered by external agencies and the subject was a very low priority in school. My journey started at a PE network meeting. I felt totally inadequate compared to

other leads – they were offering so much more and all seemed to know what they were talking about.

However, rather than feeling downhearted, I came away really inspired by what

could be achieved. Fast forward a few years and I’m extremely proud of what we offer our children in terms of PE, physical activity and school sport.

Three ‘I’s

When it comes to being deep dive ready, the three ‘I’s are huge: intent, implementation and impact. When considered carefully, they give you a tailor-made offer to suit the needs of the children in your school.

First, when thinking about intent, consider if your curriculum is ambitious for all learners and enables them to make good progress. Having a clear vision of what you want your children to learn and achieve across the school is vital. We worked hard to create ours, collaborating with all stakeholders to gain their insight into the outcomes we wanted to achieve. Even if you only have an evening’s notice, you can brainstorm all the ways PE contributes to your school and list the things your children gain from it. For example, we

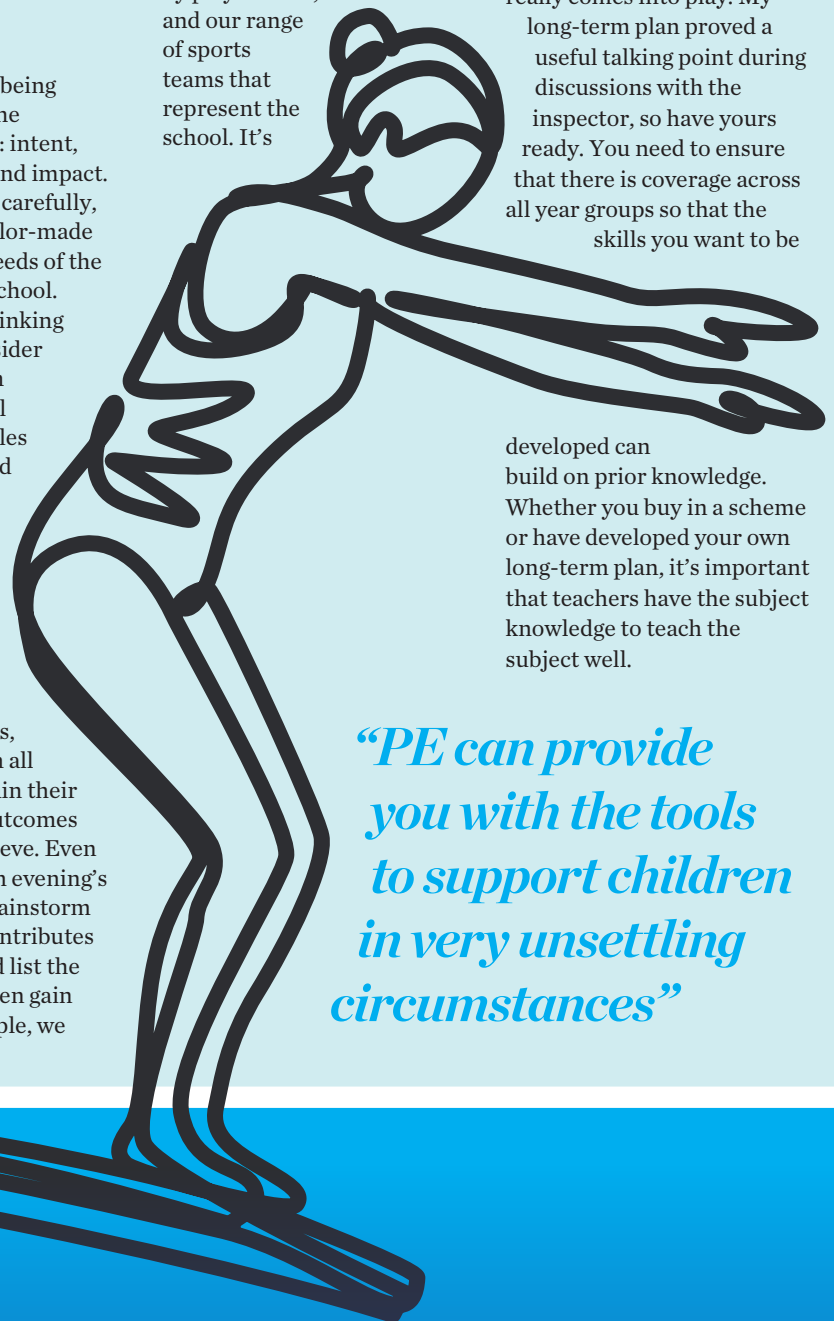
wanted all of our leavers to experience and develop the skills of leadership. We achieve this via our ‘active lunchtimes’ scheme, guided by play leaders, and our range of sports teams that represent the school. It’s

important to have your vision at the forefront of your mind when talking to inspectors.

Implementation is where a strong curriculum really comes into play. My long-term plan proved a useful talking point during discussions with the inspector, so have yours ready. You need to ensure that there is coverage across all year groups so that the skills you want to be

developed can build on prior knowledge. Whether you buy in a scheme or have developed your own long-term plan, it’s important that teachers have the subject knowledge to teach the subject well.

“PE can provide you with the tools to support children in very unsettling circumstances”



I carry out annual audits of colleagues' needs and develop a programme of CPD to support the effective delivery of PE.

If you use coaches, make sure you have a clear idea of what is being taught and how.

With impact, the most important thing to know is that your children are making progress. You need to be able to give your rationale for whatever method of assessment you use. We don't use formal assessments such as completion of skills grids, but we informally 'RAG rate' key skills for units that, when layered, give a good picture of the ability of children. Impact is not just about the curriculum though. PE offers so much more with regards to the impact on a child's health and wellbeing. Consider how you can provide children with life skills so that they can grow into healthy and active individuals.

Whole child

Most importantly, think about the impact your PE curriculum has on the whole child, and all those little things that PE offers that other subject areas can't. This proves crucial in making your school unique. The emotional health and wellbeing of children is a huge thing to consider in current times and PE can provide you with the tools to support children in very unsettling circumstances. We had a big push on mindfulness, relaxation and regular 'brain breaks' to help ease pupils back into school life post-lockdown. Consider what you do in your school, whether that's yoga, colouring club or giving

children opportunities to be play leaders or sports council members. Share the community activities you take part in that give children a sense of belonging, whether it's a themed week, Santa dash with the PTA or your May Day festival.

During our deep dive, the inspector invited me to a short 30-minute interview alongside my curriculum lead. We conducted informal observations of the PE going on in school, focusing on my perception and judgement of PE. This was followed by conversations with a group of children selected by teachers from the sessions observed. Discussions were also held with the observed teachers and the inspectors were particularly keen to speak to our NQT.

As a school we've been awarded the afPE Quality Mark, School Games Gold Mark, Youth Sport Trust Gold Quality Mark and were Midlands winners in the Sport and PE Premium Funding Awards. Working towards these accreditations required a long hard look at all aspects of our PE curriculum and whole-school offer. It gave me experience in sharing our successes with visitors. I'd really recommend applying for some awards and carrying out a thorough self-evaluation to help you know the bones of your subject.**TP**



Felicity Gardiner is PE and sport lead at John Wheeldon Primary Academy in Stafford.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS PE IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Use these questions, compiled from my deep dive experience, to focus your preparation.

Can you describe PE provision in your school?

- Have a vision document ready to share with the inspector. Alternatively, brainstorm all the things PE offers in your school and have this to hand.
- Share your long-term plan. Plans for PE and Sport Premium should be on your school website so the inspectors may have already looked at this prior to your visit.

What is the progression of skills like?

- Talk about how your long-term plan was designed. Share examples of medium-term planning and assessment documents to help explain your intent.
- Discuss how specific skills are built upon over the Key Stages and year groups.

How do you know children have made progress?

- Discuss your methods for assessment. You need to have good knowledge of the skills and capabilities of both staff and children within your school in order to be confident when talking about progression.

What support do you give to staff members?

- Share the CPD opportunities available to your staff and how you decide what training is required. Talk about the impact that staff training has had.

What makes your PE curriculum different?

- Explain how your curriculum came about. Was it designed for or by children? If you have units that your children specifically chose, talk about how these were implemented
- Tell the inspector about events or activities over the school year that help inform your curriculum.

What is physical activity like over the school day?

- Share any active learning in the curriculum that goes on in your school. Talk about initiatives you have taken part in as a school to promote health and physical activity, such as Bikeability.

How does PE support other subjects?

- Think about the opportunities for active learning and how it supports learning in core subjects
- Talk about any collaboration across subjects. For example, I worked closely with our science and PSHE leads when developing a fitness unit for PE and am now working with our geography lead to improve our teaching of orienteering.

FORCE OF HABIT

How can teachers prioritise self-care when time is so limited? It's all about implementing tiny five-minute habits, says **Steph Caswell**

If you looked at your to-do list right now, where would self-care sit? Right at the bottom, somewhere in the middle or, if my suspicions are correct, nowhere at all? Hmm, thought so. As teachers we're experts in thinking about the needs of every child in our class. We're encouraged to think of the 'whole child', taking into consideration all aspects, from academic ability to their wellbeing and family circumstances. But what about taking a view of the 'whole teacher'? Yes, there are so many important parts of the job, but what about that other 'stuff'? What about self-care and wellbeing? How often do those needs become a priority?

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, life has changed dramatically. The job you knew before lockdown no longer exists. Many teachers are struggling to cope with the changes and added pressures to a job that was already stressful enough, and it's not surprising.

It's become more important than ever, then, to put your self-care first. But how can you do it when your time is already stretched to its limit? It all comes down to habits.

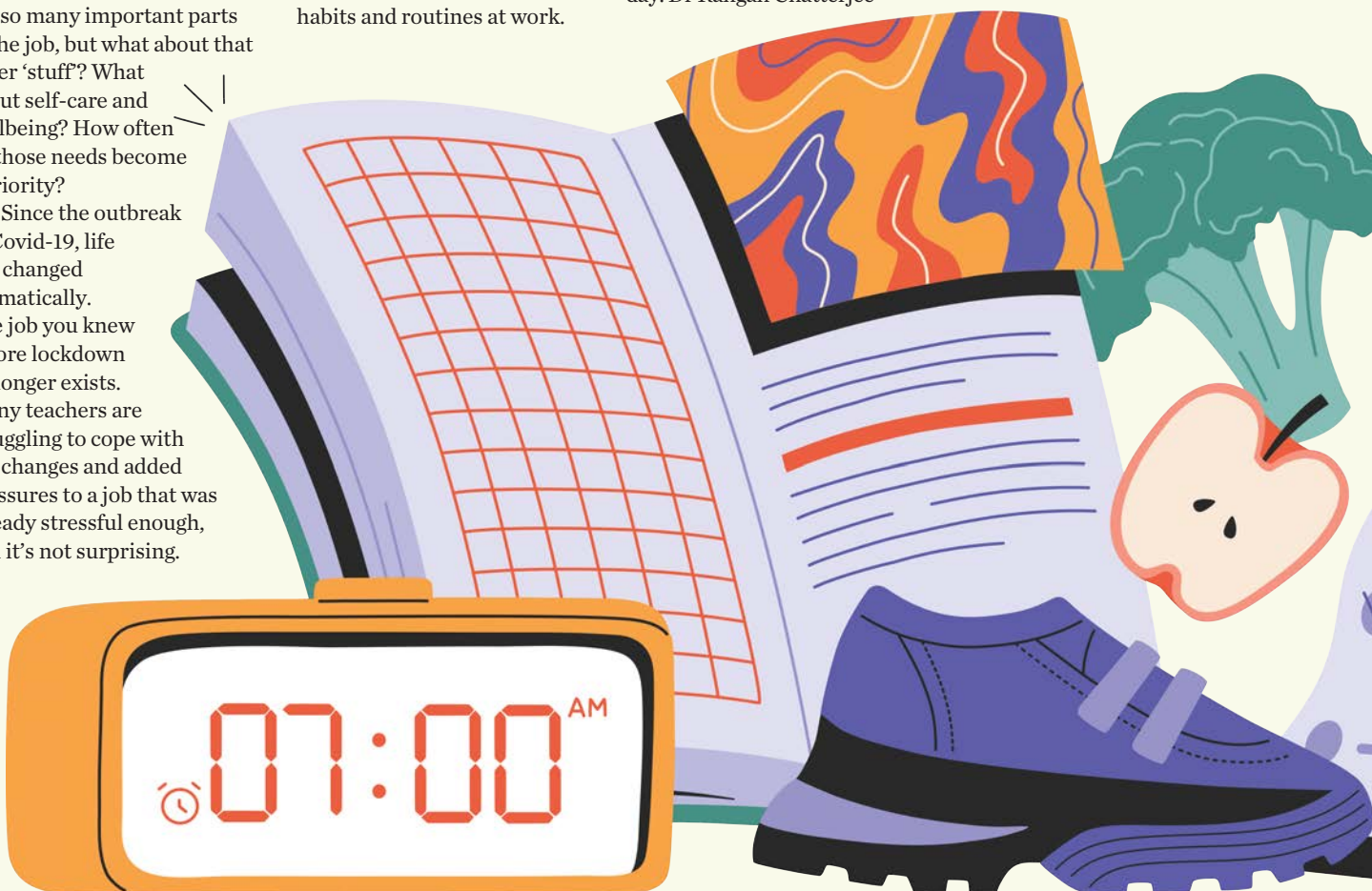
Our brains use habits as a way of operating on autopilot, allowing us to conserve energy. We have the habits of brushing our teeth before bed, putting the same leg into our trousers every morning and following the same route to school each day. If you've ever arrived at work and realised you got there without really thinking about it, that's habits and routines at work.

Meaningful change

The good news is that you can create and adopt habits for specific purposes. It's how meaningful change occurs. Building self-care habits into your daily routine isn't as challenging or time-consuming as it sounds, either. In fact, recent research from BJ Fogg, a researcher at Stanford University, shows that implementing tiny habits can be the answer you need. So, what is a tiny habit? Well, it's just as it sounds. It's almost inconsequential when you first think about fitting it into your day. Dr Rangan Chatterjee

talks about five minutes of self-care, which is essentially the same thing. Why five minutes? Because everyone can fit that into their day, right?

The theory behind tiny habits is that, by shrinking a new behaviour into something small, we avoid the feelings of overwhelm that often accompany change. A classic example is deciding to get fitter by running for 30 minutes, three times a week. We start off well, keeping to our new habit for a few weeks, but then the novelty wears off or



“By shrinking a new behaviour into something small, we avoid the feelings of overwhelm that often accompany change”

we struggle to fit 90 minutes consistently into our week. Sooner or later, those expensive running shoes are gathering dust in the wardrobe.

But if you changed the habit to be a five-minute run, you’d be more inclined to do it, wouldn’t you? Now you might have scoffed a little just then. A five-minute run? How ridiculous. But five minutes of anything is better than zero minutes. Five minutes repeated each day is over half an hour of running per week. And that’s not to be scoffed at.

Ripple effect

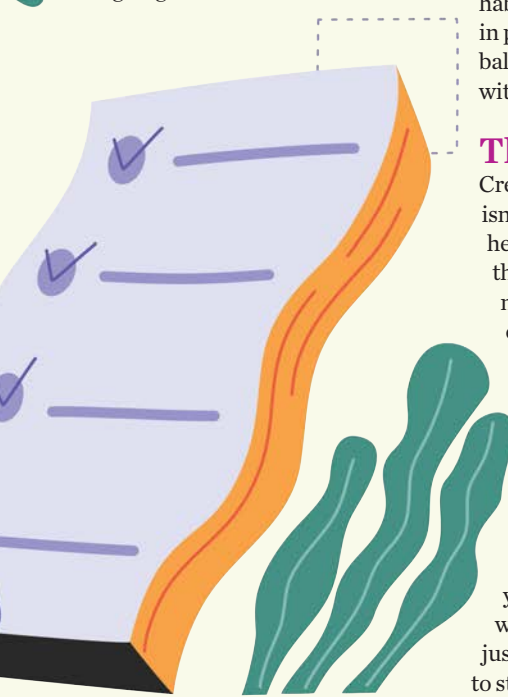
But it’s not just about the length of time you choose to create your new self-care habit either. It’s the fact that small habits done consistently lead to big changes. One morning, you’re out for your five-minute run when you decide that, actually, you’re going to do ten minutes. The

same thing happens the next day. A few weeks later, you suddenly try 15 minutes. It’s the ripple effect in action. Tiny habits lead to big changes. Some mornings you might just do five minutes, but other days you might run for 20. And the crazy thing? It’s not even about fitness levels or the amount of time you invest. It’s about putting yourself first. It’s about putting self-care at the top of your to-do list. It’s about consciously making the time to do something that will improve your wellbeing.

So, whether it’s running, yoga, gratitude journaling or dancing round the kitchen to your favourite feel-good song, putting your self-care first, even in tiny amounts, will have a big impact. It’ll begin to ripple out into other areas of your life too. You’ll soon become more attuned to your self-care needs. You’ll start going to bed earlier and adopting improved sleeping habits. You’ll put boundaries in place for your work/life balance – all from starting with just five minutes.

The whole teacher

Creating wellbeing habits isn’t just about physical health. It’s about looking at the three pillars of self-care: mind, body, spirit/connection. Maybe you’re already fit and active, but you realise you need to give some attention to your mental health. Or maybe you’re in need of some spiritual self-care, picking up connections with other people who you haven’t spoken to in a while. Whatever you need, just pick one area to focus on to start with.



TRY THESE FIVE-MINUTE SELF-CARE IDEAS

Self-care habits need to be meaningful to you. Just because other people swear by meditation, it doesn’t mean you’ll enjoy it too. Your new habit must be relatively easy so that you feel motivated to keep going. Simplicity leads to consistency. Remember to choose one area to focus on first.



Mind

- Find three things to be grateful for, even if they’re small, and record them in a gratitude journal.
- Try meditation with the Headspace app.
- Compliment a friend or colleague each day. Spreading kindness does wonders for our wellbeing.



Body

- Initiative a lunchtime wellbeing walk. Invite a colleague to go with you for added motivation.
- Start your day with some yoga stretches. Leave out your yoga mat as a visual action trigger.
- Make sure you’re drinking enough water. Keep a bottle close by and refill it every lunch and breaktime.



Soul

- Sit in the staffroom after work. Connecting with colleagues over a cuppa for a few minutes at the end of each day is so important.
- Find a positive mantra to repeat when you feel overwhelmed. Write it on a sticky note and fix it next to your mirror.
- Schedule a weekly phone call with a friend. Put a reminder on your phone or write it in your diary to make sure you do it.

Whatever your needs, adopting tiny habits can make the difference you seek. Create some action triggers to help you remember to do your new habit. Fancy trying gratitude journaling? Leave your journal on your pillow as a visual reminder. Keen to try a lunchtime walk for five minutes? Leave your trainers by the door. Interested in mindfulness? Try taking three deep breaths in and out each time the kettle boils.

Tying an action trigger to a new habit helps to embed the new behaviour into your daily routine. It preloads your brain’s decision-making process and motivates you

to go through with it. Again, you’re avoiding overwhelm and building healthy, tiny habits. As you make your way through the coming months, your self-care must become a priority to keep stress and burnout at bay. If you’ve been putting it off, start small and pick a tiny habit to try. Because if not now, when? **TP**



Steph Caswell is an author, performance coach and former teacher.

@stephcaswell_

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You probably already use the relational approach, but explicitly putting it at the heart of all you do will really make a difference

KAREN PILLING

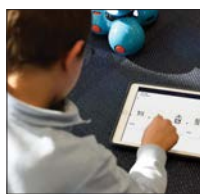
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The relational approach was first introduced in therapy and counselling and is based on the premise that most problems in life are relational. Our problems often stem from negative experiences in relationships with others. Therefore, these problems can be solved by forming relationships and interacting with 'emotionally regulated' others.

In a school context, the relationships that may have caused damage may be with parents, family members or previous school staff. As with attachment theory, these embryonic relationships can shape how a child grows and develops. If they are dysfunctional, it can often negatively affect development. This can be improved by forming good relationships in school. By following a relational approach which strives to develop positive relationships, you can have a positive impact on all other areas of school.

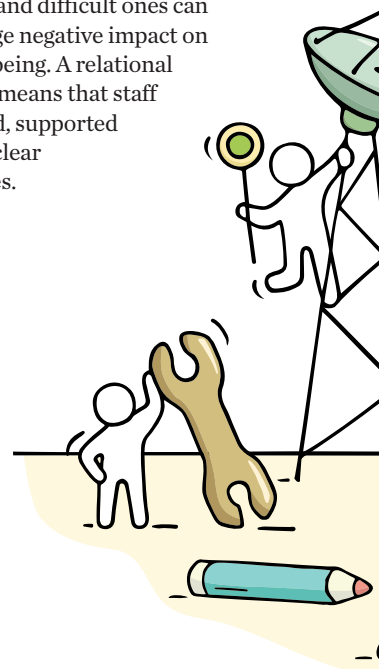
Why does it work?

As we all know, behaviour is a language. If children are behaving in a certain way, it's often because they are trying to tell us something. For some children this will be behaviour which shouts, "Leave me alone; I'm angry; I'm hurt." For others, it may be quiet, unobtrusive behaviours which say, "I'm scared; I'm anxious; I don't know what to do." The relational approach enables you to identify what it is that a child is telling you (even if they're not actually saying it), and what you can do to help.

We all know a member of staff that seems to have the 'magic touch' with those hard-to-reach children. It's not because they are actually magic (however much I

want to think that is the case). If you observe them, it's often because of the relationship they have formed with the child. The pupil knows and trusts them. A good relationship with someone means you feel happy, safe and secure in their company. This means that clear boundaries can be set and the child knows what to expect. It's often a lack of boundaries that causes anxiety and stress, leading to changes in behaviour. Sometimes children will form a relationship with a particular member of staff and it's only that person who can calm them down or find out what's wrong. Obviously this all falls apart when they are away or busy. A whole-school relational approach means that children develop positive relationships with lots of adults and children, helping them to feel safe all of the time.

A whole-school approach also means that staff feel safe too. Staff relationships can sometimes be tricky, and difficult ones can have a huge negative impact on your wellbeing. A relational approach means that staff feel valued, supported and have clear boundaries.



Where to begin

One of the great things about the relational approach is that it's really easy to implement. Most of us already use this approach in our everyday practise. In my school, one of the first things we did was whole-school training on attachment and trauma. This was led by Child in Mind, a therapeutic company that we work with.

Next we introduced positive greetings in the morning. Every member of staff stood at their classroom door and greeted children individually. Since schools reopened this has become even more important, now that children are no longer brought to the classroom door by their parents. This first interaction can set the tone and, for some children, will be the first time an adult has spoken to them with kindness that day. Asking about little things like football training takes a few seconds but means a lot to children.

We've also ensured that we have secure routines and boundaries in place, both as a school and in individual classrooms. Teachers devise classroom rules linked to our whole school values at the start of each half term and remind children of these regularly.

Staff were trained on how to use Dan Hughes' PACE approach (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy). We introduced 'scripts' based on this which helped to remind children of rules without getting into discussion or negotiation. We also introduced restorative justice when dealing with children's fallings out. Staff were given prompt cards to help them start restorative conversations. Initially this approach took up a lot of staff time, but after a while we began to notice that pupils were using it themselves, meaning they didn't need as much staff input when dealing with arguments.

Next we looked at what to do when children aren't following the rules. Children who haven't had positive relationships early on often need to be 'taught' what is expected. Consequences that teach better behaviour, rather than punish poor behaviour, have a much greater impact. Shame-based behaviour systems, such as traffic lights and reward charts, can actually exacerbate the behaviours you're trying to avoid. When we feel ashamed, it can lead us to feel angry and defensive, which is why some children seem to be 'in the red' every day. These

approaches add to a child's negativity and don't reduce negative behaviours in the long-term.

Relevant consequences

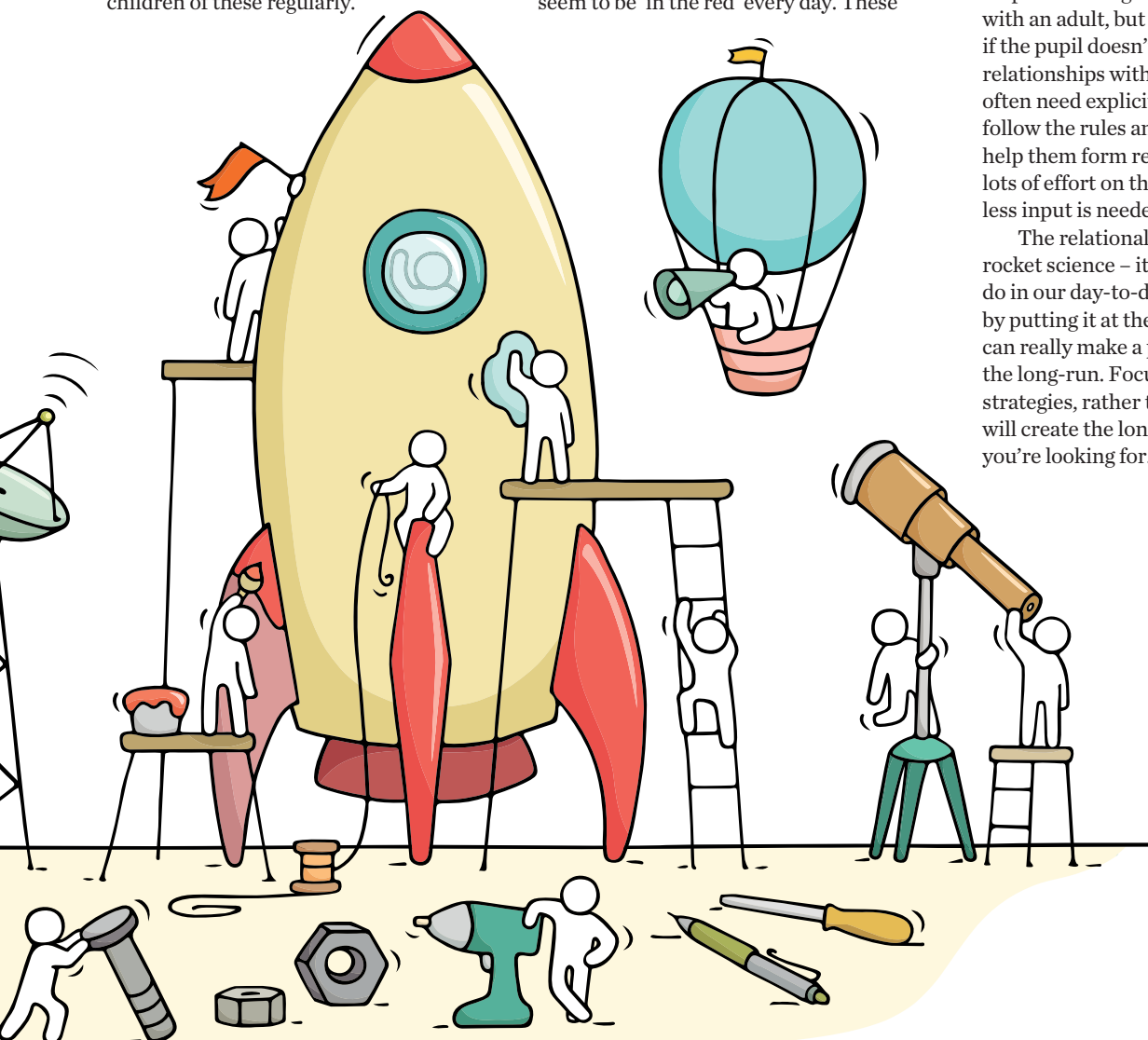
The relational approach suggests that children need consequences that teach, rather than punish. Relevant consequences, rather than arbitrary ones, are fairer and help children to understand the effect their behaviour has on others. For example, if a child is not lining up properly, they'll be asked to walk with the teacher at the front. If they don't complete their work, they have to finish it at break or at home. In the past, pupils often told me that they couldn't remember why they were in trouble or that their consequence was "unfair". This has significantly reduced since introducing relevant consequences.

For children with additional needs such as ASD, PDA or SEMH, the relational approach is pivotal. In the past it was felt that these children responded really well to one-to-one support because it helped them with their work. What actually helps is forming a positive relationship with an adult, but this can be detrimental if the pupil doesn't then go on to form relationships with others. These children often need explicit teaching of how to follow the rules and additional support to help them form relationships. Spending lots of effort on this initially means much less input is needed later.

The relational approach isn't rocket science – it's something we all do in our day-to-day lives. However, by putting it at the heart of all you do it can really make a positive difference in the long-run. Focusing on preventative strategies, rather than responsive ones, will create the long-term impact you're looking for. **TP**



Karen Pilling is a SEND consultant and deputy headteacher at Chapel Street Primary in Manchester. She has been a SENCo for five years.



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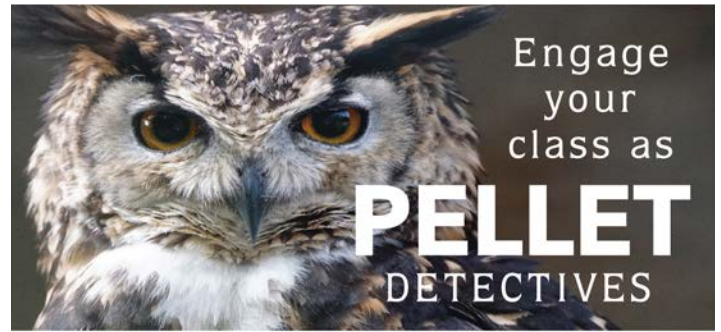
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Playing by the **RULES**

If we value children's creativity, why are so many maths lessons based on recalling abstract, unrelated algorithms?

JOHN BEE

I like maths because it has a right or wrong answer." This sentence can be heard in classrooms across the UK, but is maths providing us with a false sense of security? Is there more at play?

We've all looked at fractions with terror in our eyes, wondering whether the 'top number' is the numerator or denominator. Do we need to keep or change the denominators so they are equivalent? What about keeping, flipping and changing the digits? Is $\frac{1}{4} > \frac{1}{5}$? Multiplying fractions is easy: just multiply the 'top number' by the 'bottom number'.

This kind of approach relies heavily on following and remembering rules and procedures. Debate, reasoning and even thinking become limited. As a profession we celebrate the creative and imaginative capacity of children. Why, then, do some maths classes become elaborate lessons in remembering the particular rules of abstract, unrelated algorithms? Of course, we should not underplay the importance of algorithms and mathematical fluency, but this should be an end goal of teaching once children have mastered concepts, not the dominant pedagogy or approach.

Most teachers know how and why algorithms work; children less so. It's our job as teachers to

expose mathematical structures to make abstract processes concrete and clear. Under this lens, it is not difficult to see why around a quarter of children do not reach the expected standard for mathematics at Y6. In a curriculum which places emphasis on procedural, unrelated facts, children may miss the connections within maths, such as how learning to count in twos, threes, fives and tens in KS1 links to reading and interpreting scales on graphs in KS2, or how learning about factors and multiples helps when solving problems linked to fractions. It's essential that children make links if they are to think like mathematicians.

Some teachers already use reasoning and allow children space to think and justify, but do we already have set parameters for success? Are we only looking for reasoning which ultimately arrives at a given answer? If so, how do we move away from a right/wrong culture in maths? Putting debate, discussion and reasoning at the centre of lessons can transform teaching and learning and, ultimately, the culture of mathematics. Here's five principles to adhere to.

1 Start with a genuine question

A few years ago, I used to watch the Saturday night TV show *Take Me Out*, in which an array

of girls looking to go on a date would switch off their light if they were not interested in the man who emerged from the 'love lift'. Making children write down a dry learning objective such as "To add fractions" instantly turns the lights off behind their eyes. Consider the below examples:

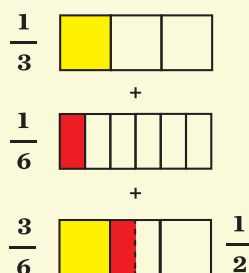
Example 1

To add fractions

$$\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{6} = ?$$

Example 2

What do you notice?



The first example requires memory of the algorithm and rules. The second, however, provides the answer but elicits children to explain using equivalences, models and images to understand how and why the algorithm works. You don't even need to mention the word 'fraction' initially.

2 Ditch the calculation lists

When presented with a list of unrelated calculations, children rely on a process or memory. However, as soon as they arrive at an answer, the thinking stops. An alternative is to offer different models or images that pupils need to match or write calculations for. For example, show the numbers 151 and 515 and ask what is the same and what is different. This

can lead to powerful transformative discussions. Similarly, showing models of fractions and asking what pupils notice encourages debate, justification and reasoning.

3 Avoid 'yes' and 'no'

You may be the teacher, but you're not the answer sheet. As soon as you say 'yes' or 'no', you limit pupils' thinking and reasoning. Instead, ask *why* or *how* a concept works. This is an effective way to strengthen and deepen children's understanding.

4 Explore the children's ideas

To be told 'no' by a teacher is disempowering and disengaging. To have your answer proven wrong by peers is a learning experience. Encourage exploration, drawing, creating and designing in your maths classroom to bring debate alive.

5 Get creative

Use practical equipment, models and images to spark discussion, debate and reasoning. Double-sided counters are great for revealing mathematical structures. For example, displaying four counters with two red sides up and two yellow sides up shows that $\frac{2}{4}$ is equivalent to $\frac{1}{2}$. **TP**

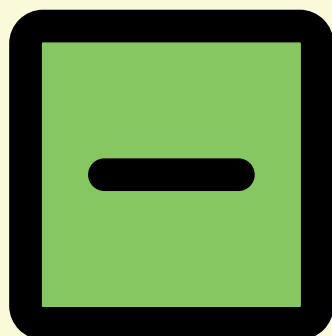


*John Bee is head of KS2 and maths leader at a primary school. He is the author of **Maths Mastery***

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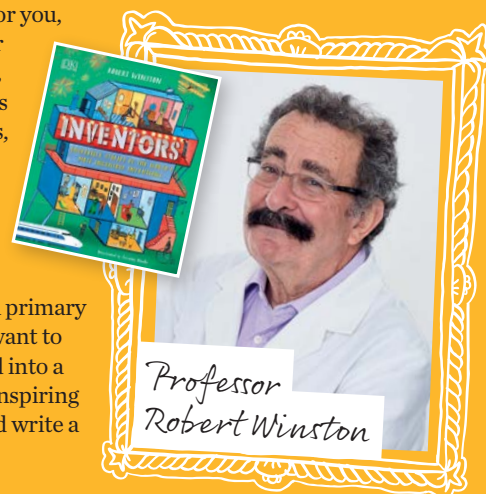
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Writing non-fiction can be a tricky business for a primary class. Once they've decided on the information they want to share, if you're not careful writing can quickly descend into a list of facts. In this episode, Professor Winston shares inspiring and motivational advice about how to research, plan and write a piece of engaging non-fiction.

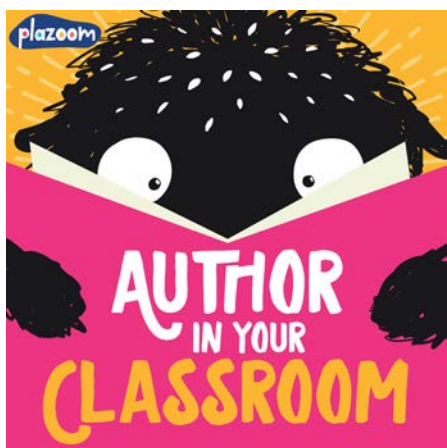


Professor Robert Winston



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1 WHAT MAKES GOOD WRITING?

"I don't think there is such a thing as science writing. I think there's just good writing and not so good writing. Good writing, in my view, involves telling a story. We listened to stories a hundred thousand years ago around the fire outside our cave mouths, and we still want to hear stories today. With this science book I've tried to tell, in a very limited space, a story about each of the inventors."

2 A LITTLE EMBELLISHMENT

"With a lot of these inventors we don't know very much about them, so to some extent some of the things the book is saying about them is what we *understand* they said or *think* they did. There is an element of embellishing things a bit to make them more interesting. I think that's inevitable and I don't think that's bad writing."

3 WORKING COLLABORATIVELY

"I go into schools a great deal and talk to children about what I think it requires to be successful. The first thing to realise is that none of us are geniuses. A genius is very rare and, actually, you wouldn't *want* to be a genius. What we need to be able to recognise is that you have to keep learning. The more you learn, the more useful you are both to yourself and to other people. I think that geniuses are exceptional because they work separately and we don't really understand them all the time, but the way to succeed is to work collaboratively with other people."

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PREVIOUS EPISODES

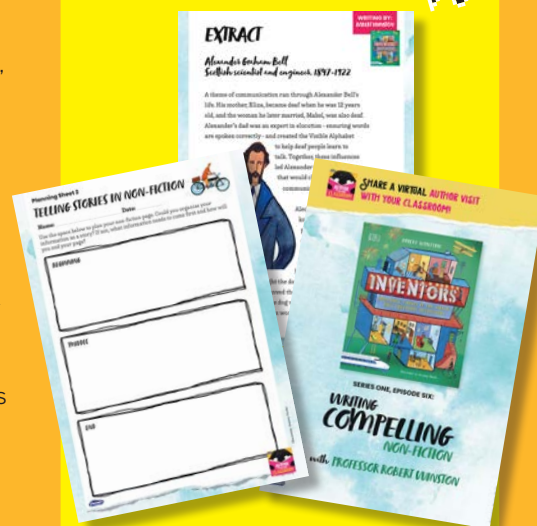


CRESSIDA COWELL, Children's Laureate and author of *The Wizards of Once* series, spoke about the power of creativity. Download our teaching sequence, including lesson plans, teacher notes and activity sheets, and give children the chance to create a new magical creature and write a scene featuring their invention.



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Embracing ORACY

The ability to use speech clearly and with confidence is crucial for successful outcomes – in literacy and in life...

SUE DRURY

Coined in the 1960s by British researcher and educator Andrew Wilkinson, 'oracy' describes the ability to express yourself fluently in speech. Over the decades, its role in education has become better understood and more highly valued. After all, what better way could there be to demonstrate understanding than the ability to convey an idea clearly to someone else? This holds true in everything, from explaining your reasoning in maths to responding appropriately to an alternative perspective on life in RE or PSHE.

That said, it is the skilful manipulation of words that forms the bedrock of oracy, and literacy is, therefore, the area in which it is most appropriately taught. Being able to write standard English well begins with being able to speak it fluently. That's why it is so important for young writers in particular to rehearse sentences verbally before putting pencil to paper.

More than meets the ear

Oracy covers many different aspects. These range from basic features such as the volume, clarity, pace and tone of the delivery, to broader considerations such as respecting the audience, listening and taking turns. Then of course there's choice of words, rhetoric and content, not to mention the ability to organise and explain your ideas verbally. Fortunately, there are lots of ways to practise all these skills within your lessons without devouring huge chunks of your teaching time.

First, you need to set some rules and expectations. For a start, insist on standard English whenever your pupils are talking

within a class context and don't be afraid to correct them if necessary: "It's *those* pencils, not *them* pencils," and so on. That means, of course, that you need to set a good example, so work hard to eradicate any bad habits that you might have developed over the years.

Questions and answers

Make time for short word games, perhaps as a warm-up activity. There are plenty to choose from, but ones that involve questioning and responding are particularly good for developing oracy skills. For example, younger pupils love '20 questions' (in which only 'yes' or 'no' answers are allowed) while older ones might enjoy some version of 'Just a Minute', the long-running radio game.

A broad vocabulary is an essential part of improving pupils' life chances. Use oracy activities to help children expand their personal lexicons, perhaps by getting them to explain or define less common words, or even challenging them to include these words in everyday conversation.

4 PLAZOOM RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ORACY IN THE CLASSROOM

Topical Tuesdays

Weekly debates on current affairs. bit.ly/tporacy1

Bug Banquet

Could your pupils persuade you to eat insects? bit.ly/tporacy2

Tier 2 Vocab Cards

Encourage ambitious language choices. bit.ly/tporacy3

Classroom Display

Figurative language posters to inspire writing. bit.ly/tporacy4

Compelling arguments

More interesting speakers make good use of rhetorical devices, such as humour or figurative language. Anyone who has heard a badly-pitched wedding speech will know that using humour effectively is not as easy as it might seem, so school could provide a safe space for practising that. Much the same is true of rhetorical flourishes, so encourage pupils to use techniques such as similes, metaphors and personification when they are speaking.

Of all the oracy skills, the ability to debate effectively must be one of the most useful, because it encompasses so many important aspects, from marshalling ideas and information to 'reading' the audience. You could include oral debates as part of the planning and preparation for a persuasion or balanced argument writing unit, or why not make time for a weekly debate based on current affairs?

Ultimately, by introducing oracy activities to your timetable, probably on a 'little and often' basis, you could have a massive impact on your pupils' ability to express themselves clearly – and that will be good news for both their academic achievement and their life chances. Innit, though? **TP**



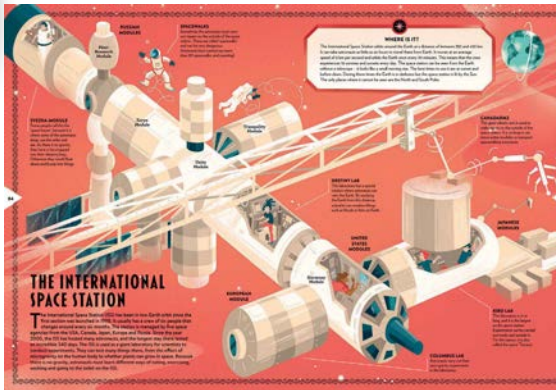
Sue Drury is literacy lead at Plazoom, the expert literacy resources website.

Find more advice at plazoom.com/blog

 plazoom.com



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Amazing Islands is a fact-filled, colourful celebration of island wildlife, history and culture. Discover 100 of the planet's most magical islands — their wildlife, trees, diversity, people, treasures and more. From islands that have been taken over by animals to islands made of shells, this book takes you on an exciting tour of some of the smallest land masses in the world. The book includes a world map, which plots all the islands found in the book, plus fold-out flaps with engaging lists of island facts.

What's on offer?

- *Space Maps* by Lara Albanese, illustrated by Tommaso Vidus Rosin (£18.99), featuring amazing facts and 24 maps
- *Amazing Islands* by Sabrina Weiss, illustrated by Kerry Hyndman (£14.99), featuring a world map and fold-out flaps with engaging lists of islands facts
- Curious to learn more? A GoCuriosity license is the perfect learning support to accompany these books. Visit gocuriosity.com for more information

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*Competition closes at 5pm on 8th January 2021. Winner will be notified within 21 days. Full terms and conditions available at teachwire.net

WHY I LOVE...

Claire Theobald from the BNF discusses the Eat Like A Champ programme

ABOUT ME:

NAME:
Claire Theobald

JOB ROLE:
Education service manager at the British Nutrition Foundation and former primary teacher

FAVOURITE FEATURE:
Eat Like A Champ can help pupils develop healthy habits at an early age



issues like climate change and nutrition into the classroom might seem daunting, developing healthy habits at an early age can provide pupils with a deeper understanding of sustainability that they can take with them as they grow.

Free digital resources

The Eat Like A Champ programme offers free resources aimed at children aged nine to ten. There are additional 'thinking' questions for pupils to consider and research by themselves or with classmates.

Written by experts
The programme content is



based around the Eatwell Guide and has been developed with health, sustainability and education experts. Topics include healthy eating, food waste, recycling, hydration, climate change and physical activity, all linked to UK curriculums.

Contact:
Download Eat Like A Champ resources at eatlikeachamp.co.uk

Promotes healthy lifestyles

Eat Like A Champ can help increase awareness of the importance of healthy, sustainable lifestyles in pupils at a young age. While bringing serious

One-hour sessions

Each lesson is designed to last approximately one hour and is supported with a variety of adaptable and engaging resources, including lesson plans, worksheets, card activities, and PowerPoint presentations.

3 REASONS TO TRY... Safety Net

Help parents keep their children safe online with an expert programme of webinars and resources



1 DESIGNED BY EXPERTS

The Keeping Children Safe Online programme combines live webinars, remote learning and family resources to help schools equip parents with the tools they need to keep their children safe online. It has been developed in collaboration with Home Office PREVENT and the Police Crime Commission.

used to influence and coerce children into making bad choices and educate parents on how to help tackle online bullying, grooming and radicalisation. Parents are provided with a Safety Net book, proven to help families have open and honest discussion in the home from an early age.

2 PROVEN TO HELP

The hard-hitting 60-minute live webinar sessions for parents expose the hidden dangers children face online. They address methods

3 WIDELY USED

Safety Net is used by many schools, local authorities and multi-agency partnerships across the UK and helps parents to learn about online vulnerability.

Parents will discover how to keep their children safe when using the internet, social media and online gaming. This is particularly important as we adapt to living and working in unusual circumstances due to Covid-19.

Contact:
For more information email info@skipsed.com or visit skipsafety.net

At a glance

- Live webinars for parents that expose the hidden dangers children face online
- Address bullying, grooming, radicalisation and how to stay safe on social media and online gaming
- Used by many schools, local authorities and multi-agency partnerships across the UK

INSIDE THIS SECTION



We review five brand new titles that primary-age children will love, including *Crocodile Tears* by Roger McGough



Use these methods from Geraldine Magennis to seek out pupils' views on what entices them to read for pleasure



Use picturebook *Look Up* to learn about Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space



Discover the titles your classroom can't afford to be without as we celebrate the amazing world of children's writing

→→→ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Do you know what they know? These handy VGP assessment and activity packs from literacy experts Plazoom cover all the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation terminology in Appendix 2 for Y1-6. They are ideal for revisiting and assessing previously taught skills, checking for knowledge gaps and for intervention or catch-up work. Visit plazoom.com/collections/plan-assess-review



Just LIKE ME

When children feel represented by the characters in stories, it can have a huge positive impact on their relationship with reading

ZANIB MIAN

My sister, a primary school teacher, poked me at the dinner table one evening. “Your fault!” she said, “I keep hearing giggles and whispers in the classroom and when I investigate, it’s them sharing a funny bit from your book under the table!” “Hah – fantastic!” I smiled proudly. My sister added, “I’ve never had that before with a book. It’s been doing the rounds.”

She teaches at a school in Camden with a high proportion of Muslim students. Their love for my book, *Planet Omar*, stemmed from being able to relate so much to the family depicted in it. It gave me heaps of pleasure to hear of the classroom shenanigans Omar had stirred up – young readers were seeing themselves in a book that they really enjoyed. They saw a family much like theirs, doing the everyday things they do. It wasn’t a textbook that only spoke about their culture in a boring way, to teach others. Instead, it was funny and real life and at their school for all to read.

White crayon

This wasn’t something that I experienced in childhood. When I was young, people like me simply weren’t in story books. I don’t have many memories from when I was a little girl in Y1, but I remember the following incident so vividly – perhaps

because it was such a strange thing. Our teacher had asked us to draw pictures of ourselves. I finished colouring mine in and marched over to present it to her, proudly. But the teacher said: ‘You haven’t coloured your face in.’ So I grabbed a white crayon and coloured my face in and went back to my teacher. She said that it was all wrong, but I didn’t understand why. I was lost. I didn’t get it at all. People in pictures *always* had white faces.



Sadly, some 30 years later, I still don't see enough black, Asian and minority ethnic characters as the main protagonists in children's fiction. CLPE's 2019 Reflecting Realities report found that although BAME pupils make up 33.1% of the school population in England, only 4% of books published in 2018 featured a BAME protagonist. This increased from 1% the year before, so things are changing slowly. Publishers and book charities are now, I feel, really getting behind bringing readers books that represent everyone. This is reflected in the fantastic line-up of books for World Book Day 2020 – one of which, I'm thrilled to say, is Planet Omar.

Mum's hijab

I think it is essential that all children know that, like Omar, they can be the heroes in stories too. My sister's students only affirmed what I had always believed – everyone needs to see themselves in books. This was the whole reason I gave up a career in teaching biology A-level and GCSE science so I had more time to write.

“It wasn't a textbook that only spoke about their culture in a boring way, to teach others”

Those children had felt represented in a book in their school environment, and it had a huge positive impact on their relationship with reading and also on how understood and welcome they felt in their world.

This was a book they could find at the school library, see on the shelves in Sainsbury's and Waterstones and talk to their friends about – even friends of other faiths or no faith. They could talk about their mum's hijab or how they stop everything they are doing multiple times in the day to pray, the same way Omar's family does. They know that

their non-Muslim friends love Omar for the same reasons they do; because he feels like their friend and themselves, all at the same time. Just like them, he comes from an ordinary family, full of all the typical silliness, sibling fights, giggles and mischief.


Safe environment

Inclusive stories are not only written for people to see themselves in books. They are also a perfect medium for teaching children about diversity and race. They provide a safe environment for children to find the answers to questions they've always wondered about, but never really had the courage to voice: why do Muslim women wear hijab?; why do Muslims fast?; what are families with different cultures actually like?

Classrooms are the most important places children can find books that represent. Hooray to all of the wonderful, life-changing teachers who go above and beyond to source the kinds of books that build bridges, break down barriers and make the world a better place. **TP**

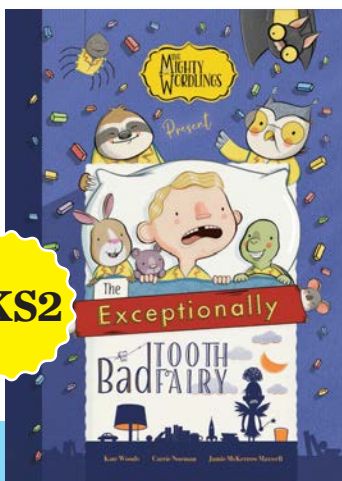


Zanib Mian is the author of the Planet Omar series, published by Hodder Children's Books.

 @zendibble

Book CLUB

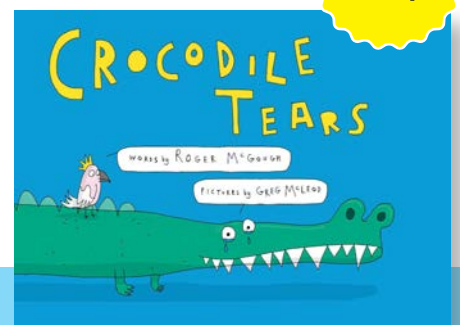
We review five brand new titles that your class will love



LKS2



KS2



KS1/2

The Exceptionally Bad Tooth Fairy

by Kate Woods & Carrie Norman
(£12.99, Norman Woods Publishing Ltd)

As all primary teachers know, helping children to build a strong vocabulary is vital. In fact, a wide vocabulary is a reliable predictor of success in later life. This unique book aims to open children's minds to exciting new words and meanings. On each left-hand page, pupils can read the tale of Jack and his scheme to ambush the tooth fairy. On the facing right-hand page, three words from the story are highlighted, with accompanying illustrations, definitions, synonyms (which readers are encouraged to 'swap' in), example contexts and etymologies from a cast of Latin-named cartoon characters called The Mighty Wordlings. For example, children will learn that 'gawping' comes from the old English word 'galp', meaning 'yawning', and has the synonyms 'gawking', 'gaping' and 'gazing'. Co-author Carrie Norman is principal of Peckover Primary in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, and her language development knowledge shines through here.

The Secret Explorers and the Tomb Robbers

by SJ King
(£5.99, DK)

What do you get if you combine fact-packed non-fiction with an exciting adventure narrative? The answer is The Secret Explorers – a diverse STEM supergroup comprising eight children from all four corners of the globe, each with their own area of expertise. Here they're banding together to stop the Cairo Museum from closing down by travelling back in time to Ancient Egypt to prevent thieves from robbing treasure from the Pharaoh's tomb. While they're absorbed in the action-packed plot, children will be picking up facts about real-life Pharaoh Khufu and his treasures, ancient Egyptian religion, and how mummies were made. Playful black and white illustrations make the text accessible and keep kids engaged, while a reference section at the back featuring timelines, quizzes, maps and glossaries will help pupils to extend their knowledge. Other titles in the series cover dinosaurs, whales, comets, volcanoes and rainforests.

Crocodile Tears

by Roger McGough
(£12.99, Otter Barry Books)

Crocodile has decided that "the jungle jangle's" not for her, so she disguises herself as a banana and stows away on a ship to London to find freedom and adventure. Despite the famous sights of the nation's capital, city life on a stone-cold street soon begins to pall. Will crocodile tears become real tears for the family and home she has left behind? With witty, rollicking verse and poignant letters from the crocodile to her mother, this is a fantastic picturebook for reading aloud in class. As would be expected from national treasure Roger McGough, it's packed with wordplay which pupils will love, and the facsimile notes from croc to mum provide lots of scope for letter-writing extension activities. At its heart, this is a story about going out to explore the world and learning what home means to you. A lesson based on the exploits of the animals who took to city streets during lockdown would be a fun starting point.

→→→ **RECOMMENDED**
RESOURCES



GaPS teaching is a serious business, but when it comes to embedding understanding and revising key skills, injecting some fun into proceedings can have a powerful impact. Why not investigate Plazoom's brilliant collection of grammar games, designed to maximise retention and recall of crucial learning points from Y1-6? Visit plazoom.com/collections/grammar-games

Meet the author

JULIET CLARE BELL ON TEACHING YOUNG CHILDREN ABOUT CONSENT



Why is teaching consent important?
When young children learn about consent and boundaries as a

normal part of healthy relationships, they'll be less inclined to behave non-consensually as they get older. They'll also be more likely to recognise unhealthy behaviours towards them, and have the language and confidence to say no. Stories can help to introduce these concepts in a memorable and non-alarming way. At this age, it's about getting children to respect themselves and others, and to understand boundaries. And what's the clearest way to find out if someone wants something? You ask first...

Was the book always destined to feature tickling?

I knew I'd use tickling to illustrate the concept of consent because it's so familiar to children, and it's often done by someone who thinks it's fun for everyone. Clearly it isn't: some children hate it, so there was a real opportunity in the story for misunderstanding and then learning by the main character. I experimented for a while with an octopus (all those tentacles for tickling) but I felt a monkey was a more relatable character for a young child.

How did your background in developmental psychology inform the book?

It's a very specific message – ask first. I wanted to use all the strategies I could to ensure that the message would get through in a non-mocking way to young children. The book deliberately differs in style from my previous books (which have tackled serious issues in more subtle ways). I'd never used animals as main characters or had a character directly addressing the reader. I needed a fun and playful story given the serious subject matter. I wrote the book after reading about the Stanford sexual assault trial in 2016 and not being able to find accessible, non-threatening stories for young children about boundaries.

How would you like teachers to use this book in the classroom?

Be bold, have fun, play around with characters' voices. Teaching resources, using the book in a fun and age-appropriate way, are available at julietclarebell.com from mid-November.



KS2

The Night Bus Hero by Onjali Q Rauf (£6.99, Orion Children's Books)

This novel from Onjali Q Rauf, bestselling author of the award-winning *The Boy at the Back of the Class*, is as surprising and compelling as her previous hit and likely to be just as popular with pupils. Having upset most of his family and classmates, ten-year-old bully and narrator of the story, Hector, fixes his hatred on a local homeless man whom he assumes is responsible for a series of thefts from London landmarks. When Hector discovers he is mistaken he sets out to track down the true thief, learning life lessons along the way from the homeless community he previously held in such disdain, as well as his arch-enemy, class swot Mei-Li. Deftly tackling bullying, homelessness and the redemptive power of kindness, the story also deals enough intrigue to interest older readers. With great pace and humour too, this is an ideal class reader and the extra resources at the end will help to prompt further discussion.
Recommended by ReadForGood.org



KS1

Ask First, Monkey! by Juliet Clare Bell (£12.99, Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

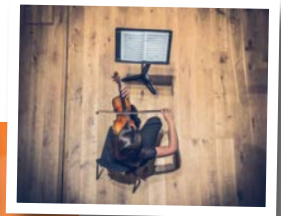
This light-hearted picturebook has been designed to help Early Years and KS1 children understand consent. Monkey is the best tickler in the world (even his mum says so), but what happens if some of his friends don't want to be tickled? With teacher guidance included at the back, this entertaining story is great for helping young children to understand the idea of personal boundaries and teaching them to consider the feelings of others. As part of a lesson about consent under the new PSHE curriculum, it's a great way to empower children to respect themselves and others, and teach them that a reason for 'no' is never needed – it just needs to be respected. The simple language means this book can be used for EAL pupils and children with autism. Author Juliet Clare Bell holds a PhD in developmental psychology from the University of Bristol.

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Out of this **WORLD**

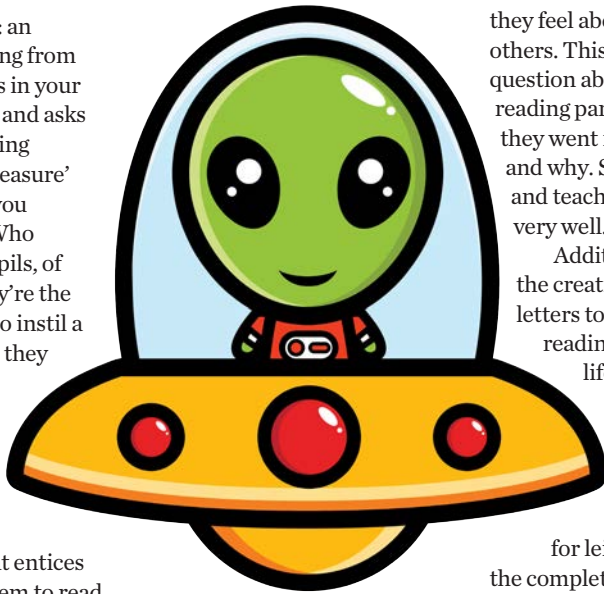
Inform your practice by using creative methods to seek out pupils' views on what entices them to read for pleasure

DR GERALDINE MAGENNIS

Picture this: an alien visiting from Mars lands in your classroom and asks you, "What is this thing called 'reading for pleasure' all about?" How do you answer? Not sure? Who do you ask? Your pupils, of course! After all, they're the ones you are trying to instil a love of reading in, so they should have some very interesting insights to share. Using creative methods to seek out your pupils' views on what entices or disincentivises them to read voluntarily can produce some very worthwhile information that you can use to shape your practice.

So how do you go about getting authentic information from your pupils who, no doubt, are eager to please you? In one case study, a teacher resolved this by asking her Y4 pupils to express their views via regular class activities. This approach is based on Lundy's pupil voice model (2007). Lundy asserts that if children are given space, voice, audience and influence to express their views, then meaningful data can result.

First of all, the teacher took a general gauge of pupils' views on reading by reconfiguring a recognised reading attitude questionnaire into a cartoon strip. The main character asking the questions was Dino the dinosaur. The difference in engagement between the pilot and final version of this questionnaire was eye-opening. It's amazing how a fictional character can draw out honest answers from children.



Next, a random sample of six pupils was selected to participate in an array of interactive tasks to reveal why they did or didn't read for pleasure. The teacher created a short animation to introduce Ali the alien. Just like with the dinosaur, the pupils connected immediately with the character and began eagerly educating their new alien friend.

To ensure that a comprehensive range of opinions were collected, pupils were asked to express themselves using a mixture of materials and media while being guided through a succession of focus group discussions, art-based activities and journal-writing tasks. These included crafting a letter to Ali describing what is meant by 'reading', placing written statements in order of priority regarding the purpose of reading, and depicting what a reader and non-reader looks and behaves like via annotated illustrations.

A particularly fun and revealing activity involved pupils pictorially representing how

they feel about reading with others. This was couched via a question about who their ideal reading partner would be if they went in a rocket to Mars, and why. Spoiler alert: parents and teachers didn't fare very well.

Additional tasks included the creation of posters and letters to Ali explaining how reading impacts everyday life, labelling collages that outlined the unique and individual factors that encourage children to read

for leisure, and the completion of thought clouds on photographs of themselves reading.

It may seem daunting to try something like this in your own classroom, especially since you might receive sharp truths about some of your provision. However, don't be deterred; you are also likely to be very pleasantly surprised. Celebrate the fact that you are establishing a unique way of communicating with your pupils which has the potential to inform your practice in subtle but powerful ways. Having invited them into the process, be sure to follow up with any reasonable changes that honour their views. What better way to show them that their voices matter? **TP**



Dr Geraldine Magennis is a senior lecturer in education and literacy at St Mary's University College in Belfast. Thank you to Gemma Fitzpatrick who wrote her M Ed dissertation on this topic.

WHAT ALI THE ALIEN LEARNT ABOUT READING FOR PLEASURE

It's a social thing. Children (particularly boys) enjoy library time but want to talk aloud with their friends about the pictures and fun bits. Organise one or two sessions across the term where the usual rule on silence is relaxed.

Choice is key. Connecting with content is essential. Allowing pupils to help choose class or library texts facilitates this.

Shine your (reading) light. Adults are really influential when it comes to motivating children to read for pleasure. Share your love of reading unashamedly and often. Model how an enthusiastic reader commits to and cultivates their love of reading.

Beware of mixed messages. An overemphasis on phonics instruction to the detriment of comprehension and enjoyment can drain the fun out of reading. The pupils in this study thought that reading was either about code-breaking or meaning-making, rather than a healthy blend of the two.

Empower parents. Children parrot their parents' perceptions of what reading entails. Share with parents the importance of reading for pleasure and how this might best be achieved alongside supporting formal instruction.

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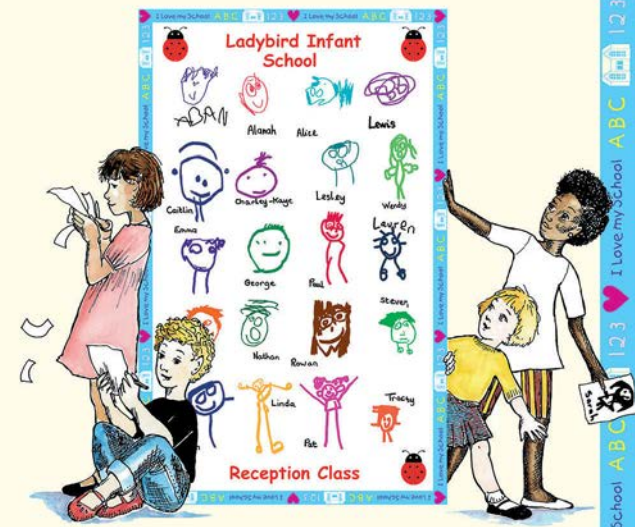


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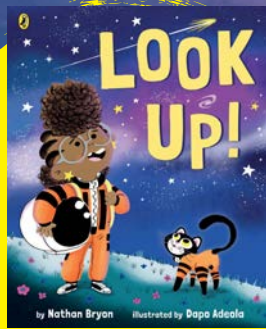
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Published by Puffin, 2019



Look Up!

Join science-mad chatterbox Rocket and learn about Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space

JOHANNA HOWARD & JONATHAN ROOKE

Every child has a dream – they want to be ballet dancers, football players, vets, pop stars... Rocket, star of *Look Up!* by Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola, wants to be an astronaut more than anything in the world (and the solar system). Named after “the rocket that blasted off into space” on the day she was born, Rocket now wants to live up to

this name and be the greatest astronaut who ever lived.

This story follows the aspirations of a very passionate and tenacious little girl who is desperate to follow in the footsteps of Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space. Before Rocket can achieve her ultimate goal of becoming the next black female astronaut, she’s determined to make her

phone-obsessed big brother, and the rest of her community, look up to admire the impending meteor shower.

This title won Waterstones Children’s Book Of The Year and will entertain and enthuse young readers with its thoughtful, bold, bright illustrations and charming protagonist. Children will root for Rocket and join in with her as they ardently shout, “Look up!”



Practical activities
Golden concepts

This book provides a wonderful opportunity for children to explore 'golden concepts' within P4C enquiries, such as hope, dreams, passion, heroes and innocence. Depending on their age, children can either generate questions about the book themselves or you can come up with them. These could include questions such as:

- What does looking up mean to you?
- Do you need to have hope to have dreams?
- What makes you passionate about something?
- What do your dreams say about you?
- What makes a hero?

Host a press conference

Our aspiring astronaut, Rocket, goes above



and beyond to spread the word about the upcoming meteor shower. In one of the many charming illustrations, we see her holding a press conference in her bedroom to her stuffed animals. This presents an excellent opportunity to engage children in an activity that brings the text to life through drama: hold your own press conference in school.

Watch a child-friendly press conference about space travel so that children understand the purpose and process. Allocate children roles such as interviewers, reporters, journalists, photographers and security. Ask children to write a question each, then vote as a class on the best questions to be carried forward to the press conference.

Design posters advising where and what time the event will take place. Record the press conference so that the class can watch it back. Give pupils the chance to edit the footage during a computing session

Actions and feelings

Rocket is a gorgeous character. Her passion and enthusiasm bubble up from every page.

Draw a gingerbread person.

Write Rocket's actions and a description of her appearance on the outside, then write her feelings on the inside.

What do we know about her relationships with her family? What can we tell about Rocket's character when she goes to the supermarket? How do people respond to her? When Rocket is waiting to go to the park and when things don't go quite as expected, what does this tell us about her character?



Write kenning poems

Rocket makes up a kenning poem describing herself as an astronaut. Kennings are an old Icelandic form of poetry. Vikings used them to name their swords. Ask children to write a kenning about themselves or meteors by putting their name or the word 'meteor' in the middle of the page and writing single words that describe them all around.

Play with joining pairs of words together with a hyphen to make interesting new phrases. Pay attention to the sound and impact of juxtaposing two words. After reading the book, children will know more about Rocket's life and character and can compose new kennings about Rocket to add to her own list.

Take it further → → →

VICTORY DANCE

Children love Rocket's victory dance which she performs when Mum tells her brother Jamal to take her to the park. In a PE session, help pupils to re-enact this step-by-step dance to a background of space-themed music. Next, ask the children to come up with their own victory dance and perform it to the rest

of the class, either individually or in groups.

CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

Give each child a small ornamental stone from an art shop or garden centre and a box. Tell them that meteors are tiny. Let them invent their own meteor and create a life for it by writing a poem, painting a picture or





sister. He finally looks up, really sees her and treats her with sibling love and sympathy. Starting with the page where Rocket's disappointed face is illuminated in her upturned torch, discuss what Jamal is feeling and what he might be thinking about his sister.

Write a script, act out the final section of the book, make tableaux, hotseat characters or compose a text message from Jamal to a friend, telling his version of the story. Focus on how he interpreted Rocket's feelings and how his opinions of Rocket changed when the meteor shower burst across the night sky. Use iPads to make a video diary by Jamal inferring his feelings. Discuss why it is important that they are finally looking up at the meteor shower together.

Research heroes

Rocket's hero is Mae Jemison. Show a short film about her from YouTube, such as the one at tinyurl.com/tp-jemison. Ask pupils who their heroes are. It may be someone famous like Captain Tom Moore or it may be a family member or friend. Ask children to research some facts about their hero and write a report using a framework like this: early life, what obstacles they had to overcome, what they achieved and why it is important.

Make a 'great lives' wall display. Ask pupils to compose and deliver a short presentation for their classmates about their chosen character and argue why they should be included in the gallery.

Descriptive sentences

We finally see the beautiful meteor shower at the end of the book. Look at

Loved this? Try these...

- ❖ *Clean Up!* by Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola
- ❖ *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Immigrant Women Who Changed the World* by Elena Favilli
- ❖ *Fantastically Great Women Who Changed the World* by Kate Pankhurst
- ❖ *Walter Tull's Scrapbook* by Michaela Morgan

this illustration as a class, then look at real meteor shower photos and videos online – turn the lights off and pull the blinds down for a more dramatic effect. As a class, gather adjectives, verbs, adverbs and nouns to create a class word bank about meteors. Ask children to construct descriptive sentences about the meteor shower using these words to help them, eg 'The dazzling explosion of luminous lights shot through the vast expanse of the night sky.' Can they include alliteration, onomatopoeia, personification, metaphors or similes?

Wikipedia page

Rocket is preparing to fulfil her ambition to be an astronaut by defying gravity, capturing rare and exotic life forms and building a ship to the stars. Ask children about their aspirations. After talking about what they might achieve and how they might prepare for it, ask children to write their own Wikipedia page about their early life, how they prepared, their amazing achievement and a picture of themselves achieving their aspiration.

Johanna Howard is LKS2 Y3/4 lead at Weeke Primary in Winchester. Jonathan Rooke is a senior lecturer in education at the University of Winchester.

Perfect a Pollock

Get pupils to illustrate their writing creating with an artistic interpretation of a meteor shower. This can be achieved simply using oil pastels on black sugar paper or sequins, glitter and glue. Take it further by studying an artist first. Introduce children to the work of Jackson Pollock (there are several child friendly videos on YouTube about him, including a cartoon at tinyurl.com/tp-pollock). Observe his work and consider why this is an appropriate style for a meteor shower. Then take the children outside and let them flick bright paint against a blank canvas.

Jamal's thoughts

Children will see development in the relationship between Jamal and his little

making a science fact file. Have a naming ceremony for the tiny meteors, then create a 'cabinet of curiosities' display in the school library for children to explore.

DID YOU KNOW?

While this book is a fictional story, it also includes many facts. Ask pupils to research and write their own space-themed facts or ask children what they

aspire to be when they are older and ask them to research facts about this.

AMAZING PEOPLE

Invite people in to talk to the children about their hobbies, achievements or jobs and what they did to prepare and succeed. Examples could include a Sunday-league football player, a keen home baker, a plumber or your wonderful teaching assistant.



Top of the class

Resources and activities to bring fresh inspiration to your classroom...



Essential skills

Skills Builder Partnership brings together over 500 schools and colleges, plus more than 200 organisations and employers, around a common approach to teaching eight essential skills. These are the skills that are essential both in the classroom and the world of work, including teamwork, problem solving and listening. Skills Builder's approach is underpinned by a rigorous progression framework which breaks down these eight essential skills into 16 teachable steps. This universal framework and the associated teaching resources have been used by tens of thousands of teachers over the last decade. Join as an individual using the free resources on the Skills Builder Hub or as a school via digital membership or the Accelerator. Find out more at skillsbuilder.org/educators



Flying start

Within one month of Maths.co.uk going live, 250 schools have signed up, 6,000 children have logged in and 289,000 questions have been answered. KS2 phase leader D Kearns from Huddersfield said, "Awesome! Congratulations to all involved. It really is a dream for teachers to use." With a 60-day free trial running until the end of the year, now is a great time to sign up. For a demo or a free trial email support@maths.co.uk



3

Safety first

Accidents can be avoided if children are equipped with the basic skills required to identify and avoid hazards. Hari's World books, Safety Sacks and resources allows teachers and parents to effortlessly engage children. Each Safety Sack is filled with books, soft toys, games, puzzles, activity boards and a parent/teacher guide, all specifically designed to bring to life Hari's safety awareness messages. Join Hari and Moe on a fun-filled adventure and bring the safety component of the curriculum to life for children. Visit harisworld.com

Sports premium

Timotay Playscapes creates inspirational outdoor spaces for schools and Early Years settings. To support the Sport Premium initiative, it has developed a proven range of engaging products that will motivate children and increase participation in sports and help to reduce obesity. Contact Timotay for your free inspiration guide and consultation at enquiries@timotayplayscapes.co.uk



4



5

Money talks

Young Enterprise works in partnership with schools to provide meaningful opportunities to enhance and enrich curriculum learning with the vital skills children need to earn and look after their money. It has developed a blended learning approach across its programmes and services, ensuring it can continue to work flexibly with you to enrich the enterprise and financial education of the children you work with. Find out more about how its programmes and services can support you by visiting tinyurl.com/tp-enterprise or email info@y-e.org.uk



teach PRIMARY BOOK AWARDS



Discover the titles no classroom can afford to be without this year...

The time has come at last – and once again, we are delighted to be able to share with you the results of our annual Teach Primary Book Awards – and prove in the process that not even a global pandemic can get in the way of the important business of supporting and celebrating the amazing world of children’s writing!

Earlier this year – just as the nation went into lockdown, in fact – we called out for publishers to send us their very best books in any or all of four categories: Reception, KS1, KS2 and non-fiction. And as ever, despite the extraordinary circumstances in which we all found ourselves, they absolutely rose to the challenge.

Narrowing the entries down to a shortlist of just 24 titles was a tough enough proposition – and then, of course, our panel of brilliant judges had the even more difficult task of selecting the winners and runners up for each category. In order to help them do that, we asked them to assess each entry against a clear list of criteria, considering such things as learning opportunities, emotional depth and language play alongside superb writing and stunning illustration

Every single book listed here would be an asset in any classroom and can be recommended by teachers with confidence; those in the top spots are truly exceptional. We hope you enjoy exploring them as much as our judges did!

“I had such fun reading these. There are some truly gorgeous books in there that I will be recommending to lots of people!”

Judge: Lizzie Jones

Programme Manager, Young Readers Programme,
National Literacy Trust

Meet the judges



DAME ESTHER RANTZEN (judging the non-fiction category) is a journalist, presenter, and founder of Childline and The Silver Line.



ADE EDMONDSON is a comedian, actor, musician, television presenter and author (*Tilly and the Time Machine* and *Junkyard Jack and the Horse That Talked* are both published by Puffin).



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



LIZZIE JONES heads up the National Literacy Trust’s Young Readers Programme – the charity’s flagship reading for pleasure programme for primary school children.



EMILY GRAVETT is an author-illustrator who has twice scooped the prestigious CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal. Her book *Cyril and Pat* was runner-up in the 2019 Teach Primary Book Awards and won the inaugural BookTrust StoryTime Prize. October 2020 will see the publication of *Too Much Stuff* (Two Hoots) and the illustrated *Quidditch Through The Ages* by JK Rowling (Bloomsbury).



LISA THOMPSON is an award-winning author of novels for children, including the acclaimed *The Goldfish Boy* and more recently *The Boy Who Fooled the World* (both published by Scholastic). Lisa has sold over 100,000 copies of her books in the UK.

RECEPTION

WINNER

KEY CRITERIA

Memorable illustration

Read-aloud-ability

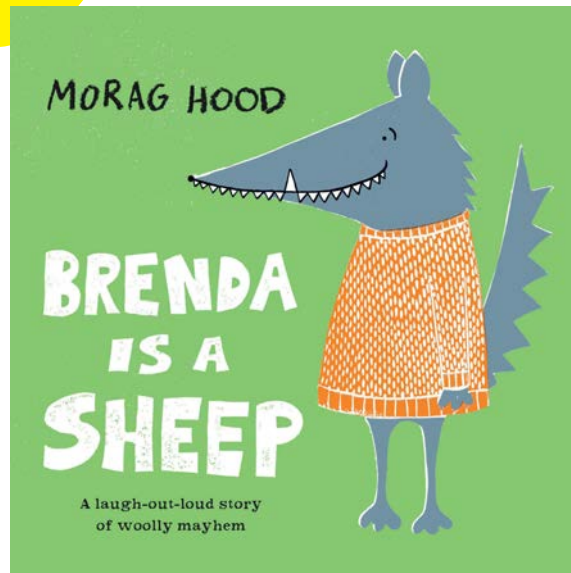
Opportunities for discussion

Encourages language play and development

Brenda is a Sheep

Morag Hood (Two Hoots)

Brenda is the most popular sheep in the flock – but despite all her attempts to fit in, there’s something about her that’s just, well, a little bit different... This hilarious book deals brilliantly with ideas of difference and acceptance, cleverly letting young readers work out the subtext – and possible implications – of the story for themselves. This makes it perfect for using as a springboard for early classroom discussions about inclusion, as well as beginning to consider the notion of the ‘unreliable narrator’ with older children. And of course, it is simply great fun to read, too!



“Quirky and unexpected, with just the right level of peril. Hidden depths for parents or carers to explore with children. Another triumph from Morag Hood!”

Lizzie Jones



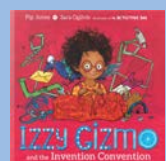
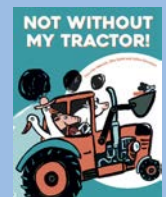
Runner up

A Little Bit Different,
Claire Alexander
(Quarto Kids - words and pictures)

Children and adults alike are bound to fall in love with Claire Alexander’s adorable Ploofers, who have been practising doing something together, all at the same time. But hang on a minute, what’s happening over there? This sweet celebration of uniqueness, with an uplifting rainbow glow, is a delight from start to finish.

“I loved this! Such a joy to read out loud. Loved the illustrations.”

Lisa Thompson



Also shortlisted

NOT WITHOUT MY TRACTOR

Finn-Ole Heinrich, Dita Zipfel, Halina Kirschner (Little Island Books)

This quirkily illustrated and strangely touching story about a boy and his favourite vehicle is the perfect read for any tractor-loving child.

THE LAST TREE

Emily Haworth-Booth (Pavilion Children’s)

A timely parable about what happens when a new community starts cutting down the trees in order to advance ‘civilisation’ – and how the children stop things before they go too far.

IZZY GIZMO AND THE INVENTION CONVENTION

Pip Jones/Sara Ogilvie (Simon & Schuster Children’s UK)

The hugely popular junior inventor returns in a hilarious tale about self-belief, creativity and sustainability.

THE LITTLE ISLAND

Smriti Prasadam-Halls/Robert Starling (Andersen Press)

A story of building bridges not barriers, and of finding friendship, rather than fear – this charming, modern-day fable speaks above all of hope.

KEY STAGE 1

WINNER

KEY CRITERIA

-
- Breadth of appeal
-
- Use of illustration
-
- Pacy, engaging story
-
- Learning opportunities



"I just loved this! Bored posh kid meets sparky life-changing new friend. I kept picking it up for another go! Wow! Wonderful! Amazing illustrations. Book of the year for me."

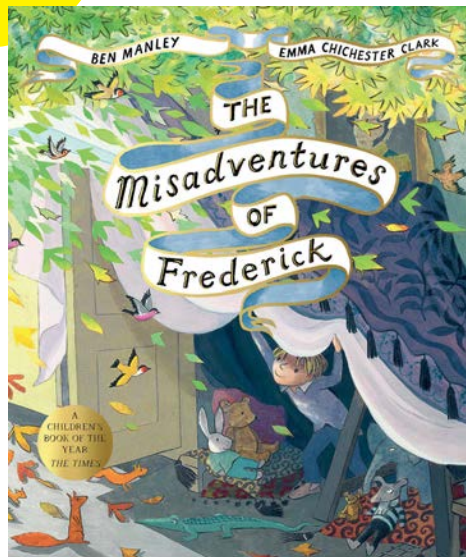
Brough Girling



The Misadventures of Frederick

Ben Manley, Emma Chichester Clark
(Two Hoots)

This playful, gloriously illustrated part-epistolary tale of one child's attempt to persuade another out of his over-protected bubble to taste a little of the adventure the natural world has to offer is one that pupils will return to time and time again. Handily, it's also an ideal way to start pupils thinking about the difference between formal and informal language – could they rewrite Emily's letters in the same style of Frederick's, and vice versa? How might that change the story?



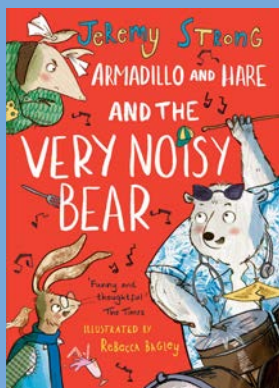
Runner up

Armadillo and Hare and the Very Noisy Bear,
Jeremy Strong, illustrated by Rebecca Bagley (David Fickling Books)

Armadillo and Hare live together in the Big Forest – and are great friends, despite their differences. This charming collection of short stories is witty and engaging, with elegant illustrations; a worthy addition to any classroom shelf.

"A funny, gentle and friendly book with memorable characters."

Lizzie Jones



Also shortlisted

GOOD KNIGHT, BAD KNIGHT AND THE FLYING MACHINE
Tom Knight (Templar Publishing)

In this second title in Tom Knight's delightful Good Knight, Bad Knight fiction series, Berk and Godwin get literally carried away...

MADAME BADOBEDAH
Sophie Dahl (Walker Books)

Mabel lives with her parents in The Mermaid Hotel, by the sea – and when a particularly interesting guest arrives, her imagination sets to work; could this be a real life supervillain?

COOKIE! ...AND THE MOST ANNOYING BOY IN THE WORLD
Konnie Huq (Piccadilly Press)

In Cookie, Huq has created a brilliantly appealing character – feisty, science-loving, and above all, completely relatable.

THE SNOW DRAGON
Abi Elphinstone & Fiona Woodcock (Simon & Schuster Children's UK)

In Griselda Bone's gloomy orphanage, daydreaming is banned, skipping is forbidden and Christmas cancelled; but magic is waiting in the snow-filled sky.





KEY STAGE 2

KEY CRITERIA

- Originality
- Compelling plot
- Emotional depth
- Something to think about?



WINNER

The Space We're In

Katya Balen
(Bloomsbury)

Ten-year-old Frank has trouble navigating his relationship with his five-year-old brother Max, who is autistic. Frank longs for the brother he was promised by his parents before Max was born – someone who was supposed to be his biggest fan, so he could be the best brother in the world. But when tragedy strikes, Frank finds a way to try and repair their fractured family and in doing so learns to love Max for who he is. This breathtakingly beautiful book has something special to offer every reader, and could certainly inspire some extraordinary and empowering classroom conversations.



“Astonishing, vivid and raw – an utterly compelling read. Frank’s very original voice is at the same time heartbreaking and life-affirming. As engaging for adults as it is for children. Sensational.”

Ade Edmondson

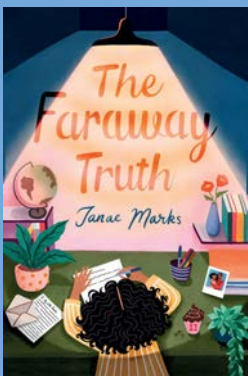


Runner up

The Faraway Truth

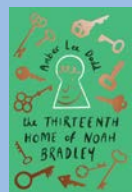
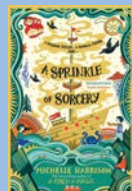
Janae Marks (Chicken House)

Zoe Washington has never once met her father, who was sent to prison before she was born. So, when she receives a letter from him on her twelfth birthday, it’s a huge surprise – and sets her off on a search to find the truth about the crime he’s supposed to have committed, and what she’s been told about the kind of man he is. Heartwarming and uplifting, this is an intriguing mystery with real substance (and cake!).



“This gripped me! I thought the story was highly original and educational. A book to promote empathy (I loved the baking too!)”

Lisa Thompson



Also shortlisted

SMALL CHANGE FOR STUART

Lissa Evans (David Fickling Books)

This fun-filled adventure featuring Stuart Horten – ten years old and small for his age – is packed with puzzles and clues to solve; it’s a real treat.

A SPRINKLE OF SORcery

Michelle Harrison (Simon & Schuster Children’s UK)

A great lesson in being kind to each other – beautifully written, with wonderfully drawn characters, sprinkled with magic.

THE THIRTEENTH HOME OF NOAH BRADLEY

Amber Lee Dodd (Scholastic)

The Bradley family have just moved into their thirteenth home – but will they escape the curse that follows them?

A HOUSE WITHOUT WALLS

Elizabeth Laird (Macmillan Children’s Books)

This is a powerful story from an award-winning author, about family, hope and redemption amidst the refugee crisis in Syria.



KEY CRITERIA

Quality of information

Presentation

Is the writing entertaining and age-appropriate?

Will it provoke further curiosity?

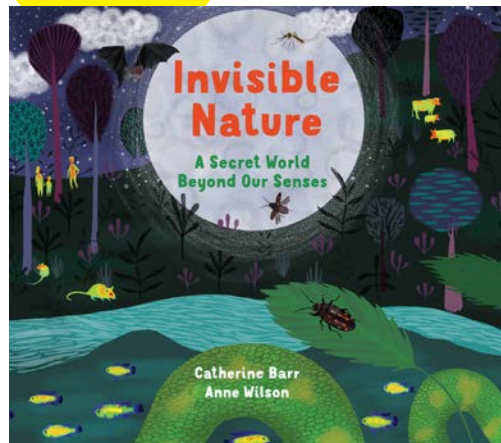
WINNER



Invisible Nature

Catherine Barr
(Otter-Barry Books)

Sounds no-one can hear, scents no-one can smell, colours we can't see, magnetic waves we can't feel – but some animals can, and use them every day. Without 'invisible nature' life on our planet would not exist. This fascinating, beautifully designed book shows how animals use it, and also how humans have learned how to tap into its powers in all sorts of important ways.



"I hope and expect this book will make the next generation far more respectful and appreciative of every aspect of our planet – and it's fun and astonishing too."

Esther Rantzen



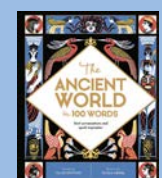
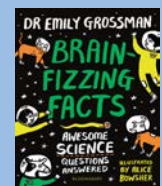
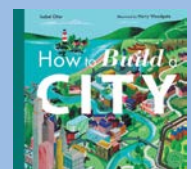
Big Ideas for Young Thinkers

Jamia Wilson/Andrea Pippins
(Quarto Kids)

Described as, 'The book for inquisitive children with big ideas and busy brains' (so, 'children', then!), this absorbing and creative exploration of some of the questions that have stumped philosophers for generations will keep pupils' curiosity fed all year long.

"Ambitious, profound, clear, this terrific book makes us reflect on the most difficult questions – I loved it."

Esther Rantzen



Also shortlisted

THE MISSING
Michael Rosen
(Walker Books)

A personal, powerful and deeply resonant account of the Holocaust, by one of this country's best-loved children's authors.

HOW TO BUILD A CITY
Isabel Otter
(Little Tiger Group)

From solar panels to sewers and from trams to tower blocks; follow the step-by-step guide and watch the city grow...

BRAIN-FIZZING FACTS
Dr Emily Grossman
(Bloomsbury)

Written by a science superstar and STEM Ambassador, this book answers science questions with both wit and wisdom.

THE ANCIENT WORLD IN 100 WORDS
Clive Gifford/Gosia Herba
(Quarto Kids)

With 100 carefully chosen words, each explained in just 100 more, this book provides quick and fun insights into the ancient world.

Runner up

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two online parents'
evenings and someone
still asks if they can
'catch you for
a minute after
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Research & CPD SPECIAL

INSIDE THIS SECTION



p66

What is a 'school of character' and why has the pandemic made it even more important?



p68

Build cognitive challenge into your curriculum and pedagogy to help your most able pupils to flourish



p71

Poorer primary pupils are nine months of learning behind by the end of Y6



Don't miss our STEM special,
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Hands DOWN

Switch your quick-fire questioning culture for a more reflective approach

JON TAIT

Ever since the dawn of time, teachers have asked questions of their students. But thinking back to my teacher training year, I can't recall much, if any, quality training or advice about how to question students effectively. Having observed hundreds of lessons in multiple schools as a senior leader walking in and out of classrooms on a daily basis, it's clear that I wasn't the only one who didn't get this training.

In far too many cases, we ask questions that have little impact on deep thinking and learning. The most worrying thing about this is that if conducted effectively, questioning can be one of the most powerful tools in a teacher's armoury. With hardly any extra planning or work, it can be the perfect vehicle for pace, challenge, deep thinking and assessment. If we can question more effectively, the impact on learning is significant. Let's explore two of the areas that you can use to increase the quality and effectiveness of your questioning and bring about deeper thinking in your classroom.

Hands down approach

If you do a Google search for the word 'teacher', the first few images will show teachers at the front of their class, standing in front of students with their hands up. This is a trademark of the teaching profession, but has never done much, if anything,

to promote high quality learning in the classroom.

Think back to your own days as a pupil in the classroom. If you knew that your teacher was always (and only ever) going to pick people to answer questions with their hands up, then you could quite quickly work out that if you didn't want to think or participate, you just had to keep your hand down. Worse still, if, as teacher, you judge whether to move on in your lesson by asking a couple of questions and getting a correct answer from one enthusiastic or knowledgeable child, then your formative assessment can hardly be classed as robust or inclusive of all students.

This is where a 'hands up' strategy of questioning really fails in the classroom. It should be your job as teacher to judge what everyone knows about a certain topic, question or problem; not just what a few enthusiastic children want to tell you. By employing a consistently implemented 'hands down' approach to your questioning, *all* students need to be thinking about the answers to your questions *all* of the time, in case they are picked to contribute to the classroom discussion.

Thinking time

The reason you ask a question is, of course, because you want an answer. So when a child thrusts their hand in the air enthusiastically the second you've asked one, it can be extremely

“How can anyone give you a well-thought-out answer in less than one second?”

tempting to take a quick answer from them. This happens far too often. In fact, studies have shown that the average time between asking a question and getting a response in the classroom is less than one second.

This presents us with many problems. Firstly, how can anyone give you a well-thought-out answer in less than one second? Secondly, everyone in the class needs time to think about the question that you've just posed. By taking an answer so quickly, you're depriving the vast majority of pupils any time to think before the answer is given. Allowing for short periods of wait time before you ask a child to contribute an answer makes a significant difference to the quality of answers that you receive.

Dangerous ramifications

Through his significant and extensive work on formative assessment over the past two decades, Dylan Wiliam has found that a lack of effective wait time when questioning students leads to a culture of children quickly raising their hand to answer questions. More importantly, teachers only ask for responses from students with their hands up.



HOW TO MANAGE HANDS-DOWN QUESTIONING

- Start by explaining to pupils that you'll be using a hands-down approach from now on. You'll be in charge of who will be answering the questions, so that means everyone needs to be thinking and listening because they never know who is going to be asked next.
- Make sure you select different children to answer for different reasons. You may want to start with a higher or lower ability student for a specific reason, or you may choose to target some of your pupil premium students. There's also the classic reason: "I've picked you because I saw you weren't paying attention."
- To ensure pupils don't feel threatened or anxious about being picked, give them a nod or have a quiet word to tell them you are coming to them next. This way they can get themselves mentally prepared, switched on and ready to answer.

This quick-fire culture of rapid questioning means that pupils who don't *want* to think don't *have* to, because they know that the answer or another question will come along almost immediately. To lots of students, this signals that there is no point trying in the first place. They can just sit back and leave the most enthusiastic pupils to answer. For many children, this approach also minimises the risk of potentially getting an answer wrong in front of their peers.

Therefore, not only is this unproductive questioning the catalyst for a lack of cognitive engagement from many students, it also has potentially dangerous ramifications for us as teachers if we base our dynamic formative assessment on it. If questioning is only actively engaging a minority of children in your classroom, then any responses you gain from them are not a good enough sample size to determine the knowledge and understanding of the whole class.

By consistently combining wait time with a new 'hands down' approach to your questioning, you can empower yourself to use questioning as a highly effective formative assessment tool. Now you can get a handle on what the whole class knows, rather than just a select few individuals. You can then use this information to inform your dynamic and responsive teaching strategies. **TP**



Jon Tait
is deputy
headteacher
of a
secondary
school and
author

of *Teaching Rebooted*
(Bloomsbury Education).

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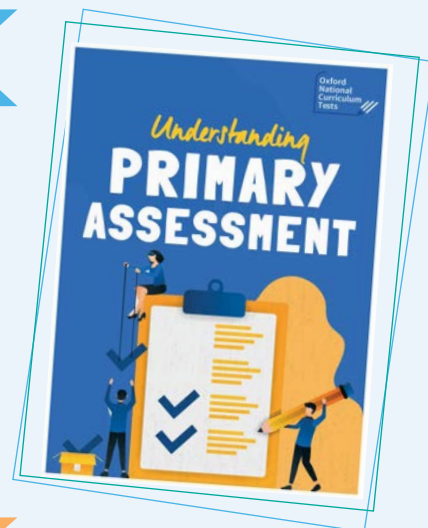
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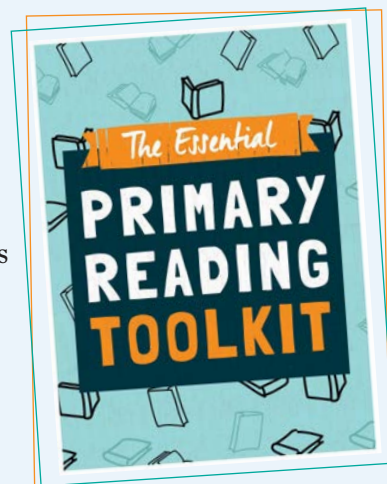


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The NAHT and Discovery Education Pathway programme brings a fresh approach to CPD by offering a blend of personal and professional development courses for teachers and leaders. It is a holistic programme that supports the continuous professional empowerment of teachers and leaders in today's schools.

1 EXPERIENCE ON-DEMAND CPD

We don't think CPD should be 'done at you'. We think it should be an enjoyable and empowering experience that develops self-efficacy through constant reflection. Pathway's courses are like no other. We've worked with leading practitioners and subject experts to develop courses that take on issues or topics and present a variety of roundtable discussions, interviews and reflections, asking three questions throughout: what are your thoughts and feelings?; what action could you take to improve?; what positive impact will this have on you and your pupils?

2 LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Maintaining positive health and wellbeing should be a priority for teachers but it often isn't. We sometimes forget our own wellbeing as we seek to support those around us. Written and presented by leading wellbeing experts Professor Tim O'Brien and Dr Dennis Guiney, Pathway's unique and in-depth wellbeing programme helps you develop a better understanding of wellbeing and the importance of critical reflection. Take proactive steps to stay positive, healthy, motivated and reflective in your work.

3 EXCEPTIONAL ADVICE

A constant source of anxiety for many teachers and leaders is how to find the right policy, the latest guidelines or accurate dates for submitting data. Staying



organised and abreast of the latest changes and requirements will help you to feel positive and in control. Powered by NAHT experts with many years' experience in talking to teachers and leaders, the Pathway Advice Hub provides high-level information on news and changes, keeps you up-to-date with the latest policies and procedures and includes a powerful FAQ section.

4 FIND YOUR MOTIVATION

We all know that motivation is important, but to engage motivation we first have to understand exactly what it is, and is not. Our Guide to Motivation helps you to understand its nature and what motivates both you and those around you. It helps you to recognise your unique desires so you can stay inspired and build motivation across your team. With this knowledge the plan becomes your starting point for change in both your personal and professional relationships.

5 IDENTIFY YOUR AMBITIONS

Having a clear sense of direction can help us stay focused and aspirational. Pathway's bespoke Career Map, designed with the help of experienced educators, helps you to identify where you are now and where you would like to get to – not only in terms of your professional goals, but also your wider interests and health and wellbeing goals. Then self-assess your strengths and areas that may need further development using our Skills Audit mapped against the Teachers' Standards. Pathway also includes an audit based around leadership competencies.



Contact:

discoveryeducation.co.uk/pathway

KEY POINTS

Pathway comprises a virtuous cycle of three main stages, Orientation, Navigation and Reflection, all designed to keep teachers and leaders on course in their careers.

Courses are authored by the UK's leading education experts, including Andrew Hammond, Hywel Roberts and Debra Kidd.

The Pathway programme is delivered online so you can progress through the materials at a time and pace that suits you and your needs.

A licence is £395 per person, per year (excl. VAT). Discounts are available for multi-user school subscriptions and NAHT members.

What a CHARACTER

What is a 'school of character' and why has the pandemic made it more important than ever? **Michael Fullard** explains...

So, what were teachers doing during lockdown? Apart from planning, teaching online lessons, setting up online learning platforms, checking on the wellbeing of students and – of course – joining the nation in becoming artisan bakers of banana bread and becoming avid followers of enthusiastic body coaches...

Well, one thing the pandemic enabled teachers to do was engage in numerous forms of CPD which otherwise they may not have had the time to do. If you visited Twitter during the height of the lockdown, you would inevitably have seen teachers from across the country sharing links to online CPD programmes and encouraging others to engage with further professional development opportunities.

Free CPD

I was delighted to see that one of the things being shared was Leading Character Education in Schools, a free online CPD programme which I had a hand in in my role as research fellow at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, part of the University of Birmingham.

The development of the Jubilee Centre's character education CPD programme began in January 2019. Through a process of rigorous research, consultation, piloting and evaluation we launched the programme in April 2020, close to the beginning of the lockdown period. The programme aims to answer the two key questions often asked of character education:

- How do you do it?
- What does a 'school of character' look like?

While previous research projects and the Jubilee Centre's collaboration with schools had shown there was a real demand for a character education CPD programme, it's fair to say the success of the programme has surpassed all our expectations. By the start of the autumn term, 1,500 practitioners had registered for the programme from 380

UK schools and 50 different countries. Its success begs a question: why is there such a demand from schools for professional development in character education?

The Jubilee Centre has noticed an increased attention to character education since Ofsted acknowledged its importance and included character development in its most recent school inspection handbook. However, it seems that the current pandemic

has led schools to think more explicitly about how they develop the character of their pupils and what impact this can have on wellbeing.

Potential side-effects

Evan Hollows, headteacher at Eastbrook School in Dagenham, recently completed the CPD programme. His view is that schools are turning to taught character in response to "recognising the potential side-effects of prolonged absence from school, whether

"The pandemic has led schools to think more explicitly about how they develop the character of pupils"



it be academic, social, or emotional.” He says that schools are beginning to see that “if character education is delivered thoughtfully, it can help pupils be equipped to overcome problems faced during and after lockdown.”

Similarly, as a result of completing the CPD, Kerry Macfarlane, character education lead at Corpus Christi Catholic Primary in Bournemouth, implemented a whole-school approach to character and has already witnessed the impact it has had, explaining that, “the development of an implicit culture and the implementation of an explicit curriculum for character education has supported the school in our reopening phase.”

Now we’re all back at school, in circumstances which can best be described as unusual, stressful and – for some – genuinely worrying, some schools have made

the academic ‘catch up’ of their pupils their primary focus. While there’s no denying that enabling pupils to learn what they may have missed should be of high importance, other schools have embraced challenges brought by the enforced break and used it to reevaluate and reassess their aims and values of education, specifically looking at how they can support their pupils during this unprecedented time.

Ever-changing dynamics

Now we’re deep into the autumn term, it’s clear that much of school life looks very different from pre-Covid times, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. While we all agree that supporting pupils through the immediate coming months is important, many

schools are trying to find the best approach to tackle the ever-changing classroom dynamics of living in a Covid world.

The success of the Jubilee Centre’s CPD programme highlights that, for many schools, the coronavirus crisis has encouraged them to think explicitly about how the character development of their pupils can help them navigate this difficult transition period. If there’s one thing the last six months have shown us, it’s the unique position and responsibility a school holds in contributing to the flourishing of the young people in their care. This position can be best summed up by Sophie Murfin, executive principal of the Wise Owl Trust in Manchester, when she describes the impact that a character education programme has had on pupils’ “ability to understand themselves and build upon character traits such as resilience and self-awareness, giving [them] a helping hand throughout lockdown and during the transition back into school.”

Has the coronavirus crisis prompted a re-awakening of interest not only in our baking skills in the kitchen, but, crucially, in the character development of our pupils? Early signs seem to indicate it has. **TP**



Michael Fullard is a research fellow at the

Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham. He was a primary teacher for nine years. Access the free online Leading Character Education in Schools CPD programme at the below website. The resource was awarded four stars in the CPD category of the Teach Primary Awards 2020.

 @mikefullard

 tinyurl.com/character-cpd

Sophie Murfin, executive principal of Wise Owl Trust, explains why she’s based her entire curriculum around character education...

Supporting our pupils for life beyond the school gates is at the heart and soul of everything we do. For years now we’ve been pioneering character education because we believe in a holistic pupil approach to teaching. In fact, we went one step further by making it the bedrock of our whole curriculum. We instigated a ‘RESPECT’ curriculum, which means we teach our core values of resilience, empathy, self-awareness, positivity, excellence, communication and teamwork across all subjects and year groups.

We co-wrote a series of mission-based lesson plans that aim to build character by taking the pupils out of the classroom to reconstruct challenges faced by real-life heroes and heroines (commandojoes.co.uk). It provides pupils with the opportunity to put their character traits to the test in carefully planned scenarios.

Our main focus is encouraging pupils to understand for themselves their character strengths and areas for development. These are then collated in their very own passport. From the age of three, our pupils take part in these missions and are introduced to the different character behaviour traits using puppet mascots.

Over the past few years the impact has been demonstrable in terms of attitudes towards learning, attendance and academic achievement. Through focusing on positive character traits we’ve given our pupils the foundations to be confident in themselves. The knock-on effect of that has rippled through all areas of school life.

Learning ACTIVATORS

Build cognitive challenge into your curriculum and pedagogy to help your most able pupils to flourish

DR ANN MCCARTHY

When you're planning a lesson, are your first thoughts about content, resources and activities, or do you begin by thinking about learning and cognitive challenge? How often do you consider lessons from the viewpoint of your more able pupils? Highly able pupils often seek out challenging cognitive work and can become disengaged if they are set tasks which are constantly too easy.

Actively promoting 'cognitive challenge' in a way that is distinctive, embedded and consistent, across both your classroom and your school as a whole, can provide greater long-term learning gains. Pupils will develop skills more rapidly and learn more effectively. On the other hand, focusing on methods such as 'must, should, could' or commercially promoted activities can mean you miss opportunities for cognitively challenging learning.

So, what exactly is 'cognitive challenge'? It can be summarised as an approach to curriculum and pedagogy which focuses on optimising the engagement, learning and achievement of highly able children. The term is used by the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) to describe how learners become able to understand and form complex and abstract ideas and solve problems. Cognitive challenge prompts and stimulates extended and strategic thinking, as well as analytical and evaluative processes. For example, you might set pupils a

problem without a question and encourage them to investigate, ask their own questions and create new problems.

To provide highly able pupils with the degree of challenge that will allow them to flourish, we need to build our planning and practice on a solid foundation. This involves understanding both the nature of our pupils as learners and the learning opportunities we're providing. Using 'challenge' as a routine extends learning at specific times on specific topics. This has useful but limited benefits. However, by strategically building cognitive

challenge into your teaching, pupils' learning expertise, their appetite for learning and their wellbeing will all improve.

What does this look like in the classroom, you may be wondering. In a recent NACE research project, schools accredited with the NACE Challenge Award examined the impact of cognitive challenge in their practice against a backdrop of relevant research. They focused on the following three areas, designed to provide cognitive challenge and impact on the present and future

cognitive growth of learners:

- Design and management of cognitively challenging learning opportunities
- Rich and extended talk and cognitive discourse to support cognitive challenge
- Curriculum organisation and design

Let's delve into each area a little more closely.

1 Design and management of learning

In the most successful 'cognitive challenge' schools, leaders have a clear vision which explicitly reflects an understanding of

being a recipient in the learning environment to an effective learner who can call on the resources and challenges presented.

They understand more about their own learning and develop their curiosity and creativity by extending and deepening their understanding and knowledge.

2 Talk and cognitive discourse

Cognitive discourse involves both teachers and pupils routinely using 'big questions'. With practice, this gives children the ability to challenge received understanding, reframe problems or look at ideas from a variety of perspectives. The importance of questions and questioning in effective learning is well understood, but the importance of depth and complexity of questioning is perhaps less known about.

When you plan purposeful, stimulating and probing questions, it gives your pupils the freedom to develop their thought processes and challenge, engage and deepen their understanding. Initially you, the teacher, may ask questions, but when you model high-order questioning techniques to pupils they, in turn, can ask questions which expose new ways of thinking. This so-called 'dialogic teaching' frames teaching and learning within the perspective of pupils and enhances learning by encouraging children to develop their thinking and

“Highly able pupils can become disengaged if they are set tasks which are constantly too easy”

Schools with a high-quality cognitive challenge curriculum use agreed teaching approaches and a whole-school model for teaching and learning. Teachers expertly and consistently utilise key features relating to learning preferences, knowledge acquisition and memory.

When planning a curriculum for more able pupils it's necessary to think beyond individual subjects, assessment systems, pedagogy and extracurricular opportunities, and to look more deeply at the ways in which these link together for the benefit of your pupils. If teachers can understand and deliver this curriculum using their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills, and if your school can successfully make learning visible to pupils, you'll be able to move from well-practised routines which are designed and controlled by the teacher to highly successful and challenging learning experiences.

Recasting the role

If we're going to move beyond the traditional monologic and didactic models of teaching, we need to recast the role of teacher as a facilitator of learning within a supportive environment. For more able pupils this can be taken a step further. If you can build cognitive challenge into your curriculum and the way you manage learning, and support this with a language-rich classroom, the entire nature of teaching and learning can change. Your highly able pupils will become increasingly autonomous and more self-reliant. They'll become masters of their learning as they gain

use their understanding to support their learning.

By using an enquiry-orientated approach, you can more actively engage children in the production of meaning and acquisition of new knowledge and your classroom will become a more interactive and language-rich learning domain where children can increase their fluency, retrieval and application of knowledge.

3 Curriculum organisation and design

How can you ensure your curriculum is organised to allow cognitive challenge for more able pupils? Here's three things to think about:

- What is planned for the students?
- What is delivered to the students?
- What do the students experience?

HOW TO USE TALK EFFECTIVELY IN YOUR CLASSROOM

- Plan for talk and decide when it will be led by you, when pupils will lead the teaching, and how pupils will engage with each other.
- Prepare opportunities for classroom dialogue which are most beneficial to the learning context.
- Structure discourse to develop cognitive learning, rather than talk being a disparate part of the lesson.
- Model high-quality language and effective discourse practices. Teach the pupils how to use these practices and then pass the learning to them.
- Make use of questions which open learning and cognitive thinking, rather than limiting pupils to those which have expected responses.



Dr Ann McCarthy is a NACE associate and co-author of the NACE

research publication Making Space for Able Learners: Cognitive Challenge. It is available via the NACE website or free for NACE member schools.

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Mind the GAP

Poorer primary pupils are nine months of learning behind by the end of Y6 and even before the pandemic, the gap was getting bigger...

NATALIE PERERA

2020 has been a year like no other. Teachers and schools have responded to the many challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, often going above and beyond to deliver pupils' education. But in spite of the herculean efforts of those working in the education system over the last few months, we know that all the disruption this year is highly likely to result in lost learning for children.

Pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds will be facing the biggest hurdles, given they are likely to have been hit the hardest by school closures. Evidence shows that during lockdown, more affluent pupils are more likely to have had teacher interaction through remote classes, personal tutoring, and a home environment that is more conducive to learning. The ongoing pandemic has exposed many things in this country – not least the extent of educational inequality. But these inequalities are by no means a new development; we know that the learning gap between rich and poor pupils was already a growing problem even before Covid-19 struck the education system.

Annual report

Each year in an annual report, Education Policy Institute researchers look at the 'disadvantage gap' – the gap in school attainment between

poorer pupils and the rest. Our latest report, published in August, found that last year, disadvantaged children were over a year and a half of learning behind their better off peers by

to tackle inequalities in education had seemingly helped to narrow this gap. But in the last few years, this progress has gradually ground to a halt.

What exactly is driving this

“We cannot expect the school system to continually pick up the slack, and deal with what is clearly a wider societal problem”

the end of secondary school. What is perhaps more disturbing is that on the eve of the pandemic this gap between rich and poor pupils had actually begun to widen: social mobility had started to go into reverse gear.

Inequalities are evident early on in a child's life, and grow as they make their way through the education system. Even in primary schools, these gaps are large: our research found that poorer pupils in primary are already over nine months of learning behind at the end of Y6 – and that gap has now got bigger for the first time since 2007. In recent decades, policies from different governments designed

concerning trend? While we can't say exactly from our latest findings, there are several big clues. One of these is the rise in the proportion of children that are in long-term, persistent poverty. These pupils have some of the biggest learning gaps and, on average, trail more affluent pupils in school attainment by as much as two years by the end of secondary. Because this group is now on the rise, and they have the biggest gaps, it's causing the overall education gap between rich and poor to rise.

Pivotal role

It's also likely that several years of austerity and welfare reforms

have a part to play. The rate of per-pupil school funding has fallen in real terms over the last decade. It is for precisely this reason that we cannot expect teachers and schools to deal with these deep-seated, national problems, as is sometimes implied. Schools have a pivotal role to play in improving outcomes – particularly for the most vulnerable pupils – but we cannot expect the school system to continually pick up the slack, and deal with what is clearly a wider societal problem.

Teachers have the power to play a transformational role in individual pupils' lives, but they are now faced with a rising tide of deprivation at a national level. It's here where we need to see changes. The government urgently needs to prioritise closing the disadvantage gap. This means reassessing funding to ensure that the most disadvantaged pupils are given the support they need. It also means a wider programme that confronts the root causes of inequalities in education, especially persistent poverty.

We are now facing a critical moment for children's life chances, with Covid-19 having exacerbated a whole host of deeply ingrained problems. We must follow the evidence and act decisively to stem the rising levels of disadvantage, or risk wiping out decades of progress in narrowing the gap and improving outcomes for the poorest children. **TP**



Natalie Perera is executive director of the Education Policy Institute.

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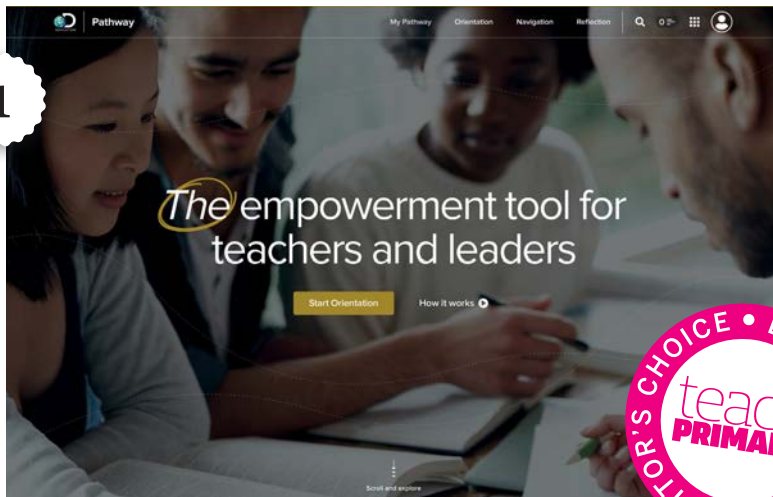
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Top of the class

Resources and activities to bring fresh inspiration to your classroom...



1

Fresh approach

The NAHT & Discovery Education Pathway programme brings a fresh approach to CPD by offering a blend of professional and personal development courses for teachers and leaders. Accessed online and at a pace and time that suits you, the Pathway programme is designed to support and develop your motivations, career ambitions and wellbeing as well as your professional skills and competencies. Find out more at discoveryeducation.co.uk/pathway



3

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STABILO specialises in ergonomic pens and pencils which are specifically designed for left and right handers. Learning to write in school is important and better ergonomics make practising easier and learning to write more enjoyable. That's why STABILO has developed the STABILO EASYstart range with ergonomic pens and pencils suitable for different ages and hand sizes. With new guidelines requiring children to have their own stationery, all of the STABILO EASYstart range has space for a pupil's name.

stabilo.com/uk

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4



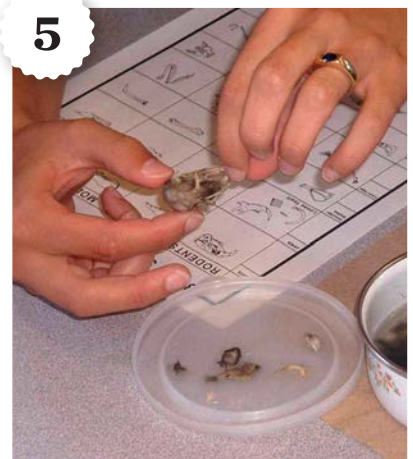
Staying safe

The Keeping Children Safe Online parental webinar is a national initiative developed in collaboration with Home Office PREVENT and the Police Crime Commission. Using live webinars, remote learning and family resources, schools are equipped in supporting parents to keep their children safe when using the internet, social media and gaming. Parents are provided with a Safety Net book, proven to help families have open and honest discussions at home. Email info@skipped.com or visit skippedsafety.net

2



5



Pellet detectives

The Suffolk Owl Sanctuary offers a unique 'Pellet Detectives' package which enables pupils to investigate the contents of real barn owl pellets as part of a food chain science lesson. Costing £3 each, pellets are supplied with bone charts, worksheets and teacher notes. Other offerings from the sanctuary include a host of teaching resources, raptor-related literature and virtual visits with Q&A sessions as part of its digital outreach programme. Visit owl-help.org.uk



How did this get from field to fork?



Help pupils learn about where their food comes from and different agricultural careers with **Sam Wyman's** idea

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given and locate the country of origin label. The groups can then plot where their food items originated on a world map. Guide a discussion about seasonality, climate and food miles.

Alternatively, for younger or less able pupils, you may want to start with which animal different meats come from, or an explanation of the fact that many basic food staples such as rice and wheat, for example, are the seeds of plants. Spend time exploring this information. Set up an activity where pupils can handle raw unprocessed ingredients (grains, fruits and vegetables) and match them to familiar processed products.

2 | FIELD TO FORK

Display an image of a familiar food such as a burger or sandwich. Work together to identify the key ingredients, such as bread (wheat), meat,

WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- The origin of familiar foods
- The processes that deliver food from the field to the fork
- The careers that food production requires

What better way to motivate a class than to discuss food? Everyone has a favourite meal or snack, after all. But many children will have only the vaguest idea of how many people are involved in producing their favourite lunchtime treat. This lesson encourages pupils to ask questions about their food and its production and will introduce them to some of the important people and careers involved in the 'field to fork' journey. Use our free downloadable timeline worksheet to help you complete the lesson.

START HERE

Farming, agriculture and the work that goes into producing our food is a wonderfully rich topic from which a whole sequence of lessons, touching on almost any curriculum area, can be developed. Indeed, some of the activities here can be expanded into individual lessons. To begin this session, ask the class where they think their food comes from and who they think is involved in producing their food. Work in pairs to record thoughts and ideas before sharing them with the class.



MAIN LESSON

1 | WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Split the class into small groups or pairs and provide them with a selection of packaged food items. These should be ingredients or unprocessed food items that are easily identifiable, such as vegetables, fruits, cheese or meat, each featuring country of origin information. To avoid food waste, try to pick items that can still be used after the children have examined the package. Alternatively, use empty and cleaned packaging that has been collected from home or the school kitchen.

Ask the children to identify the foods that they have been



“The food production industry is one of the biggest in the country”

is one of the biggest in the country. This final activity introduces children to some of the careers that are so vital to keeping us fed.

Organise the children into small groups. Go back to the worksheet completed in task two and ask the children to think up relevant job titles for the people involved in each step, such as farmer, haulage driver, baker, etc.

Once children have thought up their own, provide some job titles that are less familiar: agronomist (soil expert), engineer, food scientist, mechanic, grain merchant and auctioneer. Ask the children what they think these people do and where they fit in on the wheat to bread timeline. Download a free set of career cards to complement this part of the lesson from countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1481.

Sam Wyman is a primary teacher who works for LEAF Education, a charity that works to inspire and educate future generations about farming, food and the countryside.

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- To really develop children’s understanding of how food is produced nothing can really beat seeing it being done. Many real working farms around the country are keen to host groups and help children learn about farming first-hand. Find out more by visiting leafuk.org/education/for-teachers
- Invite people who work in food and farming into your classroom as part of a careers event and allow children to ask questions.
- Consider making a virtual link with a farm. ‘Farmer Time’ is a free service that can help you bring the countryside to life. Children will get the chance to regularly chat live to their matched farmer via FaceTime or Skype and can discuss ideas, ask questions, share knowledge and gain a real-time understanding of the issues farmers face every day. Visit leafuk.org/farmertime

Free online resources

Download this free timeline worksheet from tinyurl.com/tp-field



From field to fork

How is wheat turned into bread?
Number these sentences in the correct order, from 1 to 6.

- The crop is harvested in the summer
- The bread is delivered to the restaurant.
- Wheat is planted in the autumn.
- The wheat is transported to a mill and turned into flour
- The flour is transported to a bakery and used to make bread.
- The farmer treats the crop to keep away pests and disease and uses fertilizer to help the wheat grow

teachwire
YOUR LINK TO THE BEST IN EDUCATION

cheese, salad, vegetables, etc.

Explain to the class that they will now explore some of the key steps that are involved in the production of bread, from growing the wheat to transforming it into a finished product. Download our wheat timeline worksheet from tinyurl.com/tp-field and ask the children to put the six steps in number order. Children can spend time researching the processes set out on the worksheet and add facts and details of their own, if they wish.

3 | CAREER OPTIONS

Over 470,000 people work in agriculture. The food production industry



USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Where does the food we eat come from?
- How does food get from field to fork?
- Whose job is it to produce our food?
- Is all the food we eat grown in this country? Why not?
- Do you know what bread is made from?
- Who else might a farmer need to help them on the farm?



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- Revise and reinforce equivalent fraction learning
- Increase confidence with fractions
- Understand the role of the numerator and denominator within a fraction
- How to use strategies to identify equivalent fractions

Recap equivalent fractions by getting active



This Y4 lesson by **Jon Smedley** involves combining maths with physical activity to enthuse pupils about fractions

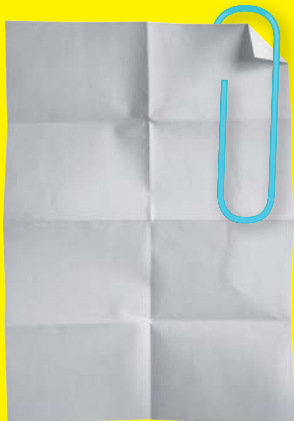
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Now children are back in school the focus is on addressing any learning gaps that may have developed during lockdown. However, spending hours at a desk is not how most teachers want to help children catch up. Active learning is an easy way to inject energy into a lesson, while increasing pupils' capacity to remember important concepts they may have forgotten. This equivalent fractions lesson has been designed for social distancing – you'll only need a few resources. It's just what you need to get pupils fired up about maths again.



START HERE

It's a good idea to start this lesson by refreshing children's memories about fraction families. Start by holding up a sheet of paper and telling the class that this is one whole piece of paper. Fold the paper and ask the children what you'd call each part. Explain that one thing divided into two equal parts is $\frac{1}{2}$. Fold the paper again and ask the class what fraction each section is. Ensure pupils understand that it's one whole cut into four equal parts. Fold the paper again and ask how many sections there will be now. Show the paper is now in eight equal parts and ask what fraction each section is.



MAIN LESSON

1 | PHYSICAL FRACTIONS

This lesson can take place in the classroom, but the school hall or playground would provide more space. Arrange children into groups of eight. Display the fraction $\frac{2}{8}$ and ask one child in each group to organise that fraction of children to stand on one leg. Next, show a different fraction – $\frac{6}{8}$, for example, and choose a different pupil to get that number of children to pat their head.

Keep going until children are confident with this, then switch to quarters. Ask pupils to get a quarter of the group standing on one leg. Let

them see that this is also the same as two children out of eight, or $\frac{2}{8}$, so they begin to understand the concept of equivalent fractions. Combine groups to extend the activity and show $\frac{4}{16}$ is the same as a quarter, and so on.

2 | MUSICAL FRACTIONS

For the next part of the lesson you will need to be able to play music and each child will require either a small whiteboard or paper and a pen. Ask the children to stand in a space as if they were playing musical statues. Hold up a card with a fraction written clearly on it and then play some music. I like using the 30-second theme for the TV show Countdown as it adds a sense of urgency to the task, but anything can work.



“I like using the 30-second theme for the TV show Countdown as it adds a sense of urgency to the task”

down but can still continue to play. If they get the next question correct, they can stand up again. This means no one is left out. The aim of the game is to stay standing for as long as possible.

3 TAKE IT FURTHER

Once the children are confident, start introducing fractions that are less familiar to them and fractions that can be made into smaller or larger equivalents. Alternatively, change the way you display the fraction. Instead of writing numbers, introduce diagrams to represent the fraction. Ask pupils to write the fraction normally or represent it as a diagram too.

Jon Smedley is a former teacher and founder of Teach Active, an award-winning online bank of primary maths and English active learning lesson plans linked to the national curriculum. Access up to 50 lesson plans for free for a trial period at teachactive.org, many of which are social distance friendly.

While the music is playing, ask the children to write an equivalent fraction on their own whiteboard or piece of paper. As soon as they've written down the answer they need to dance or jump on the spot so that you can see they've

finished.

When the music stops, ask the children to hold up their answer for you to see. Ask children with the correct answer to stay standing for the next round. Those with incorrect answers need to sit



EXTENDING THE LESSON



- Once children are familiar with the game, they can play in their own small groups and check each other's answers to see who is right or wrong.
- Use the same game to introduce decimal equivalents. Show the decimal on your whiteboard and ask the children to write the equivalent fraction on theirs, or vice versa.
- Pick a child to become the teacher and give the class a fraction to display. The new 'teacher' will need to check that the teams are correct.
- Add an element of competition into the activity by telling pupils that they must compete to be the quickest team to display the correct answer. For example, say that $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of the team need to stand on one leg.
- Children can also take part in heats against each other to become the 'school champion of musical equivalents'.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What is the top number of a fraction called?
- What is the bottom number of a fraction called?
- What happens to the numerator and the denominator in an equivalent fraction?
- If I double the numerator, what do I have to do to the denominator?



Report on Sophie's BFG disappearance



Roald Dahl's beloved BFG story provides the perfect opportunity to tackle newspaper report writing, says **Julianne Britton**

@juliannebritton missbritton.co.uk

This engaging activity introduces children to Roald Dahl's book *The BFG*. In this lesson, children will act as journalists to investigate and write a newspaper report about Sophie's disappearance based on evidence found at the scene. Prior to teaching the lesson, prepare some pieces of evidence such as an empty glass jar, a piece of black material, giant footprints, a diary entry from Sophie and perhaps even some recordings of other people giving witness statements, such as a neighbour or fellow orphan.

WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- Retrieve and record information from non-fiction texts
- Organise paragraphs in a newspaper report
- Use and punctuate direct speech
- Discuss and identify the features of a newspaper report



The glass jar might suggest that the suspect had been collecting something. The black fabric may help identify what the suspect was wearing. The diary entry will provide more of an insight into Sophie's personality. The witness statements may also provide more information about Sophie or the orphanage. The footprints will show that a large person or 'giant' was involved in her disappearance.

2 | NEWSPAPER FEATURES

Before children go ahead and write their own newspaper reports about Sophie's disappearance, it is important to recap the features of a newspaper report. Watch the video and complete the quiz on the BBC Bitesize page on newspaper reports at tinyurl.com/tp-papers.

START HERE

To start the lesson, explain to pupils that they will be acting as investigative journalists: looking for evidence, finding out information and writing a newspaper report. The first activity will involve working in groups to identify the key facts from another newspaper report. Provide each table with a sample newspaper report along with the following questions: What happened? Who was involved? When did the event happen? Where did it take place? Why did it happen? Give children five minutes to work together to find the answers. You may want to differentiate the level of each text depending on the abilities of the children in your class.



MAIN LESSON

1 | ANALYSING EVIDENCE

After the warm-up exercise, explain that the children will now be investigating their own news story and writing a newspaper report about it. Tell them that a young girl named Sophie mysteriously disappeared from her bedroom last night. First, they need to look at the evidence. At this point share the various pieces of evidence with the children and discuss what each piece might tell us. What do they think has happened? Ask pupils to make notes about each piece of evidence and the potential information it provides. What can they infer?



“Challenge children to include quotations from witnesses using direct speech”

Discuss the five ‘W’s with the children and answer the questions together, referring to what they know about Sophie’s disappearance.

- **What happened?**
A girl disappeared from her bedroom.
- **When did it happen?**
Last night.
- **Where did it happen?**
An orphanage in London.
- **Who was involved?**
An orphan girl named Sophie and a suspected giant wearing black.
- **Why did it happen?**
Police are still unsure.

The answers to these questions will form children’s opening paragraph. Ask pupils to use these facts to practise saying their opening paragraph out loud before they write. Give them time to write their headline and opening paragraphs.

3 | REPORT WRITING

Share some of the children’s opening paragraphs and discuss whether they have answered the five ‘W’s. Ask pupils what other information they could include in the rest of their report. Explain that they could include more detail about the evidence that has been found such as the glass jar, black fabric and giant footprints. They may also want to include more information about the missing girl. For this they could refer to her diary entry or the witness statements.

You may want to challenge children to include quotations from witnesses using direct speech. At this point, you may find it helpful to demonstrate writing a model paragraph for the main body of text. Remind children that to finish their newspaper

report they should discuss the current state of the investigation. For example, they might say, “Police are still looking into the disappearance of the young girl and would be grateful for any information that can assist them with their investigation.”

At the end of the lesson, choose children to read out their newspaper reports. The rest of the class should listen carefully to see if they included all the key facts. To finish, pupils will enjoy listening to the opening chapter of *The BFG* in order to find out what really happened to Sophie.

Julianne Britton is a qualified teacher with eight years’ experience. She is an author of educational resources and a private tutor.

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- After challenging pupils to include quotations using speech marks, dedicate an entire lesson to the correct use of speech marks. Alternatively, depending on the ability of your pupils, look at the difference between direct and indirect speech and converting from one to the other.
- Following this lesson and continuing the *BFG* theme, ask children to write a detailed character description of Sophie for a missing poster.
- Imagine that Sophie continues to keep a diary after she has been taken by the *BFG*. Ask children to complete an entry about her time in the giant’s cave. This will give pupils the opportunity to write in first person and use interesting vocabulary to discuss Sophie’s thoughts and feelings.
- As you reach the end of *The BFG*, ask children to write another newspaper report explaining what happened to Sophie. This is a great opportunity to assess the children’s progress regarding their knowledge and understanding of newspaper reports.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What are the key features of newspaper reports?
- What is meant by the five ‘W’s’?
- Have you used a range of sentence starters?
- Could you include a quotation from a witness?

RESOURCES



Marvellous Mobiles

Set of six chunky phones for outdoor activities that work over a range of three kilometres



AT A GLANCE

- Six brightly coloured Marvellous Mobiles, effective up to three kilometres
- Group-talk and individual phone-to-phone functionality
- Recharging docking station means no need for batteries
- Weather-proof and wipeable
- Push-to-talk technology encourages effective speaking and listening

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



With the exception of yodelling, perhaps, there's a sort of magic about being able to communicate over long distances. For primary children who may not yet own their own mobile phone, this excitement will be felt even more keenly. This is one of the reasons why Marvellous Mobiles from Hope Education could have a big impact in your school.

The growing recognition of the importance of oracy across the curriculum makes it worth investing in activities that promote good communication skills. And what could be better than a device that demands clear articulation and attentive listening? This set of six brightly coloured walkie-talkies is both visually appealing and thoughtfully designed for young hands. Chunky yet lightweight, they are easy to use, despite having more functionality than many such devices marketed for children. For a start, they have a group function, meaning a child can speak to the other five users at the same time. In addition, the Marvellous Mobiles have a phone function which allows you to speak individually to a single user by pressing the coloured button on the handset that corresponds to the colour of that user's phone.

The real benefit for developing speaking and listening skills comes

through the use of push-to-talk technology. It's an excellent way of encouraging children to think carefully about what they want to say, speak clearly and wait for their talk partner to finish before they respond. As my youngest helper discovered, simply the act of pressing a button before speaking focuses the mind.

Before I took them out for a field test, one of my main concerns was whether they would actually work. For anyone who has bought children's walkie-talkies in good faith before, only to find that they were practically useless beyond shouting range, this is not a facetious question. I am glad to report that they do – very well.

During a long walk with my team of volunteers, we split up, putting hills, woodland and roughly a kilometre's distance between us (the advertised range is three kilometres). At every step of the way, we were able to hear clearly what each other was saying. And when we returned, we simply popped the mobiles back into the docking station to recharge.

Imagine the possibilities for using directional language, exploring school grounds or forest school activities. Even the most reluctant speakers would probably be inspired to chip in. Roger that!

teach
PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Colourful and appealing
- ✓ Perfect for little hands
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Promotes good speaking and listening skills
- ✓ Lots of fun

UPGRADE IF...

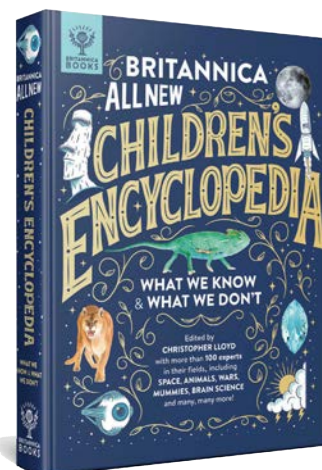
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NON-FICTION

Britannica All New Children's Encyclopedia: What We Know & What We Don't

Featuring 424 pages of facts, photos, illustrations, lists, expert interviews and multiple choice quizzes



AT A GLANCE

- 424 pages of fascinating facts
- Covers a vast range of topics
- Over 1,000 illustrations, photographs and maps
- Contains mini interviews with experts from around the world
- Includes fun quizzes at the end of each section

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



Well, this was a surprise: an encyclopedia – a chunky, physical, tome. I thought these had been driven into extinction by CD-Roms (remember them?). And what a wonderful surprise it was!

Have you seen the Disney animation *Ratatouille*? Spoiler alert: there's a moment when the shrivel-hearted food critic gets his first taste of the eponymous dish and is transported back to delicious memories of childhood innocence and wonder. That's how I felt when I opened this eight-course banquet of a book.

I was fortunate enough to grow up in a house full of books and I distinctly recall getting lost in encyclopedias. This new version joyously revived those happy memories for me. Divided into eight very broad sections, it covers everything from the beginnings of the universe to the possibilities of the future. If I just open a page at random, I discover that there are floating schools in Bangladesh to keep children learning during the monsoon season. Turn to another page and, wow, German scientists made diamonds out of peanut butter. I did not know that!

That does not mean this is a book of trivia. Yes, it's full of fascinating facts, but they are all linked to serious topics. This sense of gravity is underscored by

the genius idea of including mini interviews with experts across a bewildering range of specialisms that are both informative and inspirational. I also enjoyed the mini quiz at the end of each section.

On every page there are exhilarating images and tidy pockets of text – just enough to satisfy your desire to know, without bombarding you with excess information. After all, this is not designed to be an exhaustive source of detailed knowledge, but an enticing window onto a wonderful world of ideas to explore. It is a book for which you need to sit down, make yourself comfortable and flick through, stopping at whatever catches your eye. My young, primary-aged assistant can hardly put it down.

Why is it such a delight? It occurred to me that, although the internet gives us unlimited information at our fingertips, it is quite linear. Search engines and algorithms drive you down rabbit holes. A good encyclopedia, on the other hand, literally broadens your perspective. It is a celebration of what you didn't know you didn't know. And I didn't know how much I had missed browsing through a good encyclopedia until I picked up this one.

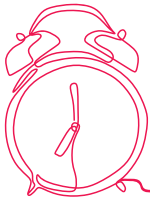
teach
PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Fascinating and absorbing
- ✓ Beautifully designed
- ✓ Detailed yet very readable
- ✓ Challenging yet accessible
- ✓ Simply wonderful

UPGRADE IF...

You want to give children the freedom to broaden their minds and explore a wealth of ideas far beyond the confines of any curriculum. Curious to learn more? A GoCuriosity license is the perfect learning support to accompany the *Britannica All New Children's Encyclopedia*.



DAY in the LIFE



We follow a teacher from first alarm to lights out...

ADAM JEVONS-NEWMAN
IS KS2 AND CURRICULUM
LEAD AT FARMILO PRIMARY
SCHOOL AND NURSERY IN
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

 @3edmigos



WAKING UP

My alarm goes off at 5.30am. Having recently become a dad, my morning now involves bottles and a bit of playtime before I set off – I love it.



MY MORNING

A quick Greggs visit, followed by a coffee and catch-up with colleagues. I especially enjoy KS2 assembly on a Thursday. It's a great way to get together, although we're doing it virtually at the moment.



MY AFTERNOON

We get stuck into topic work in the afternoons, which I love – anything from designing a Roman spa day to sampling Mexican food.



LUNCHTIME

If it's cornflake tart day, I'll have a school dinner! I also catch up on emails and calls and send some positive messages home via ClassDojo.

BEDTIME

I try not to do any work until after our son is asleep, then I get my school laptop out and put the football on in the background. Bed is usually around 10.30pm.



MY EVENING

If there's no meetings I'm usually home by 5pm, meaning I can eat tea and play with our little boy.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

- ❖ **Career plan B?** I always had my heart set on teaching. My mum taught for more than 30 years.
- ❖ **Current listening?** The audiobook of *Once upon a Tyne* by Ant and Dec – it's making me miss SMTV Live!
- ❖ **Must-read?** As a big football fan, I enjoy *FourFourTwo* magazine. I've also got *Do You Know What?* by Freddie Flintoff on the go.
- ❖ **Twitter hero?** Hywel Roberts' (@hywel_roberts) work has had a profound and positive impact on how I teach.

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