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*magic trick
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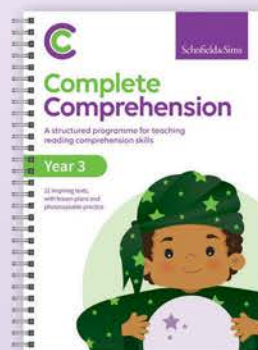
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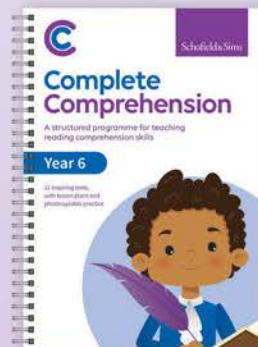
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Hello!



It's nearly the holidays – you did it! What a year this has been: for teachers, for parents and, perhaps most importantly, for children. Despite these turbulent times, what remains unchanged is the fact that every day, in schools across the country, educators go above and beyond to support their pupils and community.

As ever, there's lots going on in this issue. We're celebrating the power of outdoor learning on p29 with our #OutsideEveryDay campaign, and we've got a whole palette of inspiring art ideas starting on p72 if you fancy getting creative during these last few weeks of term.

Over on p60, Sara Wernham explores the future for Letters and Sounds, which the government has admitted "isn't fit for purpose", while on page 54 Laura Dobson has a range of tricks up her sleeve for teaching fronted adverbials with a flourish.

As Sarah Ledger points out on p39, after 16 months of upheaval you deserve a relaxing summer break more than ever before. This summer also begins a new chapter for me. I'm going to be concentrating on our online content so I'll see you on social media and will pass the baton of Teach Primary onto a new editor next issue. Thanks to all my wonderful writers and readers over the last few years.

Have a lovely summer!

Elaine

Elaine Bennett, Editor

 @editorteach

*Don't miss our
next issue, on sale
26th August*

POWERED BY...



SOPHIE HUDSON

knows from experience the amount of heart and soul that teachers put into job applications

"The least school leaders can do is send out a polite rejection email"

p21



ADELE DARLINGTON

on how special art assemblies helped embed a creative culture in her school

"Staff were blown away with children's focus, resilience and willingness to have a go"

p79



RICHARD WISEMAN

explains how performing magic tricks in the classroom can boost pupils' lateral thinking skills

"Use this opportunity to talk about why practising something lots of times is important"

p90



LEFT: *The Promise* by Nicola Davies
and Laura Carlin

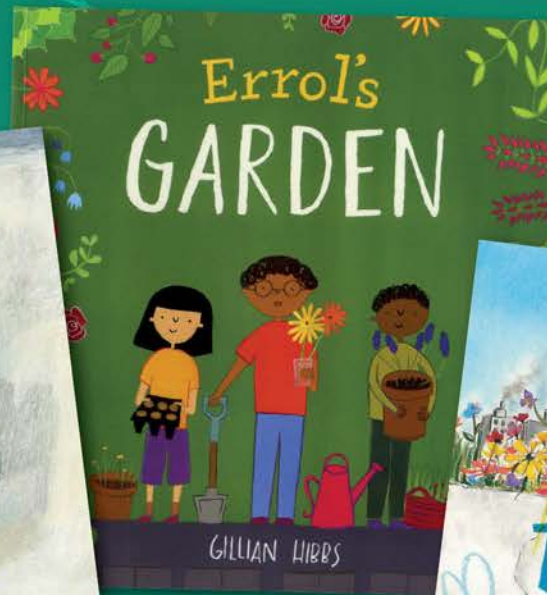
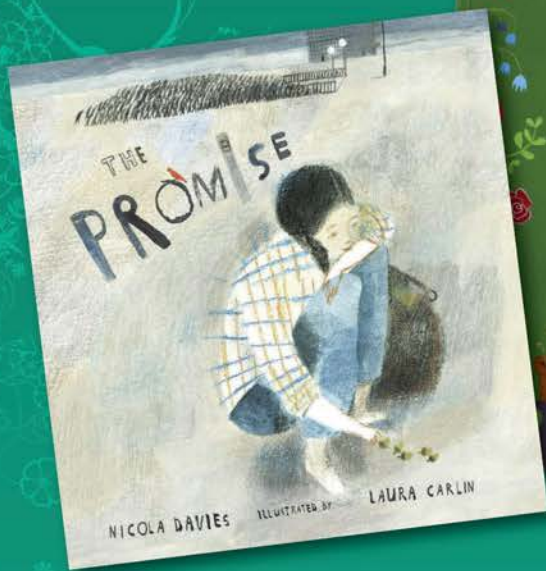
TARGETED AT PUPILS IN KEY STAGE 2

CENTER: *Errol's Garden* by Gillian Hibbs

TARGETED AT PUPILS IN EYFS

RIGHT: *The Secret Sky Garden* by

Linda Sarah and Fiona Lumbers
TARGETED AT PUPILS IN KEY STAGE 1



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We're all ears!

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

**teach
PRIMARY**

We want to hear from you!

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



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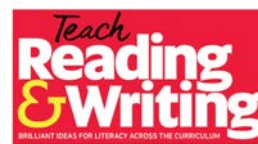
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Jolly Phonics

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across the primary years.



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So much more than just letters and sounds

Breaktime

News | Interviews | Ideas | Resources | Research



Bring on the Bard

The BBC is making nearly 1,000 of its Shakespeare programmes, spanning nearly 70 years, available to schools. Hundreds of hours of radio and TV programmes are now available, including primary-friendly shows like *Horrible Histories*, a Shakespeare-themed *Doctor Who* episode and CBeebies programmes about the *Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. More content is being added regularly and the archive is accessible for free by any school with an Educational Recording Agency licence. Head to ERA's website to search the archive and find something for your class. Visit era.org.uk/shakespeare-archive

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



FIRST AID SKILLS

British Red Cross has launched First Aid Champions, a digital resource that promotes kindness and helps children learn first aid skills. Pupils will meet six children through a variety of films and will take part in activities. Visit firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk



DISNEY PRINCESS

Disney's Ultimate Princess Resource has been designed to help children deepen their understanding of what it means to be kind, brave and to help others, covering PSHE and citizenship curriculum links. Pupils will watch film trailers and carry out a range of challenges. Visit tinyurl.com/tp-princess



MOVING ON UP

Help Y6 pupils with their transition to secondary by using Discovery Education Health and Relationships. This resource features videos, discussions and fun learning activities about coping with change, with real pupils offering advice. The programme is free until October at discoveryeducation.co.uk/rse

→→→ TODAY'S **TOP** **RESOURCES**



Oh, the places they'll go! This fantastic resources pack from Plazoom uses Dr Seuss' classic picturebook to cover literacy and PSHE in UKS2, with inspiring activities that would make the perfect project for Y6 leavers. Download it now, absolutely free, at bit.ly/PlazoomSeuss

Q & A



Adam Kay

Author, comedian & former doctor

What was primary school like for you?

I enjoyed it very much, although my two principal memories are smashing my head open running into a dinner lady holding a metal tray, and doing a poo in the swimming pool – neither of which were very fun for anyone involved. I have no doubt that my love for science and writing came from primary school. I can remember specific lessons and projects that inspired me.

Why do children love disgusting facts?

Everyone loves disgusting facts, it's just that children are more prepared to admit it. The gross stuff is a great hook to trick kids into learning – you produce enough wee every year to fill the tanks of ten cars, oh and here's how your kidneys work.

What role did reading play in your life over the pandemic?

Reading's a very important part of my life, but one that took a bit of a hit during lockdown – no more audiobooks on train journeys; no more quiet nights in hotel rooms after gigs. I've comforted myself at home with old favourites to keep me sane. When Norton Juster died earlier this year, I reread *The Phantom Tollbooth* – my absolute favourite book when I was young. It more than stands the test of time.

Kay's Anatomy: A Complete (and Completely Disgusting) Guide to the Body by Adam Kay (Puffin) is out now. Watch Adam talking about the book online as part of Hay Festival Schools Programme at [hayfestival.com](https://www.hayfestival.com). For the full line-up and to register visit [hayfestival.org](https://www.hayfestival.org)

Story seekers

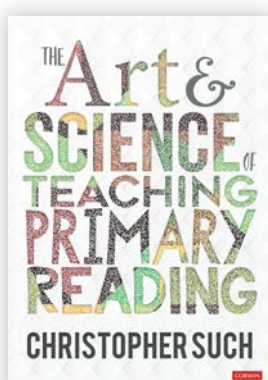
Story Seekers is a new creative literacy project for KS2 pupils from the National Theatre and Unicorn Theatre. Pupils are invited to join in a nationwide mission to find, tell and share important stories and will be led through the quest with the help of filmed theatre performances, workshops and performances by leading professional storytellers.

The mission culminates with pupils creating their own filmed storytelling performances to share with their community and other participating schools. The hope is that the project will help children to connect with their own cultural heritage, as well as that of others.

The free project is designed to take place over six weeks and support the school curriculum. There are also CPD sessions and curriculum-linked resources developed in partnership with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education to help you lead the project. Sign up at nationaltheatre.org.uk/storyseekers



Image © Ellie Kurtz



Art or science?

Teaching children to read is one of the most important tasks in primary education and classroom practice needs to be underpinned by a secure foundation of knowledge. You need to know what reading entails, how children learn to read and how it can be taught effectively. *The Art and Science of Primary Reading* by primary teacher Christopher Such (£18.99 SAGE Publications) explores the key technical and practical aspects of how children read, with strong links to theory and how to translate this into the classroom.

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Look ahead | Book ahead



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Endurance athlete Ben Smith is travelling 14,000

miles across America. Take part virtually, converting pupils' steps into miles to complete the challenge. the401foundation.co.uk/theusachallenge

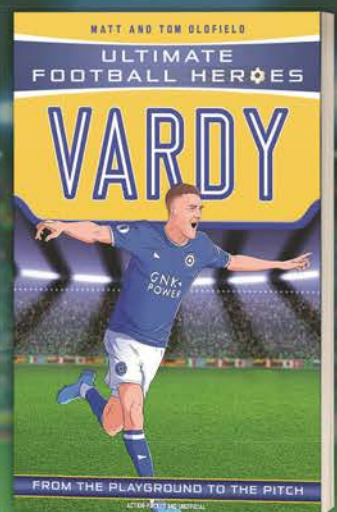
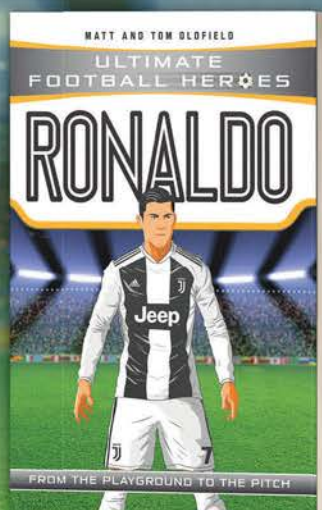
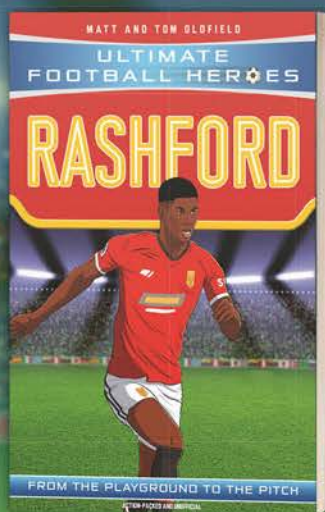
MANDELA DAY

Mark Nelson Mandela International Day on 18th July by making a difference in your community, whether by litter picking, fundraising or planting a tree. See mandeladay.com

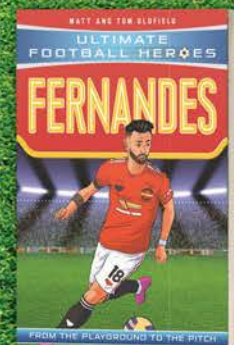
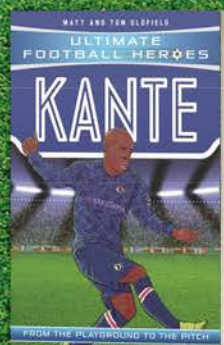


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6 WAYS to use philosophy to foster curiosity

Use these ideas from **The School of Life** to help pupils develop their emotional, psychological and interpersonal skills...

1 | WISE AND UNWISE RESPONSES

Philosophy literally means 'the love of wisdom'.

Encourage pupils to understand that 'wisdom' means more than just being clever – it's also about being kind, calm and accepting of life. Children can become 'wiser' by creating a list of wise and unwise responses to problems, such as a friend not being nice to you, not liking what you've been given for dinner, accidentally spoiling a drawing you were doing or having to go to bed when you're not tired. Wise responses might include finding the positives in the situation, whereas unwise responses include getting angry or blaming others.

2 | ASK AN EXPERT

Invite two students to roleplay. The 'expert' will talk about a topic they know; the 'non-expert' will only be allowed to ask questions, especially 'What is...' and 'Why...' questions. The activity ends when the expert begins to repeat their answers or the conversation goes around in circles. This activity allows the group to see the type of conversations that Socrates had with the Sophists. It aims to show that asking questions (not having answers) can really be a kind of wisdom. It may also show children that unlearning is just as important as learning – when the expert changes their mind in response to a particular question, for example.

3 | CREATE AN INNER DIALOGUE

Ask children to divide a sheet of paper into two columns. The left side will be for problems and the right side for questions. Write a problem in the left column, such as 'I am upset with Mum', then move onto the right column to ask a question such as 'Why am I upset with Mum?'. Taking turns on each side, continue the dialogue until answers begin to repeat or go around in circles. As children begin to ask themselves questions, they'll learn to clearly define their answers and reasons, and further develop their understanding of the problem.

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The School of Life is a global organisation helping people lead more fulfilled lives. Its children's books introduce young minds to some of life's most important ideas, from the history of philosophy to the psychology of emotion.

4 | CURIOUS QUESTIONS

Start with a big concept like 'beauty'. Ask children to come up with as many questions as they can think of related to this concept. Encourage them to ask as many questions as possible. Then delve into some important philosophical questions: 'What is real?'; 'What is right and wrong?'; 'What is society?'. The aim is for children to create more and more questions. Record the questions on a 'question wall' – perhaps organising them into categories ('open' and 'closed' questions, for example) or ranking them in quality.

5 | INTERESTING PROBLEMS

Aristotle believed that the meaning of life is about what makes your life feel interesting and good. To achieve this, what mainly counts is fixing things. When you fix something, you solve a problem that matters to you. Help children explore this by thinking of problems in the world that matter to them, for example: 'people argue too much' or 'our environment needs preserving from waste.' Can children re-frame these problems as 'how' questions: how might people argue less? Ask them to develop their own list of interesting problems to fix.

6 | SETTING A GOAL

According to Aristotle, happiness was about feeling that life is meaningful, and that this is achieved by having an important goal. Encourage children to think about one important thing they want to achieve and set a realistic date. Ask them to draw a timeline of the days, weeks, and months ahead to their set date. They can then list all the actions they will need to take and note them under each date along the timeline. They might also list all the problems they will likely face, both inner and outer – as well as all of the solutions they can think of to these problems.



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How I do it

Create two-page unit summaries to help pupils contextualise and consolidate their learning

MATTHEW LANE

1

Activate prior learning by giving children time to read and review their notes and work from all the past lessons in the unit. We had 12 lessons to review so it took a little while. Ask children to make a list of all the learning they've covered – it might be quite long. Review lists in pairs to see if anything has been missed or described in a different way. This helps children check for blindspots in their recall of their learning.



As psychologist Daniel Willingham once said, memory is the residue of thought. For children to be learning they need to be actively thinking and building links with what they already know to give context to new learning. We don't want the recalling of isolated facts but, instead, want children to understand how facts interrelate as part of a cohesive body of learning; we want to

foster 'generative' learning. Here's how we used summarising skills to contextualise a unit of learning on shape.

2

Ask pupils to pick the five most important concepts from their list. This task promotes selection and synthesis of ideas. Which concepts are interlinked? Which ones do pupils recall or forget easily? Which topics nest within others? This is a tricky task but will promote discussion and thinking.

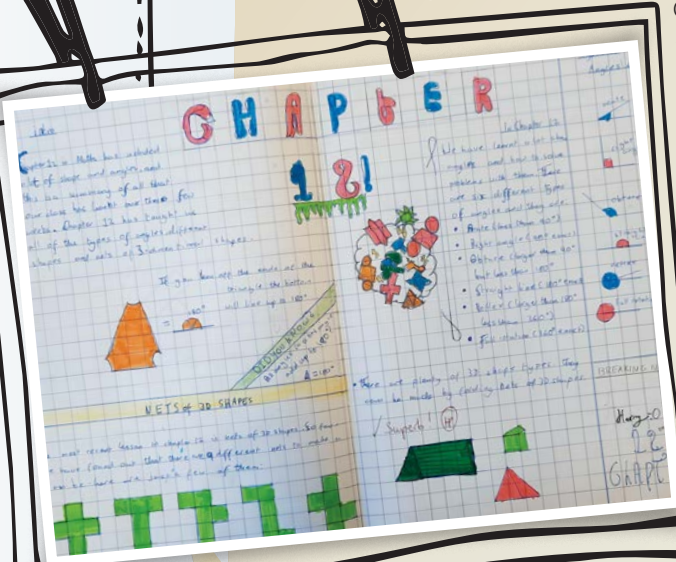
Introduce the idea of creating a double-page spread that mixes words, pictures, diagrams and short summaries to explain everything about the concept in the space provided. There are lots of examples online which you can show to pupils. I chose to show the class geography examples so they would have to think about how to translate the design for maths content.

3

4

Now it's time to get creative. Don't model how to set out the spread: this

is for children to work out. Allowing 30 minutes for the task promotes efficient summarising rather than lots of time colouring in. In my class I saw some great ideas (like drawing and cutting out nets of shapes and sticking them onto the page) and highlighted these as children worked. You may wish to do this part of the lesson as quiet work to promote independent thinking.



Once the spreads are finished, ask pupils to share them with partners or groups. What concepts did everyone explore?

Which ones were less popular? Check the longest again: which concepts did nobody do? Allow a further ten minutes for finishing off and adding in concepts seen on other spreads. Use the finished creations for revision or as the starting point for a similar unit in the future.

5



Matthew Lane is a Y6 teacher at Hethersett CEVC Primary in Norwich. Read more about generative learning in *Fiorella & Mayer's Generative Learning in Action* by Zoe and Mark Enser (John Catt Educational Ltd).

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SCAN ME



YOU DESERVE A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE

After such a strange year, let's reflect on which Covid changes we're going to keep and which definitely need to go...

 @kevharcombe

As I write, English lockdown restrictions are being eased to allow 'visits indoors to a house not your own' – great news for Burglar Bill – and hugs, but who knows what tomorrow might bring? Instead of guessing the future, let's look back and reflect on what we've learnt from the crisis – which changes stay and which go.

When it came to children in rows, teachers felt conflicted seeing their classrooms looking like a 1930s black and white documentary. Then they found that children actually looking in their direction was a boon to gaining their attention. Who knew? Parent-teacher meetings by Zoom? Parents like not waiting in draughty corridors on undersized chairs and teachers like being able to wobble the webcam and claim dodgy wifi signal when they've had enough. Win win.

There's certainly been health benefits

to paying more attention to ventilation in schools, but with windows and doors permanently flung open to dissipate viral aerosol, school corridors were like wind tunnels for testing fighter jets. Wearing warm black balaclavas indoors risked investigations by the Line of Duty crew looking for H.

Remote learning? Some teachers considered resigning rather than appear on video and suffer parents' sarcastic critiques of their appearance. Others treated the webcam like an old friend, 'performed' naturally and were headhunted by TV companies looking for the next Bradley Walsh. And speaking of game shows, for all the many high-tech learning benefits of Google Classroom, the highlight for me was watching Y1 (most of whom attended virtual meets in their PJs), playing the socks on/socks off guessing game – coming soon to ITV.

What about parents' new-found

respect for teachers? It was a fascinating psychological study to see parents' tension ratchet up as remote learning wore on and on, like something from a Stephen King horror story. Families feared they might be trapped teaching bloody fronted adverbials for decades, cursing Sir Tim Berners Lee for inventing the web in the first place. Some snapped, usually when their child told them for the 99th time, 'Miss doesn't do it like that.' Diagnoses of parental PTSD are imminent. Parents love their children, of course they do, but it's nice to have a break from them sometimes. It's a mental wellbeing thing.

When it comes to children's respect for teachers, I enjoyed seeing the relief on their little sun-deprived faces when, far from feeling separation anxiety, they fled gleefully into the blessed relief of the parent-free zone that is school; parents' plaintive and cruelly ignored 'Love you!' cries dying in the cold morning air as children raced to be with their pals. Children love their parents, of course they do, but it's nice to have a break from them sometimes. It's a mental wellbeing thing.

City economies – coffee shops and transport – are suffering due to home working, but what are the effects of cancelled school trips? The lucrative market in souvenir pencils, bookmarks and key rings has gone into freefall. A colleague this week tentatively returned to the fray, taking a class of five-year-olds to the zoo – safely outdoors in small groups. Recently furloughed zookeepers enthusiastically poked reluctant animals out of their shelters so children could see giraffes, tigers, snow leopards and even sunbathing lemurs (show-offs), safely al fresco. Many were so glad to be out in the open they dashed about like Duracell bunnies on Red Bull. As did the animals. On the coach home, to assess the learning value of the expensive trip, a teacher asked Albie what his highlight had been. He thought long and hard before announcing, 'I had a really nice poo.' Job done. Or jobbie done, perhaps.

And what of the phenomenon of public applause? Schools didn't get a weekly clap like NHS staff, which is fair enough; they were saving actual lives and putting their own at risk – but, hey, we were educating future generations and stopping parents going doolally. Whatever. Reader, please take a virtual rapturous round of applause for you all; teachers, cleaners, office staff, lollipop folk and dinner ladies. Well done – you've all been magnificent!

Kevin Harcombe is a Teaching Awards winner and headteacher at Redlands Primary, Fareham.



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

A letter to... *a military child*

You've been to three schools in three years and sometimes feel misunderstood, but help is here...



You're only seven years old and today you're starting a new school – your third one in three years. Your mum serves in the British Army and

you and your family regularly move around the country for her career. You found out you were moving just five weeks ago and your parents struggled to find you a school place in time.

Your first day is full of nerves. You only moved into your new house at the weekend and it's hundreds of miles away from the last place you called home. You've started school midway through the term and your new teacher is covering the curriculum in a different order. Everyone else seems up to speed with microhabitats and food chains but you wring your hands and wish the ground would swallow you whole.

At this new school you'll be the only child with a parent serving in the British Armed Forces. More than 50% of schools with service children have less than ten on roll. Your parents thought it was a good choice because the school population is less mobile so you won't have to say goodbye to military friends all the time, but sometimes this is harder. There will be no other pupils that can relate to your experiences as a military child. No one will understand what it's like when your mum

gets called away on a four-week exercise with 24 hours' notice, or when she's deployed overseas for six months and you rarely get to speak to her.

Your school will have a very small Service Pupil Premium budget to offer you pastoral support and it won't stretch far – that's if they even offer you any dedicated support at all.

At home you're proud to be part of the British Armed Forces community but at school it can feel like your family are living a secret life. When your mum is home you watch her go to work every day in her uniform, but while the dressing-up box at school is full of other uniforms from grown-up jobs – police, firefighters, nurses, mechanics, builders – there aren't any military clothes. You probably won't find any stories about military family life in the school library either, even though some of your favourite books at home are ones about other service children like you.

Some days you feel alone and misunderstood and wish you could just live a 'normal' life. I know how you feel because my own daughter experienced the same thing ten years ago. In 2011, her dad was serving in Afghanistan and she attended a school where she was the only service child. None of her friends understood what it was like to have a parent in the forces. One of them innocently asked her if she would get a new daddy when her daddy died. She really, really struggled. Her behaviour regressed. She started waking up in the night and anxiously

following me around the house.

I didn't know where to turn for help and the school couldn't offer me any support, so I started a charity called Little Troopers to support all children with a parent serving in the British Armed Forces. One of our many projects is to provide schools with evidence-based resources for teachers to support military children through some of the unique challenges and experiences they face and help them realise that there are 100,000 other children in the UK just like them.

Next month your mum is going away again. Your heart aches already. Because it's 'only' for eight weeks, everyone expects you to be resilient. But resilience isn't about becoming hardened over time. It's about feeling nurtured and supported by the adults in your life, including your teachers.

When your school tells you about a free Little Troopers virtual workshop you're excited to log on with hundreds of other military children from your local area and feel part of a community of others who feel just like you. I wish that I could reach every Little Trooper like you and make sure that you are getting the support you need when you need it. I want you to know that being a military child is not a disadvantage and that I'll continue to work hard to ensure that children like you get the helping hand they need to flourish.

From Louise

Louise Fetigan is the founder of military children's charity Little Troopers.

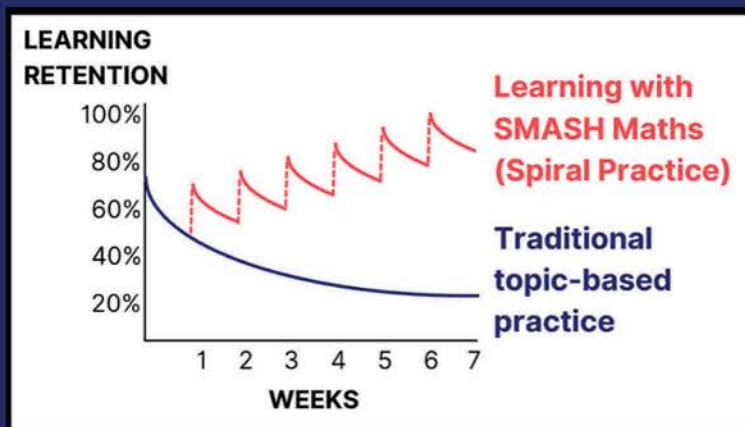


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7 NEWS STORIES

you might have missed

FUNDING PRIORITIES

A poll of its members by NAHT has found that school leaders want the government to focus its education recovery funding on small group tutoring run by schools themselves (70%), better support for pupil health and wellbeing (63%) and increased pupil premium allocation (42%). Less than five per cent of those surveyed thought that the national tutoring programme and extending the school day should be prioritised. NAHT general secretary Paul Whiteman said that "rather than dictating how education recovery happens, the government needs to give schools the flexible funding and resources to get on with the job in the way they know works best."

MEAL VOUCHERS

A report from the University of Wolverhampton looking at the free school meal voucher scheme and children's access to food during the Covid-19 crisis has found that the Edenred voucher scheme was "problematic" and caused "avoidable hardship to young people and their families" as well as "additional difficulties for schools", with a lack of training for staff and parents about how the scheme worked. The report's author, Dr Gurbinder Lalli, recommends developing a wider network for school leaders so that schools' approaches can be shared to ensure colleagues can learn from one another and develop good practice. Read the full report at tinyurl.com/tp-meals

SPORTS DAY SAVED?

The DfE has told schools that sports days can still go ahead, despite the Freedom Day delay. However, there are caveats. Pupils must remain in their bubbles, sports equipment should be regularly cleaned and families coming to watch must adhere to social distancing. Spectators can gather in groups of 30, with multiple groups are allowed. The DfE also recommends that schools consider outdoor leavers' celebrations events if they will involve more than one bubble, but groups will have to remain separated. The guidance adds: "We are keen not to restrict individual settings from designing events which maintain the integrity of bubbles or consistent groups".



LEADER WELLBEING

The DfE is looking to spend £800,000 on "tailored mental health and wellbeing support" to school leaders across England in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The DfE has confirmed that the scheme would be based on the current school leaders' wellbeing service pilot scheme, run by Education Support – a charity dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of education staff. This provides online peer and phone support to about 250 school leaders. The intention is to make the service available to all primary leaders. The contract for the new service is expected to be awarded by September.

RECOVERY PACKAGE

The Education Policy Institute says that the government's £1.4bn education recovery package is a fraction of the level of funding required to reverse learning loss seen by pupils since March 2020. The package equates to around £50 extra per pupil per year, whereas EPI suggests that the actual level of funding required to reverse pupil learning loss is ten times higher at around £500 per pupil per year. Jon Andrews, head of analysis at EPI said that the proposals are "an inadequate response to the challenge the country is facing with young people's education, wellbeing, and mental health." Read more at tinyurl.com/tp-recovery

SPIELMAN STAYING

Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman is set to continue in the role for an extra two years. Spielman joined in 2017 and was originally due to complete her five-year term at the end of 2021 but will now extend her reign to ensure the new education inspection framework changes have an opportunity to become established. By staying until 2023 she will be the longest-serving Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. Education secretary Gavin Williamson said Spielman had a "wealth of knowledge and experience from her five years leading Ofsted that will be invaluable as we work to support the education sector to make sure every child is able to recover from the impact of the pandemic".

MAT INSPECTIONS

Amanda Spielman, Ofsted chief inspector, has said that she is constrained by only being able to carry out individual school inspections rather than inspections of multi-academy trusts. When asked by the Commons Education Select Committee last month about what she would like to change about Ofsted's remit, she said: "We still operate what is, in some respects, a historic inspection legislation that constrains us to look at the level of the individual school." She's previously called it "peculiar" that MATs are not inspected over the quality of their education, use of resources, governance and efficiency.

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TEACHER JOB APPLICATIONS TAKE DAYS

So the least school leaders can do is send out a polite rejection email to candidates who aren't shortlisted, says **Sophie Hudson**

[@misshudsonhist](#) [misshudsonhist.wordpress.com](#)

Rejection in any form is hard, but on a professional level it can be soul-destroying. We've all been there as teachers: you spend hours writing a job application, noting every GCSE you've got, scouring the school's website to fine tune your cover letter. Every teaching job application I've ever submitted has taken hours or even days to complete – numerous proof-checks; sending it round for people to look at. When you've

spent that much time applying, prepping and, dare I say, picturing yourself at the school, when you get a rejection it feels like a punch in the gut.

I vividly remember applying for my first teaching job. It was at a school that I'd attended as a child. I'd returned to do some work experience there and when a job came up, a colleague emailed me to tell me to apply. I prepared, had my mentor look over my lesson, did a mock interview and put my heart and soul into the application.

I can't say it went to plan – I'd saved over my lesson with a blank PowerPoint. I knew I wasn't going to get the role, but when they finally rang to confirm my suspicions, I still struggled. In all honesty it wasn't even about that job. It was the rejection. They knew me, knew my work ethic and still didn't want me. I took it personally.

In hindsight though, I wasn't impressed with the school or the interview process. I was made to wait two hours for my interview and didn't even know where the toilets were. I didn't meet the head, which I'd been told was the norm. It felt odd and I drove home feeling a little unsettled about it.

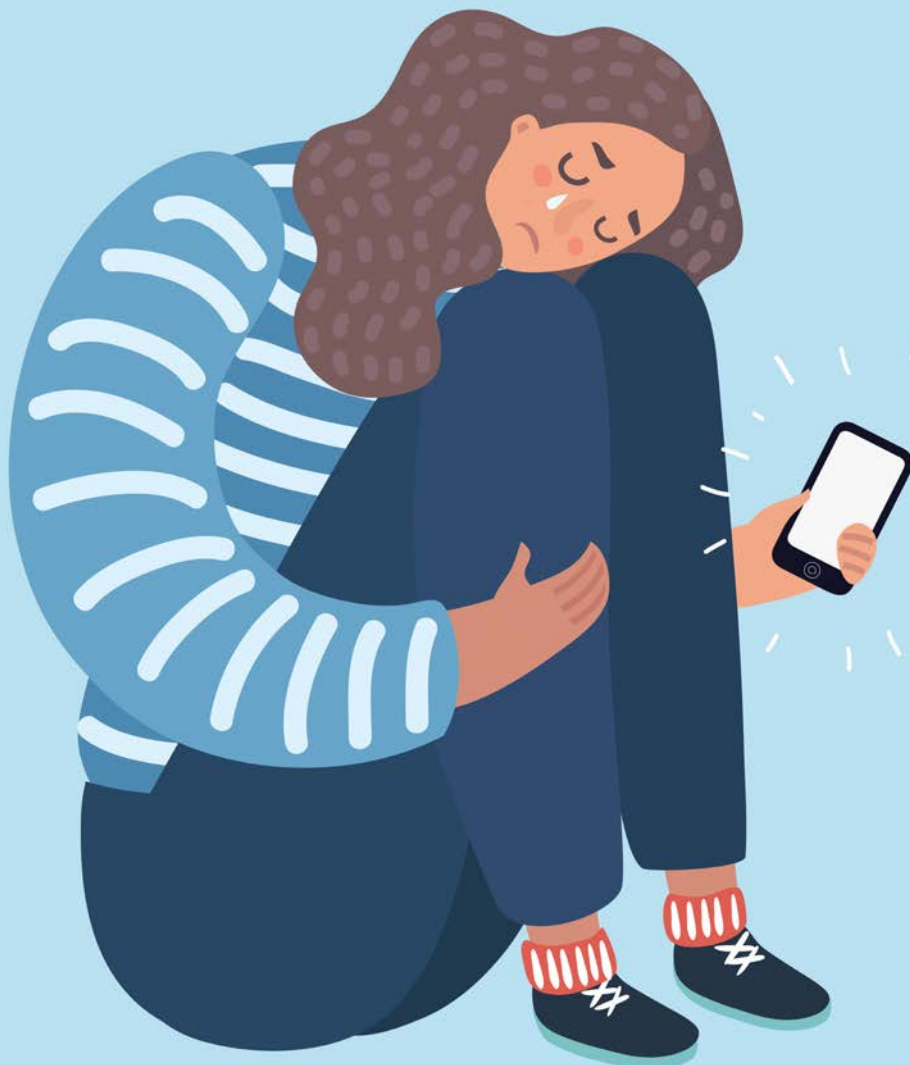
The day after the rejection I got invited to interview at my current school. I had a tour from a group of students, taught a lesson and was so impressed with pupils' conduct and engagement. I got such a real sense of what the school was about from the visit. This one felt different. Luckily I got it and it's been the perfect place for the start of my career.

Even though I love my current school, I recently applied for another job. It seemed perfect. I put so much effort into my application – I felt I had so much to offer the school. Ten days after submitting my application I still hadn't heard anything so emailed to enquire. The school told me I hadn't made the shortlist. Part of me was frustrated. I worked solidly for two days and two evenings to write my application and they didn't even tell me 'no' until I emailed. Rejected, again. What had I done wrong? What could I have done differently?

When you spend hours and days writing an application only for it to be disregarded it's hard to deal with. If the same thing has happened to you, know that you're not alone. Facing rejection helps build your resilience. It's OK to feel sad or angry, but I promise it does pass. Keep your head up high. Everything happens for a reason – I truly believe that.

My plea to school leaders is this: even if you have 100 applications, please be considerate and email those who applied to tell them they were not shortlisted. Even a generic message is enough. For those ten days when I was waiting for news of my application I was a mess. My heart raced every time an email arrived and I checked my phone more times than I care to admit. I had to chase up to get any closure. The teaching job market seems particularly tough at the moment, so my advice, especially to trainees, is to persevere. Rejection does not mean failure. **TP**

Sophie Hudson is a secondary teacher in London.



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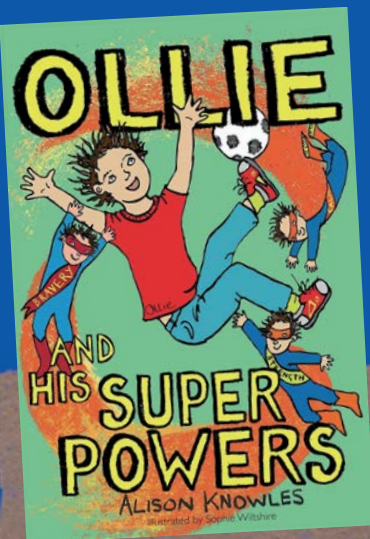
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UNDERCOVER TEACHER

Our anonymous educator gets something off their chest

"I get maths mastery but sometimes I feel it's holding back some pupils"

Teaching maths seems to have become quite complicated recently. There seems to be a lot of new initiatives and maths schemes that schools have adopted to ensure they keep up with the latest maths philosophies. I think some maths mastery approaches are very positive and feel quite ashamed of how I used to teach maths. Of course, I was none the wiser – I taught maths how the school wanted. I planned my week but had pre-determined set groups in class. Mine were red, yellow, green and blue. The children knew what they meant – they're not stupid. Pupils stayed in that group most of the year and that was that.

However, in recent years I realised children could be moved around on a daily basis depending on how they were doing. In fact, I started pre-assessing children to help me determine how to group the class (at least for the first day of the week). Sometimes the more able would work with me and sometimes with the TA, but it was always different and I had autonomy to manage my groups as I pleased. But, in some schools, this has changed.

Some schools insist that classes must now sit in mixed-ability pairs for maths. You're told not to ability group pupils at all. I understand this may be appropriate for the first day. However, after day one, it's normally clear who the fast learners are, who will need stretching and who will need supporting the next day. Surely, it makes sense to group them together for the next lesson – purely from a class management point of view?

I've had personal experience of this recently. I asked my school if I could have the flexibility to move children around, based on their daily learning. The answer was a resounding no. "We don't set here. We do maths mastery." Again, I agree with the principles of maths mastery – deepen pupils' understanding, don't jump ahead too far – but my question was answered with, "You must stretch children's learning with individual questions.

Ask them to explain. Ask them to reason. Ask them 'Why?' They can still sit in mixed-ability pairs."

I don't want set groups. That holds children back, I get that. But watching my TA moving from one child to another, giving the same input to each of them, seems like a waste of time. Surely it would be better to have the children who struggled on day one (or even during the lesson) sat together. These groups would change on a daily basis – they're not set. It just seems like good teaching to me.

I was told off recently because I'd noticed that seven pupils in my class had understood the properties of angles really quickly. They weren't all my 'top' pupils. I called them to the carpet and extended their learning with some challenges. They were bouncing ideas off each other and challenging each other. They loved it; I loved it. I left them to it for a bit and checked in on some other children.

Apparently, I was told, this is not maths mastery.

The children must stay in mixed-ability pairs.

Every child must do the same. The more able (or 'rapid graspers', as we're told to call them) could further their understanding by helping the child next to them who isn't as quick. "They can explain their thinking to them. This will be great for the rapid graspers – to help them consolidate their learning."

I also have to teach the whole class the same thing for 25 minutes. It has

to be super pacy. I have to challenge individuals with differentiated questions and make sure they all do the task practically first. In addition, I have to 'ping pong' sentences with the class, where they repeat what I say. I'm told to watch countless maths mastery lessons online and everyone has been given numerous articles to read and websites to register with where we can gain access to maths mastery resources. It's all become very complicated.

I now have a long list of things that I now have to ensure I do in my maths lessons. I get maths mastery but sometimes I feel it is holding back some pupils – and teachers. **TP**

"You're told not to ability group pupils at all"

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



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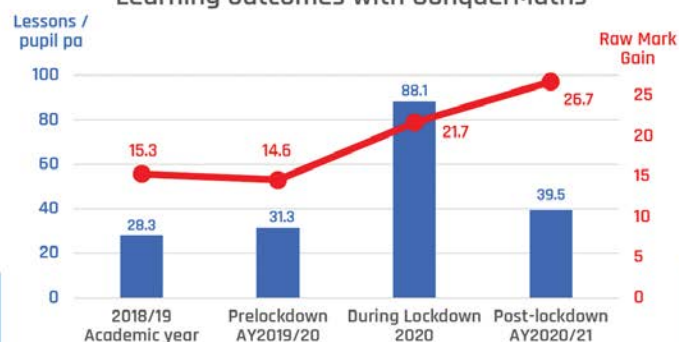
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WE WANT OUR PUPILS TO BE OPEN-MINDED

We've embedded LGBT+ education into our curriculum to ensure children know that it's OK to be whoever you want to be

 @dennyheather

The charity Just Like Us did independent research, surveying almost 3,000 pupils, and found that nearly half of young people have had little to zero positive messaging about being LGBT+ in the past year. We want to make sure that doesn't happen at my school, Norwich Primary Academy. In my opinion, primary schools should champion LGBT+ history and education and raise awareness to make sure every member of their community feels represented and understood from an early age.

When I joined the Inspiration Trust, in East Anglia, the importance of LGBT+ education in a primary school setting wasn't new to me. Having previously worked in a Stonewall school in London, I knew the importance of working with institutions to create inclusive and accepting cultures. At every corner, we need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. But we can't just do it for our school's performance or Ofsted rating – it needs to be for the benefit of our children and community. We should

champion diversity because it matters.

The first step in our journey was gaining funding from the Government Equalities Office to pay for our Stonewall set-up costs so that we could have a budget to do this work, as we're a school in an area of high deprivation. However, if you're a school without a budget for LGBT+ inclusion, that doesn't matter. Every summer we take part in Just Like Us' School Diversity Week, celebrating LGBT+ equality in education. It's completely free, including the resources provided for primary schools.

At my school we celebrate School Diversity Week alongside our participation in Black History Month, Norwich PRIDE and much more. We want our pupils to value equality, be open-minded, supportive and able to challenge stereotypical views. As a part of a multi-academy trust, it's important our values are aligned with our other schools. The trust supports us through its commitment to responding to the diversity of needs of all learners.

Our celebration of School Diversity Week includes diversity 'story time' each day, learning songs, assemblies,

a non-uniform day wearing rainbow clothes, and core lessons that teach inclusion and equality in all the curriculum areas for EYFS, KS1 and 2 and PSHE. One of the most important things is to embed LGBT+ inclusivity invisibly in the day-to-day running of your school. We train staff to think about their language and lesson planning – we want them to act as champions themselves.

Making your curriculum inclusive allows for a whole-school approach in tackling homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. However, it need not be an enormous task – you don't even need to necessarily rewrite your curriculum. You just need to start by looking at what forms a natural fit within your existing medium- and long-term plans. It works really well when you encourage cross-departmental or year group collaboration to make the task easier to manage. For example, our art curriculum features LGBT+ artists and challenges stereotypical art throughout investigation and examination.

Our RSE and PSHE curriculum delivers age-appropriate content to all year groups and teaches equality and diversity in families right from the start. We teach that families are all different and may include mums and dads; mums and mums; dads and dads; and grandparents and carers too. Our pupils have made a pledge to be 'upstanders' and we have worked with the community on raising this awareness with parental videos and family information packs.

Our school is such a wonderful diverse and rich community. Everyone has embraced and accepted our inclusive approach. We educate and celebrate with all of our children, staff and families and teach everyone that we're all equal. The main message is that it's OK to be whoever you want to be and be proud of this. We explicitly teach equality and the vocabulary around this and what it means.

We're not afraid to be inclusive and the education of this is at the core of our values at school. I'd encourage all primary staff reading this to get involved in School Diversity Week and send a positive message of acceptance to your pupils too. **TP**

Heather Denny is vice principal at Norwich Primary Academy and arts specialist advisor at Inspiration Trust. Sign up for School Diversity Week at the website below and receive a toolkit of teaching resources.

 justlikeus.org/school-diversity-week

More than A LABEL

It's high time people with disabilities were embedded into history curriculums – take up the challenge with these ideas...

BEV FORREST

UK Disability History Month (UKDHM) was established in 2010 to celebrate the lives and achievements of people living with disabilities and to chart their work to achieve equality. The number of schools marking this event is increasing, but is still low compared to months celebrating black history and women's history. Why is this the case, given that around 20% of the adult population of this country could be identified as disabled?

UKDHM runs from 22nd November to 22nd December to coincide with International Day of People with Disabilities on 3rd December and follow on from Anti-Bullying Week in November. With figures from the DfE indicating that people with disabilities are two and a half times more likely to experience bullying than those without, this link can't be underestimated.

Even more worrying than the low status of UKDHM is that audits of school curriculums rarely contain evidence of disability history. Where they do, it usually appears as a bolt-on inclusion of a significant figure with a disability within KS1 or a reference to the Paralympics when studying Ancient Greece at KS2. It's high time disabled people had their history embedded in the primary

curriculum. Following the 2005 Disability Amendment Act, it's also the law. Schools have a duty to promote disability equality.

Sustained change

A recent call-out on social media for schools undertaking quality work in this field had little response. However, there was great interest and enthusiasm from those wanting to develop this area. So why this lack of action? Popular reasons included lack of resources, poor subject knowledge from teachers and a fear of doing and saying the wrong thing.

Including disability history isn't a quick-fix process, but one that requires sustained curriculum change to have any real impact – you've probably undertaken a similar process with other areas of diverse histories. The first step has to be an audit of your curriculum and resources. Don't despair if the outcome looks bleak, instead review how you can embed disability history as a thread throughout your curriculum.

Let's start with EYFS and KS1. This could involve looking at and challenging how disabled people are displayed in traditional tales. You can also ensure representative coverage of people with disabilities when looking at family structures and experiences. This can be carried through into KS1 when studying aspects within 'changes within

living memory'. There's great scope within KS1 in relation to significant people and events. Remember, don't just look at including disabled people, but also those who campaigned on behalf of those with disabilities. Examples include Lord Alf Morris, whose work led to the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act in 1970.

Figures like Helen Keller and Louis Braille have appeared on the curriculum for many years, but usually as part of a cross-curricular topic on senses. Take this opportunity to review how they are portrayed and ensure you are celebrating their strengths and highlighting how they worked to overcome the barriers to achievement imposed by society. By studying such figures we get

Anne Begg MP, first full-time wheelchair user in the House of Commons



VOTES FOR WOMEN



Rosa May Billinghurst, influential suffragette and wheelchair user

“The first step has to be an audit of your curriculum and resources, but don't despair if the outcome looks bleak”

Ben Purse, early trailblazer for disability rights



Baroness Jane Campbell, disability rights activist and member of the House of Lords



a powerful commentary on attitudes towards disability at that time and in that place.

An increasingly popular event studied in KS1 is the granting of the vote for women over 30 in 1918. However, how often does the story include the suffragette Rosa May Billinghurst? She set up her local branch of the WSPU and attended rallies in her wheelchair – even chaining it to railings at Buckingham Palace. In our drive to include these stories we must avoid shoehorning people into the curriculum as a tick-box exercise. Always consider if their story is worthy of inclusion and measure this against any stories being removed.

Starting points

An initial glance at the KS2 history curriculum and its focus on periods pre-1066 may make the inclusion of disability history appear more

of a challenge. What if there's a lack of evidence? Can we be certain if individuals in the past had a disability? There are many lessons to learn in this area from recent steps to embed black British history within the curriculum. Work from the existing evidence of the attitudes and treatment of disabled people. Subject knowledge resources from Historic England ([tinyurl.com/tp-disability](https://www.tinyurl.com/tp-disability)) and World of Inclusion ([worldofinclusion.com](https://www.worldofinclusion.com)) make great starting points. It's clear from these that in some time periods and civilizations, people with disabilities fared better than in others. The passage of time was not always a move towards a better situation and more equal society. Tread carefully – some content, such as the horrific treatment of disabled people in Roman arenas, is unsuitable for primary pupils.

In terms of local history, you could study a hospital linked to a religious building or a workhouse or asylum in your area. By looking at a number of sites, alongside documentary evidence, chart the move from care within the community to the rise of institutions.

A popular topic at UKS2 is the impact of either the first or second world war on the country or your local area. We tend to focus on the number of fatalities, but what about the story of those who returned with disabilities? With better treatment of infections, their numbers grew significantly compared

to previous wars. Do we ever consider what happened to them and acknowledge the hardships many faced on their return? Injustice and negative attitudes in society resulted in many years of campaigning for recognition and fair treatment.

This story could also form part of a post-1066 unit looking at campaigns for equal rights by different groups in society, or you may decide to pull together the threads studied over the Key Stages and conclude with a focused unit on disability history, looking at change over time. You could look at what evidence can tell us about changing attitudes towards disability from the Middle Ages to the present day, or think about when was the worst time in history to be disabled.

Diversity focus

Rachael Eckley, history subject leader at Coteford Junior in Hillingdon, Middlesex, has threaded disability history throughout her school's curriculum as part of a broader diversity focus. Within each period studied, pupils consider whether society has moved toward becoming more diverse, inclusive and equal. Rachael and her team have done a great deal of work to review the resources they use,

avoid negative stereotypes and promote more authentic representation.

Rachael found the book *I Am Not a Label: 34 Disabled Artists, Thinkers, Athletes and Activists from Past and Present* by Cerrie Burnell (Wide-Eyed Editions) an extremely useful resource which supported her to include historical figures with a disability in many areas of the curriculum, including science, art and music. In Y6, pupils consider if society is more inclusive now than in the past. As an academy, Coteford can be more flexible in its curriculum than many schools, yet there is a great deal we can all take from their approach. Rachael feels it leads to "a dynamic history curriculum which encourages critical thinking while exploring the past."

What are we waiting for? Let's take up the challenge and join Rachael on her journey to a more diverse and representative history curriculum. **TP**



Bev Forrest is chair of the Historical Association Primary Committee and author of *Rising Stars History*.

MORE USEFUL DISABILITY RESOURCES

Learning disability history website from teacher Ben Newmark, including pupil booklet, teacher guide and PowerPoint: learningdisabilityhistory.org

UK Disability History Month website: ukdhm.org

Free Disability History Month digital illustrated book from UK Parliament: tinyurl.com/tp-digibook

Different Like Me: My Book of Autism Heroes by Jennifer Elder (£11.99, Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

Just Like Me: 40 Neurologically and Physically Diverse People who Broke the Stereotypes by Louise Gooding (£12.99, Studio Press)

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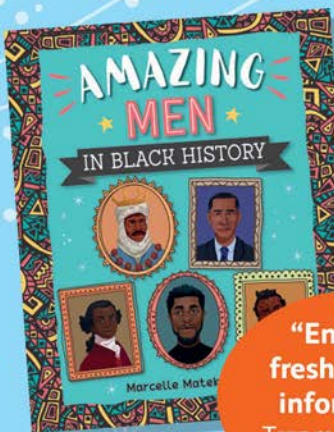
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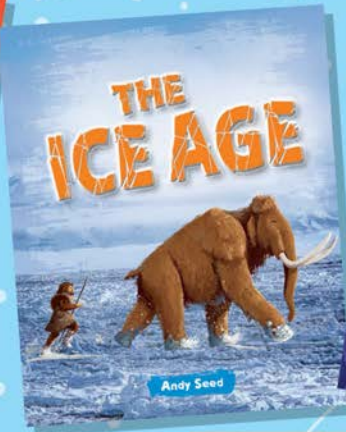
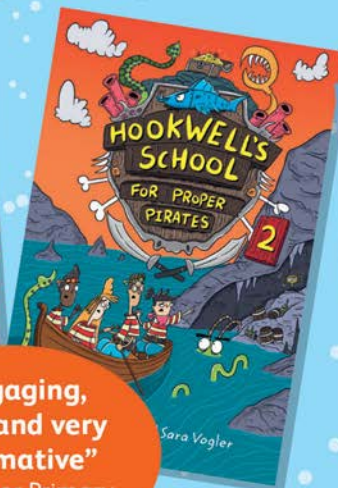
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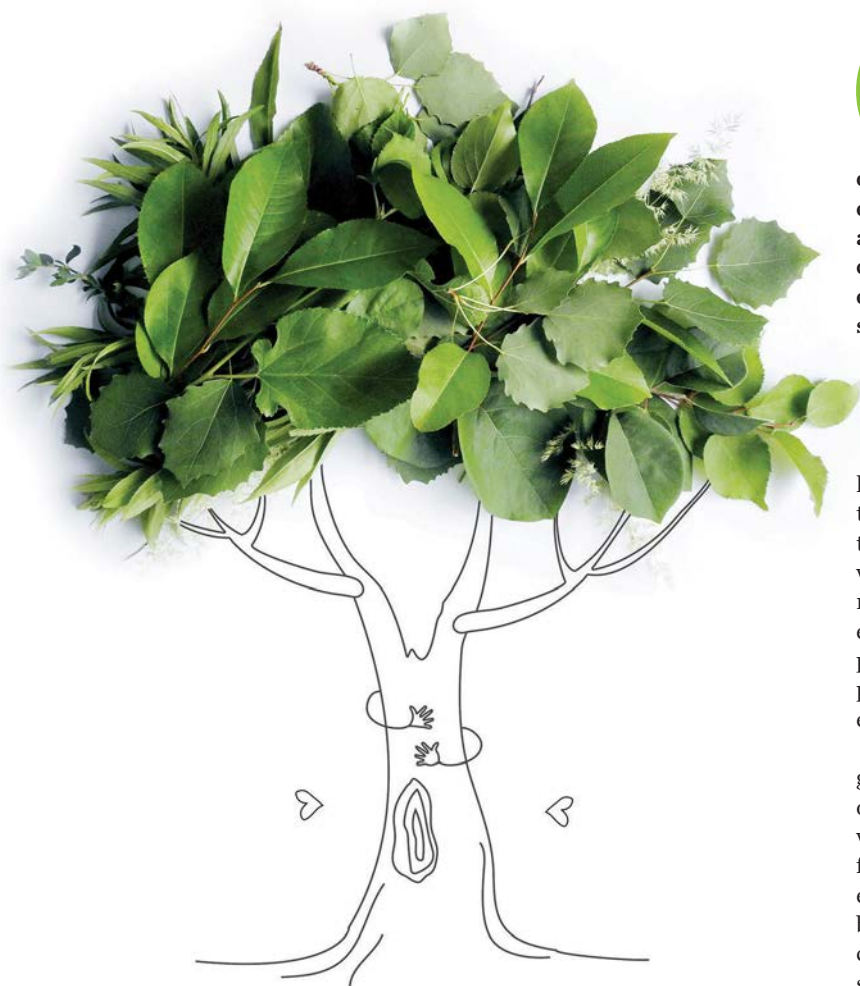


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Outside EVERY DAY

Step out into the sunshine with us as we explore the powerful benefits of outdoor learning...



Outdoor learning is a broad term that covers many types of activities – whether it's an adventurous week-long expedition, a day trip to the coast, or simply spending part of your regular school timetable in the great outdoors. Beyond the obvious benefits of physical activity, getting outside every day and taking your curriculum outdoors can help children feel a sense of belonging in their community, improve their social skills, develop meaningful relationships with others and build up their resilience.

After a year of disruption and repeated lockdowns, some pupils will have spent very little time outside, especially if they don't have access to a garden, yard or private outdoor space. Others will have revelled in having the time and space to reconnect with nature. Whatever the lockdown experience of your cohort, with Covid-19 being proven to spread less easily outdoors, now is the perfect time to recommit to spending a little time every day outdoors with your pupils.

Whether you're already passionate about regularly gathering round the firepit for a grammar session or are simply interested in dipping your toe into the water of outside learning, we've got advice and ideas for promoting the calming properties of alfresco education, how to get outside when you have a limited budget, incorporating the outdoors into your recovery curriculum and ideas for starting simple with natural story sessions. Read on to find out more...

WIN £500 OF OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT!

We're giving one school the chance to win over £500 of outdoor equipment, courtesy of forest school and outdoor learning specialists Muddy Faces. This amazing bundle contains a den building kit with poles, pegs, rope, tarpaulins and more that allows you to create a cosy base big enough for your whole class. We're also giving away a class-sized flora and fauna observation set including field guides, microscopes, bug viewers, binoculars, nets and lots more. Find out more about Muddy Faces at muddyfaces.co.uk

Enter now at teachwire.net/giveaways

*Competition closes at 5pm on 27th August 2021. Full terms and conditions available at teachwire.net/giveaways



*The stats...***83%**

of children say that being
in nature makes them
very happy

82%

of children want to do more to
protect the environment

60%

of children have spent less time
outdoors during the pandemic

48%

of children said worries about
catching Covid-19 stopped them
from spending time outdoors

44%

of pupils want to spend more
time outdoors at school

Statistics taken from Natural England
research (published October 2020).

*“Even a small
area of concrete
or tarmac can be
transformed into
a mini haven”*



*“Find peace
and unwind”*

Alana Cama, RHS schools and groups
programme manager, explains why a dose of
gardening can be the best medicine...

@rhsschools

schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk

Alongside the growing mountain of evidence that gardening is good for us, many of us have experienced first-hand the value of green spaces over the last year. Just adding a few plants to a bare front garden can make us feel happier and more relaxed, while a recent RHS study found that the more ‘doses’ of gardening you get, the better your wellbeing.

With this in mind, now is the perfect time for you to make the most of any outside space you have at your school, not only to improve mood but also to support learning. Even a small area of concrete or tarmac can be transformed into a mini haven where both staff and pupils can find peace and unwind.

Gardening clubs provide children with a sanctuary and the chance to nurture plants and develop feelings of fulfilment and pride in themselves, as well as fostering their creativity and curiosity. Michelle Jones, a parent volunteer at Ashmount Primary in London, started off small using a few disused planters and saving seeds from supermarket crops and now has 50 families involved, helping to improve the mental health of young and old throughout the pandemic.

Taking lessons into the fresh air is another great way to bring elements of the curriculum alive and help everyone feel calmer. At Ballycarrickmaddy Primary in Lisburn,

Northern Ireland, all classes use the school garden for outdoor lessons. Teacher Hannah Gourley says that every child

has the chance to succeed in the garden, helping to build self-esteem, confidence and teamwork skills.

There are lots of other easy ways to use any outside space. Consider creating safe zones or friendship benches where young people can relax or talk, and ‘chat and do’ tables to keep hands busy. Or try running mindfulness sessions in the garden – even just a few minutes a week can help reduce stress.

The RHS Campaign for School Gardening features activities, guidance and training to help all schools

get growing
this year.

Further ideas
and
resources can
be found on
our website.





“Don’t break the bank”

Want to get outdoors but don’t have much budget? No problem, says **Helen Prewett**, forest school leader at Gatehouse Green Learning Trust

[@ggltofficial](#) [gglt.co.uk](#)

The key to making outdoor learning successful is not a large budget (although that helps!), but instead it’s about having the confidence to step outside the classroom. In the past year children have experienced uncertainty and trauma; the natural environment can calm the confusion and help them to make sense of the world.

- A central seating area is important for providing a focal point for outdoor activities. This can be achieved by using logs, or you could borrow benches from your gym or use ground sheets. It’s important to place whatever you use in a circle to make the experience inclusive.

- Using natural objects to enhance outdoor learning costs nothing except thought, imagination and a small amount of preparation time. Sticks can be sorted or grouped into lengths or sizes or woven together to make spiders’ webs and dreamcatchers.

- Why not make sticks into a nest for a bird or make a home for another

animal? This provides the perfect forum to discuss the nature on children’s doorsteps and the habitats in which creatures live. Ask your class to design their own nest or habitat, or supercharge their imaginations by suggesting they make a larger home for a dragon, fairy or elf.

- Children can discuss how shadows are formed by using sticks to measure them, or try making sundials with a paper plate and small stick, looking at the shadow on the plate every hour.

- Pebbles are cheap to buy or easy to collect. Ask children to use acrylic paint to turn them into story pebbles. These can be used again and again and are especially useful for children who don’t have the confidence to speak out in front of their peers.

- Brush up on children’s mapping skills using sticks, stones, pebbles or chalk. Write a simple trail for another child to follow then expand this to explain the degrees of a circle and the location of magnetic north, south, east and west.

- Ask parents to donate any spare wood they have and build structures from these. Alternatively, get hold of some broom handles. These are

relatively cheap and can be used to create structures using knots and ground sheets.

There’s truly no limit on outdoor learning – it can enhance children’s experiences, skills and knowledge without breaking the bank. Sitting together in the open air can bring a unique sense of community during which your class can share experiences and ideas, read a story or take part in a mindfulness activity. Children can take part in discussions around their topic or a book they’re reading. Drama also comes alive out of doors through acting out scenes from books. All of this can enhance pupils’ ability to recall feelings and emotions, which can be used in writing when they return to the classroom.

DOWNLOAD OUR VERBS OUTDOOR LESSON PLAN



Get children active while improving their understanding of verbs and adverbs. This pulse-raising lesson from teacher Julianne Britton is most suitable for LKS2 and focuses on generating verbs and adverbs to be used in different ways within an extended piece of writing. Once the active part of the lesson is finished, use the language you’ve generated in sentences and a recount activity.

Download it from Teachwire at [tinyurl.com/tp-verbs](https://www.teachwire.net/tp-verbs)





“Nature makes kids happy”

Carley Sefton, CEO of the Learning through Landscapes Trust, thinks outdoor curriculums could be the key to pandemic recovery...

@carleysw ltl.org.uk

For over 30 years, Learning through Landscapes has supported teachers to take the curriculum outdoors. So, when the first national lockdown started and schools closed across the UK, our team went into overdrive. We made all our resources free, hosted webinars and started online groups that saw thousands of people sign up. Like many people during that time, we just wanted to help in some small way. But what has been interesting is that, all these months later, the momentum keeps going: as Covid-19 has been proven to spread less easily outdoors, many educators recognise outdoor lessons as a key part of a safe return to school.

The majority of our staff are teachers and educators, so we have a strong understanding of the pressures schools face as they try to balance safety with learning, and how tired you might be of new initiatives that are meant to transform learning. One of our philosophies is that outdoor learning should not be about doing something new; it's about adapting what you already do. This means it's not all about fire lighting or having a 'forest school' space. We want you to feel confident to look at a timetable and think: “that maths class would be better outside” or “we could do a hunt around the school grounds to identify 2D and 3D shapes”.

In my role as CEO of Learning through Landscapes, it's hard for me not to think that outdoor learning holds a lot of answers to many of the issues we are facing as we recover from the pandemic. We know that outdoor learning can improve children's levels of physical activity, connect them to their local environment and boost their

overall wellbeing. Recent statistics from Natural England's People and Nature Survey back up the idea that time outside also supports children's mental health, with the majority of children surveyed agreeing that time in nature makes them very happy. Plus, opinions given by teachers worldwide – such as in Outdoor Classroom Day's 2018 Muddy Hands report – lists children's improved capacity to focus and develop key skills as a perceived benefit of outdoor learning and play. But most important of all to me is the impact that this style of learning can have on pupils' happiness and their engagement with education.

We need to support more teachers to take learning outside. This will mean that, whatever comes next, we will be ready to face it with as little disruption to our children's lives as possible. Here's some tips for integrating outdoor learning into your everyday teaching:

- Use a subject you know well. There are hundreds of inspiring outdoor lesson plans online covering all subjects and Key Stages.
- Plan what equipment you need and have it ready in advance.
- Talk about the lesson beforehand: set the rules, the space you will be using and behaviour expectations.
- Get the children to meet you outside

after playtime so that they are already dressed for the outdoors.

- Make sure you enjoy it too. Being in comfortable clothes makes all the difference.

As part of our pandemic recovery programme, we're offering summer school projects and online training for educators, including a free course on our six principles of outdoor learning. Find out more at our website.



“WE'RE FOCUSING ON OUTDOOR STORYTELLING”

Daisy Selvon, lead practitioner and EYFS/KS1 writing lead at Little Parndon Primary Academy in Harlow, Essex, on taking writing outdoors...

@littleparndon1

“As a school, we've been incorporating outdoor learning into lots of subjects, with a recent focus on writing. We've been using our school grounds to inspire, challenge and motivate our pupils and boost their creativity.

Within EYFS, we've been focusing on outdoor storytelling. We used We're Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen and created different experiences outside to encourage pupils to extend their descriptive language and retell their own versions based around dragons and unicorns. This has encouraged lots of independent writing and we've also found it has really engaged our boys with writing for pleasure.

KS1 and KS2 pupils have been using our school environment to learn about poetry. We've been using different natural objects to encourage children's creativity and class teachers have focused on asking pupils to use their senses to really engage with the object they're writing about.

Taking poetry outside has helped to develop our pupils' confidence, provided them with visual inspiration and also made learning more fun and memorable.”

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AUTHOR IN YOUR CLASSROOM



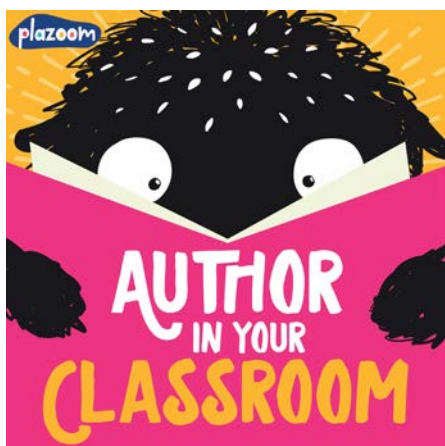
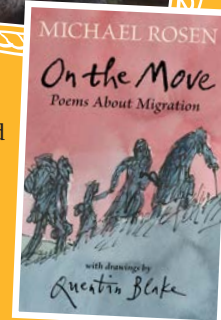
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Fancy a virtual visit from a real author? Luckily for you, Michael Rosen, author of *On the Move*, is ready and waiting to share his thoughts, ideas and inspirations with your budding wordsmiths, via our free literacy podcast. The experience doesn't end there either; we've created some amazing free teaching resources to download at plazoom.com, so you can continue your reading adventure in the classroom.

Daydreaming can be an important part of coming up with ideas for writing. Spending time thinking about a topic, linking it to your personal experiences and allowing your mind to wander can generate fantastic ideas for stories and poems.

In this episode, Michael describes the importance of daydreaming when thinking up ideas for writing. He also talks about how his father told him to 'make it personal' when writing and the importance of using your own experiences to improve your work.



HOW TO USE THE PODCAST



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



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



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

THREE THINGS KIDS WILL LEARN FROM THE PODCAST



1 MAKING WRITING PERSONAL

"The tip that my dad gave me when I was ten or 11 was "remember to make it personal." What he meant by that was to bring your own personal experience into your writing – the things you've seen, heard, thought about, smelt and touched."

2 BENEFITS OF DAYDREAMS

"We think of school as being a busy place but daydreaming is very good because you go into your own mind. Shut your eyes – I find that helps – then sit for maybe ten seconds or even a minute and daydream. When you come out of the daydream, jot down some notes. You don't have to write in sentences – just single words or phrases. This page of scribbles is food for your writing. Take any of those ideas and play with them."



3 BORROWING FROM OTHERS

"Sometimes the harder you concentrate, the harder it is to write but I'm very lucky and have had lots of practice with writing over the years. If I zoom in on a subject I can get writing fairly soon. That's partly because I've read a lot. When you read a lot, ideas come to you from other books about the shape of stories."

LISTEN TO MICHAEL'S ANSWERS IN FULL BY DOWNLOADING THE PODCAST.

PREVIOUS EPISODES

Author photo © Adrian Pope



BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH, poet and author of *Windrush Child*, had great advice for children struggling to find their voice. Download the teaching resources to help pupils learn about how to write stories featuring a powerful voice, whether their own or that of an historical character.

Author photo © Brian J Ritchie



DARA Ó BRIAIN, comedian and space fanatic, was full of advice and encouragement for young writers, delivered in a very warm and funny way. Download our accompanying resources to help pupils learn about how to bring fascinating information and humour together so each complements the other.

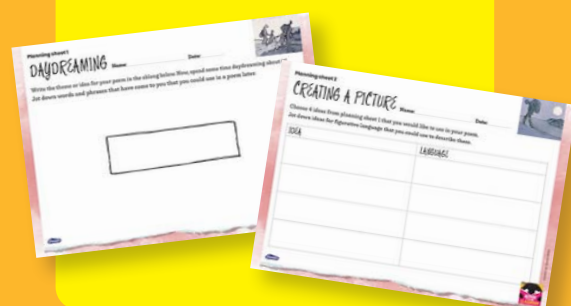
How to download the resources



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

In this teaching sequence, children will have the chance to write poems based on their daydreams and personal experiences. Extracts from the podcast are suggested to introduce each section of the teaching sequence, providing an excellent way to connect the things children are learning with the work of a professional author.

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Animal MAGIC

School pets can do wonders for the emotional wellbeing of pupils

DANIELLE O'CONNELL

As a headteacher and animal lover, knowing how to care for and live alongside animals has always been an area of educational interest for me. Animals have so much to teach us and can improve the emotional wellbeing of children in a way that is so hard to find elsewhere.

When I joined Belchamp St Paul CofE Primary in Suffolk I was eager to talk to the current headteacher about my previous experiences with animals in school. I emphasised how much my former pupils had loved their school pets and what a great educational tool they had been. The head shared my enthusiasm and before long Belchamp St Paul had its own resident guinea pigs.

From there, our register of school pets increased organically. Our budgies now live in a communal area of the school called the atrium, we have guinea pigs in class and my pet python also makes regular visits. These school pets are all dearly loved by both the children and staff. I often find children sitting contemplatively in the atrium, simply watching and enjoying the twittering and chirping of the budgies as they eat their lunch.

We have non-permanent animals at the school too which we incorporate into the curriculum, such as tadpoles, chicks and ducklings. What better way to help the children learn about life cycles than letting them watch the animals hatch and grow in real time in their own classrooms? Once fully grown, the frogs are properly released, and the ducks and chickens often end up coming home with me.

Biggest benefit

We have regular animal visitors too, including my family dog Wren, plus horses, llamas, and sheep, all owned by local farmers and residents. As a rural school, I felt it was important that children experience

this part of our community first-hand and develop an understanding of how animals are raised and cared for in our area.

Undoubtedly, the biggest benefit of having the school pets is seeing how they significantly improve the emotional wellbeing of our pupils. Children who are incredibly anxious or upset are encouraged to spend a few minutes with a guinea pig in their lap or a bird on their shoulder. With some of our children experiencing challenging home lives, being able to come and relax and even share their thoughts with the pets can provide some much-needed comfort and time to reflect.

Of course, there is science to support our approach to school pets too. Studies have shown that consistent animal interaction can help with emotional, cognitive, behavioural, educational and social development. Animals provide an opportunity for children to practise social skills and conversation with a non-judgemental audience, which helps to increase self-esteem and confidence.

I love nothing more than watching the children change and grow in this way when interacting with our animals. As a parent and a teacher, I have also specifically noted the beneficial effects on wellbeing our python can have on children



This article first featured in our sister title *The Headteacher*. Find out more at primaryleaders.com

who are on the autism spectrum. It has long been noted that deep pressure stimulation can have an immediate effect on mood and behaviour as it helps to calm the central nervous system. Our python can provide this with great success, as he slowly and calmly wraps around the children's arms. It really is amazing to witness the way the pupils relax after just a few minutes with him.

Unique selling point

Many schools may be wary about introducing school pets or bringing in animals to enhance the curriculum. This may be due to hesitance from parents and carers. However, we've found everyone to be consistently supportive of our approach and it has worked out to be a unique selling point of our school. Animal handling is always supervised and our risk assessments are completed in detail and shared with the school community.

Although there may be a degree of additional work and admin that comes with having pets in the school, I can confidently say that the benefits far outweigh the challenges. **TP**



Danielle O'Connell is headteacher at Belchamp St Paul CofE Primary in Suffolk.



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Permission to PAUSE

After more than a year of upheaval and disruption, teachers deserve a relaxing summer break more than ever before...

SARAH LEDGER



Who's up for a game of teacher-chat bingo? We all know the deal. The summer holiday countdown has begun, and within weeks the teaching fraternity will start being on the receiving end of those apparently rib-tickling quips from friends and family about our six weeks of holiday bliss. Score one point for any of the following you anticipate hearing from your in-laws, pals or envious siblings in the coming months:

- "You teachers have it good. Six weeks of holiday. You'd never survive in my career."
- "Blimey – summer holiday already. How many weeks do they give you these days? It's not five minutes since you had half term."
- "Six weeks of holiday and a 9am to 3pm work day. God, I chose the wrong profession."

And score ten points for the following killer remark:

- "Six weeks of holiday? You've had most of the last year off. Shouldn't you be keeping going and helping kids catch up?"

Even as a former teacher it still grates when I hear comments like these handed out so flippantly to teaching professionals

who work so darned hard and scarcely stop thinking about their pupils and lesson plans. But to hear such comments this year, after a period of such upheaval, challenge and public scrutiny – well, it hurts more than ever to know that the country's dedicated educators have to listen to taunts about daring to take a holiday.

Indeed, sometimes I wonder whether one of the underlying 'pandemics' to have emerged throughout this time, is a pandemic of shaming and blaming. Too often we hear judgment and assumption lobbed the way of a professional group, a subset of the population or a person whose own circumstance we don't know well enough to condemn. It's for all these reasons that shaming and blaming ourselves has absolutely no place when it comes to this year's summer holiday, and why – with no exception – you *have* to press pause and restore yourself in the summer weeks. With the benefit of my 20-20 hindsight spectacles, here are my top tips:

Stick to the schedule. Before you even start the holiday, make a plan for when you'll carry out any work that needs to be done during the holiday, and stick to it. Park it and relax, without feeling the need to keep 'dipping in'.

Out of sight, out of mind. Confirm to yourself, partner, kids or housemates that you're truly committing to 'non school' time. Put your school books, planners and even your lanyard into a spare room.

Divide and conquer. Don't face everything alone. What tasks and activities could you and your team battle through now to make September a little smoother?

Love the list. I love a good list but I've always been terrible at writing to-do lists that I can actually use, so I started colour coding them. Green – can't live without jobs; amber – would be nice but not essential; red – get off the list. This allows you to set your priorities and realise that occasionally our to-do lists create anxiety in themselves, rather than solving the problem.

No to the notification. Empty your email inbox and switch off all notifications. Having emails hanging around and nagging at you is the last thing you need during your holiday. Going through everything now will be a right pain, but well worth it when it's off your mind and dealt with.

Embrace the escape. You have permission to be off and resting like everyone else during their holiday. Since I came out of the classroom I've realised the constant fear and guilt I tortured myself with when it came to my downtime. I couldn't be the last one in; I couldn't be the first to leave. I'd volunteer to do after-school clubs, half term revision classes and summer school. Reflecting back, all this did was mean I was wiped out, exhausted and no good to any of my classes or colleagues at certain times of year. You're entitled to your holiday and deserve it every year, but this year more than ever. **TP**



Sarah Ledger is a former English teacher and deputy head. She is director of the literacy learning solution

Lexonik which delivers programmes in schools throughout the UK.



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lexonik.co.uk

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Who Goes On The SEN Register?

Should all children with a diagnosis go on your SEN register? Not necessarily, explains Sara Alston.

Read it at tinyurl.com/tpsenregister



Focus on TA Training

Good TAs are a vital asset, but we shouldn't rely on goodwill to make the role a success.

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Is Your School Attachment Aware?

Explicitly putting the relational approach at the heart of all you do is vital, says Karen Pilling.

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Game PLAN

Children with SEND need time to practise their maths skills – gamified learning offers the perfect environment for this...

JAMES AKERMAN

Some pupils love maths but many find it hard work. Learning the basics requires a lot of repetitive practice, whether it's number recognition, the four rules, or multiplying decimals by ten or 100. All primaries try to make learning fun and use concrete methods, but there are only so many times you can cut up a pizza to teach fractions.

Teachers have always needed a big bank of materials that go over the basics until pupils are confident and can get the right answer time and again. Worksheets have a limited appeal – as we all found out during lockdown – but children need that constant reiteration and that means putting in a lot of hours to develop their skills.

Individual curriculum

I work at Arbour Vale School, an all-age special needs school in Slough. While few mainstream primary schools will have pupils with profound and multiple disabilities, you may have pupils who are neurodiverse or have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties that act as a barrier to learning. We offer our pupils an individualised curriculum in an inclusive school community so we're always trying to find the right starting point and ways to show progression.

Many children believe they 'can't do maths'. As they get older their confidence dips still further because they can't build on the fundamental concepts they should remember from earlier years. While revision matters, it's important to set work which is not just a repeat

of what children have done in previous years. Children can also be reluctant to answer questions in maths in case they get it wrong. Maths questions usually have just one right answer and it may require a good memory to find it. Our pupils struggle to recall number facts and may become mute or be disruptive.

Enter gaming

Games are a major part of children's lives already. The Gaming the System report from the Children's Commissioner in 2019 starts by saying that an overwhelming majority of children (93%) in the UK play video games. So already we're tapping into something that children enjoy and see as a worthwhile leisure activity.

Game-based learning offers a non-threatening and supportive environment where pupils can practise their skills. It's designed to offer rewards and incentives to children and help them recognise their own progress. This might be via point-scoring, moving up levels, leader boards or rewards in the form of certificates, virtual medals or trophies.

Games let children repeat activities without being aware of the repetitions because they are being entertained at the same time. Children might take a route

through a game which involves moving sideways or even back to a lower level before moving on. This solves the problem of differentiation for busy teachers and consolidates or reinforces prior learning.

Studies have indicated that when lessons are gamified, pupils' attention spans increase and those with ADHD are less disruptive and more focused. Pupils see their results immediately so they can check their own progress – this can be very motivating. It also keeps children engaged and on task, freeing up teachers to provide extra attention or one-on-one tutoring to pupils who need help.

Co-designing resources

Edtech is a vital pillar of our teaching and learning strategy at our school and as such, we've got a history of working closely alongside edtech developers to co-design resources that will effectively meet our teachers' and pupils' needs. We had previously undertaken this with other subjects, but were yet to incorporate this across our maths curriculum. With this in mind, we wanted to integrate a

games-based learning platform that would complement our pupils' unique needs and sustain their engagement.

We worked with game-based learning platform Mangahigh, initially conceived as a mainstream product, to tailor the educational content so it was more accessible for children with SEND. For example, we reported back that only a few of our pupils would be able to do the activities provided and asked for additional games that started at a lower level. The team developed new content for ages five to seven so we can use it with a broader spectrum of our pupils.

As part of this collaboration, we piloted text-to-speech functions. Sentence-based questions used to make some pupils feel anxious as they struggled to understand what was being asked of them. However, the read-aloud feature means pupils can listen to the questions as often as they want and this helps them to have a clearer idea of what they are being asked to do.

If pupils get answers wrong, the AI algorithm takes them to a different activity. I've been impressed by this aspect of the software because the recommendations really do pinpoint the exact area pupils need to improve. The analytics have been a

powerful tool for us and we focused on this during lockdown when we weren't seeing all our pupils face to face. It's not just about seeing how many answers are right and wrong. I was able to check the number of times a pupil had attempted a question or activity so I could judge their mastery of a topic.

Software is not a one-stop solution, but it's given our pupils a different approach to learning maths, increased their ability to work on their own and given them the incentive to carry on even when they find the subject difficult. **TP**



James Akerman is head of ICT at Arbour Vale School. Alongside 15 other special schools, Arbour Vale is part of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust.

 @arbour_vale

BENEFITS OF GAME-BASED LEARNING FOR PUPILS WITH SEND

- Increases pupils' engagement
- Accessible from home as well as school and can be used on multiple different devices, meaning that children can carry on playing in their own time, improving their maths skills and confidence
- Many games have tools that let teachers check progress and can help with planning future lessons
- The competitive element and leader board structure encourages pupils with moderate learning difficulties
- The visual aspect helps students to understand concepts better
- Pupils on the autistic spectrum and those with ADHD particularly benefit – games draw them in and focus their attention

“There are only so many times you can cut up a pizza to teach fractions”

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Q&A

“A great piece of kit to teach programming”

Computing expert Helen Cotton explains what she loves about Cubetto, the friendly coding robot



30 SECOND BRIEFING

Powered by a tactile coding language, Cubetto is a friendly wooden robot that teaches children the key concepts of computational thinking like building algorithms, debugging and creating functions and loops – all without the use of screens or literacy.

What were your first impressions of the Cubetto Playset?

From the onset, Cubetto's boxed presentation, the robust wooden equipment and sturdy, high-quality material of the mat all reflect the promise of durability that Cubetto gives. It fills you with confidence that Cubetto will stand the test of time and, more importantly, EYFS and KS1 classrooms.

How does Cubetto work?

Cubetto has a programming board that children add their coloured tiles or blocks to. The blocks slot into the holes easily and promote awareness of shape and pattern as they only fit in one way. The bright, high-contrast colours of the blocks identify the different jobs. They are easy to handle and manipulate, particularly useful for small fingers or for children struggling with fine motor skills.

Why is Cubetto a good way to teach coding to young children?

In comparison to other floor robots, Cubetto has the advantage of showing the instructions or algorithm clearly. When children's instructions for a floor robot are not visible, it can be frustrating if (and when) the robot does not do what is predicted or expected. There is often no way to look back and fix the error.



However, Cubetto's blocks are visible to pupils.

Would you recommend Cubetto?

I would recommend Cubetto for Early Years and KS1 because it is so clear and easy to understand. The sparks of imagination from the children when introduced to Cubetto were wonderful and led to many child-led activities such as making hats to fit the



ABOUT HELEN:
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edtech.direct

Cubetto robot and writing stories about Cubetto's travels.

Does Cubetto do what it sets out to do?

Cubetto is well-made, robust and perfect for younger children to handle. The lesson plans, book and the highly visual aspects of the blocks and the programming board mean that Cubetto is a great piece of kit for a school to teach programming, computational thinking and much more.

Need to know

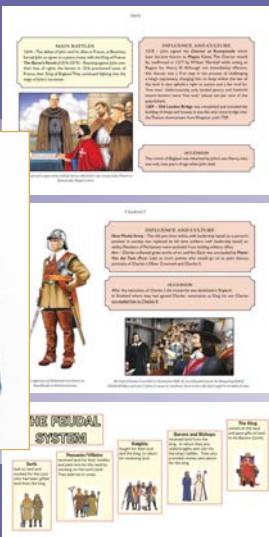
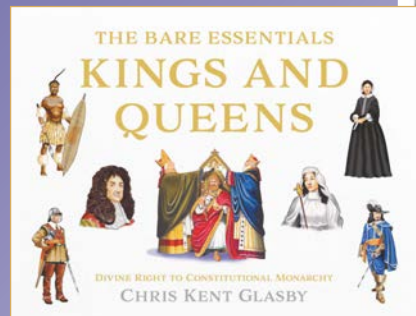
- + Get two years' worth of lesson plans aligned to the UK national curriculum.
- + Pop in the batteries and Cubetto is ready to go – no complex set-up required.
- + Cubetto is gender neutral and can be used by children irrespective of reading/writing ability or language barriers.

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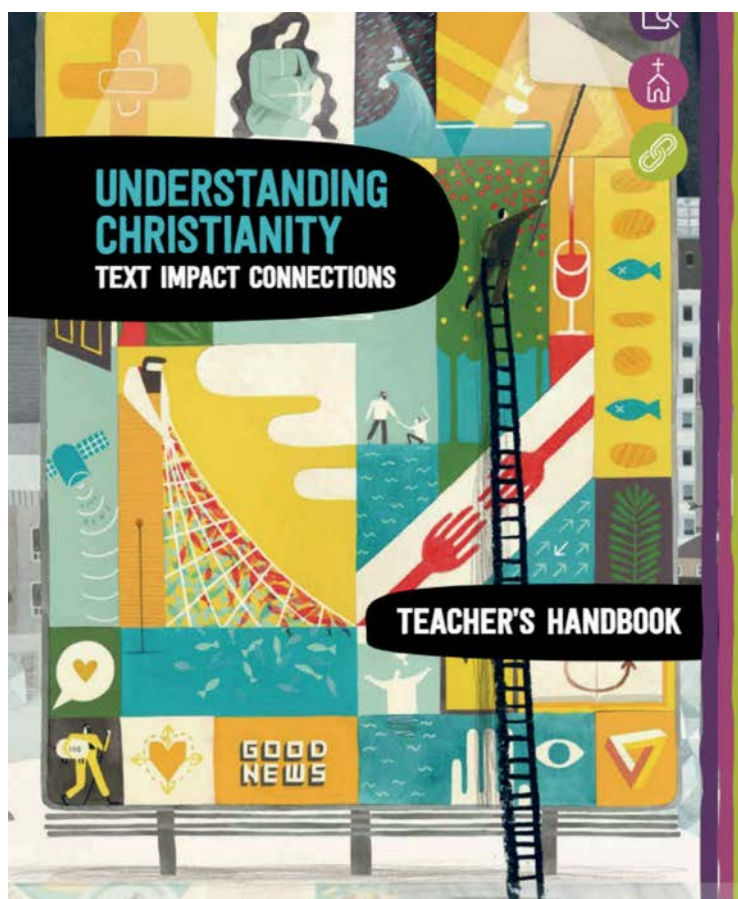
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**School
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London & Suffolk
Schools: Five primaries; one
secondary; one SEN school
Twitter: @paradigmtrust



Ben Rogers, director of curriculum and pedagogy

“We’ve made our teaching more relevant to pupils”

How and why we completely redesigned our trust's
approach to teaching science...





In 2020, the Wellcome Trust found that around half of students in Y7 and 8 felt unprepared for science at secondary school. This can't be right. What has caused it and what, as primary teachers, can we do about it?

In 2013, after 18 years as a secondary physics teacher, I switched to primary. I found (and still find) the skills of primary teachers astonishing. Every teacher has to be a specialist in every subject. And each subject is different, not just in content, but also in pedagogy. We don't teach maths like we teach phonics. Music, DT, history and science are all taught differently. But when I began to observe primary colleagues teaching science, I found something surprising: not only is primary science taught differently to every other subject, it's also taught differently to secondary science. You wouldn't think it's the same subject.

Secondary science teachers typically teach from the front of the class. Theirs is a much more instructional approach. The teacher breaks down a concept into small pieces, teaching, practising and checking at each stage. In primary science, it's much more common for teachers to adopt an enquiry pedagogy where they hold back on explaining certain key ideas and instead set up a task where pupils work out knowledge for themselves. This sounds great, but does it work? The evidence suggests not.

I don't think we prioritise scientific knowledge enough at primary school. If you look at published resources and training for primary science, the emphasis is on enquiry teaching. This encourages teachers to set a challenge for pupils – an activity for them to complete – where children are expected to discover scientific concepts independently. It sounds brilliant, except it's incredibly hard. Only the lucky few will be able to make this

inference, leaving many behind. They may have enjoyed the lesson, but they won't have learnt the science.

Tiny steps

IImagine a Y5 forces lesson. The teacher wants her pupils to learn about air resistance so she sets up an activity where pupils are making parachutes with different areas of sail. She's hoping that children will make the connection between a larger parachute and greater air resistance. The pupils drop their parachutes from a stage onto the floor and time them. This is difficult: they need to coordinate dropping the parachute with starting a stopwatch then stopping it again the moment the parachute hits the ground. If you've tried this yourself, you'll realise it's quite tricky, especially as the parachutes get smaller.

The pupils may not observe the parachutes don't open fully each time. They may not notice the draft blowing the parachute sideways, or that they started the stopwatch too early, so the data may not be adequate. Then, probably near the end of the lesson, children are asked to interpret the data. The teacher is hoping pupils can infer that a slower descent must mean the air resistance is greater. That isn't obvious, even if the results are reliable and accurate, as they're measuring time, not air resistance. We are then inferring that when the time is longer the speed must be less. Finally, pupils have to infer that something must be causing the reduced speed – air resistance.

Without teachers breaking down complex learning into small elements first, it's incredibly difficult for children to know what to look for during an activity like this, and what to do with it when (or if) they do find it. It's far better to put activities to one side until pupils have the knowledge to make the most of them.



“Only the lucky few will be able to make this inference, leaving many behind”

“But that’s not interesting for the children: it’s not fun!” comes the objection, yet that’s exactly the way other subjects are taught. We don’t teach reading by handing a copy of the latest Mick Inkpen picturebook to a child in nursery and seeing which words they manage to recognise. Instead, we take tiny steps, ensuring they can recognise the sounds different letters represent, before moving on to sounding out whole words. Once that’s mastered they are ready for sentences and more challenging books. It’s the same in maths. We know it works, yet for some reason science is seen as a special case. Until this is addressed, children are going to continue to be unprepared for the transition to secondary school.

2 Specialist knowledge

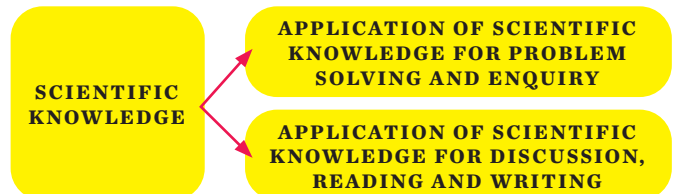
Another reason why I suspect pupils feel unprepared for secondary science is a lack of curriculum time. In England, primary science typically gets less than half the curriculum time compared to secondary. This may be because there is a much higher commitment of curriculum time to maths and literacy in primary school. I don’t have a problem with this. Pupils with good literacy and maths skills do better at science later on – it’s an investment. But with literacy and science, it doesn’t have to be either/or. With careful planning it’s possible to broaden and deepen science knowledge through literacy activities.

Another issue around science in primary schools is teachers’ lack of specialist science knowledge. Only 40% of science leads in primary have an A-level in the subject, and the ratio drops further when it comes to higher-level qualifications. The two days spent on science during teacher training isn’t enough to fill the gaps. This leads to primary science teachers often relying on published resources which are activity driven, because they’re not confident enough to teach science more directly.

These are just some of the challenges we face when trying to raise the standards of primary science and preparing our pupils better for progression in secondary school. But they’re by no means insurmountable, and at Paradigm we are now at a stage where it’s evident that our primary pupils have all the tools they need to learn – and enjoy – secondary science.

3 Bridging the gap

Paradigm Trust’s focus on bridging the science gap began in 2017. At the start of the autumn term we put together a team to address it, with one colleague drawn from each of our schools. From there we laid out the aims of our curriculum – science factual knowledge, science skills and scientific disciplinary literacy (scientific discussion, reading and writing) – and created a knowledge sequence document (download it at tinyurl.com/tp-paradigm).



Once we had this foundation established we moved on to designing how we would assess both subject knowledge and science writing. Over the course of the spring and summer terms we developed a long-term plan and began work on medium-term plans for autumn.

The next year we began teaching the scheme and assessed learning using multiple choice questions. After the autumn term we gathered feedback and evaluated how well the first term’s resources had worked. Using this knowledge to guide us, we were then able to complete the remaining medium-term plans in the spring term. It was also at this point that we introduced a science and writing assessment. In the summer we gathered feedback again and evaluated how the whole year had gone so we could improve what we would be doing in 2018/2019.

At Paradigm Trust, for one week each half term we replace our English lessons with ‘disciplinary literacy’ lessons. We teach scientific English and read, discuss and write about the science we’ve been learning (see panel, overleaf). These lessons have a strong focus on how scientists communicate. The content is built around topics children have learnt, so they are rehearsing their understanding and developing it further. Each week is finished with a writing outcome.

Our next major improvement to how we teach science was in autumn 2020 when we began subject knowledge enhancement sessions. Each half term we have a 30-minute online training session for teachers in each year group to get together and review key learning, common misconceptions and expert advice for the coming unit. It’s an opportunity to ensure every teacher understands and feels confident teaching science concepts. We’ve found over time that we can stretch teachers further, developing their scientific knowledge and widening their background knowledge via relevant science stories, a wider range of demonstrations and practical work and examples of high-quality learning outcomes.

4 Representative curriculum

By the time children enter Y7, there’s a good chance they’ve already decided whether science might or might not be for them. Research shows that many primary pupils rule out science as a future career, even if they are good at it. Why? Because over their primary career they’ve seen over and over again that scientists are white, middle-aged, middle-class men. If a child comes from a different background, as the majority do, it takes a strong will to see that and think, “I’m going to be a scientist anyway”.



To address the issue of representation in science, we designed our curriculum to reflect our pupils' backgrounds, ensuring they see themselves in it. We have built it so there's representation from Arabic cultures around astrology and the history of medicine, and positively discriminated by adding narratives to make teaching more relevant to our pupils. It's part of a project we're currently working on with the University of Northumbria called NUSTEM, which focuses on 'usualisation' of diverse role models. This is designed to encourage primary children to consider science careers, and it builds a short career selection into every lesson, so our teachers have access to resources featuring a diverse selection of role models.

Now that we've embedded a culture of scientific knowledge in our primary schools and put in place the correct resources, we've started to take the next step – increasing the quantity of enquiry activities. We feel that our pupils now have a sufficiently strong understanding of scientific concepts to be able to apply them in their own experiments. These lessons are still heavily guided by the teacher, but more independence is granted to pupils. If this is

successful, we'll continue to develop it.

Pupils are now leaving our primary schools with a strong foundation of scientific knowledge to build on. They can confidentially discuss scientific issues and read and write the kinds of text they'll experience in high school science lessons. They are familiar with how science is taught and have seen people like themselves enjoying rich and fulfilling careers in the sciences. They are ready for secondary. **TP**



Ben Rogers is director of curriculum and pedagogy at Paradigm Trust. He is also a Chartered Science teacher, a member of the Institute of Physics' Education Committee, on the editorial board for the Association for Science Education's Primary Science journal and a member of Ofsted's science advisory group.



@benrogersedu



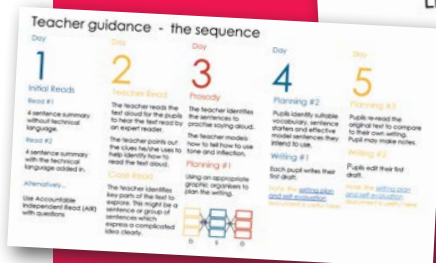
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HOW WE RUN OUR DISCIPLINARY LITERACY LESSONS

How does scientific writing differ from other forms of writing? Scientific sentences tend to be shorter, with fewer literary flourishes. Nouns take centre stage: we even turn verbs into nouns ('classification', 'neutralisation', 'adaptation'). We like concise, clear precision.

This can make it challenging for pupils to read, and even harder for them to write. Yet as pupils move through school and beyond, they are expected to learn more and more scientific knowledge through reading. The image of a scientist in a laboratory ought to be the scientist in a library.

At Paradigm, we start teaching our pupils how to read, write and talk like a scientist from early in their science careers. Each half term, we take an appropriate science text and build a week of lessons about it. We use the techniques our pupils are familiar with and adapt them to the text. Here's how the week pans out:



Day 1

This is a recap of the relevant scientific knowledge required by the text, followed by a four bullet-point summary of the text.

Day 2

We do the first full read. The teacher reads the text aloud to pupils and explores interesting phrases and use of language.

Day 3

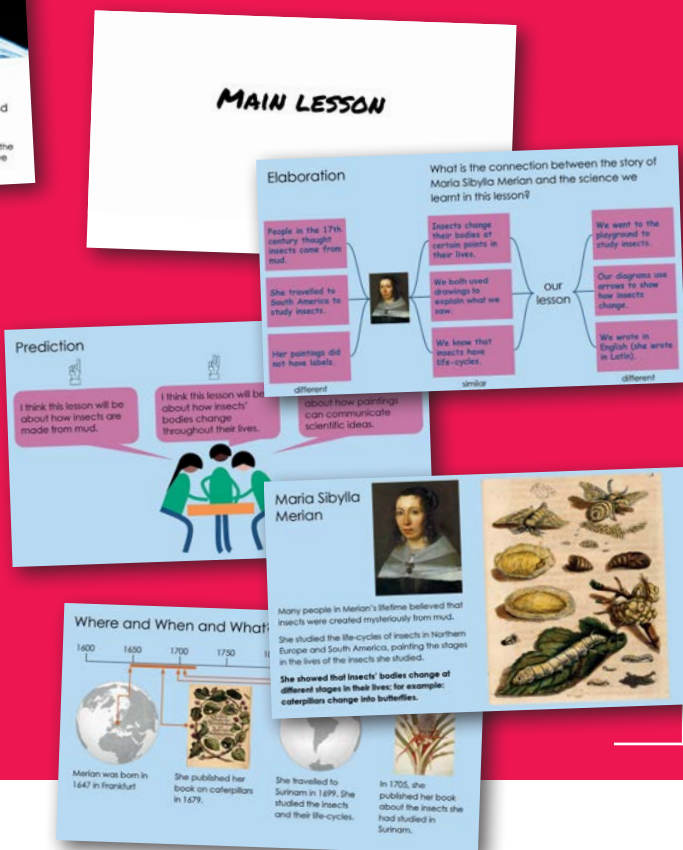
Today is all about discussion and prosody. We use techniques from Reading Reconsidered (Lemov, Driggs and Woolway) and teach pupils how to read the text

aloud – where to put the emphasis, when to pause. We also teach the phrases of discussion and scientific argument.

Days 4 & 5

We plan a new piece of writing. The key is to make the new text as close as possible to the text we've been studying. If the original text was about daffodil pollination, we might choose to write a text about tulip pollination. If the original text was about erosion of limestone, we might write about the erosion of sandstone. The idea is for pupils to apply the knowledge about scientific writing they've just learnt. On the final day, pupils write their texts.

Download Ben's example resources at tinyurl.com/tp-paradigm





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30 SECOND BRIEFING

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1 MEETING THE 2021 CHALLENGE

We know that Covid-19 has had a significant impact on children this past year, with pupils suffering learning loss and ongoing disruption to national tests. FFT's Aspire system reflects these challenging and changing circumstances with a brand new mix of services and products that aim to support senior leaders, teachers and children in 2021 and beyond. Simple and easy to use, Aspire is an integrated data system that allows schools to track and estimate future progress, evaluate performance and school effectiveness, identify intervention needs, and monitor and analyse attendance.

2 TRACKING PROGRESS

The ability to track and monitor pupil progress has never been more important. Aspire includes two tracking systems in one—Curriculum

Tracker and Assessment Tracker. This means you can now analyse and track both summative assessment data and record formative assessment data in one place. Uniquely, Aspire automatically converts test and TA data into a single 'common currency' – a DfE scaled score. So whether you're using Rising Stars, PiXL, NFER, Renaissance, GL or any combination of assessments, you can now track and compare them all in Aspire.

3 TRACKING ATTENDANCE

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and easy way to identify and monitor attendance issues (including the impact of Covid-19) for specific year groups, pupil groups and individual pupils. Attendance Tracker automatically collects data from thousands of schools each week with no user overheads. This means that as well as tracking your own pupils' attendance, you can also compare it to similar pupils across the whole country using live, up-to-date information.

4 EVALUATING PERFORMANCE

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5 LOOKING AHEAD

With a range of new services and features planned for autumn and beyond, we're making Aspire even easier to use. Automated data collections direct from schools will remove the need for manual imports and exports – saving you time, speeding up access to reports, and maximising the potential of your data. A key part of this is you – the FFT community. We believe that by harnessing the power of data from thousands of FFT Aspire schools, we can significantly improve the life chances of children across the whole country.

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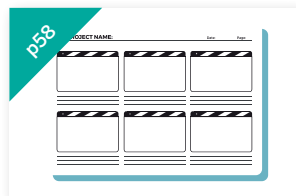
p54

Laura Dobson considers how best to teach fronted adverbials, and provides resources to help you do it



p56

How to knock it out of the park when it comes to making language learning relevant, purposeful and socially engaging



p58

Sue Drury explains how using storyboards can help children with inspiration, sequencing and much more...



p60

With the government admitting it isn't fit for purpose and is being phased out, is this the end of Letters and Sounds?

→→→ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Based on the article 'A Day in the Life on an Eco Safari' from issue four of Animal Planet magazine, this free resources pack from Plazoom is packed with literacy activities for KS2 pupils. Download it today at bit.ly/PlazoomEcoSafari



Meet the AUTHOR



Juliette Forrest on making creative writing easier for KS2 children

I'm not a teacher. I've spent my career working as a copywriter in advertising. It's my job to solve clients' problems through strategic lateral thinking. When I became a published author the doors to schools began to open. I was expected to entertain and educate the toughest clients I've ever faced: children. How could I utilise my skills in a way that would be useful to them?

During one school visit, I asked a class to put their hands up if they found writing stories difficult. They were taken aback when I raised my hand in the air. It had never occurred to them that authors might find it hard too. I left determined to come up with a solution to make writing stories easier, while nurturing imaginations at the same time.

I don't focus on grammar, spelling or punctuation. I can't recall many instances when knowing exactly where to place a semicolon might save your life. But if you can use your imagination to think your way out of a tricky situation, it could mean you live to see another day. OK. That's a touch dramatic, but being able to problem solve effectively not only makes our everyday lives easier, it's a transferable skill that can be applied to a wide range of different jobs and industries. It's something that will always be in demand. Our imaginations are like muscles. If we

don't use them, we lose them.

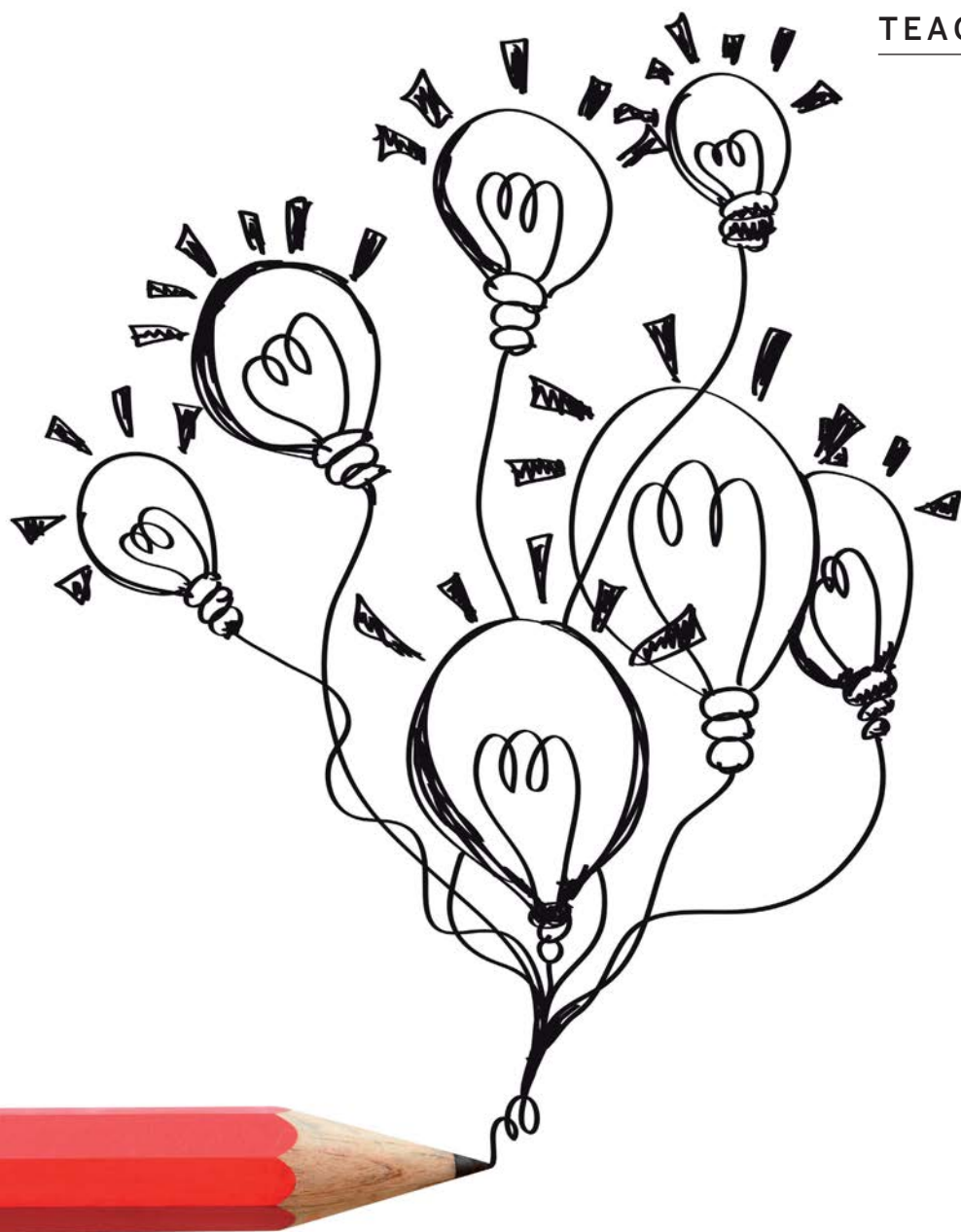
I went on to develop a writer's toolkit for children. It takes all the elements needed to make a story engaging and breaks them down into bite-sized chunks. Add in a dash of fun and it can help children to learn some under-the-radar writing techniques. Here are a few examples of the exercises I do in my residencies, events and workshops for you to try in the classroom.

Hook them in

Children's authors only have a matter of seconds to grab a young reader's attention. At the beginning of my next book, *The Night My Dream Came Alive*, there's a chase scene, so we're right in the thick of the action from the get-go. All the greatest children's books start with a brilliant first sentence to hook the reader in. Show children some of the best opening lines and discuss what makes them intriguing, then ask the class to write one sentence to grab a reader's attention. It's a simple exercise that can get every story off to a great start.

Maps with a twist

Drawing a map is fantastic for those who find working out plots challenging. First, brainstorm a list of features that could go on a map and make a hero's journey difficult. Next, give them a twist, like a tornado that can shrink you to the size of a pea or a swamp that curses you if your foot touches water.



“I can’t recall many instances when knowing exactly where to place a semicolon might save your life”

Now ask everyone to think of a quest. It could be saving a magical creature or finding the antidote to a poisonous potion. Finally, ask the class to draw their maps, working out the route their character will take, three difficulties they’ll face and how they’ll overcome them to succeed in their quest.

Name generator

I love showing children how to create dynamic characters. Make a character name generator by cutting up lots of different words and putting them in a bag. Ask pupils to pick out two words each and use them to come up with a name. Next, pose a few questions to

children, designed to help them make their characters less wooden, such as ‘What are they good and bad at?’ and ‘What are they scared of?’

A character facing their fears in a story creates brilliant drama. Ask children to hot seat their character. This is a technique used by some writers so they can get to know their characters better. Ask one pupil to sit up front with their character in mind while the rest of the class asks questions about them. Memorable characters often emerge from this exercise.

Worst case scenario

It’s our job as authors to make life difficult for our characters. The more we

can throw at them, the more readers will root for them. In my book, the protagonist mustn’t have a dream because if she does, what she dreams of will come alive. A trick used by writers to keep a story gripping is to ask these two questions:

- What is the very worst that could happen to my character in this situation?
- How do I get them out of it?

It’s a simple way to keep readers on the edge of their seats. Choose a scenario with your class, such as a boy being locked out of his house. Together, brainstorm what the worst case scenario for him would be as he attempts to get inside his home, then resolve it for the character.

For example:

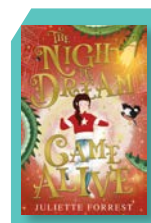
- He gets stuck trying to climb the fence into his back garden.
- He manages to free himself but is chased by the neighbour’s dog.
- He escapes by climbing a tree, except the branch snaps.

Keep on asking the two questions until there are enough ideas for a complete story, then work together to figure out the perfect ending.

Read a broad range

I’m all for children reading what they enjoy, but if they stick with the same author or type of book, it can become like junk food for the mind. When I’m writer-in-residence at a school, I begin every session reading from a different book, so I can cover as many genres as possible. I’ve also featured political speeches by Greta Thunberg, a stinky description of 18th century Paris by Patrick Susskind in *Perfume*, and articles from *New Scientist*, which can generate ideas for interesting sci-fi stories.

All this has proved successful at tempting reluctant readers into trying something new. Let’s not forget – books are rocket fuel for the imagination, and the imagination is rocket fuel for life. **TP**



*Juliette Forrest is the author of **Twister**, **The True Colours of Coral Glen** and **The Night My Dream Came Alive** (Scholastic), out this August.*

How to teach FRONTED ADVERBIALS

As well as knowing what one is, pupils need to know when a fronted adverbial works and when it doesn't – it's all about context...

LAURA DOBSON

FREE RESOURCES!

Download this fronted adverbials resource from [teachwire.net/teaching-resources/fronted-adverbials](https://www.teachwire.net/teaching-resources/fronted-adverbials)

DOWNLOAD
RESOURCES AT



TEACHWIRE.NET



When I was an NQT I taught in Y5. It was the era of summer term QCA tests. One evening I was marking a child's writing (comparing two seasons) and celebrating the excellent job they had done: most definitely showing elements of level 4. My husband appeared at my shoulder and read the child's writing.

"It doesn't make any sense!", he exclaimed. I reread the piece as a reader, rather than with my checklist magnifying glass and realised that he was right. Yes, the child had included conjunctions, complex sentences (now referred to as multi-clause sentences in the national curriculum), interesting

sentence openers and a range of vocabulary. I had also been mesmerised by the good spelling and legible handwriting. But the heart of the matter was, the content of the writing was incoherent.

Fronted adverbials can have a tendency of creating the same grammar blinkers for teachers (particularly Y4 teachers!). They spot one and praise the child for using it, regardless as to whether it makes sense within the context of the rest of the sentence. For example:

- As quick as a flash, the tortoise headed to the lettuce.
- All of a sudden, the old boat slowly began to appear on the horizon.
- Quietly, the boy said his name with a booming voice.

Excellent fronted adverbials and excellent sentences, but together they do not work. The grammatical skills we teach explicitly will provide children with an excellent toolkit as they become proficient writers if we teach that skill within its context. Children need to understand what a fronted adverbial is, how it can be used and the effect it can have. They also need to know when it works and when it doesn't.

What is a fronted adverbial?

The 2014 national curriculum glossary explains that when a word or phrase that normally comes after a verb is moved before the verb, it has been 'fronted'. It defines an adverbial as a word or phrase that is used, like an adverb, to modify a verb or clause. Adverbs can be used as adverbials, but many other types of words and phrases can be used this way, including preposition phrases and subordinate clauses.

For children (and teachers) to understand adverbials, they need to understand word classes more generally. All sentences will have a subject and a verb: 'The dog barked.' They may even have an object too: 'The dog barked at the cat.' It would be hard to write this sentence in a different order and retain the same level of coherence. An adverbial, however, is very flexible. 'The dog barked at the cat *at 11am*.' Here the adverbial ('at 11am')

is after the verb ('barked'). '*At 11am*, the dog barked at the cat.' Here it is fronted. Personally, I think it works better fronted in this sentence, otherwise 'at' is used twice in quick succession. But there are other occasions when the adverbial sounds better after the verb.

Adverbials tell us more about the verb. They might tell us when, where, how, how long, why or how much. They add an extra level of detail to our sentences and you may find more than one in a sentence: '*In 2020, at the age of 100*, Captain Tom was *finally* knighted.' Have a go at moving these adverbials around. Notice how you can make this sentence look quite different, but it's still coherent and has the same meaning. That's the wonderful thing about adverbials!

All about variety

The best way to teach children about fronted adverbials is to look at them being used by experts: children's authors. Pick up any good children's chapter book (and many picturebooks too) and you're bound to spot a fronted adverbial on whichever page the book falls open at. You'll undoubtedly also find a sentence which starts with a determiner. This is good because we want children to see that fronted adverbials work best when used as *one way* to start a sentence, not the *only way*. Variety is the spice of life, after all.

When looking at a children's book, select a sentence which includes a fronted adverbial and discuss it. I've chosen the excellent Fergus Crane by Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell for my example: 'Further along the road, the air swirled with mournful music.' Discussions about word class should form a normal part of a lesson. Identifying verbs and nouns allows children to see when a

sentence isn't complete. If they're unable to spot a verb and realise that a sentence requires one, you'll find incomplete sentences making their way into children's writing, like 'Further along the road, a girl with long, blonde hair'.

Play around with the adverbial from Fergus Crane. Can we place it anywhere else in the sentence? Why have the authors decided to write it like this? Identify what it tells us about the verb 'swirled'.

Once children understand what fronted adverbials are, what they can add to a sentence and have seen them being used

"Including fronted adverbials in her writing didn't get JK Rowling published"

in real writing, then it's time to have some fun as writers.

Activities to try

Using the resource at teachwire.net/teaching-resources/fronted-adverbials

ask children to play a game of pairs with a partner. Each time they must select a blue card and a yellow card. If the fronted adverbial makes sense with the sentence, they get a point. Alternatively, get pupils to sort the pairs they make into the following categories: 'makes sense', 'makes sense but silly' and 'nonsense'. As a further challenge, ask children to explain why the sentence is silly or why it's nonsense.

This resource can also be used with just the fronted adverbial cards. In groups of three, ask children to turn over one card. Two pupils must then have a go at completing the sentence. The third child votes for which sentence they prefer and explains why.

Finally, this resource can be used to consider how flexible adverbials are within a sentence. In pairs, ask children to select an adverbial and a sentence. How many ways can they write the sentence with the adverbial in, and still achieve the same meaning? A word of warning: both the fronted adverbial cards and the sentences begin with capital letters. As they play around with these, they must remember to remove the capital letter

that is not required.

In addition to these activity ideas, try the fun fronted adverbial online wheel spinner game at Wordwall (tinyurl.com/tp-spinner). It makes a good warm-up to a lesson where fronted adverbials are being taught.

Effective use

Once children have seen real examples of fronted adverbials in writing and have experimented with them they will inevitably be on the success criteria for a writing lesson. Hopefully, you will have instilled in your class the importance of variety in sentence openers and structures. They will have seen, both in real writing and in your modelling, the importance of using fronted adverbials alongside a whole plethora of ways sentences can be written.

After all, including fronted adverbials in her writing didn't get JK Rowling published, it was using them effectively that did. When we mark children's work, we must congratulate effective writing decisions and not simply praise a grammatical structure being used. **TP**



Laura Dobson worked for many years as a teaching and learning adviser for a large company and local authority. She now runs Inspire Primary English, providing consultancy and training in all areas of English.

 @inspireprieng

 inspireprimaryenglish.co.uk

Teaching vocab IN CONTEXT

How to knock it out of the park when it comes to making language learning relevant, purposeful and socially engaging

KELLY ASHLEY

Knock it out of the park; give it your best shot; stay ahead of the game – some of our most well-loved idioms come from the context of sport. But what does this have to do with vocabulary instruction? In the 2018 Oxford Language Report, Teresa Cremin highlighted the power and importance of teaching language in context:

“Language is most effectively learnt in the context of use, through interaction and through hearing words spoken and read in affectively engaging situations that prompt a desire to understand and to use it for one’s own purposes.”

This view is mirrored in the UKLA’s Vocabulary Viewpoints paper, which states that vocabulary will take root “when children have opportunities to use newly learned words.” When planning contextual vocabulary instruction in the classroom, we have an opportunity to knock communication out of the park by facilitating opportunities for our learners to choose and use language for different purposes. Consider the ‘context’ as a deliberately chosen and focused bank of language that, when amplified, provides a vehicle for discussion, thinking and communication around a particular idea or concept.

Contextual instruction

But what might these opportunities for contextual instruction look like? One idea is to select words from a particular picturebook, poem, information text or novel that you’re sharing with learners. In this scenario, you trawl the chosen text, carefully plucking suitable words to teach directly from the pages. While this is one approach to contextual vocabulary selection, there are also other methods to explore. The key is to give learners a purposeful outlet – something real and relevant to do with language that is taught.

To explore these other outlets, let’s consider the context of sport and physical activity. From football to rock climbing, there are a range of physical activities, experiences and literature that we can tap into to make word-learning authentic – not only encouraging active, healthy lifestyles but also connecting personal interests to drive communication. When deciding which words to teach in this context, first consider what language learners will need to use to communicate. This could be:

- Language mentioned explicitly in the PE programmes

of study – *skill, sequence, movement, compete*

- Technical language related to physical activity in general – *aerobic, health, warm-up, cool-down*
- Technical language related to a specific sport or activity. For ultimate frisbee that might be *airbender, handler, break, corkscrew*
- General language to describe the importance of physical activity – *wellbeing, challenge, perseverance, dedication*
- Language that would be useful giving a match report – verbs to describe the action: *pass, tackle, cross, strike*
- Language used in fitness apps – *application,*

programme, device, user, sync

- Language from books with a sporting theme – some fun choices include *Chasing a Rugby Dream: Kick-Off* by James Hook and David Brayley; *Armistice Runner* by Tom Palmer; *Kicking Off* by Eve Ainsworth; the *Track* series by Jason Reynolds and *Roller Girl* by Victoria Jamieson. Biographies of sporting heroes also make a great choice

Once the purpose for communication is clarified, unlock what learners already



“The key is to give learners a purposeful outlet – something real and relevant to do with language that is taught”

know about the chosen context. Which words do they already use when talking about this idea? What are their personal associations and experiences? In the words of my favourite track cyclist, Christine D’Ercole: “In order to get where you’re going, you need to know where you are.” This idea is the same for vocabulary instruction – be crystal clear about learners’ starting points before planning the journey.

Explicit teaching

The second step is to explicitly teach chosen words by tapping into a range of word-learning strategies. Focus on the following:

- Correctly articulating new words to strengthen word memory
- Exploring the visual patterns to encourage accuracy in writing

- Exploring word meaning in context and thinking of other words that are connected by meaning or usage
- Linking new language and concepts to personal experiences to deepen understanding
- When appropriate, exploring the meaning units within words such as prefixes, suffixes and root words and uncovering word history

Plan in regular opportunities to discuss and connect words – make them meaningful and powerful in children’s eyes. In 2013’s *Bringing Words to Life*, Beck says:

“The goal of vocabulary instruction is for students to know words well, to be able to explain them and use them in multiple contexts. We want them to own the word.”

Finally, help learners practise like champions and use their new language to communicate. Within the word ‘practise’ is the word ‘act’ – assist learners to act on new language knowledge by putting words to work (see panel, right). When teaching language in context, sit back and view your curriculum opportunities from the outside in. Find the links and strengthen them. Provide a range of opportunities for learners to use new language. Make communication purposeful and socially engaging. Provide rich contexts where learners don’t only encounter new words regularly, but also have something to do with these words after they are taught.

In conclusion, don’t sweat it or throw in the towel when planning for contextual vocabulary instruction. Just *take the bull by the horns* and *keep the ball rolling!* **TP**

HOW TO MAKE NEW VOCABULARY MEANINGFUL

- Help learners to think about new language in preparation for a special visitor. Invite a member of the community or an author into class (either virtually or in-person) to talk about their role. Generate questions by doing some research prior to the visit. Find out what children already know about the visitor and explore new language that will be useful.

- Teach specific words to enhance a visit or trip. Think about the words children might use to heighten the experience.

- Use outdoor learning spaces as opportunities for recharging language. This might include: words to describe objects (*outdoors, tunnel, frame*); words that add detail and description (*adventure, curious, exciting*); words to describe how our bodies move (*run, walk, play, share*). Think about the words pupils need to communicate and make them the focus.

- Vocabulary learning isn’t just for English lessons – find opportunities to strengthen language across the curriculum. Be deliberate about which words you are developing in cross-curricular contexts.



Kelly Ashley is a freelance English consultant based in Yorkshire

and author of Word Power: Amplifying Vocabulary Instruction.



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Storyboard SOLUTIONS

Discover how this simple planning technique can help children with inspiration, sequencing and more...

SUE DRURY

If your idea of storyboards is based on scenes in films in which smug, creative people use beautifully drawn cartoon drawings to outline their fabulous idea for an advert, you'd only be partly right. For a start, they don't necessarily need artwork at all.

In essence, a storyboard is a way of breaking up narratives into neat chunks in order to crystallise the sequence in which events happen. Each section does tend to have a picture, because a good image can convey a lot of information. Sometimes, however, a word or two works just as well.

In the classroom, a good storyboard template reduces the temptation for pupils to write full sentences instead of notes on their plan. It also gets them to think hard about the order in which the events will occur, and see at a glance whether the tale has coherence.

Across genres

Storyboards work across a range of genres. For example, one type of writing that is especially reliant on good sequencing is

recounts, as they are typically written in chronological order. Using a storyboard approach will help pupils to be confident that they have included all the key events and arranged them appropriately. Those that are accomplished time-tellers could even include a note of the time in each frame as a reminder of when things happened.

Similarly, anyone who has put together flatpack furniture will know that many instruction leaflets are effectively storyboards these days. Of course, we expect pupils to be able to write numbered instructions using imperative verbs, but these commercial examples do offer a telling insight into the power of images for helping us to follow a method. Getting your pupils to plan their instructions using a storyboard helps them see clearly that they have considered every step of the process.

Sense of structure

One of the possible pitfalls of a frame-by-frame approach to composition is that it can lead to writing that feels disjointed. This makes it the perfect



FREE WRITING TEMPLATES PACK

Literacy resources website Plazoom offers a selection of writing templates that can be used to support pupils with planning stories and other written work in KS1 and KS2, including mind maps, story maps and storyboards. Download them for free with a trial subscription at bit.ly/TPwritingtemplates

opportunity to remind children about the importance of cohesive devices. Storyboards are also great for teaching about paragraphs, which should change when there is a shift in time or place of topic.

Quite apart from all the benefits of using storyboards as a planning tool, they do also have their place in creating finished pieces using a comic strip format. In fact, they can be particularly good for telling a story in subjects such as history or geography, where clear illustrations can complement crafted text very effectively.

Finally, a little reminder to reassure those who are not confident about their artistic ability: storyboards are not about being great at drawing. For most applications, simple line drawings are enough. The true craft comes in creating a coherent and well-ordered composition. Get the picture? **TP**



Sue Drury is literacy lead at Plazoom, the expert literacy resources website. Find more advice at the below website.



@plazoomshop



plazoom.com/blog



PROJECT NAME: _____

Date: _____

Page: _____





ASK THE EXPERT

“Get wellbeing right first”

Crispin Chatterton from GL Assessment discusses how best to support pupils this September after the pandemic disruption

Why is transition a particular challenge this year?

The move up to a new year can be both exciting and unsettling for children. Schools have done an excellent job reacquainting pupils with classroom skills since they returned in March, but understanding gaps in knowledge and where to target additional support has been more problematic. With the cancellation of SATs, many schools have been able to plug the data gap using formative assessments to help pinpoint children's progress and attainment, in turn helping the preparations for the year ahead.

How has the pandemic affected reading?

Primary children's reading skills have suffered more than older children according to our figures – but perhaps not as badly as initially feared. Younger year groups have been worst hit – almost certainly because they usually lack the skills necessary to be independent and confident readers. Some children have struggled, others have thrived; teachers have even reported widely different results from siblings in the same family.

How can we support pupils in the absence of national data?

Good teacher judgement is essential but teachers can't be expected to do all the heavy lifting. Formative, standardised assessments allow you to benchmark children nationally, offering useful comparisons to other children of the same age around the country. Well-designed assessments can also alleviate teacher workload because they include detailed reports that are automatically generated, without the need for marking, and include next steps for individual children.



EXPERT PROFILE

Name: Crispin Chatterton

Job title: Director of education

Area of expertise: Developing services that anticipate schools' needs

Best part of my job: Supporting teachers with high quality tools

How can I help my pupils to settle in September?

Get wellbeing right first then focus on academic performance. Preliminary figures from our Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) measure indicate that children's feelings about school and their teachers are remarkably positive. But there are some indications that their attitudes about themselves as learners are less robust. Try tackling these as soon as possible before they begin to undermine confidence. Remember that for many children, academic structure is a route to wellbeing recovery, not an alternative to it – they like challenge and the routine of school life.

How can I best identify gaps in children's learning?

All educators should be empowered to use data, rather than it just sitting with SLT. Assessment can pinpoint gaps in learning, but as the teacher you are best placed to understand the context and judge appropriate interventions. Formative assessments are suitable for every level, and because they don't require preparation, they don't put undue pressure on children.

ASK ME ABOUT

TRANSITION - Preparing for transition at every level with the Cognitive Abilities Test and New Group Reading Test

PLANNING - Identifying gaps to aid curriculum planning and pinpoint individual support with the Progress Test Series

WELLBEING - Understanding social and emotional wellbeing and addressing issues straight away with the Pupil Attitudes to Self and School

Find out more about transition assessments at gl-assessment.co.uk/assessments/primary

RIP *Letters & Sounds*

With the government admitting it isn't fit for purpose and is being phased out, is this the end of L&S? Just possibly, says **Sara Wernham**...

SARA WERNHAM

My entry into the teaching profession coincided with that of the national curriculum. Up to that point, planning and what was taught in primary schools was mostly up to the teacher. I remember being in schools for teaching practice where teachers could roll up on a Monday morning with only a vague idea of what they would teach, and, if all went well and they got through everything, Friday afternoon was for 'free choice'. Oh what a simple, unpolitical world it was!

With the national curriculum came the introduction of short-, medium- and long-term plans, a plethora of templates and numerous schemes all claiming to fit with it. In the many years since then there's been a constant flow of extra advice and guidance documents from the DfE, adding to, clarifying and generally muddying the waters: literacy and numeracy hours, searchlight strategies and, of course, the ubiquitous 'Letters and Sounds' (L&S).

L&S was published in 2007, and was meant to advise and to provide guidance for the teaching of reading using synthetic phonics. There has always been much debate over whether it's a 'programme', as opposed to a 'framework' or something else. However, L&S was seen as, and adopted by many, as a 'programme',

despite it only covering the infant years and despite having no supporting materials. The lack of supporting materials is an issue as it means teachers have to supplement it from other programmes. Thus it's not possible to 'have fidelity' to it as a programme, as recommended by Sir Jim Rose in his 2006 report.

recommendation was the fact that it was published by the government and was issued free to all schools.

So life chugged on. The so-called 'reading war' had abated and phonics was recognised, by most, as the first and foremost strategy for teaching reading. The majority of schools referenced

Despite this statement, many schools continued describing themselves as L&S schools and carried on using it, supplementing it with materials from other sources. In recent years there has been agreement that reading should be taught using some degree of phonics, but the extent and quality of that teaching and the understanding of the principles is patchy, to say the least. Although attainment in the phonics screening check did originally rise, it's subsequently stalled and plateaued. In comparisons such as the international PIRLS study, England has not made much improvement. In 2011, it was joint tenth, along with Ireland. In the last PIRLS study for which the results are available (2016), England had inched up to joint eighth – just. Interestingly though, the Republic of Ireland jumped to fourth place, a considerable improvement.

England vs Ireland

What happened, or didn't happen, in the two countries to produce this difference in outcomes? Now, and I confess an obvious bias here due to my job, 86% of schools in the Republic of Ireland say they use Jolly Phonics as their scheme,

“It seems strange to me to be publishing materials on something which has been declared not fit for purpose”

Following DfE advice

At this time also came the inception and rise of Ofsted, with its sets of criteria and dreaded inspections. Obviously everyone wanted to be found 'Excellent' and not 'Failing'. What better way to achieve this than to be following the DfE advice? How could schools possibly be found to be 'failing' if they were doing so? Almost overnight, it seemed, every school became a 'Letters and Sounds' school, despite the fact that the school might already be following and achieving excellently on an existing programme. L&S had little to no independent testing, which most of the independently published schemes had. Its only

L&S in their literacy planning somewhere. However, because of the lack of supporting material and resources, teachers have always needed a good understanding of the principles of phonics to be able to choose and use such materials appropriately. There are a number of independently published programmes on the market which provide a range of materials and decodable readers, none of which L&S had or was going to provide, so in 2012 the DfE made an announcement about L&S, saying:

“This publication has been archived. It has been made available for reference use but should not be considered to reflect current policy or guidance.”

whereas 76% of schools in the UK say they use L&S. So rather than having a government-endorsed semi-programme, or one that appears to be preferred by government, Irish teachers and schools have been free to choose which programme they want to use, and which fits with and suits their own personal circumstances.

Recognising the fact that attainment in reading in English schools had stalled,

a series of English 'hubs' were instituted, supposedly to promote good practice. High-achieving schools in different parts of the country were picked to be hubs and provide support and facilitate training in their areas, from any of the accredited phonics programmes. There is, however, some debate and anecdotal comments regarding how 'independent' and how willing they actually were to provide training in all

the different programmes.

Then, toward the end of last year, rumours began circulating that the DfE were planning to relaunch L&S with additional materials provided by an 'independent publisher', who it turned out had connections to the English hubs and had advance notice of what the relaunched L&S contained. Obviously, this wasn't seen as a 'fair' process and the ethics and effectiveness of a government producing a programme was again questioned.

out, there are still plans for materials to be published, by the group linked to the hubs, that will contain the wording 'Letters and Sounds' and be based around it. I have to say, it seems strange to me to be publishing materials on something which has been declared not fit for purpose, so I watch with interest what happens next.

The decision by the DfE not to become involved with the publishing of programmes will allow teachers and schools to look at and evaluate for themselves the merits of the various independently researched schemes and choose one that suits their own experiences and preferences. This is likely to mean a rise in attainment as teachers and schools follow their chosen programme more effectively, as they really believe in it, rather than picking a scheme just because they think it is the one inspectors or the government want them to. **TP**

Phased out

After major objections from educators, advisors and publishers, the DfE announced that the 2007 L&S wasn't "fit for purpose", acknowledging that "they should not be publishing programmes of study, and that no programme should be described as official or endorsed by the Department". Further, they announced that L&S will be phased out over the next two years.

Now we come to the 'possibly' bit of my title. Although it's been announced that L&S will be phased



Sara Wernham is the co-author of Jolly Phonics.



@jollylearning

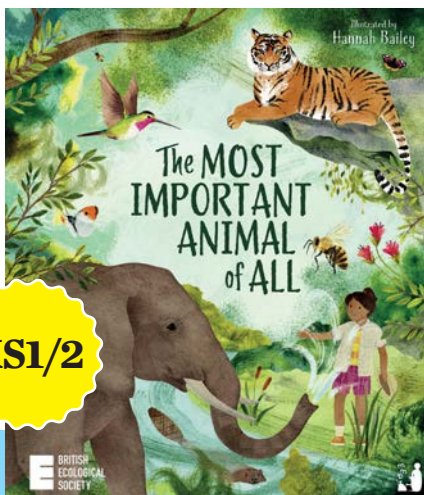


jollylearning.co.uk



Book CLUB

We review five brand new titles that your class will love



The Most Important Animal of All

by Penny Worms

(£12.99, Mama Makes Books)

Endorsed by the British Ecological Society, this positive non-fiction picturebook will introduce pupils to seven 'super-animals' that help keep the world in balance. The book has been designed to encourage inquiry, discussion and critical thinking and features a teacher challenging her class to come to their own conclusions about who is the most important animal of all. Seven pupils champion a different keystone species for the top spot – will it be master pollinator bees, ecosystem engineer beavers, or perhaps an apex predator like a shark or tiger? Why not challenge your pupils to take on a similar challenge? Using a mix of illustrations and photographs, the book brings to life the concepts of ecosystems and interconnectedness and ultimately its message is one of caring and curiosity, not eco-anxiety. Publisher Mama Makes Books launched this year and aims to create books that children will both love and learn from.

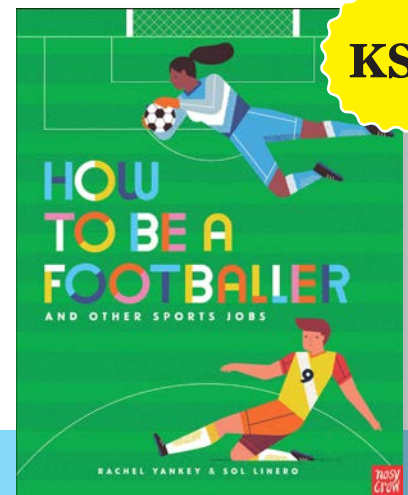


The Pirate Mums

by Jodie Lancet-Grant

(£6.99, Oxford University Press)

This swashbuckling LGBTQ+ picturebook celebrates the experience of children growing up with same-sex parents. Author Jodie Lancet-Grant's mission was to create a book that can be read by anyone, but which normalises the increasingly mainstream experience of children growing up in LGBTQ+ families. She was compelled to write it after she and her wife searched for picturebooks featuring LGBTQ+ families to read to their twin daughters, wanting them to see their own experience reflected back at them. This book is perfect for children who feel their family is different, whatever their situation; perhaps they live with their grandparents, speak a different language at home, or eat food with which their friends are not familiar. Perhaps even more importantly, it's a rollicking good read, featuring beautiful illustrations, a high-seas adventure and an endearingly bad-tempered parrot. "Who cares about ordinary?" says protagonist Billy. Who cares indeed.



How to Be a Footballer

by Rachel Yankey

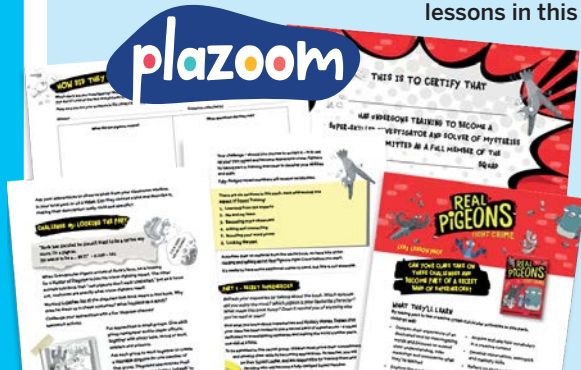
(£7.99, Nosy Crow)

Do your pupils have what it takes to become a professional footballer, a physiotherapist, a sports lawyer or even a TV presenter? This book, by TV presenter and former England footballer Rachel Yankey, introduces children to a wide range of sports jobs, from training to become a player or team coach to running the game as a referee, scouting young players for talent or working inside the stadium. Yankey, who became the first professional female footballer in England, now runs her own business coaching football in school, and her education experience shines through here. Inside you'll find timelines explaining the history of the beautiful game, and clear language explaining each of the different roles and which skills pupils will need to work on to get there. Sol Linero's bright, inclusive illustrations will hook children in – it's the perfect read for football-mad girls and boys.

→→→ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Share Andrew McDonald's brilliant book, *Real Pigeons Fight Crime*, with your LKS2 class, then use the lessons in this free resource pack

to explore the mystery story genre through discussion, drama and creative writing. Pupils will get the chance to set up their own crime-fighting squad. Download the pack at tinyurl.com/tp-pigeon



Meet the author

**KARL NEWSON ON
FRIENDSHIP, FEELINGS
AND FIXING OTHERS...**



How did your cancer experience inspire the book?

I was self-isolating during my chemotherapy and my friend

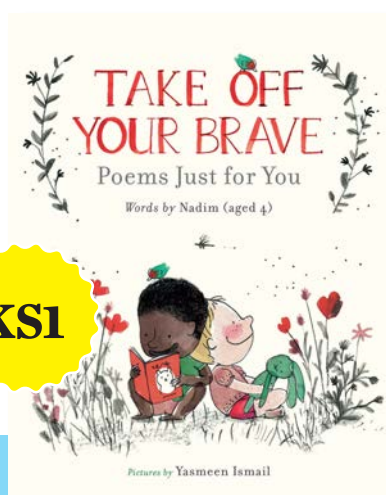
Colin West sent me an elephant illustration on Twitter with the hashtag #elephants4karl. That kick-started a march of elephants coming my way – drawings, paintings, cards, letters, teddies. It gave me such a boost when I needed it most. It made me think about how different everyone is, and how despite me being the same in the middle of it all, everyone reached out to me in their own ways. I thought about how I felt different on different days too, and I included it all. It's really a book about friendship. The story is my thank you to all those people who sent me something.

The book explains that not all sadness can be instantly fixed – was this an important message for you?

Yes. I think we can put a lot of pressure on ourselves to be 'fixers'. Perhaps some of us even feel like we've let someone down if we haven't helped a friend feel better. I wanted to take that pressure off and ease any thoughts of worry or guilt that someone might be having when they're wondering if they are doing the right thing. It was important for me to say it in a way that didn't sound preachy or belittling. I wanted to say to someone who feels sad and wants to be alone that that's OK.

How would you like teachers to use the book?

I hope that reading the story will spark lots of thoughts and questions about why the girl and animals might feel the way that they do, and that by discussing those scenes and moments an understanding of those feelings will follow. Perhaps pupils can relate to a particular animal, or perhaps they can't. I'd like teachers to share the imagery at the end of the story too because it says that despite all their different ways of expressing themselves, the characters are still there together, still friends, and that we don't need to be exactly the same as someone else to empathise with them or be friends with them.



KS1

Take Off Your Brave

by Nadim

(£12.99, Walker Books)

This charming poetry collection comes directly from the imagination of a four-year-old. Nadim was discovered by writer and teacher Kate Clanchy who was delighted by the warm response his poems received when she shared them on Twitter. The book is a moving and funny collection of poems from Nadim, with contributions from his sister and nursery class too. They reveal how a four-year-old sees the world and are bursting with feelings – from hopes and fears to love and loneliness. This book will demonstrate to your pupils that anyone can write and it makes an ideal jumping-off point for teachers looking to explore poetry and creative writing in class. And what better time for children to learn to vocalise their complex feelings than during a pandemic? As Clanchy writes in her introduction: 'Poems aren't just for special people or special feelings. They're for everyone, and everything, and for every day. Try one.'



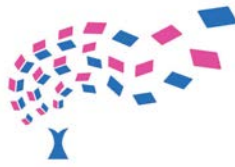
KS1

How to Mend a Friend

by Karl Newson

(£6.99, Studio Press)

Some friends need a great big hug to make them feel well whereas others prefer to be alone; some like to talk about their problems, whereas others keep it all inside. *How to Mend a Friend* is a heartwarming book which touches on empathy, loss and friendship. Karl Newson's simple rhyming text acts as a guide for helping our pals, whether they're upset about a broken toy, a broken heart or a sadness they just can't explain. KS1 children will find it easy to relate to the story, which follows a young child and her menagerie of animal friends, while learning how they might support a friend who feels down – even if that means letting them sit with their feelings for a while. The author was inspired to write the book after undergoing chemotherapy and feeling touched by the number of people who came together to show him support and empathy (read more, right).



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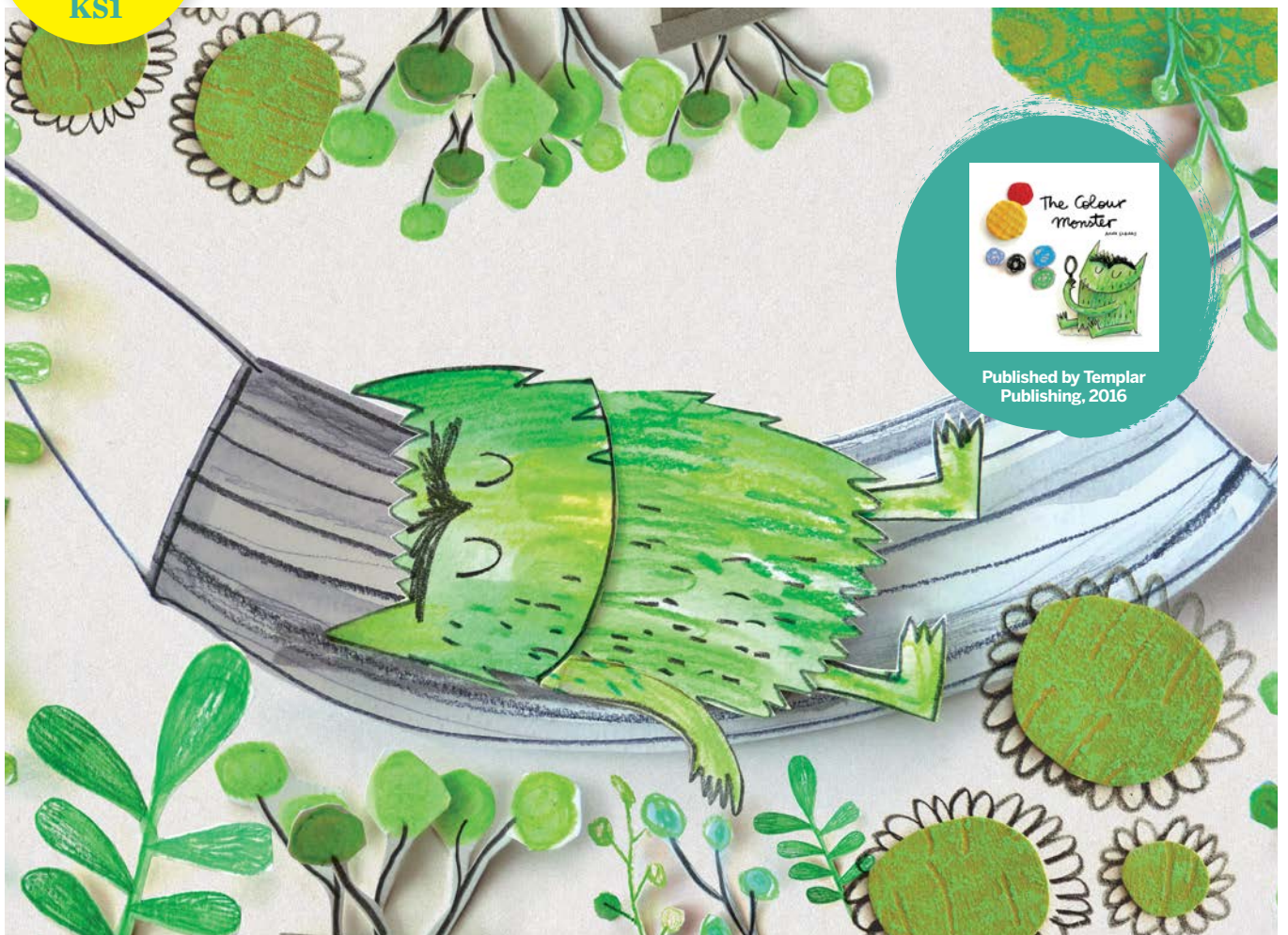
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The Colour Monster

Explore emotions and what they mean with this gentle exploration of feelings by **Anna Llenas**

HANNAH RIX

The Colour Monster is a wonderful exploration of difficult feelings. The story begins with a poor monster who feels overwhelmed and confused by his jumbled-up emotions. But fear not, he eventually learns how to make sense of what he's going through. The various feelings are brought to life for readers as the monster takes them through each emotion, one by one, via a series of beautiful collage-like

illustrations.

This is a simple story about friendship which can also help children decipher and identify their own emotions, providing them with important emotional literacy skills. The pop-up version of this book is particularly brilliant for engaging children in this surprisingly powerful and reassuring story. The colourful illustrations make it an excellent choice for a Reception or KS1 class because it's

immediately engaging.

At this stage of development most children are still getting to grips with their own emotional literacy skills so this book can act as a wonderful toolkit to get students started. In addition, the work you do around this book can lead to some vibrant, interactive displays that will really bring the story to life and allow children to take ownership of their learning and their own personal interpretation of the story.

Sharing the book

When I've used this book in my lessons, I've found that pupils are fascinated by the idea of emotions coming to life.

This personification opens up their minds to their own feelings and emotions and enables them to understand what they think and feel about certain things. The pop-up version of the book allows students to get the full benefit of the illustrations and better engage with the story.

Picturebooks are a great option for Reception and KS1 as they're not intimidating and allow for lots of creativity from pupils. You undoubtedly have a wide range of needs and abilities in your classroom but this particular story is accessible for all.

The plot is simple, yet more able children can be stretched to think about why the writer has decided to portray a particular emotion in that colour, style or shape. Less confident readers are still able to grasp the story and take away its message, without feeling left behind.

While reading the book for the first time, pause each time a new emotion is revealed to allow for discussions and questions. Alternatively, explain to children that you'll read through once and then again to reflect on each 'character'. This way, pupils can get a feel for the plot and then have the opportunity to share their own thoughts.

Practical activities

Tell the story

The colour monster goes on quite a journey through the book. Ask pupils to explore how he feels throughout. What changes inside his head when he encounters the different emotions? How does he feel at the beginning compared to the end? Use a visual flow chart or an emotion thermometer to help



pupils understand. For example, draw a large timeline or thermometer on your board, with extreme emotions at either end. While reading, ask children to volunteer what the character is feeling at certain points. This is an excellent way for students to explore each of the emotions individually, while empathising with the monster and reflecting on their own feelings.

Before and after

Where did the monster come from? How did he get to be so confused? What was his life like before he was able to understand these emotions? Are there other monsters like him out there? Encourage pupils to be creative with the origins of the monster, thinking about what his family, friends and home might be like.

Ask children to write a short series of diary entries from the monster or create an 'all about me' profile. Alternatively, as a class, collect ideas together before asking children to independently write a

short introduction to the monster's life in the form of a biography. For students that struggle with writing, try a more visual activity: label a drawing of the monster with ideas about his origins. Give students a word bank to choose from to support their work.

An alternative idea is to focus on what happens to the monster after the book. What is life like for him now he understands his emotions? Is it easier? Is it harder? What can he do now that he couldn't do before? This activity can be done in the form of a storyboard or comic book strip. Limiting children to shortened formats like these means their ideas are concise and they don't get too carried away. Create a comic book or storyboard for the monster's life the week following the events of the story, adding speech bubbles with captions.

Colour synonym wheels

Help pupils to develop their vocabulary and stretch their imaginations by creating a colour synonym wheel. Make a wheel

Take it further → → →

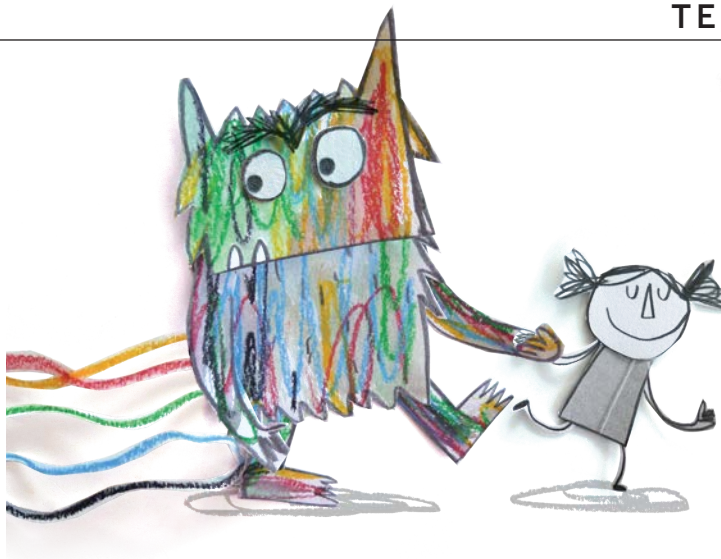
EXPLORE OUTDOORS

Now pupils have identified colours and shapes for each emotion, try exploring objects outside that you think match each individual feeling. Alternatively, recap the colours in the story then go outside and see if you can spot some of the same colours. Can children find any colours that weren't in the book? Take a piece of

card outside, along with double-sided tape, and stick different coloured objects to it, focusing on senses as you explore.

Using old pots or flower beds, collect all of your favourite things from the outdoors to make your monsters a garden. Each monster can have a pot with objects and textures that reflect their emotions.





Loved this? Try these...

- ❖ *The Invisible String* – Patrice Karst
- ❖ *The Colour Monster Goes to School* – Anna Llenas
- ❖ *The Mixed-Up Chameleon* – Eric Carle
- ❖ *Where the Wild Things Are* – Maurice Sendak
- ❖ *Two Monsters* – David McKee

for each colour and task children with labelling it with alternative shades (for example, for red you could also include crimson, maroon, cherry and ruby). This is a more creative way of developing a word bank. Allocate one colour per group then use children's finished wheels as display materials.

Add speech bubbles

The illustrations in this book are very vivid and expressive. Ask children to add a supporting speech bubble for each of the monsters. What are they thinking? Why have pupils chosen that word? How is it different to what another character is thinking?

Pupils will need to engage with their own emotional literacy to come up with ideas for each of the monsters inside the book.

Colour connotations

As a class, get students to close their eyes. Say a colour and ask pupils to think of what comes to mind when they think of it. Next, create a class collage of illustrations to go with each word. For example, your yellow collage may

contain sunflowers, daffodils and ice cream, whereas blue may feature the sky, ocean and so on.

Feelings jars

Label up several jars with different emotions, such as happy, sad, angry, fearful, calm and loved. Hand out slips of paper and ask children to write or draw what makes them feel each individual emotion, before popping them in the different jars. This is a lovely chance for pupils to self-reflect. It's also a helpful resource for students who struggle to identify their own emotions and what to do with them.

Are there any overlaps between pupils' suggestions? Have any of their emotions changed as they've got older? Are pupils' ideas similar or different to their friends? As an extension, discuss what things help when we're feeling sad, afraid or angry. Working in pairs, ask one pupil to write an emotion in a speech bubble, then their partner can write their own speech bubble with a suggestion for what the first child could do. For example, if the first child writes 'sad', the second can write, 'read my favourite story'.

Emotion monsters

Each of the monsters in the book are given their own colour and identity. Ask children to design a new monster for each emotion and justify their choices. How does that colour show that emotion? Why is it that shape?

Messy play

Let students explore mixing paints or water and food dye to see what new colours they can make. What feelings can they link with each? Why do they think that colour matches that emotion?

Make your own monster

You can do this through junk modelling, salt dough or drawing. Ask students to justify shape, size and remind them to show how their monster is feeling through the colours chosen. **TP**



Hannah Rix has taught English in secondary schools for eight years and currently teaches English in a SEND school in Norwich. This year, alongside her husband James, she co-founded Readingmate Ltd.

 @readingmate

 readingmate.co.uk

Children can then use this garden as a 'small world' to create their own narratives in. Which monsters will be neighbours? Will they visit each other?

EMOTIONAL DICTIONARY

Can pupils think of any other emotions that are missing from the book? What would these monsters look like? What colours would they be? What makes pupils feel these

emotions? Create a display featuring emotions with matching images and colours. Make it interactive by allowing children to add strategies on how to cope with each feeling too.

SLIME MONSTERS

Make a basic slime recipe, adding food colouring of your choice. Ask pupils to apply googly eyes, glitter, buttons and sequins for decoration. Allow time for children to explore the textures created. How do

the monsters feel? What would happen if you added another colour?

PUPPET SHOW

Now children know the story, get them to recreate the story using monsters created from old socks or lollipop sticks. This is a great chance for pupils to develop their speech and language skills. Pause the puppet show to ask questions or 'hot seat' the monsters. Why did they feel like that during that time?

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This gives participants the opportunity to see their art exhibited online and engage with new technology from the safety and convenience of their own home or school. It builds confidence and nurtures talent, allows children to see galleries as places "for them" and builds cultural capital. Art Bytes is open to all Y5 pupils across England. Visit artbytes.co.uk



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Use six weeks of art lessons to build up to creating a William Morris-inspired print



How special art assemblies helped us to embed a creative culture in our school



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Got five MINUTES?

Little and often is the key to improving kids' art skills, so slot in these speedy ideas where you can...

MARIA VINNEY

Everyone knows that art can be a really important way of supporting children's emotional health and wellbeing – especially with the year we've all had. But it isn't always easy to fit everything into a busy primary timetable. However, there are lots of ways you can build more art into your curriculum that don't need a lot of time or planning. Children's art skills improve the more they practise, so little and often really can make a real difference. Pupils need the chance to revisit and build on what they've learnt to really develop. It's a big ask, particularly when time is limited but, as well as looking at the curriculum map for your year group and thinking about where you might be able to make meaningful connections between art and some of the other subjects, the following ideas will help you make the most of those five or ten minutes before playtime or assembly, or at the beginning or end of the day.

Treasure box

No matter which year group I was teaching, I always had a 'treasure box' in my classroom. This is a box about the size of a shoebox, covered in interesting paper that invites children to want to look inside. It contains all sorts of tiny but intriguing natural and man-made objects: a beautiful shell; a tiny carved elephant; an old key – you get the idea. Children choose an object and do a small line drawing on 10cm x 10cm paper, with a choice of either black fine liner or pencil.

Soon enough you'll find children starting to add their own 'treasure' to the box and asking you, "Can I draw something from the treasure box please?". Before you know it, you'll have a beautiful exhibition of tiny drawings, some of which may, time permitting, be developed into paintings, collages or even a print.

Drawing ideas

Create a poster called 'Got five minutes?', featuring five drawing ideas such as: draw your friend, your shoe, an ear, your pencil case, the view. Change the poster every Monday and challenge the children to complete the five drawings by the end of the week. I always remind my teacher trainees of the importance of having paper and drawing tools available for wet playtime too – there will always be children who just want to draw.

Just add colour

If you can, purchase five or six small watercolour palette tins for your classroom – they last for ages. Once you've shown children how to add water to their brush and stroke it over the colour they want, you'll find they'll use them time and time again. Cut out a patch from a magazine and stick it to a bigger piece of paper, then challenge children to use their colour mixing skills to work outwards from the patch. Children from Y1 upwards love coming back to this when they've got a few spare minutes and it doesn't involve getting lots of materials and equipment out. If children can hold a pencil there's no reason

why they can't master a small paintbrush. If you only give them big brushes to work with, those are the only kind of marks they'll make.

Happy accidents

We want children to have agency over their art and the confidence to make their own creative choices about the materials they use. They can only do that if you create a climate in your classroom where they feel able to try things out and embrace what I call 'happy accidents'. In other words, go with the flow – so much brilliant learning happens when things don't go according to plan.

Art is the only subject where children have all the answers. Sometimes, as adults, we find this concept more difficult than children do – we get an idea in our head about how we think something is going to look but quite often it doesn't work out that way. With your encouragement, children will be happy to go with it, resulting in some really exciting artwork that is as unique as they are. Plan in time for 'trying things out'. Start by modelling and asking aloud some questions related to what you're doing:

- What happens if I use oil pastels and then paint on top?
- What happens if I smudge charcoal?
- What different kinds of marks can I make if I scratch into the surface?

Let children experiment in sketchbooks. They'll really enjoy the process and it usually generates much excitement and discussion. It doesn't have

to take long but really helps to build pupils' confidence and see some of the possibilities so that when they go on to create a piece, they can make informed decisions about which materials and techniques to use, based on their experiences.

Ask questions like, 'What surprised you?' or 'What do you want to find out more about?'. Being able to articulate their thinking and express their ideas about art are important skills for children. When you build this into your teaching regularly, you'll soon notice a real difference in children's confidence, particularly if you model the kind of language that might help them. Add a collection of words based around line, pattern, texture and colour on the wall and keep adding to it each time someone uses a new one.

More resources

If you're stuck for art ideas or need to upskill, AccessArt (accessart.org.uk) is a fantastic charitable organisation that has amazing visual resources and exemplar planning and progression frameworks, whether you're someone who feels really confident or could do with some help building your skills. The resources include inspiring input from practising artists as well as teachers and you can also access regular CPD sessions. The National Society for the Education of Art and Design (nsead.org) also features great resources and courses and has recently developed KS1 and KS2 resources for Oak Academy (classroom.thenational.academy). **TP**



Maria Vinney is a senior lecturer in primary and Early Years education, focusing on art and design, at the University of Winchester.

“Go with the flow – so much brilliant learning happens when things don't go according to plan”

MEDIUM TERM PLAN

KS2
ART

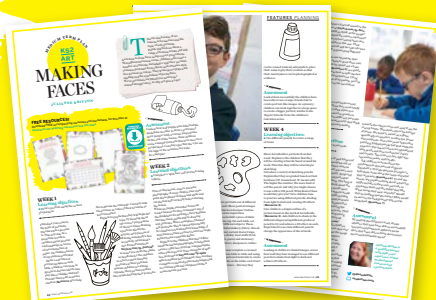
PRINT LIKE MORRIS

SOPHIE MERRILL

This unit about the artist William Morris is suited to KS2 and fits in perfectly with work around the Victorians. There are also aspects that could be adapted to learning around the theme of homes in KS1. The series of lessons builds towards children producing and evaluating a final piece of work using printmaking. It follows a clear structure, involving several lessons of research and experimentation followed by designing, creating and evaluating a final print. At the end of each session, encourage pupils to evaluate how effective their work has been and to think critically about anything they could improve or challenges they came across.

Even more art ideas...

Get sorted for September with these other exciting medium term art plans for KS2 pupils...



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used in homes today.

Using viewfinders (a square or rectangle cut out of card that you can look through) and a range of printed resources or fabric and wallpaper scraps, ask children to investigate core shapes within Morris' work. Encourage pupils to look at the way that Morris uses line – his designs are strong, fluid and feature flowing lines which echo the vines, leaves and branches he wanted to portray. At the end of the session encourage children to evaluate how effectively they have collected examples of Morris' work.



Assessment

Check to see that the children have understood the importance of Morris' work and the impact it had. How well have they been able to select core motifs within his designs?

WEEK 2

Learning objectives:

- Use viewfinders to carry out observational drawings
- Use a range of techniques to show light and dark

In this lesson children will use a variety of stimuli to inspire their thinking. To give children context, it's important to feed into the work of Morris from the last lesson and emphasise the importance of nature during a time of industrialisation. This is a good opportunity to consolidate some history work about the growth of cotton mills.

Read the poem Daffodils by William

WEEK 1

Learning objectives:

- Learn about the work of William Morris
- Use drawing to collect examples of William Morris' style

Begin the lesson by displaying an example of William Morris wallpaper. It is useful to have printed samples for children to add to their sketchbooks (find examples online, along with some of Morris' drawings). Ask children what they notice about the image. What can they



see? Move on to talk about what they think the image is part of. Ask pupils to share their opinions about the work – what they like, what questions they have. These can all be added to children's sketchbooks.

Show more examples of work by William Morris. Ask pupils if these have anything in common with each other.

Now that the children are familiar with the work of Morris, show them a photo of the artist and provide some background on who he was by explaining that William Morris was born in 1834 and was a British textile and furniture designer, architect and artist. He was a leading figure within the arts and crafts movement in Britain and is recognised as a significant figure in Victorian culture. He was famous for his use of flora in his designs. It's important to emphasise Morris' impact on homes – explain that his designs are still



Wordsworth. Talk with children about what they think it is about and how it describes a daffodil (provide pictures of actual daffodils to support). Next, show pupils a timelapse video of flowers blooming. Ask them what they notice about how the flowers open up. Collect vocabulary and encourage children to add these words to their sketchbooks. This is a good opportunity to make connections with your science lessons.

Talk about how we can show areas of light and dark or show texture through the lines or marks that we use. As a warm-up give children time to experiment with cross-hatching, hatching and varying the pressure on their pencil. You may need to model this for some pupils.

Put real flowers or pictures of flowers on each desk. Pupils can now use their viewfinders to select areas of the flowers they want to draw in their sketchbooks. Encourage children to think about areas of light and dark, where there is any patterning or texture on the plants and how they can show this.



Assessment

Check to see that children have an understanding of how they can show texture, pattern, shape and form.



WEEK 3

Learning objectives:

- Explore how to create monoprints

Look back at the work of William Morris and ask children about how they think the prints would have been created on a large scale. Would each roll or length of wallpaper or fabric have been hand-drawn and painted? Why or why not? Talk about how printing is a way of creating something over and over again.

Explain that in this lesson, pupils are going to explore a type of printing called monoprinting. This is unlike other types of printing because it involves making just one print. Talk about the materials that children will need – rollers, printing ink, biro and paper.

Model this way of printing to the class, explaining that it involves lying paper over an area of ink and drawing on the back of the paper with a biro. After squeezing out the ink, ask children what they notice. How is it different from paint? When rolling the ink out, ask children to listen to what they can hear. They should hear a sticky sound – talk about why this might be. Explain that the ink is thick so it's important to use the right amount. Talk about the fact that a biro works better than pencil as the pressure tends to be more even and you get a more consistent line. Talk to the children about what would happen if they drew with their finger – would they get a clear imprint?

Pupils can now experiment with drawing different floral shapes using the studies they've already made. Try different types of paper to see how this affects the printing process.



Assessment

Look to see how clear the prints the children have made are. Have they used too much or too little ink? Have they been able to create a clear line?



WEEK 4

Learning objectives:

- Explore how to use different surfaces to show texture

Remind children that last lesson they experimented with monoprinting. Explain that this lesson they're going to look at press printing and how this can be used to make lots of copies of the same thing. Introduce the idea that press printing involves carving into something to create an indent. Show examples of lino and polystyrene printing.

Show pupils images of prints made with dried flowers or plants. How do children think the image was created? Ask about how the work compares to the work of William Morris. How is it similar and how is it different?

Give pupils a range of materials, such as lace, tissue, corrugated card, bubble wrap, leaves and flowers. Talk about the different textures and encourage children to think of as many different surfaces as they can. Collect the vocabulary.

Pupils can now think about how to use the different textured materials to create marks in their sketchbooks. They can take rubbings of the textures using graphite sticks or wax crayons and can also layer these with paint to press print them. You may need to model this. Encourage children to annotate their sketchbooks, explaining which materials they've used to create their textures.



Assessment

Have children been able to make clear prints using different materials? Have they used too much or too little ink?

WEEK 5

Learning objectives:

- Design and make a collagraph printing tile

In this lesson children are going to use what they have learnt to design and make a printing tile, using the work in their sketchbooks to inform their design process.

Recap all the work you've done so far. What types of printing have pupils done? Explain that children are now going to make collagraph prints. These are made by building up a surface on a tile and using this to print with. Pupils will need



to think about the shapes they want to show, any spaces between these shapes and any texture they want to highlight or emphasise. It's important for children to understand that space in between their floral motifs is important in order for them to stand out.

Use the studies you've made so far to design a printing tile inspired by William Morris. Once children have formulated their designs, use card, string, bubble wrap and other materials to create a relief tile. It's important to use a thick card base and glue everything down securely.



Assessment

Look to see that children have shown an understanding of shape, space and texture within their designs. Have they shown an understanding of the work of William Morris in their designs?

WEEK 6

Learning objectives:

- Create a collagraph print

Pupils will now create prints on a range of different papers, using their textured tiles. Start the lesson by recapping the work children have done up to this point. Recount the key aspects of the design they should have taken into account. It's important that children check that everything is stuck down securely on their tiles.

Model the process of making a print. Demonstrate using an even layer of ink and a clean roller to coat the tile and create a

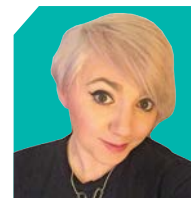
crisp print. Ask children how they could repeat the design. Talk about the importance of lining up prints carefully. Encourage pupils to make a number of prints on a few different types of paper.

At the end of the session, lay out the prints for everyone to look at, alongside pupils' sketchbooks. Encourage children to look back at the work they've done leading up to making their print, then look at the completed prints and have a class discussion about how well the work matches the intent, in terms of being inspired by nature and William Morris while taking into account shape, space and texture. Encourage children to critique each other's work, offering strengths and steps forward.



Assessment

How well have children been able to communicate their ideas using printmaking? Do they have the ability to critique their own and others' work?



Sophie Merrill is an assistant headteacher, Y3 teacher and art lead.

@merrillteaches

primarycoloursart.wordpress.com

4 REASONS TO TRY... Art Bytes

How this unique national inter-school art competition and virtual exhibition can empower and excite your pupils...



1 CELEBRATE CREATIVITY

Art Bytes contributes to a broad and balanced curriculum by providing a prestige platform for art within schools. It gives pupils the opportunity to see their work exhibited, and to see galleries as places "for them". Building such cultural capital is included in the new education inspection framework.



2 INCREASE CONFIDENCE

Art Bytes is proven to build pupil confidence and nurture talent. The mental health crisis facing young people has become more magnified than ever during Covid-19. Art is the perfect way for students to process their thoughts and feelings.

3 TECHNOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT

Art Bytes uses a bespoke, immersive virtual gallery which incorporates augmented reality elements to showcase shortlisted work. The exhibition can be accessed from the safety and convenience of home or school. It is an opportunity to engage

with new technology and engage a wide audience with your school's creative activity.

4 IMPROVE STANDARDS

Art Bytes is an Artsmark partner, and participation supports your school's journey towards Artsmark. It also contributes towards Arts Award. It offers an opportunity to showcase your students' work to a national audience, and for teachers to compare standards of artwork with other schools across the country.

At a glance

- Art Bytes is a unique national inter-school art competition and virtual exhibition.
- Celebration events and prize givings will take place across England in June 2022.
- 100% of teachers said working with us had improved student confidence.

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- Builds young people's confidence, character and resilience through creativity
- Strengthens pupil voice, develops young people's skills and supports personal progression

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Photo © Xavier Fiddes / Northway Primary School

The TINDIMS
Sally Gardner & Lydia Corry



Published by Zephyr,
an imprint of Head of
Zeus, headofzeus.com

Fill a plastic bottle with anything that will make a sound when shaken – maybe dried peas or beans. Take a toilet roll tube and cut halfway up one side. Fit the toilet roll snugly over the top of the bottle and use sticky tape to attach it. You can then decorate your maracas.

Artists ASSEMBLE!

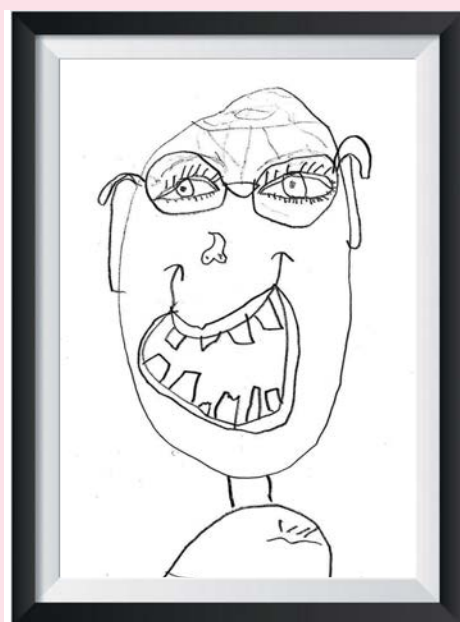
How special art assemblies helped us to embed a creative culture in our school

ADELE DARLINGTON

My pupils love interactive art assemblies. They leave them inspired, fired up and ready to take on the day. The special assemblies are such an exciting way to enhance the art provision we deliver that they've now become a regular feature on our school calendar. The assemblies provide an opportunity for pupils to collectively appreciate art, learn and rehearse new skills and reflect on artistic achievements. As art lead at my school, I run the assemblies. They fit perfectly with my passion for giving children high-quality art experiences.

When I first suggested to staff back in the autumn of 2019 that we have a go at delivering art assemblies they thought I was crackers. The thought of every pupil entering the hall armed with a sketchbook and pen sent shivers down many spines. How would we manage it? How would we maintain our high expectations of behaviour? Were the children independent enough? So many questions buzzed around the staffroom.

Staff were envisaging a chaotic scene: children standing up, asking for rubbers, requesting help, needing the toilet – you get the picture. However, luckily for our pupils we have a very forward-thinking headteacher who is always keen to give things a go. Sarah trusted my vision and enthusiasm and we agreed to give it a go.



I must admit I was more than a little anxious on the morning of the first assembly, but once the children began to file into the hall, armed with beaming grins and eager eyes, all my worries washed away. We decided to keep it simple to start with. The only equipment each pupil required was a sketchbook and pencil. All I needed was access to a visualiser, a computer and projector. An adult joined each class to support and we were ready to go.

The focus for our first adventure was portraiture. We talked about the proportions and features of our faces and observed closely before embarking on the drawing experience. I modelled using the visualiser and step by step we built up our own self-portraits.

“I was more than a little anxious on the morning of the first assembly”

The staff were blown away with the children's focus, resilience and willingness to have a go. The sight of them all sitting, drawing, engrossed and absorbed in their creations was truly heartwarming. The outcomes were something else too. Even the very youngest pupils produced self-portraits that amazed us all, demonstrating the importance and effectiveness of incorporating modelling into a varied art provision. This shared experience was so successful we knew we had to provide more of the same.

Subsequent assemblies have focused on sketching skills, observational drawing, guest speakers and artist studies. While different in content, one thing they all have in common are the excited fist bumps and whispered cheers as the children enter the hall, eager for the half hour ahead. Following the assemblies, pupils from across the school want to talk about art, share their artwork with staff and peers and discuss their creations. This initiative has really helped embed a creative culture in our school where art is valued and celebrated.

Since the pandemic hit we haven't been able to gather collectively in the same



room, but have instead delivered these assemblies virtually via Microsoft Teams. We've managed to maintain the spark and excitement this way, still using a visualiser to model techniques to enable us to continue to draw and create together.

Our most recent assembly saw us blessed with the online presence of a very special guest: writer and illustrator Tom Percival. He joined our children to share his experiences of creating digital art. What a buzz he created, inspiring our pupils to get creative on tablets and iPads in school and at home.

Now when we talk about art assemblies in staff meetings, the questions have turned from ones of apprehension and doubt to eagerness and excitement. When is the next one? What will the focus be? How can we continue the enthusiasm and journey in class? If you're tempted to run an art assembly in your school, my advice would be to go for it, and I know our staff and pupils would wholeheartedly agree. They really are a fabulous, valuable, shared experience. **TP**



Adele Darlington is an EYFS teacher and art lead at Leighfield Primary in Uppingham. She also works as an art SLE across the Discovery Trust.

 @mrs_darl

5 easy art ideas that look amazing

Help pupils to create artwork that has the wow factor with these inspirational projects

MANDY BARRETT

Fabulous fossils

Develop Y3 pupils' printing skills while learning about rocks and fossils in your science topic. Use biros to carefully score ammonite images into a polystyrene sheet. This creates a block to print from. Encourage pupils to imagine what the design will look like once it's printed. Next, experiment with coloured inks to create repeated printed images.

Test the prints in sketchbooks first and ask pupils to add annotations about their thoughts, feelings and learning journey. How can we make the print darker or lighter? How

much ink is needed? Which colour do children prefer?

If children want to improve their print block at this stage, give them a new piece of polystyrene. Alternatively, move straight on to experimental work and explore printing onto paper and fabric, discussing any similarities and differences you encounter. Make sure to document all your discoveries and thoughts in sketchbooks.

Finally, create backgrounds by tearing coloured sugar paper and sticking the small pieces onto a larger sheet of paper. Use your blocks to repeat a fossil print over the top.



Inspirational posters

Work together to produce inspirational portraits of significant people. This fits in nicely with events such as Black History Month. Before beginning, discuss each person and their achievements and share some famous quotes from them.

Next, gather images and transfer them onto a piece of strong A3 cartridge paper by rubbing the back of the photocopy with a layer of

graphite or oil pastel then fix the picture onto the paper using a small piece of masking tape before tracing over the image with a biro. This will transfer the graphite or pastel onto the paper. Enhance the transferred images with black felt pens and add quotes.

Using PVA glue and a range of materials, add a collaged background. This creates a textured look which makes the paintings more interesting. This is a good opportunity for children to increase their

knowledge of preparing canvas backgrounds.

Use acrylic paint to add vibrant colours to the images, making sure that the portraits and quotes don't get lost. Try watercolour paints to build up colour on the faces, then use marker pens such as POSCA to outline parts of the work. These pictures make an inspiring display when placed together and will help children to be more aware of a range of inspirational people.

Mythical eyes

This project ties in well to English units featuring mythical creatures. Begin by drawing a range of eyes in your sketchbooks, exploring different drawing media and textures. For example, children can experiment with using bubble wrap or textured wallpaper to print with. At the same time, discuss previous art learning such as tonal values and painting and printing techniques, giving children time to record, review and revisit ideas.

Explore the shapes found in different eyes and discuss how these could be created using clay, recording your annotations in sketchbooks to support the learning journey.

After this initial exploration, children will be ready to create their clay eye. They should be confident of the shapes they would like to create and the textures they

want to add to replicate scales and other features.

Use batons, a rolling pin and clay boards to create a slab of clay that is 1cm thick. Cut this to shape using a clay cutter. Children can now either use a template or score their shape directly into the clay. Use a variety of tools to create texture in the clay to give the appearance of dragon scales.

Join different pieces of clay together with slip. This ensures pieces are less likely to fall off while being fired in the kiln. If you don't have access to a kiln, leave your dragon eyes to air dry then add a layer of varnish or PVA glue. Alternatively, use salt dough or modelling clay then oven bake, or try playdough or plasticine.

After you've fired your dragon eyes, use acrylic paint to add colour. Add a PVA glue glaze over the top to add extra shine if you wish. Finally, add a glass eye using a glue gun. Don't forget to document the whole process in sketchbooks using annotations and sketches.

Galaxy travellers

If you're doing space in science, this project links in perfectly. Begin by looking at a range of images of the universe. Discuss how you might recreate these using pupils' art skills and knowledge.

Experiment with using a crunched up paper towel to add bursts of poster paint to black card. This will create a



textured, mottled effect. Be careful not to add too much paint, as you still want the black to be visible. Some children may want a very busy background full of stars and constellations, while others might aim for a more muted effect.

Next, look at a range of drawings and photographs of astronauts wearing spacesuits. Draw different versions of astronauts on white paper using black felt pen. This can either be a close-up, with lots of detail on the suit, or a smaller astronaut to place in the background – children should be encouraged to create a composition of their choice.

Cut out the visor of the spacesuit so that the background is visible through the drawing. This gives the illusion of a reflection in the helmet of the suit. Encourage children to discuss their ideas and reasoning while creating their work.

Super sugar skulls

This idea works well if you're studying the ancient civilisations of South America in history. Encourage children to use their sketchbooks to research the vibrant imagery connected to Mexico's Day of the Dead holiday. Explore different art media, artists and the culture of the festival, documenting your findings via annotations in sketchbooks.

Next, pupils can practise their sewing skills by creating a 'sugar skull' using felt. Use a template to cut out the shape of a skull, then embellish it with felt, embroidery thread and buttons. This will give pupils the chance to try running, back and blanket stitch.

After constructing your sewn sugar skulls, create a report that evaluates the making process. Consider materials and equipment used, the making process, knowledge learnt and skills practised.



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

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Lesson PLANS

We're taking the hard work out of planning with innovative ideas from some of the UK's most creative teachers

KS2

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IMPROVE YOUR TEACHING OF THE SLAVE TRADE

It's a sensitive subject but will help pupils understand topical #BlackLivesMatter issues, says Julia Edwards.

KS1

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SAVE RAPUNZEL WITH A NEW INVENTION

Use a fictional character's problem to help children design inventive solutions, says Laura Cross.

KS2

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EXPLORE VOCAB CONTEXT WITH A WORKING WALL

Use these vocabulary exercises to help pupils plan, draft and write creatively, says Emily Azouelos.

KS2

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USE MAGIC TRICKS TO BOOST CREATIVITY

Bringing out their inner magician can improve children's lateral thinking, says Richard Wiseman.

LESSON PLANS



Even more ideas...

Trauma informed

Trauma Informed Schools UK is offering part-time diploma training across the UK to ensure your school truly supports the mental health and emotional wellbeing of both staff and students. Empower key staff to respond effectively to children with mild to moderate mental health problems and learn whole-school strategies. Attend a free briefing over Zoom and find out more at traumainformedschools.co.uk



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Cook School's free ten-week online course serves up engaging, easy-to-follow vegetarian recipes. Sign up to receive lesson plans and recipe cards to create healthy, sustainable meals. Classes are in the form of 30-minute videos, presented by Cook School junior ambassadors. Sign up by emailing hello@cookschoo.club



Celebrate the NHS

The Big Tea encourages schools to put on an event to raise funds for NHS Charities Together. Draw each other's 'pour-traits', see how many teabags you can throw into an empty mug or host a traditional afternoon tea. Download a fundraising kit at tinyurl.com/big-tea



Find more online! Visit teachwire.net/news/50-lesson-plans-ks1-ks2



Improve your teaching of the slave trade

WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- How the slave trade operated, including the Middle Passage
- Map the triangular route and the cargo that was carried
- What life was like on a slave plantation
- How abolition shaped modern Britain



It's a sensitive subject but will help pupils understand topical #BlackLivesMatter issues, says **Julia Edwards**

@scargatherer scargatherer.co.uk

The transatlantic slave trade is a fundamental part of British history, but it can feel like a difficult subject to tackle in the classroom. Understanding the slave trade enables children to make sense of events such as the #BlackLivesMatter protest, which led to the Edward Colston statue in Bristol being torn down. In this cross-curricular lesson, children will learn about all aspects of the slave trade, including a sensitivity for the language we should use to talk about it. Pupils will explore the legacy of abolition, and reflect on how we remember the past.



START HERE

Begin by asking children what they know about the slave trade, collecting key words such as 'slaves', 'plantation', 'African', 'black', 'ships', 'Jamaica', 'Caribbean', 'America', 'plantation', 'sugar', and 'tobacco'.

Give a general explanation of the slave trade: ships from Europe sailed to the west coast of Africa with goods to exchange for innocent people; these people were transported across the Atlantic to the Americas where they were forced to work as slaves on plantations; the sugar and tobacco produced on the plantations was then shipped back to Britain. Over time, about 12 million people were taken from Africa like this.



MAIN LESSON

1 | MAP THE ROUTE

Using blank maps of the world, ask children to plot the triangular route of the transatlantic slave trade, marking each part of the route with the cargo carried. Ships sailing from Britain carried brass, copper, glass beads, cloth and guns to west Africa. (Guns enabled warring tribes to defeat their enemies and exchange them with slave traders for more weapons.)

Human cargo was transported on the Middle Passage, from Africa to the West Indies and America. Ensure children understand that the people we refer to as 'slaves' were ordinary men,

women and children, often kidnapped. Using the word 'slaves' implies these people were destined for slavery, so try to use the expression 'enslaved people' or 'enslaved Africans' when referring to them.

Discuss the conditions on board ship, the length of the journey, the penalties for rebellion, and the cost in human lives (estimated at 10% from disease caused by insanitary conditions, overcrowding and inadequate food and water). There are some helpful video clips available on BBC History at [tinyurl.com/tp-plantation](https://www.bbc.com/history/tp-plantation).

On the third part of the route, ships transported sugar and tobacco back to Britain. No enslaved people were ever landed at ports in Britain, so

“Ensure children understand that the people we refer to as ‘slaves’ were ordinary men, women and children, often kidnapped”



for many years the British public was largely oblivious to the suffering involved in producing their goods.

2 | TERRIBLE JOURNEY

For the next part of the lesson, ask children to write a diary entry for an enslaved child working on a plantation. Consider the effects of the terrible journey they had just survived, the experience of being sold (and branded) like an animal on arrival, and the deliberate isolation of each enslaved person from anyone they knew or who spoke the same language.

The text *Recollections*

of *Slavery by a Runaway Slave* (tinyurl.com/tp-runaway) describes daily life on a plantation, including the long hours of back-breaking work, the inadequate and unfamiliar food and the constant barbaric punishments. This text is inevitably upsetting, but these experiences should be discussed if possible, as well as the bravery of those who dared to rebel. (A further 30% of enslaved people died in the first three years of enslavement from malnutrition, exhaustion and tropical diseases.)

3 | ABOLITION TIMELINE

For the final part of the lesson or topic, make a timeline of abolition, including campaigning from the 1780s,

the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and the final abolition of slavery itself in 1834. Explain to children that enslaved people now became ‘apprentices’, required to work for up to six more years unpaid, until this was abolished in 1838. Make sure that pupils are aware of black abolitionists such as Olaudah Equiano, Phyllis Wheatley, Mary Prince and Ottobah Cugoana, as well as white campaigners such as William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson and Hannah More.

Discuss the fact that the abolition of slavery was brought about by the British government paying compensation in 1834, not to those who had been enslaved, but to the slave owners for their loss of ‘property’. One slave trader, Thomas Daniel, received a payment of £75,000, equivalent to about £60 million today. This money still benefits the UK, since the recipients invested it in the building of British railways, the establishment of insurance companies, support of the Church of England and some British universities, and the foundation of institutions such as the Natural History Museum.

*Julia Edwards is the author of **Slaves for the Isabella**, part of **The Scar Gatherer series**, a sequence of seven historically accurate time-travel adventures, written to engage children in learning about daily life across British history. She runs workshops on all the periods covered by the series, including the slave trade.*

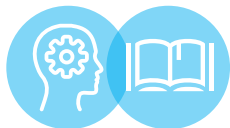
EXTENDING THE LESSON



- Look at the famous diagram of the Brookes slave ship (tinyurl.com/tp-ship) and use the sizes given in inches in the explanation to measure out in centimetres the space given to each man, woman and child. Note too that the ship previously transported more people than in the diagram. Find out where this picture was first published and why.
- Research the contribution of one of the black abolitionists to the campaign for abolition.
- Learn and perform a Negro spiritual – songs created by African Americans that merged their African cultural heritage with their experiences of being held in slavery.
- Read about the #BlackLivesMatter protest in Bristol in June 2020. Discuss whether we should continue to have statues of individuals such as Edward Colston, and if not, what we should do with them.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- How do people try to justify treating others badly?
- If your ancestors had received a compensation payment in 1834, how would you feel about the money?
- How can we stop racial inequality in Britain today?



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- What an invention is and that they can solve problems
- Empathise with a character to identify a problem
- Design an invention with a user in mind
- Communicate and evaluate design ideas

Save Rapunzel with a new invention



Use a fictional character's problem to help children design inventive solutions, says **Laura Cross**



inventorsandmakers.com/schools

In this DT lesson, KS1 pupils will learn about the invention process and how inventions solve problems. This is brought to life with a real problem faced by a character in a familiar story. Through the design process pupils will generate ideas and communicate them with others. This lesson covers several sections of the D&T curriculum, involves minimal equipment and is easy to integrate into your class topic or book. As pupils practise their invention and design skills, they'll also be developing their collaboration, creative and problem-solving skills too.



START HERE

To introduce the concept of an invention, explain that inventions are things that are made by humans. Check understanding with a quick thumbs up/thumbs down 'Is it an invention?'

game, giving examples such as a chair, the sea, a computer and a dog. Inventors and engineers design inventions to solve problems. Explain that your problem is that it's raining outside and you don't want to get wet. What invention can pupils think of to solve your problem? Discuss that more than one invention can solve the same problem. Try again with a few more problems.



MAIN LESSON


1 | SAVE THE DAY

Extend the starter activity by asking pupils to identify the problems that an invention solves. Show various objects and ask what problem each solves. Make sure pupils are wording their answers as problems, not solutions.

Once pupils have a good understanding of inventions, send them off on an invention hunt with mini whiteboards. Ask children to write down or draw some of the inventions they see. Once back together, share ideas and discuss the problems those inventions solve.

Now explain that you need children's help to save the day for a character in a story. For example, Rapunzel is stuck in a tower and needs to escape, or the three billy goats need to cross the river without the troll noticing. Choose a character from the story you're doing in class or one that is familiar to the children. For Y2 pupils you might want to allocate different stories and problems to each group.

Start by asking the class to think about the character's problem and brainstorm this together. In mixed-ability groups, pupils will next discuss and design their own inventions to solve the



**“Choose a character
from the story you’re
doing in class”**

character’s problem. You’ll probably need to give some examples: a machine that can fly up to Rapunzel’s tower or a catapult to launch the goats across the river, for example. Make sure pupils spend a few minutes talking about ideas before they start. Carefully monitor each group’s ideas at this initial stage as they get going.

Once groups have an idea for their invention to solve the character’s problem, they can draw and label it using a large sheet of paper. They can also come up with a name, add colours and details and practise how they will explain it to the rest of the

class. Continue to supervise each group, moving them on with their inventions with questioning and making sure they have fully thought through the idea.

2 | SHARE AND EVALUATE

Ask all groups to come and present their invention idea to the rest of the class. They should start by stating the problem they are solving with their invention and then explain how it works, using their drawings. Allow other groups time to ask questions and comment on the designs. Focus your teacher feedback for each group on the originality of the ideas, imagination and creativity, how their invention

solves the problem and any teamwork you observed.

3 | REFLECT AND ITERATE

It’s important to make time at the end of the lesson to reflect on what pupils have learnt and the process. Recap what an invention is, how inventions solve problems and then talk about how pupils thought carefully about a character’s problem to come up with a design to solve it.

Spend any extra time talking about what went well, what pupils liked and what they’d change about their designs. Explain that this is what inventors and engineers do every day. As a class, ponder any problems pupils face themselves and talk about ideas they have to solve those problems. Children can try to think of inventions for problems they see around them as a home learning activity.

*Laura Cross runs **Inventors & Makers** which offers after-school classes and workshops teaching STEM in primary schools and online. Use code **TEACHPRIMARY** to get 10% off STEM workshops for your school.*



EXTENDING THE LESSON

- If groups finish their invention designs early, encourage pupils to come up with additional details such as the materials they would use to build it, a building plan or even an advert or poster.
- Once pupils understand the invention process, encourage them to use it again in another lesson for another character or a problem that a real person faces.
- Give each group the opportunity to build a simple version of their invention using junk modeling or other available materials.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What is the problem? How is the character feeling?
- What ideas do you have to solve the problem?
- What does the character need? What would the character like?
- Have you drawn or written down all your ideas with labels?
- How would this part work?
- What happens when/if/after/before...?



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- The context behind words and how context can affect vocabulary choice
- How to level-up their vocabulary to create different effects for the reader
- Expand their word knowledge
- Broaden and deepen their understanding of related words

Explore vocab context with a working wall



Try these vocabulary exercises to help pupils plan, draft and write creatively, says **Emily Azouelos**

emily.azouelos.com

In this lesson you'll use a variety of creative vocabulary exercises to deepen pupils' understanding of the text you're currently studying. The vocabulary generated from the activities can be used in subsequent writing lessons and displayed on a working wall to act as a focal point for children when it comes to planning, drafting and writing creatively. The exercises will help students understand the context of the vocabulary, provide opportunities for oracy and draw upon drama techniques to make the vocabulary examined memorable, engaging and, above all, fun!



START HERE

Pair up children and hand out sentences from a text with words highlighted. These words should be unfamiliar for the class but important to understanding the wider text. Encourage pupils to use the context of the sentence to understand the meaning behind the word choice, giving time for discussion. Each pair should generate a synonym more familiar to them ('affluent' becomes 'rich', for example). Display the linked words on a working wall as a word bank for precision when writing. Finally, using a timer, challenge the pairs to create as many synonyms and antonyms of the original word as they can.



MAIN LESSON

1 | GRADIENT LINES

Hand out thesauruses and give children the chance to become 'magpies' and steal some synonyms and antonyms to add to the words used in the starter activity.

Then, using all of the vocabulary generated, ask pupils to arrange them along a gradient line (rich to poor, for example). Discuss their placement choices and reflect on the differences between the words and the effect for the reader.

Put up the finished gradient lines on your working wall. Make a few laminated stars and when marking, place it inside a

child's book so they know they have used a great piece of vocabulary from the gradient lines. They can write their name on it (or a peer when peer marking) and stick it next to the word on the gradient line. This can incentivise and encourage a class to push their vocabulary use in writing.

2 | FROZEN WORD EXHIBITION

Using a large space, ask children to walk around while you give this instruction: "You have ten seconds to make yourself as ... as possible". Fill in the blank with adjectives such as 'big', 'mean', 'spooky' or 'spiky'. Once pupils are warmed up, focus on the character, setting and action



“Give groups time to visit other teams to try and trade words with them”

descriptions from the text you’ve been studying, ensuring that children understand the meaning of the words.

Explain to pupils that they will be creating a frozen word exhibition, physicalising words they have been learning. Split the class in half, with one side watching and the other side creating a frozen statue that embodies a word. The children watching can then select a ‘frozen statue’ and adopt the antonym of the word they think the child is displaying.

Walk around and take photos of the pairs in their frozen positions

and then ask them to sit down and share the words that they were displaying. Did any pair successfully show a paired synonym and antonym? Display the photos on the working wall and invite children to write further descriptive words on strips of paper to be displayed around the images to act as a word bank of amazing vocabulary for them to independently use during creative writing.

3 | LEVEL UP

Present your class with a boring character, setting or action description that has been adapted from the text you’re studying. Identify the descriptive vocabulary and discuss the meaning, using dictionaries to support.

In groups of five, ask children to create five new ambitious vocabulary words to improve the boring description. Write them down on pieces of card. As a whole class, read aloud the five words from each group. If five or six groups have the same word, that word is ranked as low-value. If only one or two groups have a word, it is ranked as high-value. And if between three and four groups have a word, it is mid-value.

Give groups time to visit other teams to try and trade words with them. Groups can either directly swap words of similar value or supply a new, better word in order to get a high-ranking word. Give pupils a choice at the end to discard or keep any low ranking words they have. Either in their groups or independently, ask children to have a go at rewriting the description using the new vocabulary they’ve traded with each other.

Emily Azouelos has worked as a teacher and senior leader in London primary schools and creates educational content for arts organisations to promote creativity in the classroom.

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- Hand out pictures of the landscapes or characters featured in the text you’re studying. Ask children to write words to describe the images over the top on a sheet of acetate. Display these on your working wall as an interactive word bank.
- Draw around a child on a big sheet of paper to represent one of the characters in your text. Using the frozen word exhibition images as a stimulus, can pupils include some of the vocabulary they have discovered and use it to describe the character’s appearance, motivations and personality? Write the character’s inner thoughts and feelings inside the outline, and things to do with appearance, actions and any facts about the character on the outside. Stick the finished ‘person’ on your working wall and add to it when you find out new information about the character.
- Ask children to create dictionaries featuring their own definitions and images to help illustrate the new and unfamiliar words they have learnt. Place the dictionaries in the reading corner so pupils can share what they’ve learnt.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- How does your word choice affect the reader?
- How did you use the context of the sentence to help you work out the meaning of the word?
- What made you choose that word to describe the character/ location/action?



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- Understand how a simple magic trick works
- Learn how to perform it to the class
- Practise public speaking and performing skills
- Learn about the concept of lateral thinking and how it helps us in different walks of life

Perform magic tricks in class to boost creativity



Bringing out their inner magician can improve children's lateral thinking, says **Richard Wiseman**

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

We know that creative activities are hugely beneficial for the development of children, but have you ever considered using magic tricks in the classroom? Our recent research at the University of Hertfordshire shows that learning to perform magic tricks can boost children's creativity and lateral thinking as they learn to think outside the box. It's also a great tool for developing confidence. By presenting a trick, pupils will practise their performance skills and get an exciting opportunity to 'wow' their peers.



START HERE

Demonstrate a simple magic trick for your class. The 'colour vision' trick is a great one to use as it's easy to get hold of and learn.

This involves showing someone a cube with different coloured sides and asking them to secretly choose a colour before placing the cube in a closed box – you'll be able to 'magically' reveal their choice of colour. Alternatively, show a YouTube clip of the trick in action – but a live performance is always the most effective! Ask children to discuss in pairs how they think the trick is done, before sharing their theories with the class.



MAIN LESSON

1 | LEARN THE TRICK

Once pupils have discussed their theories, it's time for them to learn how the trick is done. Divide your class into pairs or small groups and give each group a magic coloured cube set and instructions – they'll learn the key to the magic trick and understand how you 'guessed' their colour.

To add more variety to the lesson, especially in a bigger class, include several simple magic tricks so different groups have different tricks to decipher – they could be based on coins, numbers, cards or many more. There are lots of resources available

on magic tricks for this age group, but take a look at my Quirkology channel on YouTube for inspiration.

2 | HONE THE PERFORMANCE

Give each pair or group some time to practise their magic trick performance. Take a short break part way through this section of the lesson to check on everybody's progress. Discuss as a class what makes the most effective performance: what skills do pupils need to be using? This could cover:

- self-discipline, needed to practise and improve
- creativity, to keep your audience entertained
- empathy, to put yourself in



“Talk about why practising something lots of times is important”

performing the trick as a double act in their pairs; telling a story throughout their routine; or making it a comedic performance with jokes or characters.

Encourage peer-to-peer mentoring within the pairs or groups, with pupils giving each other feedback on how convincing the trick was, and how they can improve it next time.

3 | SHOW TIME

Ask for volunteers from each pair or group to take it in turns to perform their trick to the class. Make sure the children know it's OK if the trick doesn't go to plan – use this opportunity to talk about why practising something lots of times is important, just like any other subject or hobby that pupils do.

Ask the rest of the children to say what they enjoyed about learning and performing the tricks, and what they liked about their peers' performances. Discuss how they think the different tricks might have been done. Introduce the concept of lateral thinking – what does it mean, and what has it got to do with magic tricks?

Richard Wiseman is a professor of psychology at the University of Hertfordshire. He is also a member of the Inner Magic Circle and has worked as a creative consultant with Derren Brown and on The Twilight Zone and Brain Games.

the shoes of your audience – how does the trick look from their point of view? Do you want them to be surprised, entertained, impressed? And how might you make them feel this way?

Children might want to take inspiration from magicians they've seen in books, films or on television, or watch videos of magic tricks on YouTube for ideas of how to perform and embellish their act. Encourage pupils to try different ideas:

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- Practise lateral thinking skills by giving each group a different everyday object from around the classroom. Ask each group to write down on a big piece of paper all the different ways they can think of to use the object. Challenge them to be as inventive, surprising and funny as possible, and share their best ideas as a class.
- Discuss why this kind of thinking outside the box helps us. How would scientists, inventors, detectives or writers use these skills?
- Build on the children's performing skills and confidence by creating a class magic show to perform in an assembly or at the end of term. Learn some more tricks and ask the class to come up with their very own magician personas, with names, costumes and favourite tricks.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Why do you enjoy magic tricks?
- Do you like knowing how a magic trick is done or do you prefer to keep guessing? Why?
- What are your favourite books and films that include magic?

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Schools

Top of the class

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



1

Supporting readers

A recent survey showed that 92% of schools in Ireland use Jolly Phonics as their sole systematic synthetic phonics programme. Teacher Mary Conroy says, "The pupils love the programme – it's multisensory and engaging. It's particularly good for those that are struggling a little." The challenge for some years now with literacy has been to catch a wider cohort of pupils in the Early Years before they fall through the holes in the literacy net. "I find that Jolly Phonics is the net that catches and supports all my readers", adds Mary. With Ireland ranked 5th in the PIRLS league table and many schools using Jolly Phonics for more than ten years, perhaps there is a pointer there for how others can achieve similar success? jollyphonics.cpdcollege.com



3

Understanding Christianity

Strengthen your primary RE teaching this summer with RE Today's online CPD courses. The bestselling Understanding Christianity course, split over three dates, supports teaching Christianity in RE and is used in over 6,500 schools. You'll also receive a complementary teaching resource handbook worth over £90. Thanks to grant funding, community schools can save £150 on this course (usually £210). NATRE membership discounts apply to non-community schools. The next primary course starts on 29th September. For further details on courses and NATRE membership packages visit retoday.org.uk



4

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



2

Save time

All the team at Maths.co.uk are primary teachers so they know the kind of time pressures that educators face on a daily basis. With over 10,000 questions instantly marked, 200 online tests and detailed analysis reports, Maths.co.uk will save you time photocopying, marking and analysing data. On average, Maths.co.uk will save teachers over two hours every week. Whole-school licences are heavily discounted. For a free trial call Elaine on **020 8432 9529** or email support@maths.co.uk



5

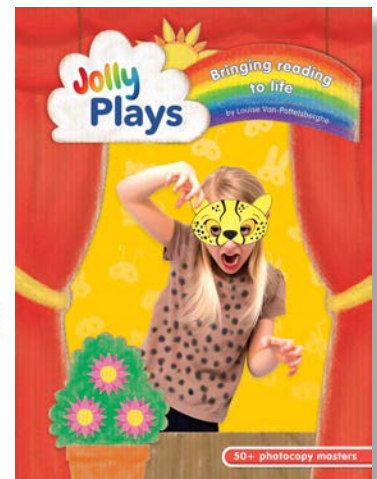
Trash to treasure

Turn everyday rubbish into treasure with The Tindims of Rubbish Island. Prizewinning author Sally Gardner and illustrator Lydia Corry have created a fun new world of tiny characters and big adventures. Their empowering new series for five to eight-year-olds is printed in dyslexia-friendly font with pictures on every page. The Tindims series is available now at all good bookshops.

DRAMA →

Jolly Plays

Jolly
Phonics



Six plays with related teaching resources and activities, designed to help children become confident readers

AT A GLANCE

- Six reproducible play scripts that encourage reading and performance
- Mask and prop templates for performing the plays
- Comprehension and discussion questions for each play
- User-friendly layout, making teaching the content straightforward
- Cross-curricular links to art, science, PE and literacy

REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES



Jolly Plays is designed to help children become fluent and confident readers, with well-developed speaking and listening skills. Following in the footsteps of Jolly Phonics, the teaching in Jolly Plays is multisensory, active and fun. The content encourages learners to engage with both reading and performance, boosting confidence and helping children progress with their understanding of the links between modes of reading.

The book contains six plays and each comes with a number of additional teaching resources and cross-curricular activities, meaning that the resource is fully comprehensive and requires no additional content. For me, what is most striking about Jolly Plays is the way in which every possible element of learning has been considered. There is all of the information a teacher needs to run the lesson without the laborious hours of preparation. For example, there's a list of what is needed for each play to be performed, costume suggestions, stage setting ideas and even suggestions about how non-participants can be involved.

From a student's perspective, Jolly Plays is engaging and varied. Based on the Jolly Phonics purple level (the sixth level of decodable Jolly Phonics readers), the plays are accessible and interesting, making the

transition from prose to script smooth and enjoyable. The book contains additional resources which can be used whether the children perform the plays or simply read them aloud. What I like about the aesthetic layout is that all of the parts in each play are colour coded by difficulty to help teachers select the right part for each child, and there are songs and non-speaking parts for less confident children, ensuring that everyone in the class is included.

Drama-based learning can be intimidating but Jolly Plays is designed to empower both teachers and pupils. The pre-planned questions for each play allow you to effectively check for understanding, whether you're a specialist or not. The assessment resources save a mountain of planning time and drill straight down to the core values and ideas in each play.

Performance gives opportunity for numerous cross-curricular links. Jolly Plays highlights these and gives suggestions for how each play can link to different topics in science, sport, art and many others. Although these suggestions are finite in the book, what they also do is make it explicit what you can do to build on the topic covered in the plays. This springboard is sometimes all that is needed to see how wider links can be made.

teach
PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Engaging, relatable plays that help readers bridge the gap between prose and script
- ✓ Designed with teachers and learners in mind
- ✓ Guidance makes teaching performance and plays straightforward
- ✓ Assessment questions make the package inclusive
- ✓ Additional curricular links amplify the power of the resource

UPGRADE IF...

You are looking for a way to transition learners from prose to script without specialist help. This is an affordable and fully comprehensive performance resource that gets exceptional results.

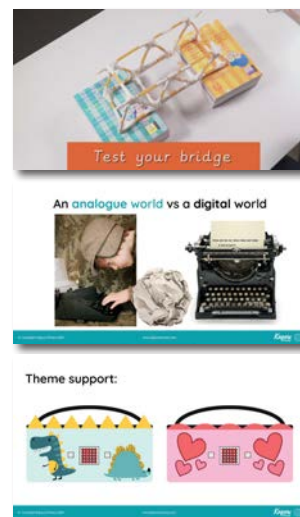
£20, 020 8501 0405, jollylearning.co.uk

D&T



Kapow Primary D&T scheme of work

Complete national curriculum coverage from Y1-Y6 via hundreds of lesson plans and videos



AT A GLANCE

- Comprehensive D&T scheme of work covering Y1-6
- Complete national curriculum coverage
- Huge breadth of topics included, ensuring learners cover all areas of D&T
- 100+ lesson plans, adaptable to other topics
- Teacher and pupil demonstration videos



REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES

D&T is a difficult area for some schools to effectively deliver, simply because of the practical elements involved in the subject. Kapow Primary's scheme of work follows the tried and tested formula for success that has cemented its reputation for supporting teachers and helping them develop.

Authored by primary D&T specialists, the units are tailored to suit the target Key Stages. The topic content is based on the D&T Association's 'Projects on a Page', providing pupils with a rich array of experiences and fully equipping them for secondary school.

The scheme of work can be easily adapted to your teaching needs, time and resources. The lessons are planned to promote clear progression of learning and relevant crosscurricular opportunities are highlighted throughout.

The scheme of learning comes with pre-planned lessons that consist of teacher video, student video, lesson plan and all of the required supporting resources. This complete package means that workload is massively reduced. In addition, you'll receive a number of supplementary resources that allow tracking and

discussion of the curriculum offer – especially helpful for inspections.

Key topic areas include cooking and nutrition, mechanical systems, textiles, electrical systems, structures and the digital world. Throughout, learners are exposed to theoretical and practical elements of each topic and inspired to explore their interests and take risks.

The new Digital World units for KS2 teach pupils how to apply their understanding of programming to control and monitor products designed for specific purposes and develop 2D and 3D CAD skills.

Kapow Primary resources boast exceptional pedagogical understanding. The inclusion of actual teachers in the creation process is a huge positive. The resources ensure that learners have the freedom to explore, but are also encouraged to follow good study habits. The introduction of knowledge organisers to this scheme of work (and their others) is a testament to the adaptability and forward thinking of the resource writers.

The full curriculum coverage is easy to access and the supporting videos are exceptional development resources for teachers.

teach PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Exceptional breadth and depth of content
- ✓ Videos add functionality and value
- ✓ Core principles based on understanding and enjoyment
- ✓ Easy to navigate and integrate into planning
- ✓ Clear presentation of content that can be used to supplement teaching or as full units
- ✓ Real emphasis on progression in skills and understanding

UPGRADE IF...

You want a package of resources that allow you to deliver exceptional D&T but don't have the time or expertise to plan the content yourself.

From £185+VAT, [kapowprimary.com](https://www.kapowprimary.com)

TECHNOLOGY

Samsung Galaxy Tab A7

Slim, lightweight tablet with plenty of storage and defence-grade security



AT A GLANCE

- Sleek, functional, stylish tablet, perfect for any educational setting
- 10.4" screen with stunning visuals; only weighs 476g
- Powerful processing speeds
- Intuitive and easy to use for all ages and technological abilities

REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES



In the right hands, the right piece of equipment can really impact the learning of young people and empower teachers to deliver engaging and interactive lessons. The Samsung Galaxy Tab A7 is a seriously powerful tablet that could have that instant impact.

Samsung's most recent Galaxy range boasts a number of devices perfect for education. The Galaxy Tab A7 tablet is sleek, stylish and hugely functional, making it perfect for classrooms. The impressively sized 10.4" screen means that it is usable but not cumbersome. Weighing in at 476g, the tablet isn't heavy and is well suited to small hands. The tablet is also great for teachers – it can be stored easily and packs some serious computational punch for its size.

The Galaxy Tab A7 is an intuitive tablet that boasts simple and logical command steps to execute functions. The actions on the tablet soon become habitual and after just a few minutes of acclimatisation, students (and adults!) can access the basic functions and use the apps loaded onto the tablet. Even for those accustomed to other types of tablet, navigating the Galaxy Tab A7 becomes second nature quickly. The smoothness and efficiency of the Android software is clearly evident.

The Galaxy Tab A7 comes with 32GB of storage and has rapid charging functionality, meaning that it can be used for a variety of tasks in a day. If you need more storage, there is capacity for an additional memory

card of up to 1TB.

The tablet boasts defence-grade security. Your private data is protected from malware and malicious attacks by the Knox security platform. In addition, the Galaxy Tab A7 boasts a number of restrictive functions to ensure that learners are accessing the right materials during learning time.

Integrating the Galaxy Tab A7 into lessons couldn't be easier. Used as a single tablet, or in conjunction with other pieces of technology, it can unlock so much potential for learners. Samsung has made the networking functions simple to set up, meaning you can quickly prepare and distribute the technology, reducing lost learning time. The actual speed of the processor puts mountains of information and apps at the fingertips of pupils.

The Galaxy Tab A7 can be fully integrated with the wider Samsung ecosystem. This brings additional levels of collaboration into the classroom, with interactive whiteboards, digital flipcharts and numerous other functions accessible without a computer connection. If your school is part of a MAT or if children have to complete distance learning for any reason, Samsung devices help you to empower students to continue to learn, wherever they are.

If students have the right kit, it makes their learning more efficient and the job of the teacher less stressful. The Galaxy Tab A7 is a win-win.

teach PRIMARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Exceptional functionality and versatility
- ✓ Designed with students and teachers in mind
- ✓ Powerful tool for integrating technology into learning
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Loaded with features out of the box, but also easily adapted for your context

UPGRADE IF...

You want to boost the use of technology in your classroom, or want to support staff to help children who require specialist provision.

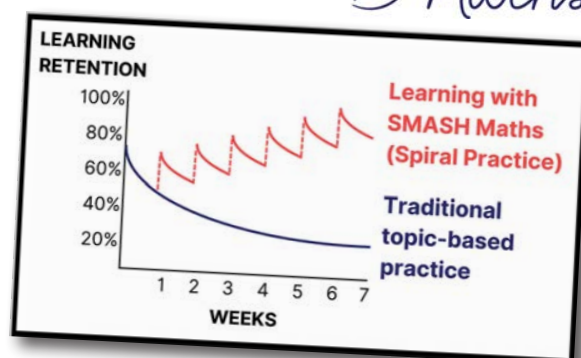
Visit Samsung Experience Stores to explore the range or get in touch on 0333 344 1916 or email samsungexperiencestores@prs-and.com



MATHS ➔

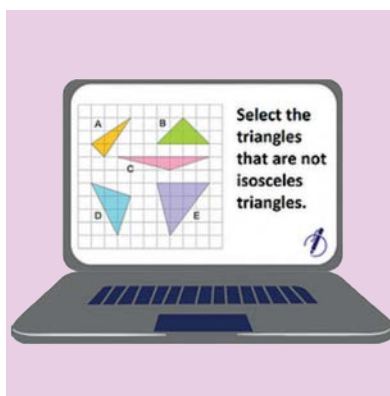
SMASH Maths

Online primary maths programme where students revisit every area of the maths curriculum every week



AT A GLANCE

- Comprehensive maths offer that builds on learning online
- Designed and written by highly accredited maths specialists
- Spiral curriculum approach builds toward long-term mastery
- Aligned with White Rose
- Free for all pupils in all primary schools



REVIEWED BY: ADAM RICHES

SMASH Maths is an online maths platform that has been created with a simple, clear premise: all students should be able to achieve their best in maths, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity or social background. The platform promotes maths progression through sequenced learning that is interactive and encourages, enhances and promotes confidence in problem solving.

At the core of the concept lies the SMASH Maths spiral curriculum. Unlike other online maths offerings, learners visit all six areas of the maths curriculum every week to improve learning retention. By frequently revisiting and practising topics, learners theoretically retain more information. SMASH Maths works by countering the effect of the forgetting curve, helping learners to build confidence in a number of topics simultaneously.

The topical content is designed and written by maths educational experts Sarah-Anne Fernandes and Trevor Dixon. Every SMASH Maths online practice task is bespoke and designed specifically for the course. Dixon and Fernandes have a unique breadth of experience and their pedigree is evident when you look at the technical aspects of the course content.

Some other maths products teach by topic, meaning children rarely revisit what they have learnt and soon forget. In contrast, SMASH Maths utilises spaced repetition to ask questions that are based on current year

group curriculum content but also content learnt previously.

SMASH Maths sends online interactive practice questions straight to teachers' inboxes. This directed model means teachers don't need to select the topics to learn or worry about what to prepare for key assessments. All questions are aligned with national SATs questions to prepare children for these key assessments. In addition, bespoke additions are available to cover exam practice for 7-plus and 11-plus exams.

What impresses me most about SMASH Maths is the pedagogical approach after the maths has been done. If a question is answered incorrectly, feedback provides step-by-step written and video guidance to enable children to learn how to solve the question.

As well as guiding learners to develop key skills, SMASH Maths builds on conceptual aspects of maths. Key vocabulary and definitions are provided to rapidly improve maths literacy. Clear definitions are provided in the feedback to help students untangle the mathematical language.

SMASH Maths is designed to develop problem-solving and reasoning, and it does exactly that. The programme uses a variety of problems to build confidence and resilience. SMASH Maths deepens students' understanding of the maths curriculum and helps them master year group content.

**teach
PRIMARY**

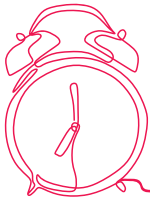
VERDICT

- ✓ Exceptional breadth and depth of content
- ✓ Engaging content throughout
- ✓ Helpful directed feedback to overcome misconceptions
- ✓ Excellent maths language used throughout
- ✓ Free for schools

SUBSCRIBE IF...

You'd like to supplement and support your maths learning using free weekly spiral practice in school. Partner schools also get an exclusive 50% discount code to send to parents to purchase SMASH Maths @ Home (£6/month).

Free, smashmaths.org/schools



DAY in the LIFE



A one-day diary from first alarm to lights out

WAKING UP

My alarm goes off at 6.15am and the first thing I do is take my puppy into the garden and remind my children to wake up!



EVE CAIRNS VOLLANS IS A PLYMOUTH-BASED Y4 TEACHER AND LEAD FOR LOWER KS2, READING AND CPD.

 @evevollansmca



MY MORNING

Our first session is 'teaching of reading'. We chant year group words then read from a novel, followed by activities. We have connecting doors between classrooms so often team-teach 60 children.



LUNCHTIME

Once a month the Y3/Y4 team orders a takeaway lunch for a treat. We chat about our weekends and what we'll be doing in our afternoon sessions.



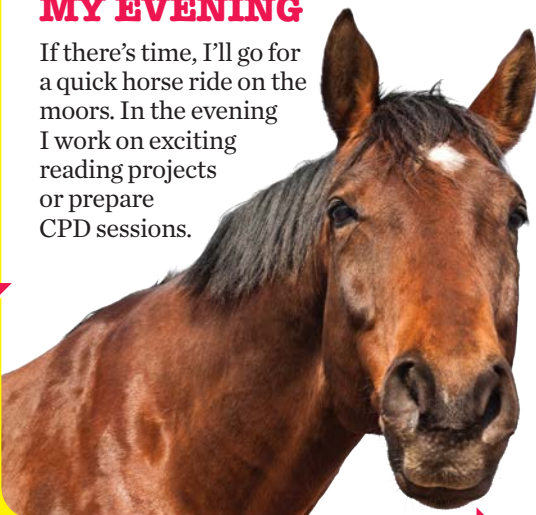
MY AFTERNOON

If we need to finish learning from the morning we're flexible with our timetable. We always finish the day with whole-class reading. I walk around the room as I read, modelling pace, fluency and expression.



MY EVENING

If there's time, I'll go for a quick horse ride on the moors. In the evening I work on exciting reading projects or prepare CPD sessions.



BEDTIME

I unwind with a warm bath, chatting to friends or watching a comedy programme and go to bed around 11pm.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

- ❖ **Career plan B?** Psychologist – how we think and learn fascinates me!
- ❖ **Must-listen?** Episode 21 of Mind the Gap podcast where Emma Turner interviews Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli about Teaching WalkThrus.
- ❖ **Must-read?** Issue 12 of Impact from the Chartered College which is themed around assessment and feedback. Also, the children's book *Malamander* by Thomas Taylor.
- ❖ **Twitter hero?** Mia (@missbteaches_) is positive and uplifting. I love how she chooses high-quality picturebooks to stimulate art. I'm also incredibly inspired by her baking skills!

Are you looking for resources to support you in teaching for mastery?



SCHOOL JAM

Discover School Jam

School Jam is a Reception and KS1 maths practice app that allows teachers to simply send home weekly fun, easy-to-use maths activities. Perfectly aligned to the White Rose Maths small-steps and Power Maths lessons, it can help build maths confidence, foster parental engagement and optimise children's progress.



MATHS Flex

Discover Maths Flex

A new maths practice service for KS2 that combines powerful AI with the White Rose Maths* small-steps approach as the basis for setting highly personalised, individual practice. The AI constantly adapts to the pupil's own strengths and weaknesses helping you to manage the wide range of abilities in your class whilst cutting down the time required to set practice.



Discover Power Maths

Recommended by the DfE**, Power Maths is a whole-class mastery programme designed to spark curiosity and excitement and help you nurture confidence in maths. Perfectly aligned to the White Rose Maths progressions and schemes of learning, it's written specifically for UK classrooms by leading mastery experts.



Learn more about these mastery resources at:
www.pearsonprimary.co.uk/TPmastery

*Maths Flex follows the White Rose Maths scheme of work but is not endorsed by White Rose Maths.

**Power Maths KS1 and KS2 have been judged by the DfE panel to meet the core criteria for a high-quality textbook.

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MATHS.co.uk

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- ✓ Ideal for formative and summative assessment
- ✓ Used by 100s of schools in the UK

