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**ALISON PEACOCK**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

### “Welcome...”



If you'll permit me to state the obvious, this country, like all others, expects a lot from its teachers. Beyond imparting essential knowledge to children, teachers are also called upon to be moral guides, vigilant observers of students' wellbeing, step in when social support structures break down and so much more.

As Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi recently made clear, however, they're very much *not* expected to be proselytisers for certain ideologies or political parties. That's hardly news to teachers, of course. Over on page 82, John Lawson makes the point that educators are all too aware of their responsibilities, and sensitive to the impact their words and framing can have when explaining how the world works to groups of curious and credulous young learners.

And then something like the invasion of Ukraine happens.

When an event of such magnitude comes to pass and overwhelms the media discourse, children and teenagers are going to want to know why as much as everyone else. Yes, the first port of call for most is going to be members of their family, with good reason. But at some point, many will conclude that the people in their lives who do the most to explain things to them might have some helpful insights to offer.

I can still recall how my middle-aged Y5 primary teacher once fielded a question from a classmate asking what had caused the 1991 Gulf War (which dates me, I know). She proceeded to give us a lengthy – maybe 10-minute or so – improvised semi-lecture that took us on a dizzying, whistle-stop tour of Saddam Hussein's territorial ambitions, Kuwait's oil-based economy and what it's like to live under a totalitarian regime, in a region blighted by a series of modern conflicts over the course of decades.

Could she respond in such a way now? Was it even appropriate back then? I'm not sure I trust my childhood memories enough to confidently make that call. But what I remember well was the revelation that the vast, seemingly inexplicable and very adult world out there didn't have to be so unknowable. That the reasons behind why the news was showing footage of desert warfare each night might be complicated, but that with time, patience and a knowledgeable adult to hand, it might be possible to understand at least part of what was happening.

I'd like to think that amid all the horror of these past few weeks, some students, somewhere will have experienced something similar, and resolved to build a better world when the time comes.

Enjoy the issue,

Callum Fauser  
callum.fauser@theteachco.com

## On board this issue:



Dame Alison Peacock is CEO of the Chartered College of Teaching



Gordon Cairns is an English and forest school teacher



Nikki Cunningham-Smith is an assistant headteacher



Vic Goddard is co-principal at Passmores Academy



Alka Sehgal Cuthbert is a teacher, independent academic and writer



Adrian Lyons is an education consultant and former Ofsted HMI

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How shrewd student praise can lead to better outcomes





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Group editor: Joe Carter

Editor: Callum Fauser,  
callum.fauser@theteachco.com, 01206 505115

Head of commercial solutions:  
Richard Stebbing

Advertising manager: Ria Bentham,  
ria.bentham@theteachco.com, 01206 505240

Deputy advertising manager: Ashley Lower,  
ashley.lower@theteachco.com, 01206 505926

Senior account manager: Ian Blackiston  
ian.blackiston@theteachco.com, 01206 508617

Account Manager: Laura Ingle,  
laura.ingle@theteachco.com, 01206 508628

Art editor: Richard Allen

Designers: Luke Rogers, Adam Barford, Kevin Dennis,  
Lee Francis & Steve Streeting

Photography: CLiQQ Photography  
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Accounts: 01206 505995

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**City of Leicester College**

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- ▶ Call 01295 222777

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# The newsletter

Grab a coffee and spend five minutes exploring the lighter side of CPD...

## The UNINFORMED teacher's guide to...

### ELDEN RING

If you've recently overheard your more bookish Y10s discussing 'The best Confessor build' and 'How to kill Godrick the Grafted' with urgent intensity, and assumed it was down to some sort of sub-Tolkien, twaddle-infused media property, you'd be right. Sort of.

*Elden Ring* is the hot new attention-sapping video game *du jour*, and the latest in the 'Soulsborne' series of brutally difficult action role playing games set in bleak fantasy worlds. This one also has George R.R. Martin on writing duties to lend it some added gravitas, and give that ECT in your English department even more reason to doubt whether the *Song of Ice and Fire* novel cycle will ever receive a satisfying conclusion.

As is often the way with these things, your Y10s have no business actually playing it, of course. As a PEGI 16-rated game, only your worldly Y11s with birthdays between September and May should have that pleasure, most whom are probably far too busy occupying themselves with the more mainstream arcana of *FIFA 2022* – 'How to defeat Jhazai Mi V'ardeh?' – to care...



#### DO SAY

"There's no 'easy' mode, of course..."

#### DON'T SAY

"So which one's Frodo?"



## BEAT THE BUDGET



**What are we talking about?**  
'Ukraine: Discussing the war and refugee crisis with students'  
Teaching Idea from Facing History & Ourselves

**What's the targeted age range?**  
14-16

**What's on offer?**  
Online advice, recommended prompts and student-

facing slides intended to guide classroom discussions of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia

#### How might teachers use the resource?

The guidance includes advice on how support students in processing the conflict, strategies for managing a fast-moving and distressing news cycle and suggestions for ways of exploring how different governments have responded to the conflict's growing refugee crisis.

**Where are they available?**  
facinghistory.org



## DON'T QUOTE ME...

"Russia's education minister, Sergey Kravtsov, openly described schools as central to Moscow's fight to 'Win the information and psychological war' against the West."

Washington Post news report dated 20/03/22

## Think of a number...

64%

of UK children rarely or never speak to their parents about their mental health

Source: Censuswide survey of 2,022 parents commissioned by Comic Relief

9%

of teachers say they will only leave the profession upon retirement

Source: TeacherTapp survey of 4,690 commissioned by Bett

91%

of teachers state that their job has adversely affected their mental health in the last 12 months

Source: NASUWT Wellbeing at Work Survey 2021

## ONE FOR THE WALL

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest"

Benjamin Franklin





## Just the job?

The National Foundation for Educational Research has highlighted some worrying findings with regards to teacher recruitment targets. According to its latest 'Teacher Labour Market in England' annual report, there is a 'substantial risk' that targets won't be met this year in a range of subjects, including English – where recruitment is usually consistent – and others that often exceed them, such as geography, biology, art and RE.

The report also points to growing shortfalls in subjects already affected by shortages, notably physics, which the NFER estimates is recruiting at below 20% of the level needed to meet its targets. Other subjects faring badly include maths, chemistry, computing, D&T and MFL.

More generally, the total number of ITT applications in February 2022 was down 23% compared to a year ago.

According to the NFER's school workforce lead, Jack Worth, "The evidence seems clear that teacher supply challenges across subjects are re-emerging after two years of having eased due to the pandemic. Improving the competitiveness of teachers' pay is important for both recruiting and retaining teachers, but while the government has proposed pay increases for teachers, the increases seem insufficient on their own to address the emerging recruitment and retention challenges."

The full report can be downloaded via [bit.ly/ts113-TN1](https://bit.ly/ts113-TN1)

▼ **SAVE THE DATE** ▼

## STATEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Forget the media-friendly soundbites – what else was in those speeches and letters you missed?



**THE SPEECH:**

### Education Secretary addresses Association of School and College Leaders conference

**WHO?** Nadhim Zahawi MP

**WHAT?** Keynote speech

**WHEN?** 11th March 2022

"I think all leaders should aim to be ambitious, but there has never been a more critical time for leaders to make ambition really count.

I came here aged 11, unable to string a sentence of English together. I hid at the back of the class. Even the thought of going to school was a scary one. If my parents hadn't had the wherewithal to push me to take advantage of the education this great country provides, I don't know where I would have ended up.

And if my teacher Bob Hiller hadn't reminded me to funnel my – how should I put it – creative, disruptive energy into something good, I certainly wouldn't be here today. Bob, wherever you are, thank you.

Skills, schools, families. These are my priorities, and these are informed in many ways by my own life story. They are what made the difference to me and what I think can make a real difference in the lives of children across our country.

Because there are children in our country, right now, who need the support that I needed. And those children will achieve incredible things if given that chance.

Colleagues, we are going on a journey – I hope together – to do exactly that."



**THE REMARKS:**

### NEU comments on DfE statistical release on educational attendance to 17th March 2022

**WHO?** Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary of the National Education Union

**WHEN?** 22nd March 2022

"The government's plan to end regular testing in schools and free testing in the community after this month is clearly a bad call. It will make COVID outbreaks and future waves hard to track and render impossible the efforts to anticipate trends. Without cases being picked up and isolated, widespread disruption in schools due to the virus will become an ever-increasing threat as we approach exam season.

We have got to see a change of course on COVID policy from the top, with testing remaining free and at school level, a renewed and much more far-reaching commitment to monitoring, air filtration, and other building requirements. It is only through such preventative measures that we can reliably keep education disruption under control, at a time when cases are rising. Living with Covid must not mean ignoring it."

27 APRIL 2022 Schools & Academies Show | 7-8 JULY 2022 Festival of Education | 10 NOVEMBER 2022 The Education People Show

### 27 APRIL 2022

**Schools & Academies Show**  
ExCeL London  
[schoolsandacademiesshow.co.uk](https://schoolsandacademiesshow.co.uk)

A one-day event aimed at bringing together education leaders and suppliers, as well as facilitating all manner of networking and professional learning opportunities in areas such as procurement, workload, school governance and technology use. The line-up of speakers is set to include Amanda Spielman, National Schools Commissioner Dominic Herrington, and Dame Rachel de Souza, among others.

### 7-8 JULY 2022

**Festival of Education**  
Wellington College  
[educationfest.co.uk](https://educationfest.co.uk)

Following a COVID-prompted two-year hiatus, the 12th Festival of Education will once again be held at Wellington College this summer. The organisers plan to host stimulating talks and presentations by more than 200 speakers drawn from across the profession, and attract a crowd of more than 5,000 educators to what remains perhaps the most relaxed and convivial event on the education calendar.

### 10 NOVEMBER 2022

**The Education People Show**  
Kent Event Centre, Maidstone  
[theeducationpeopleshow.co.uk](https://theeducationpeopleshow.co.uk)

Formerly the EduKent EXPO & Conference, the retooled Education People Show is pitched as a free-to-attend, major networking event for school leaders and policymakers across Kent and neighbouring counties, combining inspiring keynotes with engaging workshops and an extensive exhibition of leading school and academy suppliers.



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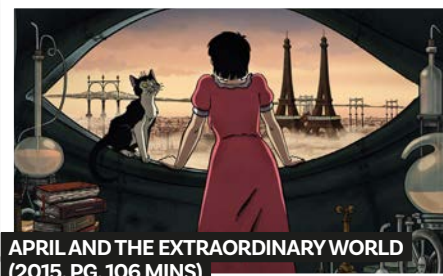


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# Get Into Film



**APRIL AND THE EXTRAORDINARY WORLD**  
(2015, PG, 106 MINS)

## CURRICULUM LINKS:

Science, geography, D&T

In an alternate past where electricity hasn't yet been discovered, and the Napoleonic Empire was never defeated, Paris is run by steam power.

Any scientists not working to forward the aims of the Empire have mysteriously disappeared. April is an orphan from a long line of scientists, her parents tragically killed in a freak accident while on the run from the police.

With the help of her cat Darwin – who can talk, thanks to a prototype serum her parents were working on – April spends her life in a secret lab, trying to complete their work while concealing her progress from the Empire's spies in this imaginative animated adventure.

## Discussion questions:

- How does the film's steampunk setting convey the sense of a society that never advanced technologically into the modern age?
- What do you think the film's message about environmental preservation might be?
- What kind of social obstructions do you think scientists face in the real world?
- In what way does the film's hand-drawn animation style add to its appeal?

Head online to [intofilm.org](http://intofilm.org) to stream the film and download our fantastic film guide, where you can find Teacher Notes on these discussion questions and much more. You can also access our Earth Day theme page, containing further information and resources regarding this important event taking place on 22nd April.



## Retweets

Who's been saying what on Twitter this month?

**Mr G @deputygrocott**

Do you remember when taking a lateral flow test was like a military procedure? We'd take ourselves off, line up all the components and take 15 minutes preparing ourselves? Now we do them while making the packed lunches.

**Miss Thompson PE @HWT\_PE**

Student comes in with a fresh acrylic manicure (against school policy) and expects to be excused from certain PE Elements as she keeps 'catching them' Is this real life?

Follow us via [@teachsecondary](https://twitter.com/teachsecondary) – and let us know what you're thinking!

# TEACHER TALES

True stories from the education chalkface

## Up the creak

"To distract from the boredom of exam invigilation, our team of invigilators would, one by one, attempt to navigate their way through the hundred plus exam desks, from one end of the hall to the other, in as few floorboard creaks as possible.

Other members of the team would carefully observe the route taken, after which the next person would embark on a different route, trying to avoid the creaks and groans of the hall's ancient wooden floor and thus attain a lower 'creak' score.

As a professional, I can assure readers that our 'game' did nothing to detract from ensuring every exam was conducted as per expectations..."

## Left / right issue

"I once stopped a Y7 boy in trainers at breaktime and asked him where his shoes

were. He told me he'd had PE yesterday in period 6, and that when he got home he discovered he had two left shoes. He'd brought the shoes in, and was going to go to PE to sort the issue out.

30 seconds later I stopped another boy who was wearing trainers, and also hobbling. He told me he'd had PE the day before, and that when he'd put on his shoes that morning 'it was agony', because he seemed to be wearing two right shoes – hence him taking them off and putting on his trainers instead.

I gently led him to the first boy in the playground and told them both, 'I think you two need to talk...'

Find more true tales and amusing anecdotes at [schoolhumour.co.uk](http://schoolhumour.co.uk)

## A FEW MINUTES OF DESIGN

### #21 FICTIONAL OBJECTS

Give one or all of the objects on the other side of this card a meaningful role in a short story.

Draw a scene from the story in which the object or objects appear.





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# The Vocab Clinic

Support your students towards better language use, with the help of our resident word-wizard, **Alex Quigley**...



## TRY THIS TODAY: 'COLLECTING COLLOCATIONS'

When pupils read and write in the classroom, they will notice that some vocabulary routinely appears alongside 'familiar friends' in the form of collocations. When you hear the word 'account' in a history lesson, for instance, it will commonly be as a part of a collocation, such as 'historical account' or 'comprehensive account'.

With the help of resources such as the EAP Foundation's 'Academic Collocation List' (see [bit.ly/ts113-vc1](https://bit.ly/ts113-vc1)) we can encourage pupils to **collect collocations** and learn to use them habitually, thus developing their ability to write academically. We can nudge pupils towards collection opportunities when they use particular words. Consider 'argument', and the handy collocation examples 'counterargument', 'compelling argument' and 'valid argument', to name but a few.

## Cracking the academic code

Across subjects as diverse as history, geography, English and science, pupils will be routinely called upon to express arguments in writing. This is one of the most common academic text types pupils will need to master – and a key, if somewhat subtle feature of academic arguments is the requirement to make clear, but 'tentative claims'.



When making 'tentative claims' in a historical context, students might use adverbs like 'possibly' or 'potentially'. They may also utilise modal verbs like 'may' and 'could' to convey that they're uncertain about certain historical events, but are still in the process of carefully crafting an argument.

## ONE FOR: HISTORY STUDENTS

### REVOLUTION

**Derives from:** The Latin root 'revolvere', meaning to 'turn back' – an origin that relates to revolving stars

**Means:** A great change in affairs, often involving the overthrow of an established political system

**Related terms:** Revolve, counter-revolution, revolt, rebel, regime change

**Note:** The term can be applied to changing political systems (e.g. the 'Russian Revolution') but also to certain periods of history (e.g. the 'Industrial Revolution')



## DO THEY KNOW?

It's estimated that a third of the world's population – around 2 billion people – now use English

## I DON'T THINK IT MEANS WHAT YOU THINK IT MEANS...

### IMPROPER

#### In maths

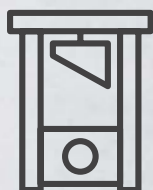
An 'improper fraction' is when the nominator (upper number) is equal to or larger than the denominator (lower number).

#### In history

To break from accepted standards of behaviour



## One word at a time



The word 'capital' is often taken for granted by pupils, as it's so ubiquitous – from the capital cities of geography, to the capital letters of English. The word derives from Latin, with the root 'caput' meaning 'head'. Thus, just as we recognise the 'head' city of a country, so the 'head' of a sentence now becomes clear.

Exploring the root of 'capital' can reveal many helpful linguistic links. The word 'decapitation', for example, becomes more easily understood once you know that 'cap' means 'head', and that the prefix 'de' means 'down' – hence its literal meaning being the process of *taking someone's head off!*



Alex Quigley is a former teacher and the author of *Closing the Reading Gap* and *Closing the Vocabulary Gap*; he also works for the Education Endowment Foundation as National Content Manager



REASONS TO TRY...

# 5 Methuen Drama Student Editions

Uncover the deeper meanings behind some great plays with these knowledge-packed, yet accessible editions



## 30 SECOND BRIEFING

The Methuen Drama Student Editions series guides drama and English students through a selection of brilliant plays in a way that's sure to capture their imaginations. Each edition comes with a wealth of supporting material written by world-class academics to help students access, explore and better appreciate each text.

### 1 PLUG THOSE KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Is there a classic or well-known play you don't want to admit to never having read or seen? We all have gaps in our subject knowledge, and the Methuen Drama Student Editions series is a fantastic way of plugging them, while building your repertoire of brilliant plays. Each edition contains a wide range of material to help and support teachers, making them a cost-effective way of bolstering your departmental knowledge.

### 2 TWO RESOURCES IN ONE

Students require guidance and support when navigating plays ahead of written exams, or when preparing to perform before an audience. Each Student Edition puts the relevant play in context, in a way that allows students to pursue their own avenues of study or areas of research in order to broaden their understanding. The helpful page layouts are easy to follow, and presented in a systematic way that enables each edition to serve as a combined script and study guide.

### 3 EXPERT CURATION

Every Student Edition includes an introduction and supporting commentary from experienced and authoritative experts within the worlds of drama and academia. These editors have curated and

selected a wealth of research material through which readers are carefully guided. This enables students to really get to grips with the play they're studying, while also giving teachers lots of prompts and inspiration for themed discussions and written tasks.

### 4 THE BEST OF OLD AND NEW

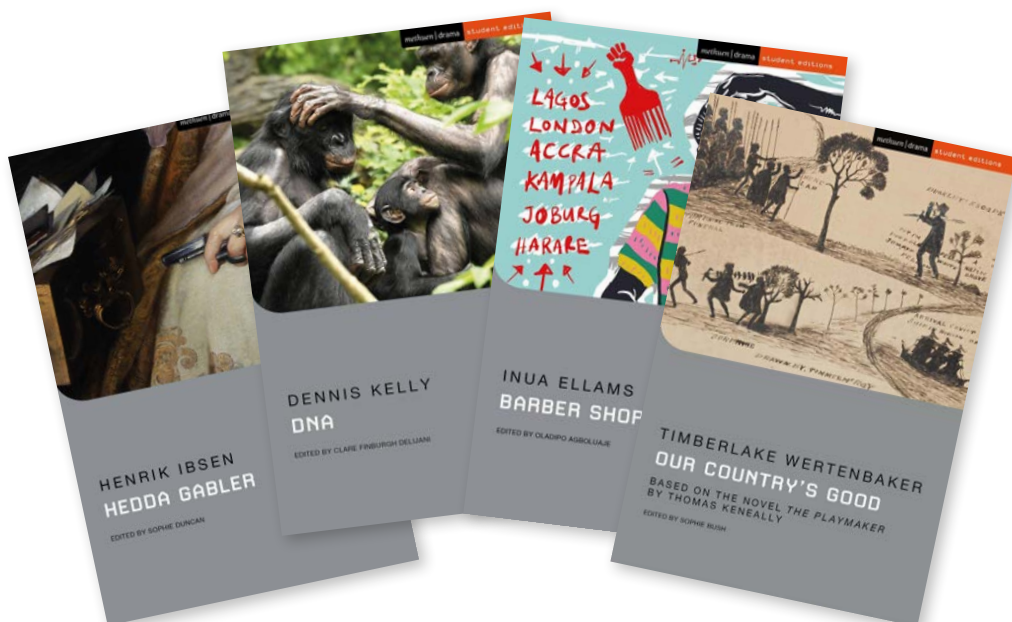
As well as established plays frequently used as set texts, the Student Editions series also encompasses an ever-growing treasure

trove of newer plays. Acknowledged classics, such as *Hedda Gabler* and *Our Country's Good*, can be found alongside detailed treatments of Kae Tempest's *Wasted* and Inua Ellams' *Barber Shop Chronicles*, making these editions ideal for keeping your subject knowledge

up to date, and introducing some modern masterpieces into your teaching.

### 5 SUITABLE FOR ALL

There's something for everyone in the Methuen Drama Student Editions series. Conceived with the needs of drama and/or English teachers firmly in mind, these editions' carefully curated supporting material will provide thought-provoking explanations and study challenges for students from GCSE right up to university level. Hugely informative, while simultaneously succinctly written and highly accessible, they're flexible enough to support a range of learners at different levels.



Find out more:  
[bloomsbury.com/student-editions](https://www.bloomsbury.com/student-editions)  
[schools@bloomsbury.com](mailto:schools@bloomsbury.com)

## KEY POINTS

The books making up the Student Editions series are available now from [bloomsbury.com](https://www.bloomsbury.com) and all good book retailers

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## [ M A T H S P R O B L E M ]

## FACTORS AND MULTIPLES

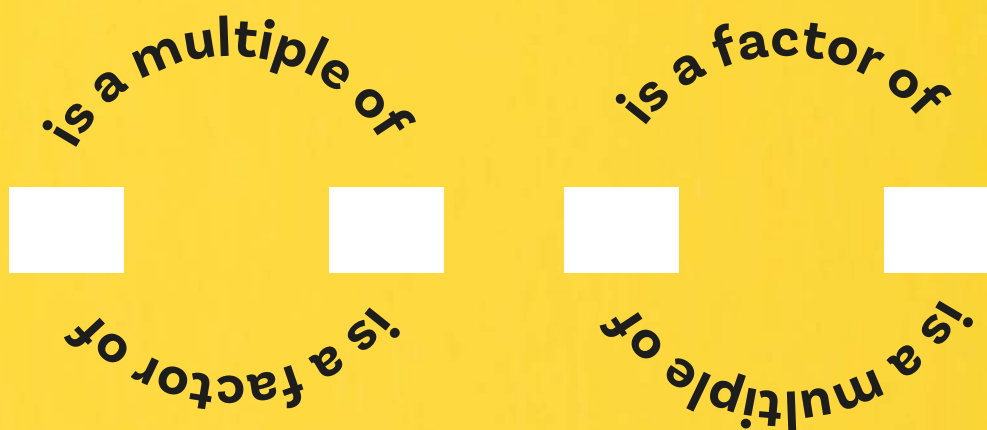
Students often confuse factors and multiples, and respond with one when they mean the other

In this lesson, students examine factors and multiples together, comparing and contrasting them, so as to appreciate their connections and differences.

**THE DIFFICULTY**

This task is intended to bring to the surface any confusions that students may have concerning factors and multiples.

Find four different numbers that could go into these boxes to make the wheel statements true:



For example, students might give the numbers 10, 5, 3, 12. Look out for students putting the numbers the wrong way round, indicating that they are muddling up factor and multiple.

**THE SOLUTION**

Factors 'go into' numbers, and so are (nearly) always smaller.

Multiples are made by taking 'multiple' copies of the number, so are (nearly) always bigger.

You could ask:

Is a multiple of a number always greater than that number?

Yes, except that any number is always a multiple of itself.

Is a factor of a number always less than that number?

Yes, again, except that any number is always a factor of itself.

Now ask students to make up wheel statements, with four different box numbers, like the one above. But, this time, can the four numbers:

- all end in a 3?
- all end in a 1?
- all be greater than 20 but less than 50?
- all add up to 100?

What other possible constraints can students think of?

**Checking for understanding**

For each of these statements, say from 0 to 100% how sure you are that it's true. If you're absolutely sure it's true, write 100%. If you're absolutely sure it's false, write 0%. If it's somewhere in between, write a number between 0% and 100%.

- a) 3 is a factor of 6      b) 6 is a factor of 3  
c) 8 is a multiple of 2      d) 2 is a multiple of 8  
e) 9 is a factor of 1      f) 1 is a factor of 9  
g) 1 is a multiple of 20      h) 20 is a multiple of 1

The answers are: a) T; b) F; c) T; d) F; e) F; f) T; g) F; h) T

You could just go through the answers, or alternatively, you could 'negative mark', so that the student's total score is the sum of the confidence percentages they gave to the true questions, **minus** the sum of the confidence percentages they gave to the false questions.



Colin Foster (@colinfoster77) is a Reader in Mathematics Education at the Mathematics Education Centre at Loughborough University. He has written many books and articles for mathematics teachers. [foster77.co.uk](http://foster77.co.uk)



# Less data, more thinking

A philosophically-informed pedagogy can do more for schools than data-driven initiatives unsuited to the complexities of educational practice, argues **Alka Sehgal Cuthbert**...

In 1996, Tony Blair put education at the centre of a famous speech he delivered at Ruskin College Oxford. “An ‘Age of Achievement’ is within our grasp,” he said, “but it depends on an ethic of education.”

We never found out what that ‘ethic of education’ actually was, but we did become very familiar with a plethora of new strategies for measuring achievement – the most ubiquitous of which was perhaps Assessment for Learning, as popularised by Dylan Williams.

Originally introduced as a way of helping teachers through this new and unfamiliar landscape, with its growing number of different targets, AfL was typical of a managerial approach to education, where process threatened to drive content offstage.

## A knowledge-based curriculum

13 years later, the Shadow Secretary of State for Education at the time – one Michael Gove – attempted to re-centre the importance of knowledge and curriculum, and the content of education. In a 2009 speech to the Royal Society of Arts, he spoke of education as having “An emancipatory, liberating value.” Once in government, he introduced a series of National Curriculum reforms in 2013 with the professed aim of restoring

a knowledge-based curriculum.

Gove’s attempts weren’t entirely successful, however, and weren’t well received by a profession that was largely sceptical of the then Conservative-led coalition government. And yet the academic case for the importance of knowledge – which in the UK had been notably advanced by Michael Young in his 2008 book *Bringing Knowledge Back In* – nevertheless found a receptive audience among official circles and the wider profession, to the point that identifying as a ‘knowledge-rich school’ eventually earned the approval of Ofsted.

At the same time, local education authorities held CPD sessions on planning and sequencing curriculums, and teachers were encouraged to create ever more lovely-looking knowledge organisers. While this was happening, what of knowledge’s poorer sister, pedagogy?

According to the ‘(New) manifesto for evidence-based education: twenty years on’ by

Professors Rob Coe and Stuart Kime for Evidence Based Education, “Research can never tell teachers what to do, nor should it; it can, however, help provide teachers and leaders with what Prof. Steve Higgins (and others) have called ‘best bets’. **It can – and should – provide the theory** underpinning the action in classrooms, leadership meetings, governing body committees and policy-making discussions.” (*Emphasis mine.*)

This confuses research with theoretical knowledge, and then compounds the problem further by suggesting that theory should underpin ‘actions in the classroom’. This misunderstands the relationship between theoretical knowledge and research, and between theoretical knowledge and teaching.

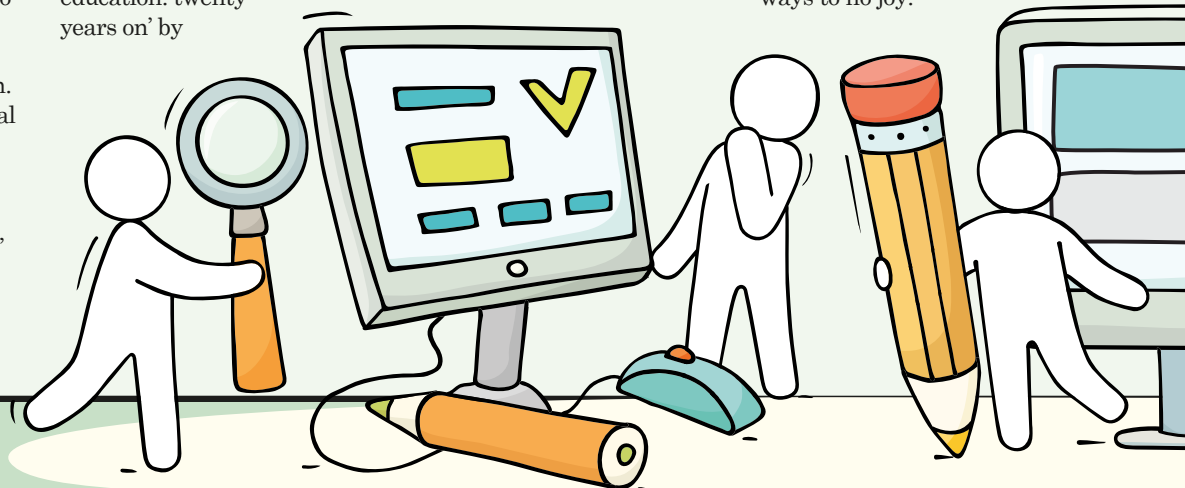
Experimental research can falsify hypotheses and raise questions for further investigation. It is designed to empirically test theoretical

claims. It does not ‘provide theory’. In fact, a recent study (see [bit.ly/ts113-tp1](https://bit.ly/ts113-tp1)) suggests that there’s little connection between teachers poring over research data and helping students learn more effectively – though many corporate entities have been doing rather well from the modern trend towards data-fetishisation in education.

## Philosophy and aesthetics

When it comes to teaching, helping pupils learn and acquiring understanding of formal knowledge, teachers would do better by turning to philosophy, rather than data or narrowly focused research studies.

One example from my own practice as an English teacher may be illustrative here. I had been struggling with teaching abstract nouns to a class who couldn’t consistently distinguish abstract nouns from collective nouns. I tried rephrasing my verbal definitions in umpteen ways to no joy.





## Join the CONVERSATION

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I recalled some research I'd read about learning styles and tried using visual illustrations, which helped one or two pupils understand better, but not the rest. My verbal definitions were simply replacing one set of conceptual definitions with another, while my visuals remained too closely associated to the empirical referents. With each attempt to clarify, I was merely adding layers of confusion.

It was while reading a highly philosophical and abstract book on aesthetics that I finally realised where the problem lay. I needed to find a way of making the concept of the 'collective' concretely distinguishable from the concepts of singular and plural nouns. My pupils were insufficiently experienced in thinking abstractly to understand the substantive meaning of 'collective'.

My solution was to bring a bunch of grapes into class. We considered the phrase 'bunch of grapes' in written and visual forms (again), and then its concrete manifestation on the table.

I pulled the grapes off, and asked if we still had the plural noun 'grapes', and the singular noun 'grape', and they duly answered yes. When I then asked if we had a 'bunch of grapes', the penny dropped. I had become a better teacher through reading philosophy and aesthetics, rather than studying 'How to...' research papers.

## "There's little connection between teachers poring over research data and helping students learn more effectively"

### An objective view

I continue to be highly critical of evidence-based education because education – as opposed to qualification – is at its most successful when it *defies*, rather than *follows* evidence.

Education is about the experience of thinking as an act of self-reflexivity. This encourages pupils to take a more objective view on aspects of the world than those with which they are already familiar through

everyday experience. This can be unsettling, but it introduces pupils to ideas *qua* ideas, and thinking *qua* thinking – both important features of abstract thinking.

Philosophers of education have argued that education is fundamentally a relationship between humans, rather than a matter of technical expertise. A humanities-based teacher education is more likely to help teachers carry out their proper role of ensuring pupils engage intellectually with what they're being taught, rather than monitoring

pupils' individual output.

As any English teacher knows, it's quite possible to write an essay that's perfect in form but banal in content. Thinking isn't an empirical phenomenon. We can work out good proxies to get a sense of how much pupils have understood, and set questions to test how secure their understanding is, but proxies are only good to the extent that they address the specific circumstances that

apply to a particular group of pupils.

### Human-centred

Deeper thinking can sometimes result in empirical outcomes that suggest a pupil is stagnating or going backwards in terms of their subject performance. We shouldn't be worried about this, so long as we're able to ascertain the cause and work out the best way of helping them through what may be a necessary moment of difficulty.

By contrast, the urgent quest for continual improvement does little to encourage teachers to have the confidence – assuming they even have the time – to perform the intricate work needed to educate properly, irrespective of outcome.

If our collective experience of lockdown has taught us anything about education, it's that it is, above all, a human-centred, rather than technical endeavour. Philosophy contains a few centuries-worth of accumulated wisdom that can help us consider such questions, and may well prove to be a better source for educational improvement than any number of random controlled experiments ill-suited for inquiry into something as intellectually, ethically and aesthetically complex as education and pedagogy.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alka Sehgal Cuthbert is a teacher, independent academic and writer, and co-editor of *What Should Schools Teach? – Disciplines, subjects and the pursuit of truth*, 2nd Ed. (£25, UCL Press); follow her at @ASCphiled





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they're easy-to-digest, cut through the noise, and always offer actionable advice and next steps when necessary. Whether it's recruitment time and you need interview questions, or you need help planning next year's budget, there's no topic the team can't help with.

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# 3 things we've learnt about...

## HOW SUBJECT DEPARTMENTS THINK

School staff may be united in the aim of 'educating the kids', but when it comes to the nitty gritty, different departments aren't always be on the same page...

**1 Curriculum Thinking**  
When the latest Ofsted Education Inspection Framework was introduced in 2019, 90% of teachers supported the greater focus on the curriculum that its changes introduced – but are they still in favour of that, three years on?

57% of secondary teachers still seem to be happy with this curriculum-centric emphasis, which has since become a key consideration for leadership teams. Indeed, the phrase 'curriculum intent' is one that two thirds of teachers have heard from their SLTs thus far this term, with a further two thirds having encountered it during school training sessions.

However, around 50% of English teachers say they would change more than half of the curriculum they currently teach – a far higher proportion than most other subjects. Maths teachers seem most in favour of keeping their curriculum largely as-is, but even among this group there's still an appetite for change, with 84% wanting minor amends to their current curriculum.

**2 Prior knowledge**  
That said, curriculum intent counts for little if students don't enter secondary school adequately prepared for what they're going to learn. Transitions can be difficult, with many students experiencing the dreaded 'summer slide' that appears to have the most impact between Y6 and Y7 when compared to other years.

Yet this seems mainly a concern in core subjects, with 72% of English and 84% of maths teachers seeing strong prior knowledge in their subject as 'very important'. It doesn't seem as vital elsewhere, with just 28% of science teachers and 30% of language teachers echoing those sentiments.

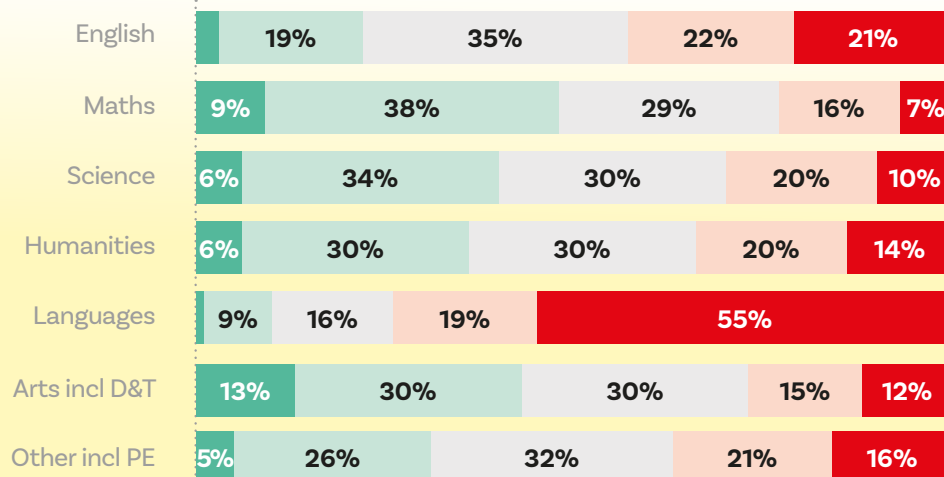
MFL departments may share that view because they can't be sure what languages a student may have learnt in primary, though that may be a blessing. Languages remains a fairly unpopular subject among primary teachers, to the extent that almost 30% wish to see it removed from the primary curriculum entirely!

**3 Advance information has divided opinion**  
With the effects of COVID still being felt across the education sector, the 2022 exam season was never going to be 'normal'. Exam boards have now announced their advance information arrangements, aimed at helping the current Y11 cohort, who haven't had an undisrupted year since they were in Y8.

These vary across subjects, from a larger choice of questions and access to formula sheets, to being forewarned of topics that will come up in the exam – but which subject teachers have been happiest with the information they've received?

The most positive are maths teachers, 47% of whom say they're satisfied with the information that's been issued. Conversely, MFL teachers seem dismayed at the information made available to them, with three-quarters stating that they're dissatisfied. Given that the speaking, listening and reading portions of MFL exams remain unchanged, it seems clear that language teachers believe more allowances should have been made for their students.

**HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE ADVANCED INFORMATION RELEASED FOR YOUR SUBJECT'S GCSES?**



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Satisfied  
Neutral  
Dissatisfied  
Very Dissatisfied

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The mental health of our students has rightly been the focus of much attention these past two years, but we risk overlooking the profound impact the pandemic has also had on the wellbeing of school staff

# Vic Goddard



**Being in school almost constantly over the last two years, I've seen the impact of the pandemic across our whole community. Yet while there have been a great many reports published regarding the mental health of our students and the families we serve, it seems that the impact on staff – many of whom are themselves parents or carers – has been of less interest.**

I was therefore delighted when The Key's GovernorHub service released a set of findings highlighting the concerns governors and trustees currently have for the wellbeing of school staff, and am grateful to them for having given me the chance to discuss said findings in a webinar that took place in early March – a recording of which can be accessed via [bit.ly/ts113-vg1](https://bit.ly/ts113-vg1).

## Striking a 'balance'

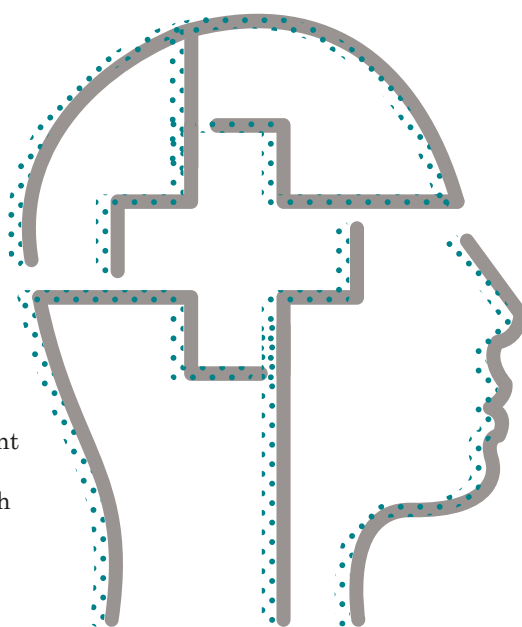
The phrase 'critical friend' is a well-worn one, but it very much applies to governors and trustees. Their relationships with heads involve walking a line that's always been narrow, but which became even more so over the last two years. To see more than 4,000 of them surveyed, and over 80% expressing concerns regarding the mental health of the school staff they work with, is something the DfE must pay attention to.

The improvement and development of schools and the staff who work in them is constant, but persisting with that when teaching is being done remotely, and with no exams at the end, has proven incredibly difficult. The argument could be made that

it's not necessarily the number one priority, when the expectations placed on staff to change their ways of working and embrace new technologies has been so unrelenting.

For some, the switch we've seen to more technology-assisted teaching has been quite straightforward. For others, it's been a seismic change that's left an impact that needs to be taken seriously by leaders at all levels. Technology can often lessen teachers' workload, but not always.

Attaining a good work-life balance is tricky, since what might be considered by some as 'balanced' won't be for others. Expecting governors and trustees to have a clear understanding of how to help their headteachers and CEOs manage their workload thus seems a little optimistic. And that's before you factor in the various anxieties staff will have had in managing their lives outside of school, in areas as fundamental as the health of their own families.



## Altering expectations

The flexibility that's proved so vital during our response to the pandemic is still required as we come out of it. I've previously written about delegation, and how the extent to which tasks are truly delegated has a major impact on workload and efficiency.

The closer we can get to staff autonomy on tasks the better, because requiring people to check in constantly, rather than simply letting them get on with things, takes time – the one resource we never have enough of. Bottlenecks can develop quickly, generating stress and lessening efficiency.

I'm very fortunate in that Passmores' governors and trustees continue to follow a flexible approach. They've moved away from requesting long, multi-page reports, for instance, and our governing bodies and trust board employ excellent formal clerking, so that reports can be given verbally if governors feel this will still allow them to carry out appropriate scrutiny.

The COVID infection rates may be gradually declining, but it would be foolish for us to rush back to how things were done previously. All leaders should bear in mind that the impact of the pandemic will be felt for years to come. We may crave face-to-face meetings, but if it's best for people at the end of a long day to hold them online, we should do just that.

Ultimately, there are two simple questions we should be asking, and we'd do well to listen to the answers: *'What do we ask you to do that takes a significant amount of time for little or no significant impact?'* and *'How can we do it differently, but just as well?'*



Vic Goddard is co-principal at Passmores Academy – as seen on Channel 4's *Educating Essex* – and author of *The Best Job in the World* (Independent Thinking Press, £14.99)



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# “Schools must look to the future”

The pandemic has had a dramatic on teacher recruitment, and will continue to shape schools’ talent pipeline for years to come, writes Dame Alison Peacock



**What’s become known as the ‘Great Resignation’ has been steadily gathering pace in the UK, with record numbers of employees leaving their jobs, post-pandemic.**

What impact has this had on the teaching profession? What possible path will recruitment take this year, and what might be in store for secondary school leaders across the country?

## A buyers’ market

Despite many sectors reporting employee departures, school leaders can take some encouragement from the fact that teachers seem less affected. A report for The Gatsby Foundation produced in October 2021 (see [bit.ly/ts113-ap1](https://bit.ly/ts113-ap1)) highlighted that there had been fewer teacher job moves throughout the pandemic, meaning greater stability for schools – something that can only be beneficial for students as we look to the future.

We may yet see more movement as we gradually move beyond the COVID-19 crisis, but for now, 53% of secondary teachers said there had been no resignations in their subject department at all, compared to 41% pre-pandemic.

## The cost of recruitment

Despite the lower numbers of resignations being reported, hiring new staff still consumes a large portion of schools’ resources, diverting precious time and money away from classrooms. *The Daily Telegraph* recently reported that the average amount spent by secondary schools per vacancy amounts to £1,000, while DfE figures show that the nationwide cost to schools of

recruitment advertising is estimated at around £75 million.

To remedy this, many schools are abandoning costly recruitment advertising and agencies in favour of free alternatives. The DfE’s own Teaching Vacancies service costs nothing, while still generating visibility – since January 2022, jobs listed on the service have been viewed over 1.6 million times.

## Flexible working

We’ve also seen a growing number of schools offer more flexible roles, with the pandemic helping to accelerate the trend. With numerous teachers having recently adopted different working patterns and experienced new forms of hybrid working, expect the appetite for flexible roles to increase even more in the coming years.

Increased opportunities for flexible and part-time working in schools will play an essential role in ensuring that teaching remains a viable and appealing career. When implemented appropriately, flexible working can help to ensure that teaching positions suit different employees at different stages of their

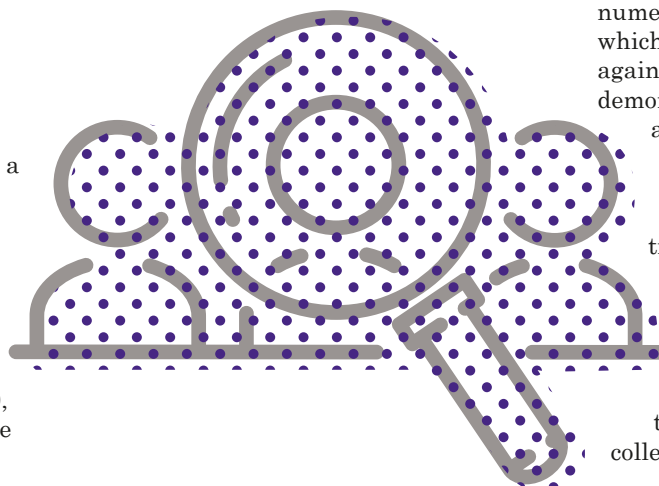
lives – from those with caring responsibilities, to existing teachers who are keen to pursue professional development or other forms of work in their chosen field of study.

Flexible roles can additionally play a part in improving staff engagement and satisfaction levels, which can in turn improve retention rates and reduce recruitment costs. It’s notable that nearly one in five of the roles advertised on Teaching Vacancies thus far have been flexible.

## Demand for support roles

The Gatsby Foundation has further found that recruitment adverts for secondary school technicians in science, technology, art and other subjects have exceeded pre-pandemic levels. It’s been anticipated that there may be a shortage of applicants for such jobs over the next few years as schools increasingly compete with openings in other sectors, so it’s worth considering your current offer to technicians when it comes to pay, opportunities for promotion and benefits, to ensure you attract the best candidates.

The pandemic has presented numerous challenges for schools, which have been met time and time again. Our profession has demonstrated remarkable resilience and professionalism during this difficult time, but schools must now to look to the future and recognise that some of the transformations enacted in response to COVID-19 are here to stay. By embracing them, schools will be able to continue successfully recruiting staff in a way that benefits their students, colleagues, and wider community.



Dame Alison Peacock is a former secondary teacher and primary headteacher, and is currently CEO of the Chartered College of Teaching; for more details, visit [chartered.college](https://chartered.college) or follow @CharteredColl

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The traditional classroom environment requires teachers to stand at the front and impart knowledge. With this kind of one-size-fits-all approach, learners are typically passive in the early stages of a lesson, reducing opportunities for student-teacher interactions – and the larger the class, the less some students may feel they can get involved.

### What are students now doing for homework?

Homework tasks are usually given to students to help them reflect on what they have learned. The flipped-classroom approach

turns this on its head, instead using homework to prepare students for the next lesson. Computer science students can watch a video from Craig ‘n’ Dave ([youtube.com/craigndave](https://www.youtube.com/craigndave)) and, using the Cornell system of note-taking, bring useful notes to lessons and establish a baseline knowledge of the next topic.

### What are students now doing in lessons?

Preparation allows students to hit the ground running and actively contribute from the



**ABOUT CRAIG:**  
Craig Sargent is the co-founder, with Dave Hillyard, of Craig ‘n’ Dave, having previously been a teacher of computer science for 14 years



**Contact:**  
03330 164059  
[admin@craigndave.co.uk](mailto:admin@craigndave.co.uk)  
[craigndave.org](https://craigndave.org)  
[youtube.com/craigndave](https://youtube.com/craigndave)

start of the lesson. Questions like, ‘What are we learning today?’ are replaced with, ‘I understood that, but can you help me with this?’ Craig ‘n’ Dave resources facilitate self-starting lessons with students engaging immediately. Homework also becomes more purposeful for students, because their notes provide them with immediate support.

### So, is this lazy teaching?

No! It’s a common misconception that a teacher using the flipped-classroom approach has nothing to do. On the contrary, teachers still play a vital role. They can now focus their attention where it’s most needed, correct misconceptions, deepen knowledge and undertake formative assessment. Students who are able to progress on their own can do so, while students who need more support will benefit from the teacher’s increased availability.

### What are the benefits?

With teachers now having to juggle extensive specifications and limited curriculum time, the flipped-classroom approach allows them to reclaim their time. Students have an increased confidence in what they are learning, having prepared ahead of the lesson, and can benefit from increased teacher interaction. Students can also enjoy higher levels of independence, and take ownership of their own unique learning journey.

## Making a difference

- + A video for every bullet point of the specification, providing full and detailed coverage
- + Student workbooks with model answers that double as knowledge organisers
- + Comprehensive flipped-classroom resources with everything included and all your planning done!



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# THE TS GUIDE TO... GCSE EXAMS

As your Y11 students enter the final stretch of their time at secondary, we examine how schools can help with that all-important revision – and whether certain aspects of what they'll be tested on might need a rethink...

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**HOW MUCH TRUST DO TEACHERS AND THE WIDER POPULATION HAVE IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXISTING EXAMS SYSTEM?**

**45%**

of England's population believe that GCSE standards are maintained year-on-year

**35%**

of England's population agree that GCSE exams are a good preparation for employment

**55%**

of England's teachers agree that the marking of GCSEs is accurate

Source: 'Perceptions of AS and A levels, GCSEs, and Applied General qualifications in England – Wave 19' – report prepared by Ofqual/YouGov, following a representative survey of headteachers, teachers, students, parents, higher education institutions and members of the public

**3** TEACHWIRE ARTICLES FROM THE ARCHIVES

### HARNESS YOUR STUDENTS' DRIVING FORCE

If your students are struggling to maintain effective revision habits at home, try pointing them towards Natasha Devon's study tips...

[bit.ly/113special1](https://bit.ly/113special1)

### ARE YOU TEACHING A 5-YEAR GCSE?

Testing young people on knowledge they haven't yet been taught is both pointless and unethical, says JL Dutaut – but it's not hard to see why it happens...

[bit.ly/113special2](https://bit.ly/113special2)

### WHY CAN'T STUDENTS TYPE THEIR GCSES?

Today's students have grown up with keyboards and tablets, says Guy Snape – so could it be time to let them put their pens down during exams?

[bit.ly/113special3](https://bit.ly/113special3)



# Remote revision SUPPORT

**Nikki Cunningham-Smith** looks at how your school's pandemic-prompted distance learning provision could take your GCSE revision classes to the next level...

**T**he landscape of teaching has somewhat altered since the monumental shift that the pandemic threw at the profession. Back in March 2020, most settings were busy scrambling to navigate the brave new world of distance learning. Two years later, we now find ourselves in a place where most schools are capable of delivering hybrid learning provision that combines in-person lessons with education received at home.

That might make some of us fear for the future of the 'snow day' – will we ever again be able to down tools and join our charges in sledging down the nearest big hill, sharing in the joys of a bonus day of fun? – but it must be said that some incredible opportunities are now being presented to us when it comes to exam classes.

## Where we are

In the past, we'd rely heavily on arranging interventions and exam classes in the hope that those pupils needing them the most would actually attend. It was hard to chase those that didn't, and near impossible make them compulsory, since most would take place during extracurricular school hours.

Yet we're now in the position of being able provide comprehensive support at our pupils' and parents' convenience in a number of different ways.

**Accessibility** Most students own, or at least have access to one or more digital devices, with those that previously didn't now much more likely to, in the wake of the government's laptop funding schemes. More access means more incentive for schools to continue developing their hybrid learning provision so that it encompasses livestreamed and archived, on-demand revision classes.

**“Seeing concepts explained by staff, rather textbooks, can empower parents to provide their children with extra help”**

**Targeted support** We've seen further government funding support for the rollout of Microsoft 365 for Education and Google Classroom in trusts and specific settings. This has given schools more options when it comes to delivering, supporting and monitoring their learning, and enabled interventions to be more succinct and better tailored to pupils' individual needs.

**Better inclusion** Post-pandemic, there's been a notable increase in persistent absenteeism and a reduction in consistent attendance. What distance learning provides is a way of reassuring those who can't

engage in person feel that they aren't being left behind, that their academic outlook isn't hopeless and that they don't have to give up – because they can now access the same learning at the same rate as their peers.

Granted, this might not be a one-to-one substitute for being present in a classroom, but it certainly goes a considerable way towards helping them make meaningful gains in their

thinking that a particular subject or topic is simply beyond them.

The modern learning platforms now in place at most schools can also help teachers instantly communicate to parents those areas they feel would be helpful for students to work on, thus making schools' revision support more informative and responsive.

**Cost savings** While some students might still prefer working with tangible materials, largely gone are the days of printed revision guides. Online platforms allow guides, notes, directions and documents to be stored digitally, reducing the photocopying workload and producing learning environments where students' revision materials across all subjects can live together in harmony.

**Flexible learning** Whether it's because a student didn't get a concept, was absent or simply needs reminding of a key point, the ability to call up lessons going over certain areas that pupils can relearn takes away some of the pressures associated with exam season. Various studies have shown that teenagers function better with later starts, and while the structure of the typical school day has yet to reflect this, we can at least now offer students the flexibility of being able to access



learning when it works for them, rather than at prescribed times – something which may well result in better engagement with the content needing to be learnt.

### Where we're going

So with all that in mind, what can you do to take your GCSE support provision to the next level?

### Lights, camera, action

If you haven't already, start recording your lessons and revision sessions – and if you're delivering key skills, use a visualiser. Most visualisers come supplied with software that allows you to capture processes as you're performing them for later recall.

Create a folder on your desktop called 'Teaching Moments' and begin building up a bank of knowledge. You could even task students with explaining concepts using your visualiser and capture the resulting

footage, so that they can refer back to explanatory videos narrated by themselves and their peers.

**Digital resources** The available options when it comes to acquiring digital textbooks are expanding all the time, with websites such as [classoos.com](https://www.classoos.com) making it easy to access (for a fee) whichever books you might need.

Let's not forget the trusty scanner, or free mobile apps that let you take pictures of printed matter and convert them to PDFs – with annotations, if needed – though be mindful of copyright permissions when doing either at scale.

**Monitoring** Most online classroom platforms will give you the option to see who is accessing the work you've set and when. You can

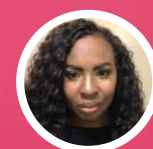
download reports detailing who has watched your lesson and who has yet to complete their tasks, thus enabling you to check whether students have properly understood a concept or might need further support. Those that aren't engaging can potentially work alongside your department head or head of year, if needed – either way, you'll know in real time who is along with you for the ride and who isn't, and be able to address any issues before it's too late.

### Free teaching resources

There are numerous online revision tools out there, covering a huge range of subjects – Gojimo, Quizlet, BBC Bitesize, The MindMeister, Brainscape and Xmind, to name but a few – so use them. Some may offer pre-made subject information, quizzes, tasks and exam-style questions, or else they may let you to create your own revision aids, such as mind maps and revision cards.

YouTube and social media platforms such as TikTok can also be a great source of material that students will find helpful, be it general exam tips or advice relating to certain subjects.

Distance learning has opened up a whole new world of learning accessibility, flexibility, creativity and support that's just begging to be used in the service of securing the best possible outcomes for students. I, for one, am excited about the environments I'll be able to create and develop year on year for their benefit.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nikki Cunningham-Smith is an assistant headteacher based in Gloucestershire



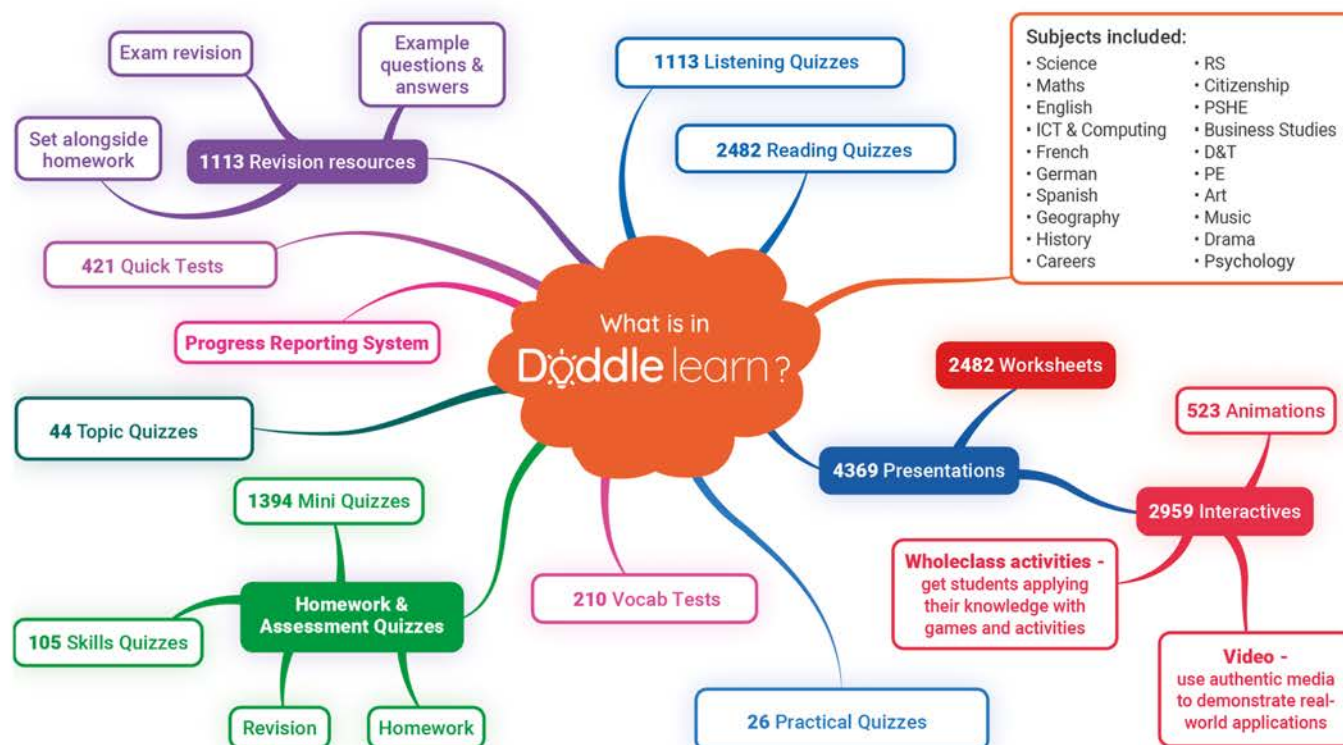
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English	£999	£669	Geography (A-Level)	£249	£167	Music	£249	£167
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# Plan for success

Effective revision undoubtedly leads to better exam results – but what should it look like? Claire Gadsby has some suggestions...

**D**id you know that 88% of students who revise effectively exceed their target grade? Interestingly, most young people don't know this, failing to realise how exactly how much of a game-changer revision really is.

Sitting behind this apparently simple statement, though, lies the key question: *what is effective revision?* In my work with thousands of pupils around the world, I have not met many who are initially overjoyed at the thought of revision. More often, it's perceived as an onerous chore to be endured in solitude before facing the trial of the exams themselves.

It doesn't have to be this way, however – and I'm passionate about taking the pain out of the process. Revision can, and should be fun. Yes, you read that right. The following strategies may be helpful for you in motivating and supporting your students on their revision journey.

## 1 Timer challenge

Reassure your students that not everything they've learnt needs revising. Lots is actually still alive and well in their working memory. Put a timer on the clock and challenge them to see how much they can recall about a particular topic off the top of their head in just five minutes. The good news is that this is 'banked'; what pupils need to do now is to focus their revision on those areas that they did not write down. It is only at this point



that they need to start scanning through notes to identify things they had missed.

## 2 Bursts and breaks

It's common for young people to feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of revision ahead of them. Be confident when you reassure them that 'little and often' really is the best way to tackle it. Indeed, research suggests that a short revision burst of 25 minutes followed by a five-minute break is ideal. Make the most of any 'dead time' slots in the school day to include these short revision bursts.

## DOWNLOAD

A 'Getting Organised Checklist' for your students at [bit.ly/ts113-cg1](https://bit.ly/ts113-cg1)



## 3 Better together

Show students the power of collaborative revision. Working with at least one other person is energising and gets the job done quicker. Activities such as 'match the pairs' or categorising tasks have the added advantage of also promoting higher order thinking and discussion.

## 4 Remove the scaffolds

It's not effective to simply keep reading the same words during revision. Instead, 'generation' is one of the key strategies proven to support long-term learning.

Tell pupils not to write out whole words in their revision notes. Instead, they should write just the first letter of key words and then leave a blank space. When they look back at their notes, their brain will be challenged to work harder to recall the rest of the missing word which, in turn, makes it more likely to be retained for longer.

## 5 Playful but powerful

We know that low-stakes quizzing is ideal, and my 'Lucky Dip' approach can be helpful here. Keep snippets of revision information, such as key terms and concepts, 'in play' by placing them in a gift bag or similar. Every so often, mix these up and pull one out at random to check for understanding. Quick, out of context checks like this are a type of interleaving, which is proven to strengthen recall.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Claire Gadsby is an educational trainer, author and founder of Radical Revision – a comprehensive online revision programme offering sustained support and structure to students in the lead-up to their exams. Find out more at [radicalrevision.co.uk](https://radicalrevision.co.uk)



# “ILLUMINATE THE POSSIBILITIES”

The journey towards developing empathy as an adult begins at school, writes **Djamila Boothman** – so why is the GCSE English curriculum still so narrow?

**W**hat techniques do you use to create tension in your creative writing? I ask my Y11 students in an English language revision lesson.

Capturing the few responses on the board, I explain that to develop our own creative writing skills, we must examine others' writing and identify how they achieve a desired effect. I hand out copies of an extract from Malorie Blackman's *Boys Don't Cry* and read it to them.

As I read aloud, their engagement and interest are evident. The main character, Dante, is a similar age to them. The passage's interaction between two teenage characters resonates. The topic is of interest and relatable. Maybe even more significant is that the author blurb and accompanying image give no doubt that this is a Black British female writer with an OBE.

For many in this classroom, this is a first. As a Black woman, I feel proud to be able to provide students with this experience. But then I ask myself whether the fact that it's possible for a child to finish school having never read a book written by a person of colour could really be an oversight in the multicultural society in which we live.

According to the Lit in Colour initiative launched by Penguin Books UK and The Runnymede Trust, 34.4% of students are Black, Asian

or minority ethnic – and yet just 0.7% of students study a text by a writer of colour at GCSE, while a scant 0.1% study books by a woman of colour at GCSE.

Has systemic racism tiptoed into our classrooms, restricting the quality of the English curriculum and normalising the marginalisation and under-representation of certain groups?

## A lived commitment

When schools make claims about inclusion and diversity, one would hope to see that their shared values statements are lived, and not simply laminated.

Most UK schools adopt a set of values that promise to champion diversity, inclusion and representation to develop the cultural competence of the school community. It follows that any school truly committed to such aims would ensure that they are extended to the curriculum. Surely there is no greater way of exploring and honouring the lived experiences of the school community than by using the English literature curriculum to empower and educate?

Moreover, all schools seek to increase engagement, particularly among disproportionately excluded

students. Studying literature should promote a love of reading, but how many children can truly love literature when they're not visible in it? Similarly, how many children can be encouraged to invest the same level of commitment and dedication into English as they do into PE and music without any role models to illuminate possibilities for their futures?

If you cannot be what you cannot see, then we need to look at the messages we're sending to our children about their future options. Examining the texts we read with them is a good place to start.

## Disproportionately excluded

In the multicultural Britain of 2022, there can be little justification for the texts studied in schools to be so predominantly written by White males. These are not the only stories that matter, or the only poems that need to be heard.

The same groups disproportionately excluded from school more generally are often also those disproportionately excluded from the English literature curriculum. That is, excluded from opportunities to feel, be seen and be heard.

This also causes their peers to miss out on valuable learning opportunities. How can we expect society to become more empathic, or address systemic discrimination in the adult world if such discrimination hasn't first been thwarted in school? What are the long-term emotional effects of this on children – both those whose experiences aren't currently reflected, and those subliminally taught that 'their' stories and perspectives are the only ones that matter?

## Introducing new texts

In the wake of Teach First's Missing Pages report (see [bit.ly/ts113-eld1](https://bit.ly/ts113-eld1)) and others like it, exam boards have committed to meaningful change in support of diversity in English literature specifications. For example, we've recently seen a language paper containing an extract by writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

It's important to point out that the exam curriculum isn't 'the curriculum' in its entirety, yet many schools have curtailed their KS3 and KS4 selections for years, opting instead to teach to the exam. Danger lies in the perception that there's no value in texts not on exam board lists. Surely, there's as much value in Tracey Baptiste's *The Jumbies* for a Y8 student as there is in *The Tempest* if they go on to study *Macbeth* in Y11?

There's a contextual and literary value to learning about the supernatural from

**“How many children can truly love literature when they're not visible in it?”**



## WHERE TO START

The Collins *Through Our Eyes* anthology is a valuable GCSE resource, designed to bring a range of unseen texts to students and develop the skills they need to succeed in English language, whilst also fostering a love of diverse literature. Unseen texts can come from anywhere and should be carefully selected; this anthology is a great place to begin!

an engaging Caribbean story, which serves to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students in the classroom. The hope is that revised set texts will influence fresh choices in schools.

### Community consultation

When it comes to curriculum design, who makes the decisions in schools about which texts students will study? Often, it's the head of department or the English department collectively, but with the quality of the curriculum now so heavily scrutinised and diversity needing to be taken into account, I wonder whether we should consider a form of community consultation. If a school is going to deliver a unit on World poetry, for example, why not ask parents and students to recommend a poem before making the final selections?

As practitioners, we're absolutely clear on the value reading adds to a person's

life, both intellectually and emotionally. Consequently, we have to ask ourselves whether we're doing all we can to ensure that every young person finds that author, poet or genre they can genuinely connect with.

We must never forget that access to literature is a luxury many young people don't have. School leaders must accept our unique role as a potential vehicle for change and social mobility, because we can help the most disadvantaged students access a wide range of literature.

When a child hasn't been read to by their parent or carer, an English teacher reading to them may be transformational. Additionally, if a teacher reads with a child who speaks English as a second language, over time that child will develop the capacity to take books of their choice from the school library and read them at home to parents, younger siblings and perhaps even other families.

## DIVERSIFY THAT CURRICULUM

- Draw attention to learning links across the curriculum, perhaps via the school newsletter and/or student-led videos during tutor time – *'This week in English we read Malorie Blackman's Boys Don't Cry, learnt about contraception in PSHE and performed improvisations about teen pregnancy in drama.'*
- Link literature choices to the whole school calendar; champion and celebrate different events and awareness days throughout the year, such as Pride month or South Asian Heritage month.
- Consider the needs of students with English as an additional language; facilitate opportunities for them to learn and engage more effectively through interpreters, translators and community members.
- Invite colleagues to help run an assembly and/or offer input into your text selections; ask for their opinions about what you have planned, and whether it's going to be sufficiently accurate, sensitive, appropriate, celebratory and positive.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Djamilia Boothman is an assistant headteacher, English teacher, Teach First Ambassador, documentary-maker and contributor to the Collins anthologies *Who We Are* (for KS3) and *Through Our Eyes* (for KS4); follow her @missboothman



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# 5 REASONS TO TRY... Exam support residentialials

Why a stay at Conway Centres could be just the thing for helping your students focus and ready themselves for exam season...



## 30 SECOND BRIEFING

A GCSE or A Level exam support residential provides a great opportunity to prepare pupils for the intensity of the upcoming exam period. Conway Centres offer GCSE and A Level arts exam support courses in beautiful natural surroundings, enabling young people to engage, focus, and reset ahead of their exams.

### 1 RAPID LEARNING

Young people who attend an exam support course at Conway Centres receive an extra half term of learning in just one weekend! From practising their techniques, to building portfolios of coursework – young people will develop their skills ready for their exams, thus boosting their confidence and grades.

### 2 RELIEF FROM DISTRACTIONS

The beautiful and natural surroundings of Conway Centres: Anglesey provides the perfect space to get away from all the usual pressures and distractions of school or home, whether it be social media, gaming, television or anything else. Instead, students get to benefit from this change of environment in our on-site classrooms, in sessions led by nationally-recognised subject specialists, helping them to maintain their focus ahead of their exams.

### 3 CATCH UP IN THE LEAD UP

With the impact of school closures looming large these past couple of years, many students may feel particularly overwhelmed about their upcoming exams. The exam support weekends can help alleviate such pressures via the academic progress they're able to make over the course of an intensive weekend,



further boosting their confidence.

### 4 RAISE ATTAINMENT

The exam support courses are designed to support students in boosting their grades and raising attainment. Whether students are attending a GCSE drama course to develop their practical, creative and performance skills, or crafting artefacts and other pieces of creative

#### Contact:

01248 714 501

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[conwaycentres@edsential.co.uk](mailto:conwaycentres@edsential.co.uk)

work to support their progress in GCSE art, schools love that a revision residential at Conway Centres boosts their students' subject immersion, in a way that's reflected in their grades.

### 5 INCREASE THE CONNECTIONS

With a variety of different schools attending each weekend, students are encouraged to network and create new connections with individuals who have the same interests. This will allow them to share ideas and thoughts on how to support each other, whilst networking and building relationships that can open up a world of opportunities.

## WHAT SCHOOLS SAY

*"The art GCSE weekend was brilliant. Students thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and weekend. We were very impressed with the workshops and staff at the centre."* – Teacher of art and photography, Rainford

*"Friendly staff – the GCSE art workshops were excellent!"* – Neston High School

*"Pupils learnt more in a weekend than they would achieve in a school term in real terms improvement. The trip led our results to increase by 13%."* – Walkden High School

*"We had the best weekend. It is simply the best CPD my colleagues and I have all year. The pupils have obviously come on leaps and bounds."* – St Gregory's High School





# Off the Shelves

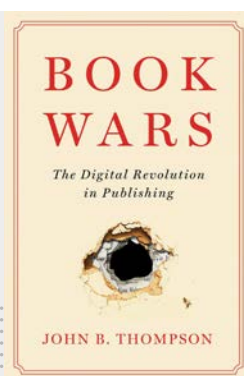
Brilliant titles for you and your students to explore



## **A Head Full of Everything:** **Inspiration for Teenagers With** **the World on Their Mind** (Gavin Oattes, Wiley, £12.99)

Being a teenager isn't easy. Not quite an adult, but no longer a child, and craving both independence and security, teens have rather a lot to contend with. This book amounts to an extended pep talk that seeks to boost readers' self-esteem while providing practical advice. Oattes discusses his own lack of self-confidence and feelings of 'imposter syndrome', despite achieving success as a comedian and in-demand speaker – a reasonably sensible approach, though he does inadvertently come across as somewhat patronising on occasion. The main cause of this are his seeming attempts to be 'down with the kids' via the deployment of various 'sweary' (his term) words. As such, it's not always a pleasant read, but may well be a useful guide for especially under-confident students.

Reviewed by Terry Freedman



## **Book Wars: The Digital** **Revolution in Publishing** (John B. Thompson, Polity, £30)

Why has the widely-predicted death of the printed book at the hand of the e-book yet to materialise? Because, according to Thompson, the 'digital revolution' was never just about books, but many social factors – from personal desires to institutional goals. *Book Wars* delves into the question of what exactly a book is in the modern age, taking in uses of data, market segmentation, technological advancement and trends in user experience, as well as the more recent developments of crowdfunding and subscription models. It could serve as an excellent source of ideas for cross-curricula projects involving computing, English and economics, though the author himself admits that instant obsolescence awaits any chronicler of the present. That said, it's a useful overview of the vast changes affecting the book world.

Reviewed by Terry Freedman



## **The Self-Taught Computer** **Scientist: The Beginner's Guide** **to Data Structures and** **Algorithms** (Cory Althoff, Polity, £22.99)

A book aimed at those wanting to teach themselves computer science, but one that still has some value for school students. Althoff sets out to present the basic concepts of computer science in an accessible way, and while the scope of topics covered might not completely align with the computing programme of study, enough of its material does, making it a worthy addition to any school library. Be warned, however – the genial tone and approachable prose at the start becomes challenging quite quickly. Taking Python as his program of choice, Althoff leads us through a series of chapters on searching, sorting, data structure, and more, each ending with a challenge or two, before concluding with some advice on how to secure a job in programming.

Reviewed by Terry Freedman



## ON THE RADAR

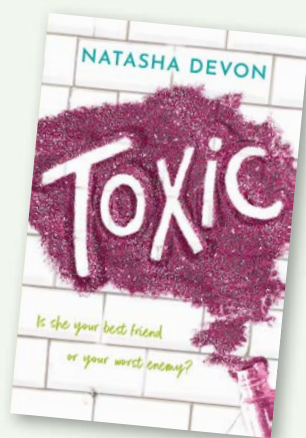
A deep dive into the emotional intensity of a teenager's mind when their 'best friend' turns on them

**Toxic**

(Natasha Devon, UCLan Publishing, £TBC)

Due out in July 2022, this YA novel by the campaigner and writer (and, full disclosure, past TS contributor) Natasha Devon grapples with several hot button topics that many teen readers will readily recognise. Our narrator is Llewella – a conscientious sixth former at an all girls school who's spurned popularity among her peers in favour of activism and every extracurricular activity going. When a startlingly glamorous and worldly new girl called Aretha joins her year, Llewella resolves to get to know her, and so begins what appears at first to be a beautiful friendship – but then things begin to take a turn for the worse...

Devon is a regular visitor to schools, where she gives talks and conducts research on issues relating to mental health. *Toxic* sees her adeptly channel these experiences into an unflinching portrayal of the turmoil that abusive relationships can cause, while simultaneously addressing complex matters of race, identity, sexuality and class. It's a high wire act at times, but one that results memorable, fully rounded characters and above all, sticks the landing.



## Meet the author

## KATE ROBINSON

**How did you come to embark on this project?**

Dad was commissioned some time ago to produce a pocket-sized 'manifesto' distilling his core arguments and beliefs that would run to around 10,000 words. He spent a lot of time reflecting on what it should stand for, and I think he became quite daunted by the idea of actually doing it. We eventually started working on the project together in June 2020 after he became ill; we then had 18 days between finding out that his prognosis had changed to him passing away. We spent that first week sitting together and discussing it non-stop. I'd set my phone to record and he'd talk about what he wanted to include.

**Was it difficult to maintain the book's focus and overall scope?**

When the original 10,000-word commission later changed to something a bit longer and more in-depth, I remember coming up with the idea of basing the chapters around 10 manifesto statements, so that you could pull those statements from the book and have that distilled manifesto, with each chapter diving more deeply into the ideas and thought processes that underpin them.

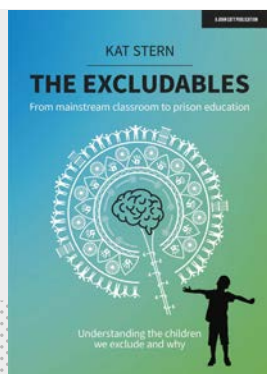
**When putting the book together, what audience did you have in mind?**

There's the audience he already has, for whom the book will be a kind of 'greatest hits', but a core aim was for it to also speak to people who hadn't previously come across his work, or maybe saw his 'Do Schools Kill Creativity?' TED Talk and wanted explore further.

**What do you see as the main challenges to your father's vision of centring creativity in education and wider society?**

I think the biggest issue is 'the system' as it is, which particularly here in the UK, seems almost hell-bent on going in the opposite direction from where we'd like it to go. But as we say in the book, education isn't about what happens in politicians' offices or in legislation, but what happens in school classrooms on a daily basis, and in the lives of the people within the system.

In terms of changing things, it's really down to a grassroots movement, as far as we're concerned. One of the book's manifesto statements is 'Rock and roll was not a government-led initiative'. Real change comes from the ground up, and the revolution is well underway.

**The Excludables**

(Kat Stern, John Catt, £15)

The topic of school exclusions frequently prompts fierce debate among teaching professionals. Can excluding students, with the severing of support and vital connections that accompanies it, ever be justified? Or is it more important that schools have recourse to a final sanction for the protection of other students and staff? In *The Excludables*, Stern – a former PE teacher turned behaviour consultant – delves into the data behind exclusion rates, examining why some groups are excluded more than others (boys, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, certain ethnicities) and the resulting impact on their lives, while offering a scholarly assessment of macro trends combined with sensitively drawn depictions of stories, personalities and situations that the statistics can serve to conceal. A bold, thought-provoking and enlightening attempt at grappling with a perennially difficult subject for all educators.

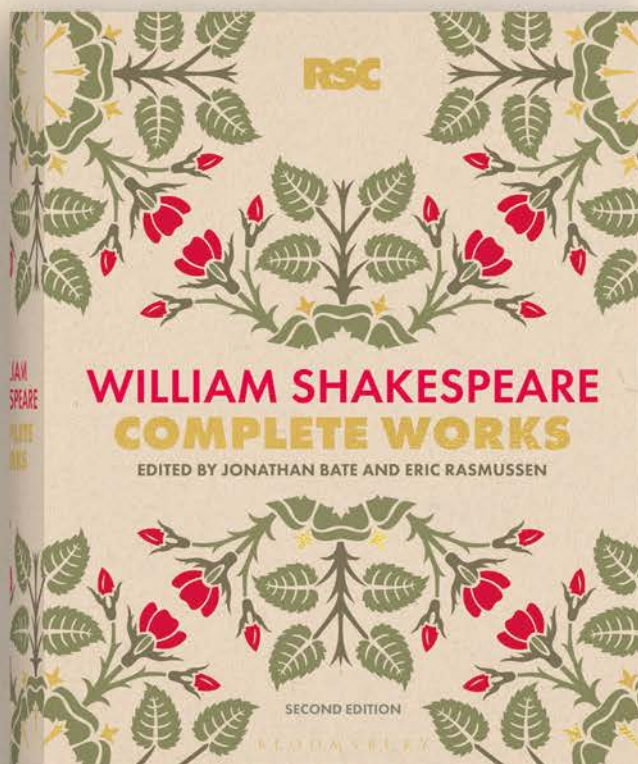
**Imagine If...**

(Sir Ken Robinson and Kate Robinson, Penguin, £9.99)

As an internationally renowned educationalist, Sir Ken Robinson was widely admired for his efforts at highlighting the importance of imagination and creativity within education systems, and how these might inform more compassionate and sustainable approaches to organising wider society. A prolific writer and speaker up until his untimely passing in 2020, he originally conceived *Imagine If...* as a concise overview of his core arguments and ideas. Completed by his daughter Kate, it now serves as a wide-ranging, yet tightly structured articulation of his vision, whizzing past observations on human evolution, neuroscience, ideologies, climate breakdown and more, which coalesce into a compelling account that's clear-eyed about where we're going wrong, and inspiring in its proposals for how we might correct the course we're on.



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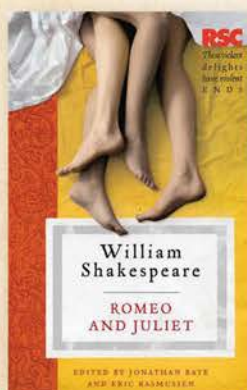
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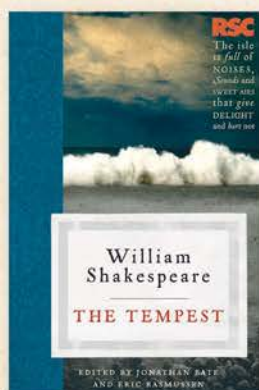
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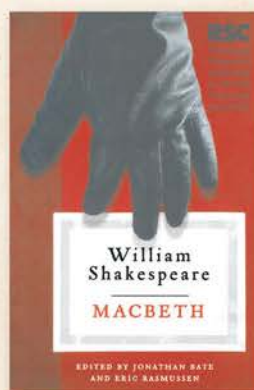
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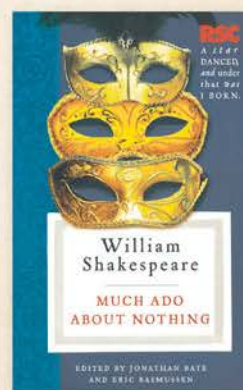
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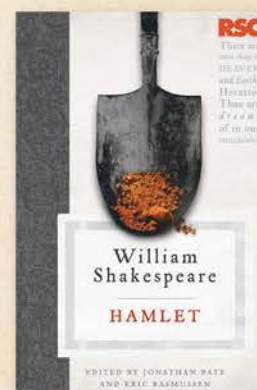
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## Key Quotations

# TYBALT CAPULET

Helen Mears picks out lines that could help students explain the significance of this minor, yet crucial, character...

*"What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word, As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee."*

(Act 1, Scene 1, lines 56-7)

Tybalt arrives into the play with a bang, his words to Benvolio cementing his status as the bringer of hate. In Baz Luhrmann's film of *Romeo and Juliet* he is hailed by a glimpse of a sign reading 'Add More Fuel to your Fire'. It is a neat summary of his role in the play – to add fuel to the feud, and an excellent quote for any GCSE student's armoury.

*"Now by the stock and honour of my kin, To strike him dead I hold it not a sin."*

(Act 1, Scene 5, lines 55-6)

When Tybalt sees that Romeo has gatecrashed the Capulet Ball, his first instinct is to want him dead for the intrusion upon Capulet territory. Although he's stopped from striking, it's this intrusion that makes Tybalt challenge Romeo to a duel.

*"Tybalt: It fits when such a villain is a guest. I'll not endure him. Lord Capulet: He shall be endured."*

(Act 1, Scene 5, lines 72-3)

Tybalt informs his uncle that Romeo is at the party and that he wishes to take action against him, but is shot down by a Lord Capulet perhaps mindful of the warning issued to the families

earlier that day that further fighting will result in executions.

Capulet also twice refers to Tybalt as 'boy' during his responses – clearly demeaning nomenclature for the fiery Tybalt. Does this goad him further into seeking revenge? Has Romeo inadvertently pushed Tybalt's anger further?

*"I will withdraw, but this intrusion shall*

*Now seeming sweet convert to bitter gall."*

(Act 1, Scene 5, lines 88-9)

Out of earshot of his uncle, Tybalt here swears that he'll take revenge on Romeo later; a decision that will lead to his own death and that of

## Who is he?

Tybalt Capulet, Juliet's cousin, is the personification of hate in the first half of *Romeo and Juliet*, and the catalyst for the problems that blight our protagonists in the second half. Although not physically in the play for long, his influence is extensive and he's an omnipresent reminder of the feud between the two families

Mercutio, as well as the separation of the lovers that will eventually lead to their double suicide.

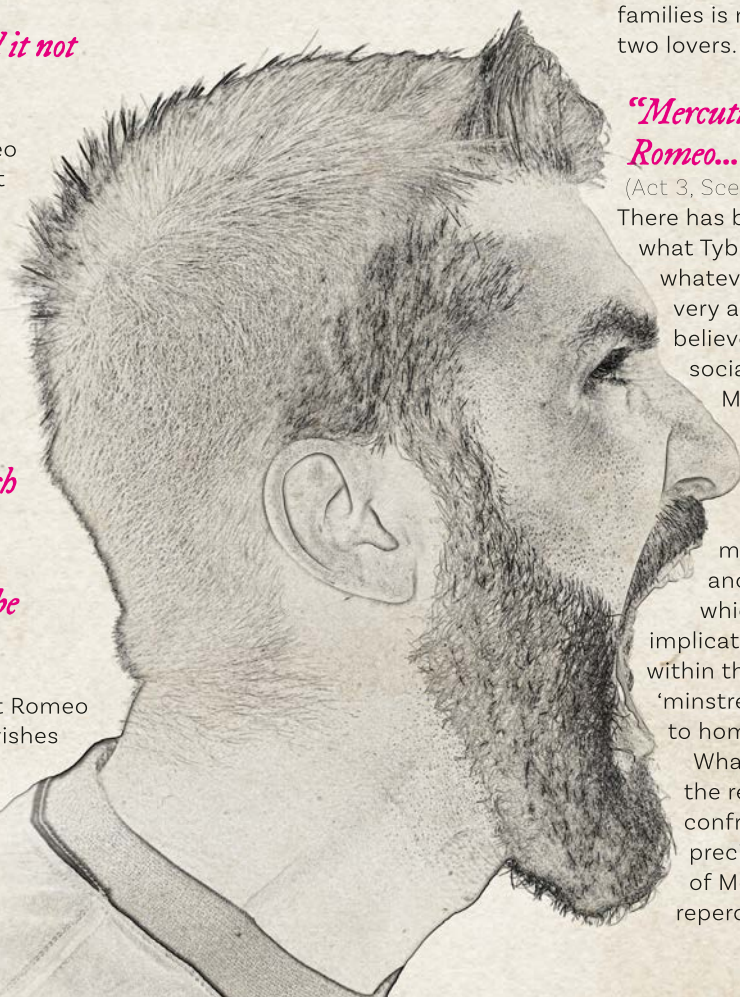
The lines directly precede the famous shared sonnet of Romeo and Juliet's first meeting, which is a bitter reminder that the hate of their families is never far away from the two lovers.

*"Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo..."*

(Act 3, Scene 1, line 38)

There has been much debate over what Tybalt means by this line, but whatever it is, it makes Mercutio very angry. Some commentators believe that it's a jibe about social status, and that Mercutio's reply – "What, dost thou make us minstrels of us?" – is anger at Tybalt referring to them as lowly paid musicians. But there's another school of thought which suggests that there's an implication of homosexuality within the accusation, and that 'minstrels' is a specific reference to homosexuals.

Whatever he might mean by it, the remark stokes the mood of confrontation yet further, precipitating the fateful killing of Mercutio and its repercussions.



OUR EXPERT: Helen Mears is an English teacher who sits on the education committee of the British Shakespeare Association



# MUST FEEDBACK ALWAYS BE CONSTRUCTIVE?

**Colin Foster** takes issue with the belief that if you can't feed back anything constructive, you shouldn't feed back anything at all...

**D**o you like receiving feedback from someone who's been observing your lesson?

The answer might depend on who is doing the observing and what their particular style of feedback is like. Teachers will often say, *'I don't mind feedback – so long as it's*

*constructive'*, but I'm not convinced it's such a good approach to take if we're genuinely serious about improving our practice.

There may be times when someone is able to only identify problems, rather than present us with all the insights we'll need to find our way to a realistic solution, and that's *fine*. Identifying issues for further consideration can be a necessary and extremely valuable part of

the feedback process. Pinpointing a problem can be an important step along the way, and shouldn't necessarily be seen as a 'destructive' act. The extent to which it is will largely depend on how the problem is perceived, and subsequently responded to.

## **'Praise sandwich'**

Every teacher understands how important criticism is if we're to develop as professionals. We shouldn't aspire to be like Noël Coward, who famously said, "I can take any amount of criticism as long as it is unqualified praise."

We want and need to hear hard truths about what we're doing, and how our actions are perceived by other people, even if we end up disagreeing with them – but demands for

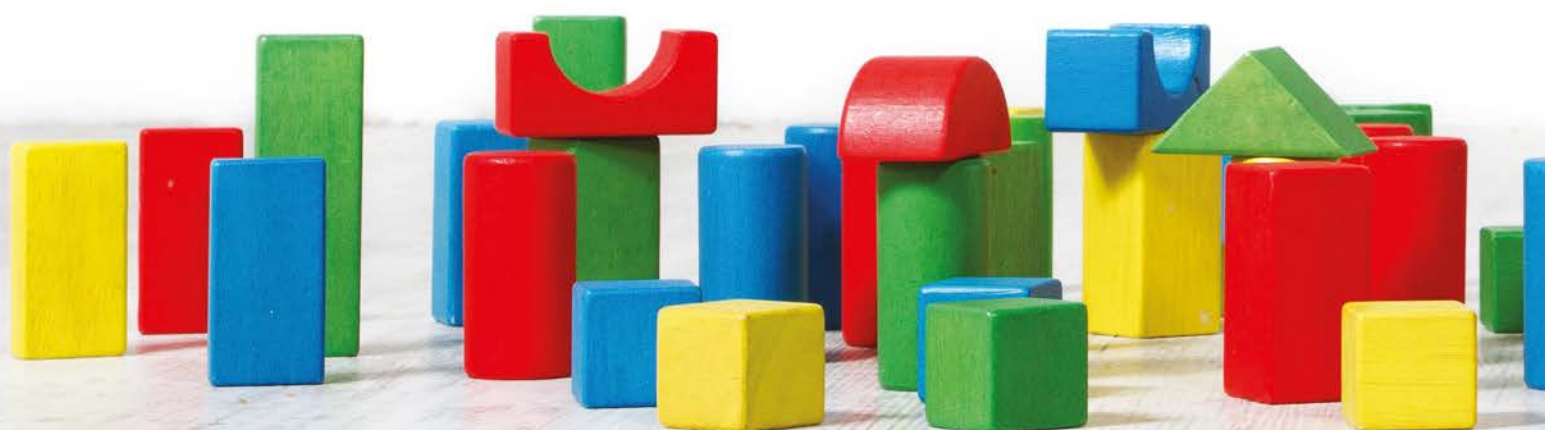
'constructive feedback' unintentionally work against this.

When we state that we'll only accept 'constructive feedback', what we're effectively saying is that we'll only listen to criticism of what we're doing if it comes as part of a 'praise sandwich' or includes positive suggestions of things we might do differently. Yet positive and constructive suggestions of this sort can be very difficult for many observers to provide, especially if they don't possess specialist expertise in our subject area (something I discuss further in a piece for the ATM that can be seen at [bit.ly/ts113-fb1](http://bit.ly/ts113-fb1)).

For example, a non-expert observer might readily notice that a certain group of students in a class

seem to be disengaged from a particular task, but they might not have much idea as to why that might be, or what the teacher might have done differently to engage them better.

Insisting on 'constructive' criticism only means that observers in that position can't share such observations unless they also happen to have a 'solution' – which they might not. This can in turn drive observers towards feeling they have to come up with some kind of plausible-sounding solution – however unhelpful or irrelevant it might actually be – just so they can claim that they're being '*constructive*', rather than just '*negative*'. This simply ends up being counterproductive, and ultimately helps no one.





### Part of the process

A manager might think that it's clever to tell their staff, *'Don't bring me problems, bring me solutions!'* but really, this only serves to keep people quiet and helps managers turn a deaf ear to what's actually going on. A manager with that kind of mindset doesn't want to be told about any problems unless there are easy, ready-to-action solutions, but this is a recipe for disaster. All it does is ensure that problems get ignored and buried, until they grow into something much worse.

Similarly, in the classroom, if something is going wrong during a lesson, you'll want to know about the specifics as soon as possible, from whoever might be in the position to tell you.

If, for instance, you're unwittingly responding differently to contributions from boys and girls, and it's never even occurred to you that this might be what you're doing, you'll want to have it pointed out – even if what you should do to change that is going to involve complications.

As a teaching professional, you should *really* want to hear these sorts of things, even if they're being communicated to you by a colleague who

## “We want and need to hear hard truths about what we're doing”

doesn't have much expertise in your particular area, or any suggestions that seem outwardly positive or useful.

This applies just as much to those colleagues who may perhaps be worse in the relevant area of their own teaching, or who you simply don't respect all that much. Whatever the case, it's still better to be made aware of such issues than to carry on not knowing about them.

Nor is this just limited to your colleagues. Students can be perfectly capable of spotting potential problems in lessons, and we shouldn't reject their comments out of hand just because they may not have the experience needed for them to offer us practicable solutions that could be described as 'constructive'.

### Non-constructive feedback

Classroom teaching is tough, and teachers need all the help they can get, so let's be glad for comments, in whatever form they take. Some may ultimately turn out to be useless, ill-considered or ill-informed, and miss the point of what you're trying to do. If we're truly confident that there's

nothing to be gained by reflecting on them, we can brush those off and continue with what we're doing. By contrast, other comments may be highly pertinent and easy to implement – and these are like gold.

But the reality is often more complicated than either of those scenarios. Many observers won't be sufficiently skilled or insightful as to lead us all the way from identifying an

issue to presenting a viable solution, but may still have something of value to contribute. It may be that they can only take us as far as pointing vaguely to something we need to be attending to and putting a question mark over it.

This could be our cue to approach others, reflect by ourselves or seek out other sources of professional development, so that we can come up with a plan for doing something about it. But let's not be quick to dismiss such pointers simply because they're not 'the full package' and don't tick the 'constructive' box.

Whether observations turn out, in the end, to have been truly constructive for our practice depends largely on what we do with them next, and how we take things forward in the ongoing journey towards developing our practice.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Colin Foster (@colinfoster77) is a Reader in Mathematics Education at the Mathematics Education Centre at Loughborough University. He has written many books and articles for mathematics teachers; find out more at [foster77.co.uk](http://foster77.co.uk)





# Curriculum CONTRADICTIONS

If the government wants to provide a ‘broad, knowledge-based curriculum’, it should examine why its favoured EBacc is narrower in scope than what schools were teaching in 1904, says **Adrian Lyons...**

**O**fsted school inspections now follow a familiar format.

Whether it be a full Section 5 inspection, or a reduced Section 8 inspection of a ‘good’ school, its approach on day one is to focus on the ‘quality of education’ through the spectrum of subject deep dives.

For each subject selected, the relevant subject lead will be required to justify to the inspector their ‘curriculum intent’ – i.e. the point of studying their subject. Subject leaders must then explain the knowledge they have selected to be taught, and the order in which it will be taught. The purpose of this is to demonstrate sensible sequencing of learning.

## Knowledge base

Ofsted in its current incarnation is deeply committed to the notion that a curriculum must be knowledge-based. There’s a strongly held belief that pupils growing up without a rich knowledge base will be disadvantaged once they enter the employment market, and will have to negotiate barriers to social mobility in later life.

As Nick Gibb – former Schools Minister, DfE guru and shaper of Ofsted’s thinking over the last decade – explained in a 2021 speech to the Social Market Foundation, “We replaced the 2007 National Curriculum because it was based on a series of general aptitudes with insufficient subject-based content. In its place we introduced a

National Curriculum which gives pupils a grounding in the ‘best that has been thought and said’.”

However, earlier on in that same speech he stated that, “My belief, and my argument today, is that we will only deliver on the promises that all politicians make, of ensuring that every child receives a first-class education, if we ensure that all our children are taught in schools with an extensive knowledge-rich curriculum by well-trained and supported teachers ... in schools that encompass the arts, languages, music and the humanities as well as science and maths; [and] in schools that give every child the knowledge they are entitled to as part of their cultural inheritance.”

This speech effectively saw Gibb countering his own argument. After stating that the arts and music should form part of a first-class education, he went on to enthusiastically promote the benefits of studying the EBacc at KS4 – a development which has served to squeeze those subjects out of the curriculum, and effectively devalued them at KS3.

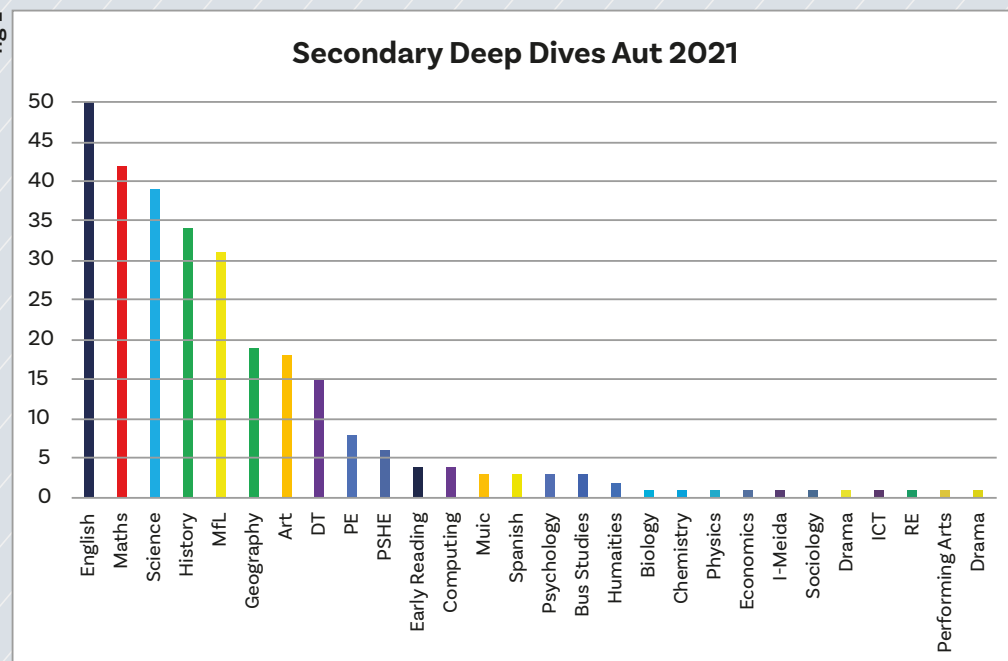
## What’s the rationale?

Ofsted predicates its curriculum discussions on the principle that choices must be made, and that a rationale must always be given for how those choices are ultimately arrived at. So what is Ofsted’s rationale for its latest curriculum choices?

Research carried out by former HMI and Ofsted senior leader Adrian Gray has sought to show which subjects Ofsted focussed on the most during the autumn of 2021, as illustrated in fig 1. Those curriculum choices were largely made by individual lead inspectors, with little to no centralised strategic thinking behind them.

Where there has been direction from the centre, it has largely resulted in a narrowing of the subjects that can be chosen for Ofsted enquiries into quality of education. So it was that in January 2022, Ofsted quietly dropped both PHSE and citizenship from the pool of subjects

fig 1





that could potentially be inspected under its quality of education judgement.

The rationale for this is difficult to pin down. The organisation's argument is that PHSE already plays an important part within an inspection's Personal Development judgement and isn't a National Curriculum subject. That may be true, but then neither is Religious Education, which *is* subject to deep dives (albeit rarely, as shown in the graphic). On the other hand, citizenship is a standalone National Curriculum subject that has been sorely neglected over the past decade.

I fear that the relative lack of RE deep dives in secondary schools is due to the strong probability that statutory requirements wouldn't be met, thus causing problems for the whole quality of education judgement.

I used to joke with other HMI that if you wanted to be sure of getting evidence for an Inadequate judgement in a secondary, you'd select RE, PHSE and citizenship for deep dives. All three have become overlooked, yet nonetheless vital subjects for preparing young people for life in modern Britain – particularly if there's a

suitably strong focus on the 'E' for 'economic' within PHSE.

### A narrow spectrum

Internally, the range of subject areas considered 'worthy' of Ofsted's attention has been steadily reduced, with the upshot that two years ago, the highly popular secondary school curriculum area of economics, business and enterprise was axed altogether.

It's not simply the case that an over-emphasis on knowledge to the exclusion of other skills has been controversial. The problem is more that the knowledge selected forms a very narrow spectrum.

In this ongoing, confected battle between 'knowledge' and 'skills', important aspects of personal development have lost out. In the Nick Gibb speech cited earlier, the most problematic words are arguably, 'We introduced a National Curriculum which gives pupils a grounding in the 'best that has been thought and said' – a sentiment that appears in the current Ofsted framework, despite being highly contestable.

fig 2

#### 1904 SCHOOLS CURRICULUM

English  
Maths  
Foreign language  
Science  
History  
Geography  
Drawing

#### MODERN ENGLISH EBACC CURRICULUM

2x English  
Maths  
Foreign language  
2x science  
History or geography

We presently have a National Curriculum that largely reflects the values and priorities of 1904 – the year in which the then Board of Education first issued its Regulations for Secondary Schools. If we compare the makeup of 1904 curriculum with the EBacc curriculum, the government's preferred choice for today's students, we can see that relatively little has changed, except for the EBacc becoming even narrower (see fig 2). Where is the room for new or different knowledge?

### Part, not whole

Ironically, Lord Kenneth Baker – architect of the 1988 National Curriculum – has said that the current EBacc is 'regressive', and 'severely limits learning' describing it as ignoring the skills needed for today's workforce, and failing poorer

students. Instead, he has called for a broadening out of the EBacc into a 'new Baccalaureate' with a wider scope, offering opportunities to teach computer science, creative and technical subjects.

I agree entirely with Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, that a child growing up in Grimsby should have the right to the same curriculum as a child growing up in Chelsea. I would, however, argue that powerful subject knowledge only forms part of a good quality education, and not – as Ofsted has been so keen to promote these last five years – the whole of it.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adrian Lyons is an education consultant, having previously spent 16 years as an Ofsted HMI; for more information, visit [adrianlyonsconsulting.com](http://adrianlyonsconsulting.com) or follow @AdrianLyonsFRSA





# Masterful MOTIVATION

It might sound counterproductive to tell your students that they're great before helping them to improve, but it can be a hugely effective aid to motivation, says **Hannah Day**

**A** member of our art department treats every student as if they're the next Picasso.

At first, I thought this was a mix of laughable and dangerous, but then I saw the results. Rather than resting on their 'excessively gifted' laurels, the students receiving this praise actually upped their game. It turned out that their newly imparted sense of self-belief changed how they approached their learning and resulted in improved outcomes.

So I did what all the best teachers do – I observed closely, and then stole this approach for myself. To my surprise, it worked. I wanted to know why, and if the approach might point to anything else we could do as teachers to motivate our students and help them to achieve.

## Feel like a genius

The approach of making students feel like a genius works best for those possessing little or no confidence, who are convinced they're bound to fail and will therefore benefit from a significant confidence boost.

I personally use it after working with a student one-to-one in order to help them overcome a specific hurdle. First, work through the problem with them. Then, when they see the result, congratulate them, regardless of how much of

the effort was yours.

It's important that this is a celebration of what they *have* achieved, rather than pointing out what they *can* achieve. You're highlighting and framing their moment of success, while embedding in them a belief that they made that success happen.

Lines such as '*Look what you've achieved!*' or '*You did that!*' work especially well. You might initially find yourself heavily supporting the work they're doing, but as time goes on, they'll do more and more for themselves. The belief in themselves they've built up from their previous achievements will give them the confidence to try and achieve more in the future, thus boosting their self-motivation.

## Shift the perspective

For many valid reasons, education can, at times, focus more on instruction-based teaching than on providing students with space for them to explore. This gives students the sense that their education is largely their teacher's responsibility, but however much the teacher is able to provide, the act of learning is still ultimately down to the student, so help them realise this.

Research by the Harvard psychologist Ellen Langer shows us how that can be done. She studied a group of hotel maids, 67% of whom said they didn't regularly exercise. Despite being engaged in physical work all day, this proportion saw

what they did only as 'work'.

Langer and her team divided the maids into two evenly sized groups, and had one of the groups talk them through a typical workday, explaining what type of activities they'd be doing. The researchers assessed how many calories these activities could help the maids burn, and pointed out that the combined activities described by the maids met the criteria of an 'active lifestyle'.

The other group received no such information.

To their amazement, one month later, the 'educated' maids displayed reduced blood pressure and had apparently lost weight, despite no changes to their daily routine. The suggestion seemed to be that just by *understanding* they were exercising, the exercising itself became more physically impactful.

We need to do the same with our students – describe what it is that we're doing, and then explain *why* it helps them to learn. Explaining why, for example, units are laid out in a particular order and how this is helpful. Why we teach certain aspects of the course in particular ways, and how different activities or tasks will lead to understanding. Doing this should, without making any other changes, increase students' engagement, understanding and motivation, and give way to better outcomes.

## Give them a placebo

The scene described above is a form of mental placebo. I thought I might encounter further examples of mental placebos being used in education, but what I didn't expect was to find someone else using almost the exact same approach.

A separate study carried out by Dr Ulrich Weger and Dr Stephen Loughnan was structured in an almost identical way to Langer's. After a group of students were set a test, half were told they had 'special skills' needed to complete the task while the others weren't. As with the maids, those who were told they'd do better duly did.

What Weger and Loughnan concluded was that the increase in confidence meant the students felt less of the anxiety or stress that can reduce our ability to perform well under





pressure. They effectively replaced worry with confidence, in a way that helped them to achieve their best.

### Shift expectations, set goals

Many of us will give our students important pep talks before they take exams, but what about when completing coursework, or even ahead of a typical lesson? This term, I've been teaching shape and colour psychology linked to logo design. After reading this research, I decided to apply my own psychological prepping,

reminding my students that they already possess a thorough knowledge of different brands, logos and symbolic meanings, that they've been steadily developing this awareness over the course of their lives, and that the lesson would therefore be a cinch.

If we can somehow harness students' perceptions of themselves and their abilities, then we teachers should think about how we target set. Practical to-do lists can often be extremely useful, but we perhaps first need to help students see the bigger picture. We're more likely to achieve big if we think big.

The practice of future visualisation, or mapping, is increasingly attracting attention. This is the act of imagining your future as you want it to be, and then using that insight to plan the steps necessary to make it happen. If a student therefore dreams of becoming a vet, games designer or hotel manager, what do they need to do to get there?

Of course not all future visualisation is job-related – at least, not at first. What if they dream of living abroad, for example? What jobs might help make that happen? From there, they can start to look at what qualifications or training they might need. What's important is that rather than plotting a course from where they *are*, you start from where they *want to be* and work backwards, linking targets to the wider vision.

I've practised this in my own life and found it to be transformative. From developing new skills to exercising better financial management, I've made many successful lifestyle changes by beginning with a future dream in mind. Yes, our goals are often never quite how we imagined them when we finally reach them, but the process of attaining them still moves us forward, giving us a level of bravery we might not otherwise have.

By following the steps outlined above, you can gift your students with increased confidence, a better understanding of how their education is designed to develop their knowledge and a clearer vision of the adult life they want to lead.

I've found that my own group of graphic design students have indeed become more confident, buoyant and happy to offer salient, well-informed answers. No doubt they'll soon be ready to take on the world...

## MOTIVATION TOOLBOX

### 1. Give students control

What parts of a lesson or project can students help to determine? Give them options, ask which they want to select and why, and then encourage that approach.

### 2. Catch them being good and reward them

You can't always give detailed feedback, but how about a raffle ticket? Each time you get a great answer, or see some good independent work, give them a ticket. At the end of each half term, hold a prize draw – the better a student has worked, the more raffle tickets they'll have.

### 3. Be your biggest student

Model a real desire to learn. If, during a project, you find out something new, tell them. Get excited about it yourself, and link it back to the group's current knowledge. Let them see your love of discovering new information, and that we're always learning alongside them.

### 4. Know both your students now and their future selves

If you can find out what your students love or dream of, you can utilise it in their learning. Point out how your subject will support them in achieving their aspirations, and encourage them to always think big.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hannah Day is head of visual arts, media and film at Herefordshire and Ludlow Sixth Form College



# Get advice on tackling harmful sexual behaviour in children and young people



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# SPOTTING THE SIGNS

**Carmel Glassbrook** highlights five visible indicators that harmful sexual behaviour may be affecting the children and young people in your care

In 2021, Ofsted published a review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges which found that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse of children was 'More prevalent than adults realise.' For some students, such incidents had become so commonplace that they 'consider them normal' and 'see no point in reporting them'.

In a research review authored by Professor Simon Hackett in 2014, harmful sexual behaviour is described as "Behaviour expressed by children and young people under the age of 18, which is developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or abusive towards another child, young person or adult."

Together, we must work to develop a culture where harmful behaviour isn't tolerated, and children feel safe to come forward and report. Below are five examples of how harmful sexual behaviours could be displayed by students, along with guidance on how you can manage or respond – though this is by no means an exhaustive list.

## 1. Sexual language or behaviour that is advanced for a child's age

This may be a sign that the young person is viewing sexual material or pornography online, presenting an opportunity for you to discuss with them the impact of this. Direct conversations of this type are not easy to have, so you may find that a broader



discussion regarding the harmful impact of adopting behaviours displayed in pornography may be helpful. Further advice on handling this topic can be found in an SWGfL guide accessible via [bit.ly/ts113-hsb1](https://bit.ly/ts113-hsb1).

## 2. Regular use of aggressive or sexualised language directed at others

To prevent the use of harmful language by students, discuss why the use of sexualised and sexist language can be damaging. If you believe that a student has been affected by such behaviours, try and have a sensitive conversation with them to better understand the situation; any behaviour presented as a 'joke' should be taken just as seriously as other comments.

## 3. Talking about sexual experiences with anxiety or uncertainty

This could be a sign that they have been affected by harmful sexual activity. It's important to broach the subject sensitively, asking what's troubling them and listening to what they have to say. This may mean they will be more likely to

approach you or a member of staff in future if they have any concerns.

Peer pressure can add to young people's confusion when deciding if they're ready to begin engaging in sexual activities, so it's important for them to understand the principles of consent and learn to trust their own instincts. Learning about sex and relationships in lessons affords opportunities to discuss what constitutes a healthy relationship – the main message being that no one should be pressured into anything, particularly any sexual activity they're uncomfortable with.

## 4. Disclosure of non-consensual sexual contact

If a student self-discloses a non-consensual sexual contact, you should always encourage them to discuss it further. An essential aspect of ensuring victims feel safe and comfortable talking to you is reassuring them that they'll not get into trouble for telling you, and that they've done the right thing in coming to you.

Students should feel

informed and empowered about what is appropriate and inappropriate touching. When broaching these topics, use language that can't be misunderstood.

## 5. You discover a child is sending and/or receiving illegal images or pornography

If a sexting incident is reported to you, you must establish if it is consensual or not. Explain that relationships should involve mutual respect from both sides, and make both parties feel safe. Some useful guidance issued by the government and the UK Council for Internet Safety can be found at [bit.ly/ts113-hsb2](https://bit.ly/ts113-hsb2).

If you believe students at your school are displaying any of the harmful or inappropriate sexual behaviours described above, you can access relevant resources and further support from the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service. Delivered in partnership with the Marie Collins Foundation, this service is funded by the Home Office in collaboration with the DfE. It's available from Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm, by calling 0344 225 0623 or emailing [hsbsupport@swgfl.org.uk](mailto:hsbsupport@swgfl.org.uk)



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carmel Glassbrook is a safety and security online specialist at SWGfL; for more information, visit [swgfl.org.uk](https://www.swgfl.org.uk) or follow @swgfl\_official



# Let's work TOGETHER

What if you could foster a form of interaction among your students – and indeed colleagues – that worked to mutually impart key knowledge, skills and other types of information? Well, it exists, and it goes by the name of Cooperative Learning...

**C**ollaborative or 'Cooperative Learning' is a term that refers to a number of activities which can stimulate thought and conversation about a given subject. The range and scope of said thoughts and conversations can (to a sufficient degree) be controlled, which means that Cooperative Learning can facilitate the full taxonomy spectrum, from simple memorisation to analysis, debating and creating.

Cooperative Learning pre-organises peer interaction into reusable patterns, which we have dubbed 'CLIP's. CLIP is an acronym for:

- Cooperative
- Learning
- Interaction
- Pattern

It is a pattern in the sense that, again and again, it sequences your learners' interaction with your materials/tasks/questions and with each other, regardless of what or whom these might be in a given activity in a given lesson. But it's not just any interaction pattern; it's specifically a *Cooperative Learning Interaction Pattern*.

## What it is (and isn't)

There are a number of definitions of what is required for a sequence of interactions to warrant the designation 'Cooperative Learning' as opposed to 'group work'. We have chosen the leanest delineation by American

educator Spencer Kagan, who first coined the mnemonic 'PIES':

- Positive interdependence
- Individual accountability
- Equal participation
- Simultaneous interaction

This sounds a lot, but it is not, because these four principles are always facilitated by the very pattern itself – no planning is required to achieve PIES.

Let's investigate how PIES is facilitated using a CLIP called Catch1Partner. In the most basic form of Catch1Partner, each learner has a subject-relevant question on a card which they discuss in changing pairs. Positive interdependence means that both children in each pair are needed to perform the CLIP, and therefore both stand to benefit from their peer's successful outcome.

They are not fighting for their teacher's attention, nor are they competing to come up with the right answer first, or even for their right to speak. On the contrary, the more one partner succeeds at their task, the more the other partner stands to benefit in the form of learning, and vice versa. This mutual reliance is embedded in all steps of the interaction.

As children approach a potential partner, they might be requested to use phrases modelled by the teacher (in bold) – for example, **'Excuse me, can I ask you a question, please?'** 'Yes, **of course** you

may' (smile, turn full body towards peer, establish eye contact, appropriate physical distance and voice volume – all modelled by the teacher).

They take it in turns to answer each other's questions/ solve each other's tasks and then swap cards and say, **'Thank you.'**

## Social element

Usually, this activity is used to remind children about something that has been taught previously (known in the current zeitgeist as 'activating prior knowledge' or 'revision'). However, all CLIPs can be used at any time and/or in any situation to facilitate many different objectives across a wide range of subjects.

The social element in these activities ties the process of learning to the stimulation of the brain's pleasure responses, which many children today find mainly in addictive games and social media. The second aspect that defines Cooperative Learning – individual accountability – is the demand that both partners answer, and can do so using their own ideas and from their own unique understanding.

Equal participation entails that both partners not only

answer, but have the same opportunity to speak from their own understanding and at their own length about the subject matter, irrespective of their different abilities. A key feature here is that lower-attaining children are just as important to the resolution of the CLIP steps as their higher-attaining peers.

Indeed, the inclusion automatically afforded by Cooperative Learning is one of its many unique selling points. Obviously, some will talk for longer than others, but time is limited to the interaction of asking and answering the specific question, so at some point invariably they will both have answered, then swap





materials and move on to the next partner.

Finally, simultaneous interaction demands that everyone is doing all this at the same time – every single learner. There is no exception to this rule, unless there are very specific SEND-related reasons, and even then, any concessions should be temporary. For example, permission for an anxious child to remain in a corner and let people come to him should be seen as a step towards gathering the courage to mingle.

### The bigger picture

CLIPs can be used wherever something is being taught, learned, produced, processed or shared. For example, Jakob is currently developing Cooperative Learning to unpick extremely complex or toxic topics that involve multiple stakeholders, such as systemic racism in schools or unaligned mutual expectations between university students, tutors and leaders.

Many of the schools we work with use rough-and-ready CLIPs in staff

meetings. If children can enjoy them, why shouldn't adults benefit? Indeed, Drew's school, Stalham Academy, has successfully used CLIPs to get parents on board at parents' evenings.

Notwithstanding their instant and high impact, once CLIPs have become routine (and only then), they are simple to deploy in classrooms, give teachers a strong sense of effortless control and give learners of all levels a sense of freedom and empowerment.

There is no need to buy new materials, because CLIPs use your existing resources in more powerful ways, across all Key Stages and in all subjects. We have seen Cooperative Learning merge with existing good practice and support other approaches, invigorating and strengthening initiatives as varied as SOLO taxonomy, Philosophy for Children and Power Maths.

Evidence about the benefits of Cooperative Learning has been found consistently for over 40 years in systematic reviews and meta-analyses of research studies, according to the Sutton Trust's Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit, and on average affords five months of additional progress per learner per year.

### Silver bullets

All this praise begs the question, why doesn't

every single primary and secondary school, college and university in the world just adopt Cooperative Learning? Why isn't every educational institution spitting out self-confident, competent masters of their own destinies, with top grades to boot?

Part of the answer lies in the unhappy conflation of Cooperative Learning with disorganised group work. For example, there seems to be a tacit acceptance among teachers that any collaborative activity decreases the quality of individual assessment, and requires you to run around keeping your charges on task.

Another is that age-old maxim that the devil is in the detail. Poorly executed Cooperative Learning is possibly worse than regular unstructured group work, because it undermines the concept and turns teachers and children away from using it.

Headteachers' fear of the Ofsted werewolf can lead to a too-desperate search for

the silver bullet that will solve everything. Make no mistake – Cooperative Learning *can* be a silver bullet, but what good is a bullet to someone who hasn't picked a target and doesn't know how to maintain and operate a firearm?

Due to its step-by-step, hands-on nature, Cooperative Learning is possibly the world's cheapest, most non-threatening and effective professional development and coaching tool for teachers and school leaders alike. But because it is precisely that – a tool – you need to know what you want to do with it, which entails investigating who you are and who you want to be as a teacher or leader.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jakob Werdelin is a Danish teacher trainer and consultant, as well as the founder and director of UK-based Werdelin Education; Drew Howard is director of primary curriculum and pedagogy at a MAT in Norfolk

This article is based on an edited extract from their book *The Beginner's Guide to Cooperative Learning: Make your learners your main teaching resource* (Crown House Publishing, £16.99)





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 TEACHER VOICE

# “Let their imaginations run wild”

**Matthew Gouldson** considers the role that competitions and other outside initiatives can have on getting students to write in more creative and imaginative ways

**H**ow do you start encouraging young people to write creatively in the classroom?

This can often be a challenge. After exploring various themes, ideas, and countless sentence starters, it can sometimes feel as though their work is being written for them, with any sense of originality tamped down. Before long, you're again posed with that eternal question, only this time voiced by a student – ‘*How do I start?*’ And so the cycle repeats itself.

If you think that's hard, try encouraging young people to write creatively in their own time. At The Mosslands School in the Wirral, we take pride in the strategies we've put in place to encourage our students to enjoy writing and reading – which, when you're dealing with teenagers, is no easy task...

## EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

Last year, I came across a writing competition that got our students and teaching staff excited. It helped that Pearson's ‘My Twist on a Tale’ contest offered an enticing prize – the chance for students to get their story and name published in print – but as is only right, the promise of gaining recognition and praise from school staff provided some motivation too.

The competition required entrants to demonstrate originality. Suggesting new ways of opening sentences, exploring of how to creatively fashion metaphors, looking at exceptional pieces of writing not already glued to the curriculum (including from students' own reading) – these all helped.

Granted, these kind of external opportunities don't run all year round, and not all will be relevant to your

students, but it's worth keeping your eyes peeled for notices in education magazines, new websites, teacher forum discussions and social media activity regarding initiatives and competitions that can aid engagement and creativity in the classroom.

## WRITING SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Competitions like ‘My Twist on a Tale’ and others are great for giving students opportunities to write something different to what they're used to, and find real joy in writing. The theme for this year's competition was ‘Our tomorrow’. The future is a vast topic, providing a multitude of story ideas, such as the evolution of the human race, climate change or time travel. This can be overwhelming, but it gave our students the chance to write about something important to them, and/or let their imaginations run wild, outside the confines of the curriculum.

One of our Y7 students, Larrie Marsh, was selected as the North West winner. He pushed his creativity to its limits

with a weird and wacky submission which, right up to the final line, seemed outrageously bizarre – but it was a piece of writing that granted readers the privilege of wandering the inner realms of a young person's mind.

There also are other avenues you can explore outside of formal competitions. Why not connect with your local newspaper and see if they'd be interested in taking an article from one of your students – perhaps on something happening in the local area, or a notable sporting event?

You can try exploring internal opportunities too. Are there any upcoming school events that will need content to be written, or any writing opportunities available within your school newspaper or newsletter?

## READING FOR PLEASURE

Understanding our students, identifying their interests and hobbies and exploring these further is what's helped us so far. As educators, we'd love to say that every child will eventually go on to enjoy the act of writing without that external impetus, but we all know that in reality, it's not that easy.

Kicking stigmas and taking names remains a tough battle for educators, in what are increasingly challenging settings. Creative writing assignments can easily seem like relics from the past, but there's a great deal of good that we should cherish in them and fight for on our pupils' behalf.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matthew Gouldson is an English teacher at The Mosslands School in the Wirral; for more information, visit [mosslands.co.uk](http://mosslands.co.uk) for follow @MosslandsSchool. You can read Larrie Marsh's winning entry, and find out more about this year's ‘My Twist on a Tale’ competition at [go.pearson.com/OurTomorrow](http://go.pearson.com/OurTomorrow)







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# “There must never be another Jane”

**Simon Antwis** explains why schools can and must do more to identify mental health difficulties in those students determined to conceal them

**J**ane – not her real name – was classic ‘head girl material’. She was popular, sporty and an A\* student. She exuded confidence, or so we thought.

At the time, I was head of a school that was trying out a new tool called STEER Tracking in an effort to better measure, track and ultimately improve our students’ mental health and self-regulation. The results for Jane’s year group had just come in, and my SLT and I sat down one rainy lunchtime to pore over the results.

After scanning the data, we were puzzled. The tool had flagged Jane as a student whose mental health we should keep a close eye on. A few of my colleagues sat back in their chairs, seeing this as the proof they’d been seeking that this whole exercise was a waste of time. As the biggest advocate for this new tool, I momentarily squirmed before quickly moving on to the other students it had identified.

## Trusting and questioning

A fortnight later, Jane walked off the school premises in the middle of the day – behaviour that was totally out of character. When we found her, it emerged that she’d been the sole carer of her brothers and sisters for months. The combined burden of schoolwork, childcare and household chores had finally taken its toll.

I vowed then that wherever I became a headteacher, there must never be another Jane. I promised myself

that I’d have a better handle on the pastoral needs of my students, and that while I’d continue to trust my instincts, I’d continually question them too.

Jane is no longer a student of mine. Since then, I’ve been a head at three schools, a school inspector and a senior education consultant, and I know from what I’ve seen that we can, and must do better at identifying and supporting students who are desperately trying to conceal their mental health struggles.

## The ‘hidden middle’

Doing so is far from easy. If anything, it’s getting harder. Increasing numbers of students, particularly girls, are going to ever greater lengths to mask signs of distress, making it much more difficult for teachers and education staff to identify and help them.

This means that as teachers, pastoral staff and school leaders, we can no longer expect to identify our vulnerable students via the methods we’ve always used up to now. It’s simply not enough any more to go on what we can observe of students’ behaviour, their attendance, engagement, what we know of their home life and our gut feelings.

I know that many schools use student voice tools, such as online surveys and chat hubs, to identify vulnerable students, but I’ve found that these too

often fail to spot the ‘hidden middle’ – those students who, for example, may be showing early signs of self-harm, bullying, anxiety or unhealthy self-control.

I’m still a passionate advocate for the tool that identified Jane, and have successfully rolled out STEER Tracking in each of the schools where I’ve been head. For me, it’s the final piece of the jigsaw – the one that may well affirm the observations and hunches of hard-working pastoral staff, or cause us question what we think we know about our students’ home lives. Most importantly, the tool is designed so that it’s extremely hard to game, and can suggest a range of interventions for any students who are identified.

It’s encouraging to see how far we’ve come in the 30 years since, as a newly-qualified

teacher, I was told to ‘check my Y11 form were okay’ with almost no training whatsoever. The time has now come to use the tools we have, and despite their attempts to pretend otherwise, do all we can to identify those other Janes (and Johns).



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon Antwis is STEER Education’s senior education consultant, having previously been a headteacher of three schools and a school inspector





# JACKS OF ALL TRADES

**Gordon Cairns** shares his thoughts on why we should be careful not to ride roughshod over the mixed skills and restless curiosity of the generalists in our midst...

**W**hat do sporting superstars Tiger Woods and Roger Federer have to do with the scope of our schools' curriculums to maximise students' potential? More than you might think.

A comparison between the respective sporting skills of these two serial winners serves as the basis of a recent book by David Epstein called *Range – how generalists triumph in a specialised world*. Woods famously focussed on the playing of golf to the exclusion of almost everything else from the age of 2, whilst Federer took a markedly different path, playing a range of sports up until his late teens, before eventually focusing on and excelling at tennis.

Both went on to dominate their respective disciplines over the course of their careers, but Epstein finds that it's actually Woods' approach of early specialisation that's the outlier, with the majority of elite athletes going through a 'sampling period' of trying multiple sports, and only then focusing on one field above all others.

Outside of sport, Epstein goes on to show how generalists like Federer are more likely to excel later in life, and are also able to juggle a wide range of interests. He claims that they can often be more creatively agile, and skilled at making connections that

comparative specialists simply can't see.

## A knotty problem

For another example, we can look to Elisabetta Matsumoto – an assistant professor of physics at the Georgia Institute of Technology, and also an avid knitter since childhood. While attending graduate school, she came across an unusually knotty stitch in

protecting astronauts from exposure to radiation.

I bring up Professor Matsumoto not to suggest that fashion and textual design should be a prescribed A Level for those wishing to study physics at university, but rather to show how we might all benefit from an education system that does more to promote generalist thinking in our future workforce.

**“Far from an embrace of the generalist, we’re seeing a concerted push in favour of specialists”**

the course of knitting a pattern for a Japanese red dragon. This prompted her to begin analysing the geometry of stitches, and eventually, the mathematics of knitting itself.

She now studies the limits and possibilities of knitted materials, to better understand how different stitches can transform the mechanical properties of everyday fabrics. Most recently, Matsumoto has been searching for a fundamental equation to perfectly describe the properties of knitted fabrics, which could be transformative for the development of customisable prosthetics, wearable electronics and entirely new materials, and applications such as spacesuits capable of

year, Scottish students will generally study one or two subjects to Advanced Higher Level, and then a few other Highers of subjects they've studied up to National 5 level, thus widening their range of knowledge and skills, and helping to foster more of a generalist mindset.

These differences in approach are perhaps best illustrated by the study of English under the two systems. The Scottish Higher covers both language and literature, allowing students opportunities to study an additional subject. What the Scottish system might lack in depth, it makes up for in the breadth of subjects studied.

It seems likely that all this would cause knowledge gaps between Scottish university students and those who attended school elsewhere, but there's no evidence to suggest that Scottish students graduate with poorer degrees.

## A concerted push

What isn't in doubt, however, is that schools can't decide unilaterally on what and how they teach without involving universities – not when the latter's entrance requirements ultimately govern what a school is able to offer its senior students, and when the effort involved in taking an extra A Level could negatively impact a student's overall grades.

Here, however, the Scottish university system is worth observing. An A Level

## Compare and contrast

The most straightforward way of doing this would be to increase the number and range of subjects studied at sixth form. The study of three A Levels over two years remains the education pathway followed by the majority of UK school students for entry into most university courses, but that's just 60% of the number of subjects covered by a typical student under the Scottish education system during their senior year of school.

The five Highers studied by students in Scotland are equivalent to the three A Levels required by most UK universities, but studied in just one year. In their sixth



student would typically be required to pass three subjects before studying Biology, two of which have to be related to science and maths. Their Scottish peers, on the other hand, could gain entry to the University of Glasgow with five Highers, only two of which need to be in science-based subjects.

We've also seen a gradual shift away from studying four AS levels towards three over the last decade. The effect of this has been reduce the generalist character of education in England yet further, while also negatively impacting uptake of the subject that arguably offers the widest scope of them all – English, which can potentially incorporate elements psychology, history and theology all within the space of one lesson.

The recent push towards STEM subjects that offer greater job opportunities accompanied a fall in A Level entries for English language of more than a fifth in 2019. Far from an embrace of the

generalist, we're seeing a concerted push in favour of specialists.

Looking further afield, we can see that even the comparatively wide range of subjects offered in Scotland is dwarfed by that of a country often cited as an

education exemplar. In Finland, all students intending to enter higher education must follow a curriculum that's divided into four sections – 'languages',

'science and mathematics', 'social and humanities' and 'art, physical education, religion or ethics'.

As far back as 1998, the stated objective of the Finnish Upper Secondary Schools Act was *'To provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary in further studies, working life, personal interests and the versatile development of their personality.'*

### Real breadth

What we're seeing now is greater receptivity to the strengths of generalists in wider society. In its recently published 'Future Doctor' report (see [bit.ly/](https://bit.ly/)

ts113-general1), Health Education England observes that the next generation of medical professionals will need to possess a range of different abilities compared to their predecessors.

According to Sheona MacLeod, the body's executive medical director, "System-wide collaborations can now help deliver a vision for the future, so that doctors with generalist skills are supported to adapt healthcare provision to meet their population needs, and work effectively in multi-professional teams in an increasingly complex healthcare landscape."

It's also interesting to note that Bill Gates initially employed staff at Microsoft following similar principles: "We hired not just brilliant coders, but people who had real breadth within their field and across domains. I discovered that these team members were the most curious and had the deepest mental models."

Finally, of course, teachers can look to their own experiences of following what, in most cases, will be the archetypal generalist career – developing a wide-ranging skill set while remaining curious, rather than following the more specialised education pathways of medicine, law or accountancy. By thinking of ourselves as Federers, rather than also-rans, we can help to promote the generalists in our classrooms and celebrate their unique abilities as much as those of their more specialist peers.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gordon Cairns is an English and forest school teacher who works in a unit for secondary pupils with ASD; he also writes about education, society, cycling and football for a number of publications





## ASK THE EXPERT

# “That lightbulb moment”

James O'Brien explains how GL Assessment's CAT4 can help teachers spot students' hidden potential

### What is CAT4?

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) provides you with a rounded profile of a student. It measures the main areas of reasoning ability known to make a difference to learning, and helps teachers understand how students learn, what barriers to learning they may have and their academic potential. It's a standardised assessment, so results are robust, consistent and are benchmarked nationally and over time. It requires no preparation, and is suitable for students up to 17+.

### What do schools use it for?

As it focuses on reasoning ability, rather than attainment, CAT4 allows teachers to see what students are capable of – particularly when triangulated with other assessments and teacher judgement. It also allows schools to understand what students can do at GCSE and A level, and includes retrospective KS2 indicators. CAT4 provides a snapshot in time, but its stability and consistency have made it especially valuable at transition and KS3 over the last few years.

### What surprising features does CAT4 have that teachers may be unaware of?

It's excellent at uncovering hidden potential, often providing teachers with 'that lightbulb moment'. It can pinpoint the abilities of EAL students who may struggle verbally but score highly on non-verbal, quantitative or spatial skills, for example, or children who have high verbal skills but who struggle with numbers. And CAT4 is multi-functional – it helps subject teachers advise on GCSE choice, SENCOs identify who needs additional support, and provides SLT with a reference point for every year group.



### EXPERT PROFILE

**NAME:**  
James O'Brien

**JOB TITLE:**  
Head of Assessment Insights

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:**  
Standardised assessment

**BEST PART OF MY JOB:**  
Being part of a team dedicated to helping schools improve pupil outcomes through better assessment

### How does your link with Fischer Family Trust (FFT) benefit schools?

Our partnership with FFT allows schools to upload CAT4 scores into FFT Aspire, which then generates GCSE estimates for all students. This helps teachers set targets for students in every subject, to monitor progress and estimate likely outcomes at GCSE. Teachers can also access summaries and benchmark estimates of gender and prior attainment groups. This service is due to be rolled out across all secondary year groups in the autumn term.

### What ongoing support is included with CAT4?

In addition to account management support, we also provide free online training resources and one-to-one data consultations with our Assessment Insights team, which is made up of former teachers. This gives an additional layer of insight, helping schools extract the most useful information from their data. We also offer interactive reports at school group level, for SLT, classroom teachers, parents and students that highlight individual and group strengths and weaknesses, suggest interventions, and provide national comparisons.

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# FOCUS ON: MUSIC

We look at how arguments for better music provision can be made in a more compelling way, and at some of the main obstacles that practitioners are currently battling with

**Why should students want to study music, and what's changed in how it's being taught?**

## THE AGENDA:

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Instead of endlessly arguing over music's 'academic' credentials, we should celebrate what it can provide for students, argues Martin Ainscough

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Three peripatetic music teachers reflect on how curriculum demands, school timetables and COVID-19 have all affected their roles in recent years...





# Dancing to a DIFFERENT BEAT

Instead of endlessly arguing over music's 'academic' credentials, we should celebrate what it can provide for students, argues **Martin Ainscough**...

**I**n recent years, a 'perfect storm' brought about by budget restraints, the introduction of progress 8 and the EBacc and the contraction of KS3 has led to significant issues for music and arts education in secondary schools across the country.

This has ultimately led to a reduction in the quantity and quality of arts provision that young people experience in the state education sector.

Conversations and debates across social media and the wider profession have focused whether or not music is indeed an 'academic subject' (whatever one of those actually is), and should therefore be included within the EBacc.

However, I believe that for too long, we've tried to justify the subject of music by its 'academic' credentials, when we should actually be celebrating and promoting the uniqueness of the subject in our classrooms, and immersing our students in the joy of performing and making music.

## Be bold

There's a widely viewed video on YouTube titled 'Leadership Lessons from the Dancing Guy'. It's often used in leadership courses, and is a resource I've regularly used myself when leading my own team and delivering leadership courses.

It features a video recording of a man dancing in a field, who appears at first to be a lone idiot. However, his enjoyment and energy soon

spread and he gains his first 'follower', who normalises his behaviour. Soon, a whole crowd is involved in the dancing.

Music teachers need to be bold, just like the dancing guy – to be happy in being different from purely 'academic subjects', and willing to exploit our ability to engage students in practical, hands-on and real-world learning in ways that just aren't possible in an English or maths lesson.

We should remove non-musical activities from our lessons and harness the power of music itself to move students emotionally, and build upon their experiences

27% of our students choosing to take one of our three music courses at KS4, achieving positive progress 8 scores within these subjects.

## Intrinsic motivation

In Y7, using the Musical Futures 'Just Play' resource enabled us to ensure that all our students were able to play a range of instruments competently, and that they possessed a good understanding of chords, melody, structure, rhythm and the elements of music.

Throughout the Just Play project, they had the opportunity to develop their skills on vocals, ukulele, guitar, bass, drums and

Changing the way our classroom space was used helped to facilitate this more practical style of learning. Our teaching rooms have since been designed to resemble music shops, with a range of instruments readily available on walls and various areas around the classroom.

There are no desks and no books. Instead, talk centres around the music. We use subject-specific terminology as

***"We should remove non-musical activities from our lessons and harness the power of music itself to move students emotionally"***

of it outside of school. Music lessons ought to involve instruments in hand, and should fully engage every learner by using songs, tunes and instruments that young people enjoy, like and identify with.

It's these principles that form the cornerstone of Musical Futures, which transformed the way we taught music in my school and provided us with the catalyst to ensure it offers something for every pupil. Embedding this way of learning led to

keyboard. The resource is structured to take learners from picking up an instrument for the first time, to being able to play a full chord sequence, drum beat, bassline or melody as part of a whole class ensemble.

Importantly, it enables children to use the kinds of music that they genuinely listen to and identify with, while the use of backing tracks within the resource helps to scaffold performances and encourage students to improve.





we're playing, so that students can develop a deep understanding of musical concepts not just by reciting definitions, but by actually incorporating them into their playing.

By the end of the project, the students developed a range of musical skills which enabled them to work independently in musical groups, with the ability and intrinsic motivation to want to improve and achieve in music lessons.

This meant that we were subsequently able to utilise resources such as the 'BBC Ten Pieces' with our classes – in order to, for example, expose our students to classical music by engaging in

### DOWNLOAD

a free Musical Futures Playalong resource for 'Shotgun' by George Ezra from

[bit.ly/ts113-ma1](https://bit.ly/ts113-ma1)



whole class performances of Greig's 'Hall of The Mountain King'. We've also used many additional Musical Futures playalongs to ensure that classroom repertoire remains current.

Our emphasis on practical learning continues at KS4, for which we'll use set work playalongs to immerse our students in the music they must understand in order to be successful in the exam.

### Authentic sounds

It's essential that music in schools reflects what students are listening to outside of the classroom. This can be used as a starting point for exploring different and unfamiliar

genres, however daunting that prospect might seem for us as adults.

A survey we conducted circa 2019 among our Y10 learners revealed that their top genres of music were drill, Soundcloud rap, American rap and house music. Our challenge, as music educators, is to ensure we can help young people to learn through such

styles of music, which will often be way out of our comfort zones.

That requires investment in technology – which in our case, led to the introduction of DJ controllers and Ableton Live. This created a real interest amongst our pupils, who were soon hungry to explore the styles of music they identified with the most, but in an authentic way, using tools employed by real musicians.

Let's stop worrying that we're not considered fully 'academic' and instead focus on the enjoyment, engagement and lifelong passion for music we can encourage by celebrating the difference of our specialism from the core subjects, and ensuring that our classrooms are places where students can learn practically, and in authentically musical ways.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Martin Ainscough is director of creative learning at Fred Longworth High School in Wigan, where he teaches music; he is also a director of Musical Futures – a non-profit organisation that seeks to improve the quality and relevance of music education for young people





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# Make every copy count

**Abigail D'Amore** talks us through a new scheme to ensure that everyone gets to fully benefit from the Schools Printed Music Licence

All state secondary schools in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland automatically have a Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML). This is funded by the government and administered by Printed Music Licensing Limited, which represents print and music publishers.

The SPML is hugely helpful for schools. It enables teachers to freely copy and arrange music based on a set of straightforward terms and conditions, without having to negotiate or fund multiple licences. This means schools have constant access to a wide repertoire from a range of composers and songwriters, and can make arrangements of this music to suit the needs and abilities of their students.

## A fairer system

To comply with the requirements of the licence, teachers need to report what they are copying and arranging annually. However, to date, less than 2% of schools have actually done this, making the royalty distribution system linked to the SPML neither accurate nor fair.

From a school's perspective, this can be simply down to a lack of awareness over the conditions of the licence, a misunderstanding of what

the licence allows schools to do, or perhaps most significantly, the sheer lack of time that busy music teachers have.

That's where Every Copy Counts comes in. Every Copy Counts is a new initiative for schools that use printed music, which aims to raise awareness of the SPML's benefits among the teaching community, and in turn, improve the quality and quantity of data being reported by schools – thus ultimately resulting in a fairer distribution system for music creators.

The initiative includes a user-friendly online portal that schools can access via [everycopycounts.co.uk](http://everycopycounts.co.uk). This allows music teachers to quickly enter information on how they're using printed music at a time that's convenient for them. All teachers need to do is submit their data each year, which will then help to inform the annual royalty payment.

## Added incentives

As a thank you to teachers for taking the time to report their data, the Every Copy Counts initiative is providing a range of incentives.

As soon as teachers enter their data via the online portal for the first time, a suite of free learning materials will unlock that can then be accessed at any time. These include editable

PowerPoint presentations with lesson ideas for composing and songwriting activities, which have been created by teachers for teachers, alongside guides on copyright and careers.

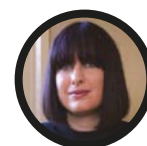
There's also a mixed ensemble arrangement designed for use by student bands and ensembles, a series of exclusive webinars with industry experts, and access to online teacher networking sessions for sharing practice and ideas.

Crucially, the Every Copy Counts team comprises a group of committed music educators who understand and believe in music teachers and want to help. We're here to dispel myths about the licence, and can provide support to help schools sign up to the portal, collate and enter data.

The licence is there to make it easier for teachers to copy and arrange music. It also helps the right people get paid. Taking a small amount of time to share what you're doing will not only give you access to useful resources, but also contribute to the larger process of supporting a fairer distribution of royalties to music creators.

## HOW IT WORKS

1. Visit [everycopycounts.co.uk](http://everycopycounts.co.uk), read the information and follow the link to register with the online portal.
2. Enter your sheet music usage data at a time that's convenient for you. You'll need a record of composer/arranger; title of work; title of book; music publisher; print publisher and/or website if using digital downloads.
3. Unlock your free resources and access the various offers available from Every Copy Counts.



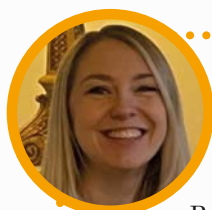
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Abigail D'Amore is programme director at Every Copy Counts; for more information, visit [everycopycounts.co.uk](http://everycopycounts.co.uk) or follow @EveryCopyCounts



# Hitting the right notes

Three peripatetic music teachers based at Birmingham's Services for Education charity describe how curriculum demands, school timetables and COVID-19 have affected their roles in recent years...



## "There are often those dreaded 'car lunches'"

Nicole Farrell, assistant head of woodwind

Between 2011 and 2020 there was quite a change in what it was to be a peripatetic music teacher. We were in a period of austerity, with budgets gradually getting tighter and tighter. We were expected to teach more children in less time, often of different abilities and in mixed instrumental groups. We've continued to do our best to differentiate, but this has its challenges.

That said, there have also been many positive changes in the nature of our work. More children have gained access to instrumental lessons through a growing Whole Class Instrumental Teaching programme. Local partnerships between the Birmingham Music Education Partnership and West Midlands Music have created more opportunities for children in Birmingham to make music.

I was very fortunate to have been working in a forward-thinking organisation during the pandemic, which mobilised online teaching in March and April 2020. Online teaching was a huge learning curve for us all – I'd never used Microsoft Teams before, and was

used to playing my instrument alongside pupils, seeing them up close and being able to point to notation.

Returning to school in September 2020, instrumental teachers were faced with having to teach instruments from across rooms while wearing face masks or shields, often with screens dividing us from pupils. We were able to offer ensemble provision online from 2020, which proved a challenge, but was very rewarding.

In-person ensembles made a cautious return in September 2021, and we've had several successful in-person concerts since. It's been very emotional seeing young musicians perform in their first concerts in several years – their enjoyment is infectious. It's been difficult seeing pupils struggle with the pressure, anxiety and lack of stability due to the pandemic, which is why I'm trying my best to provide a safe environment for my pupils, where they can feel comfortable and enjoy making music together.

The schools where I've seen the most success are always those where I'm made to feel like part of the school community, rather than just a visitor. As a 'peri', there are often those dreaded 'car lunches' that you grab as you dash between schools, and the anxiety of not knowing whether you can sit in the staff room. The offer of a cup of tea is always welcome!



## "Peripatetic teachers are in a unique position"

Amy Swallow, assistant head of inclusion, brass teacher and SEND specialist music teacher

My students have a range of SEND, including autism, emotional and behavioural needs, and hearing impairments. As a teacher, I've always been compelled to find ways of making music more accessible and relevant to young people through the use of technology, student-led repertoire and a focus on ensuring that smaller, gratifying steps are seen and recognised. I want to encourage students to see the fun to be had in the creative and expressive process.

I've seen a huge amount of creativity and passion from my colleagues in providing inspiring opportunities for students to enjoy music making and all the benefits

that come with it. There's a growing chamber music festival, more departmental festivals and events, orchestral days and staff ensemble performances in schools, to name but a few.

With that has come the need to undertake more preparation tasks, organise promotional campaigns and support events in person. I've had to really work hard on my organisation, efficiency and time management, which can be challenging for us music teacher creative types(!), but absolutely necessary if I'm to continue being inspired and motivated by the amazing students I work with.

Post-pandemic, I've felt more responsibility than ever to create a positive space for my students, and have been moved by the courage and inner strength they've all shown during these times. We have had to use COVID-safe – and often less effective – teaching methods in the short term.

In some of my work with special schools, close interactions and touch are incredibly important when





## “A key concern for us was maintaining engagement”

Adam Hickman, deputy head of music service

My role is primarily based around engaging with schools and our local music education hub, to help schools deliver instrumental and vocal provision, provide performance opportunities and deliver CPD for classroom teachers.

We’ve observed schools having to make some quite difficult decisions regarding their budgets, with the result that their arts provision can suffer. It’s my job, and that of the teachers within the service, to advocate for and promote the transformational impact that high quality music provision can have on children and young people.

In recent years we’ve seen an increase in group instrument lesson sizes, which has been a net positive in terms of the numbers now accessing music provision more generally, but we’ve also received feedback from schools that points to a quite dramatic fall in GCSE music entries. That’s fed into tough decisions schools are making over if, and how much they can subsidise music lessons, support parents and expand access.

During the pandemic I contacted all the schools in Birmingham to see if they were interested in our offer of delivering lessons online. I’m pleased to say that a large number opted to proceed, because a key concern for us was maintaining engagement. We were also able to organise a ‘digital concert’ that schools were able to view and parents could engage with.

Having since returned to working inside schools, I’ve seen just how much pupils have missed out being able to take part in informal live performances, such as playing in assemblies. I recently helped to organise one such concert, and noticed how the pupils seemed much more nervous than we’re used to.

As peripatetic teachers, we’ll often encounter pupils quite used to playing in front of other people, but are increasingly having to give pupils reassurance and help develop their

encouraging musical engagement among students.

In some settings I was required to wear PPE which hid my facial expressions. Where it was best for me to stay socially distanced, I had to direct school staff to conduct the required musical interactions themselves. I found this particularly difficult, since these tend to work best when they’re exploratory and intuitive in the moment.

Peripatetic teachers are in a unique position where students may be more likely to open up to us and share their feelings and concerns – especially when their time with us has been the only individual time they’ve had with an adult at school, or indeed at all. Having seen the positive impact music has had for students on a daily basis, especially during these times, it’s my hope that creative subjects continue to become ever more valued and enjoyed by all.

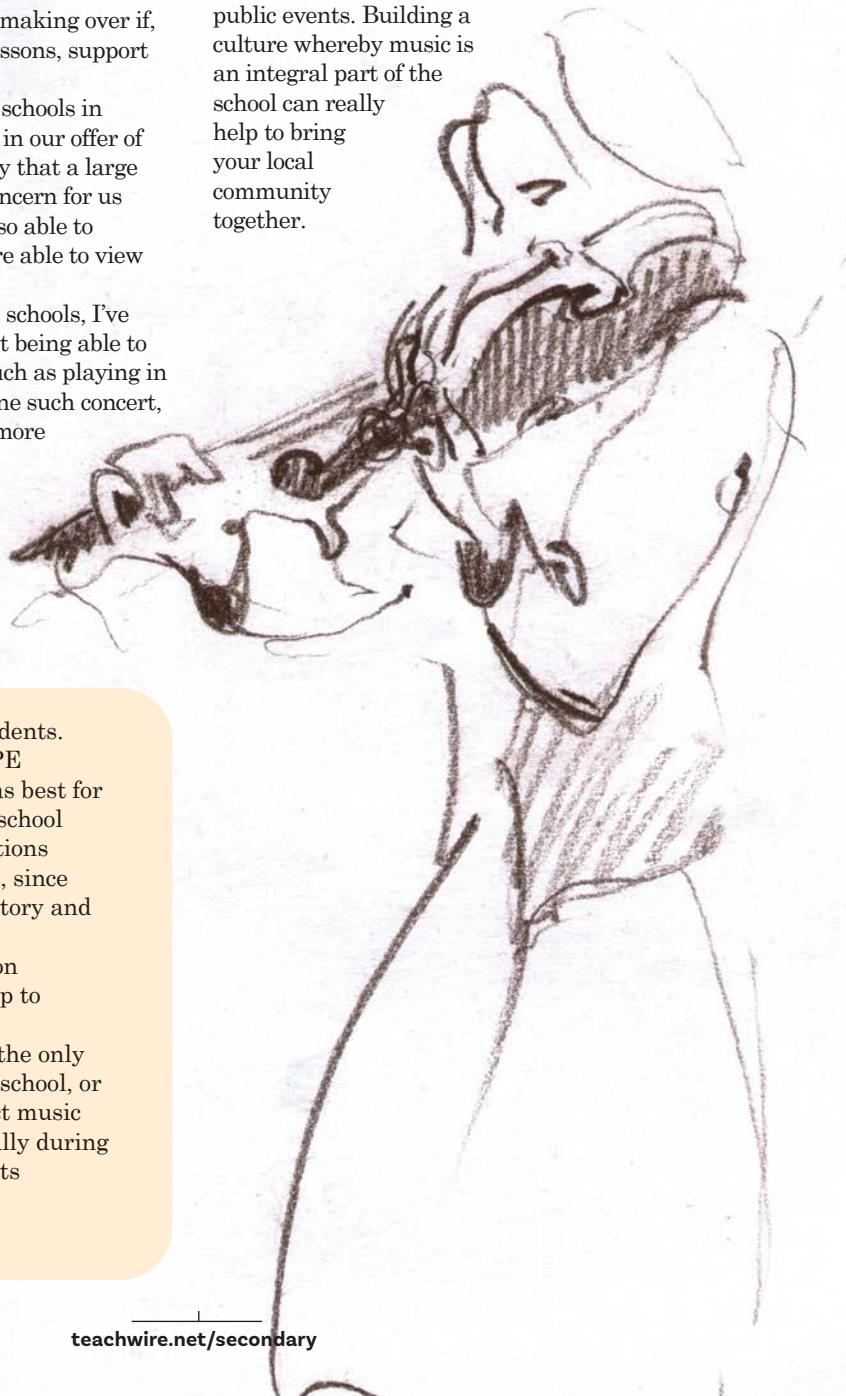


## BEATING THE BUFFERING

To get round some of the technical issues involved in providing online lessons we created a free platform for schools in Birmingham called SFE ([sfeonline.co.uk](http://sfeonline.co.uk)). It hosts a series of over 800 video tutorials, amounting to around 380 hours of music – if live lessons were persistently disrupted by connection issues, we would direct students there, so that they could watch the techniques they needed to practice in their own time.

confidence – typically starting with performances in class, before moving on to year groups, assemblies, and eventually performances to parents and families.

Music can be a great vehicle for building an important sense of community. I’d urge secondary school teachers and music leaders to contact their local music hub and see what they’re able to offer, and to make any visiting music teachers part of your school’s social fabric. Have it so that music groups can perform at your open evenings and other public events. Building a culture whereby music is an integral part of the school can really help to bring your local community together.







Lesson plan: **ENGLISH KS3**

## WHAT A TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE...

Give your students a primer in how to deploy literary sleight-of-hand and wrong-foot readers, with Lisa Thompson's lesson on how to craft mystery stories...

### DOWNLOAD

a FREE KS3 English lesson plan on descriptive writing

[bit.ly/ts113-MW1](https://bit.ly/ts113-MW1)

tw

### WHY TEACH THIS?

- Develop students' capacity for self-expression and promote a thoughtful approach as to why they like particular mystery stories.
- Help them to communicate more effectively by studying different techniques, vocabulary and structures in writing
- Foster student creativity
- Help students consider the function of literature, and what works compared with what might not
- Provoke thoughts regarding why writers create the stories they do

I love reading mystery novels and short stories. As human beings, we're often driven to find out the answer to things. Who did it? Where is the treasure hidden? Is that suspicious character really who they say they are?

Mystery stories are a joyous thing, but I tend to find that if I've guessed the ending, I end up feeling disappointed. Despite trying to solve the mystery as I read, I still want to be surprised by the outcome. I want my last thought on closing the book to be, 'Wow, I didn't see that coming!'

When writing my own mystery books, my aim is to keep the reader wanting to know more and to surprise them at the end. In this lesson, students will have an opportunity to get creative, thoughtful and inquisitive as to how far they can push their own writing.

Q What's the recipe for a great mystery story?



### STARTER ACTIVITY

Begin the lesson with a group discussion about what the word 'mystery' actually means. Look at various definitions and find some synonyms. Discuss what it is that makes a good mystery.

Ask the students to share a mystery that they've read, seen or engaged with that they've enjoyed. Can they pinpoint what it was about the story that kept them gripped and wanting to know more?

The plotline is important, but what about the characters? Did they care about them? Find out if any of the students' suggestions contained a 'red herring' and look up the history behind that phrase.



## MAIN ACTIVITIES

### READING AND ANALYSIS

Read an extract from a mystery novel, such as a chapter from *The Rollercoaster Boy*, and/or a mystery short story – for example, 'The Tell Tale Heart'.

Discuss the writing and list the qualities of the stories that feel specifically relevant to a mystery narrative. This might include interesting or suspicious characters lacking clear motives; the fact the story doesn't give everything away at once; the build-up of tension; something unusual that stands out, which might prove to be a red herring later on. What is the writer wanting us to think at this point?

## THE PLANNING STAGE

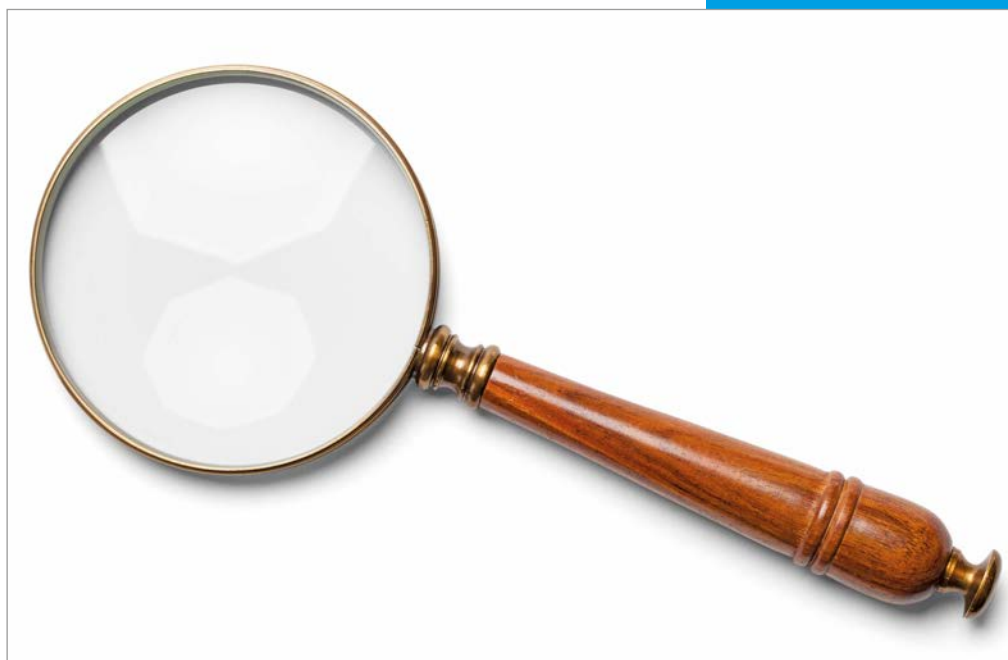
We can now present the class with a mystery scenario to help them plan a story of their own.

A guest has gone missing from a hotel room. The room was locked from the inside. Inside the hotel room there's no sign of any disturbance. There's a single bed, a wardrobe, a bedside table, a pair of shoes and a locked trunk. Your main character is the manager of the hotel and has used a spare key to investigate.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Begin by brainstorming some ideas and creating a mind map of potential storylines. The story must include some information on the guest who is missing, what the hotel manager discovers when they begin to look around the room and an object that could turn out to be a red herring.

When you have finished your brainstorm, it's time for the students to plan. Using their favourite parts from their mind maps, they should aim to plot their stories into three basic parts:



**"I want my last thought on closing the book to be, 'Wow, I didn't see that coming!'"**

### THE BEGINNING

Setting the scene and introducing the characters

### THE MIDDLE

Ideally the peak of the story – the point where you include an 'Oh no!' moment.

### THE END

The conclusion to the mystery

The students then share their story ideas out loud to

someone in the class, making any changes to their plans as they go. Talking through story ideas out loud is a really good way of working out if there are any major issues in your plot.

Have the students reflect on whether their plot takes a different turn once they've talked about it. The students can then begin to write their stories, using their plans as a guide.

## SUMMARY

Writing a mystery that's going to fool inquisitive readers is hard. When looking back on the mystery stories they've produced, encourage the students to consider carefully what they feel worked as they wrote them, and what didn't.

Do any of them conclude that it might have been easier to start with their story's final clue and work backwards? How hard was it to avoid clichés when writing for this genre? Do they think there might be more editing involved when writing a mystery novel?



### GOING DEEPER

Look into the etymology of the word 'mystery' and research one of the greatest mystery writers in the English language – Agatha Christie.



### HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS

Write a short mystery story using one of the following prompts – a suggested title of 'The Unopened Letter', or the opening line, 'The last person to see my brother was a liar...'

### THE AUTHORS

Lisa Thompson is a children's novelist; her latest book, *The Rollercoaster Boy*, is available now (Scholastic, £5.99) – for more information, visit [lisathompsonauthor.com](http://lisathompsonauthor.com) or follow @lthompsonwrites

This article was co-authored with teacher Stuart Pryke (@SPryke2)



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# Too much choice?

The emphasis we've seen on parents' right to choose their child's school is sold to us as empowering, but the data suggests it could be achieving the precise opposite, observes **Melissa Benn**...

**F**or the past six months, my friend has talked constantly about which secondary school to 'choose' for her daughter. As this year's National Offer Day approached, she was obsessively checking her emails for news of where her daughter was likely to go.

For most of last year, there were trips to schools across the capital and various tests of her child's musical and artistic talents – some verging on the farcical. My friend encountered schools that embraced applicants with warmth and enthusiasm, as well as others (invariably high-achieving, oversubscribed institutions) that left her and her daughter feeling like unwanted guests at a party.

## Fierce refusal

Under the current system, Y6 applicants are offered six choices of school, though 'choice' isn't really the right word. Rather, families can make six statements of preference, ranked in order. Where a child ends up will largely depend on the often complex admissions criteria of any given school.

My friend is enterprising and determined. She readily acknowledges that the process is stressful, but when I suggest that it might be simpler if everyone had at least the right to go to their local school, she barks back at me, "My child is not going to *that* school."

In the decades I've spent as a parent and campaigner, how often have I heard that same fierce refusal from numerous parents (usually mothers, it must be said)



doing everything possible to get into the 'right' school? Even when that includes attending church while holding no religious belief, or hiring expensive tutors to improve their child's chances of success in secondary school tests?

## 'Fatalistic and disempowered'

Beneath it all lies a primal fear that without such vigilance, their child might drop into a black hole of missed opportunity and even social disaster. It's these emotions that Dr Aweek Bhattacharaya, chief economist at the Social Market Foundation, interrogates in fascinating detail in a new study (see [bit.ly/ts113-mb1](https://bit.ly/ts113-mb1)) comparing the experiences of parental choice in the English and Scottish education systems, based on qualitative in-depth interviews with parents and children from 57 families in five locations (two in England, three in Scotland).

In Scotland, every child is allocated a school by their

LA. The vast majority accept a local place, with only 13% of families applying to alternative schools. In England, over 60% of families opt for a school that's not their nearest.

One might assume that families in England would feel happier with their more extensive options. Not so, says Bhattacharaya, who finds that greater formal choice, "Does not seem to translate to greater perceived empowerment. To the contrary, those in England tend to be more cynical, fatalistic and disempowered."

Nor does greater school choice translate into improved fairness across the system overall: "The consensus is that any effect on academic outcomes is uncertain and modest in size. Moreover, increased choice seems to be associated with a more segregated, and so less equitable system."

## Agonising process

Parents often come to develop very different

perspectives of school choice as the years go on. Many who might once have belonged to a local community via their children's attendance at a nearby primary regret the loss of contact and friends, to both them and their children, that comes with travelling long distances each day.

It's also clear that children from similar social or economic backgrounds tend to end up in broadly the same kinds of universities and jobs, irrespective of where they went to school. Yet for all that, Bhattacharaya concludes, it's unlikely that any political party will reform the English system. 'Choice' remains a powerful mantra for parents and politicians alike.

My friend's daughter was eventually accepted at the third school on her list of preferences – one that her mother had previously told me she'd be 'perfectly happy' with. Or perhaps not. Soon after National Offer Day, both she and her daughter found themselves feeling angry and confused at not securing a place at either of their top two schools, and decided to appeal the decision. In their case, and perhaps many others, the agonising process of school choice looks set to continue long into 2022...



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melissa Benn is a writer; her latest book is *Life Lessons: The Case for a National Education Service*, published by Verso



# What's New?

our pick of the latest solutions and innovations for secondary education

1

## Culture in the classroom

MyLearning is a hub website that hosts FREE learning resources created by cultural organisations from across England. We work with museums, galleries and archives to bring together high quality resources in one easy-to-use website. MyLearning's mission is to get wonderful objects, and all the fabulous stories they hold, out of museum stores and archives and into classrooms.

Our content covers the whole curriculum, from KS1 to KS4, and includes accurate information, images, audio, video, downloadable resources and digital interactives. Established for 16 years, MyLearning is a non-profit funded by Arts Council England; for more information, visit [mylearning.org](https://mylearning.org) or contact [info@mylearning.org](mailto:info@mylearning.org)



## Eco-friendly legibility

Back in 2006, Pilot launched its 'Begreen' range – eco-designed products that were 85% refillable and manufactured with a minimum of 70% recycled plastic (excluding consumables). This pioneering approach allowed Pilot to be the first manufacturer worldwide to offer more environmentally-friendly writing instruments.

Pilot is now aiming to offer its Begreen products at the same price point and quality level as its standard products,

making them ideal for use in classrooms by both teachers and pupils alike. From ballpoints and gel ink rollerball pens, to whiteboard markers and highlighters, the range spans every item schools might need.

This year has also seen Pilot introduce plastic waste reclaimed from beaches into the composition of its B2P pens, as part of a collaboration with recycling specialist, Terracycle. To mark the occasion, Pilot has launched the B2P Ecoball pen made of 86.64%\* recycled plastic bottles, 2.5% of which comprise recycled ocean plastic. For more details, visit [pilotpen.co.uk](https://pilotpen.co.uk)

## Computer science, flipped

Craig 'n' Dave is a comprehensive package of GCSE and A Level computer science resources designed to be delivered via a flipped-classroom learning model. The contents include schemes of learning, student workbooks, supporting videos, model answers, end-of-topic tests, programming activities and more besides, thus helping to reduce teachers' planning and preparation time.

The package's resources aim to facilitate self-starting lessons and get students engaging immediately. The included homework activities meanwhile encourage students to demonstrate independent learning, helping them to grow in confidence and take ownership of their unique learning journeys. To find out more, visit [craigndave.org](https://craigndave.org) or contact [admin@craigndave.co.uk](mailto:admin@craigndave.co.uk)



2

## Out in the field

The Geographical Association is promoting a National Fieldwork Week from 6th to 10th June 2022, which aims to extol the benefits of outdoor education and inspire teachers. The week will be a focal point in encouraging teachers to take students outside, whether locally or further afield.

This year, a series of activities will be taking place around the theme of 'change'. Students

will be tasked with taking a critical look at environmental, human and physical change, or a mix of all three. This may uncover a wealth of first-hand evidence from families, local businesses, shops and the students themselves. Most areas will have recently experienced a series of major changes, often due to the pandemic. National Fieldwork Week presents an opportunity to examine these closely, and share the outcomes via displays in schools or local community halls, or by sharing them with the GA. To find out more, visit [geography.org.uk/National-Fieldwork-Week](https://geography.org.uk/National-Fieldwork-Week).

## Safeguarding connections

The Safeguarding Company is pleased to announce our launch of a brand new online community. Free to access, this community is intended to be a space where safeguarders can connect in order to seek support, share resources and receive advice.

The Safeguarding Community has three different rooms: a 'Staff Room' for day-to-day communications, an 'International Room' and a 'Safe Room', in which anonymous questions can be posted.

We understand that safeguarding can often be a challenging and lonely job. We believe this community will be beneficial to the mental health and wellbeing of those involved with safeguarding, giving them a much-needed safe space in which to connect with others who understand what they're feeling. For more details, visit [thesafeguardingcompany.com](https://thesafeguardingcompany.com)

We have launched!

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The  
**SAFEGUARDING  
COMMUNITY**

Connecting and Supporting  
Safeguarders, Everywhere.

Sign Up Now







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### Building skills

Develop your students' critical thinking, teamwork, communication and design skills by taking part in the Royal Institute of British Architects' National Schools Programme. This free and inclusive programme enables teachers, children and young people to learn about architecture and the built environment through working with inspiring architecture professionals.

Participants will get to enjoy taking part in practical activities such as 3D model making, master-planning, sketching, technical drawing and digital drawing. Pupils can also explore a range of core curriculum subjects, including science, literacy and numeracy, through the completion of architecture-focused activities in school, online or at RIBA's historic London headquarters and galleries at 66 Portland Place. The activities are designed to suit your schedules and enrich your curriculum – find out more by visiting [architecture.com/schools](http://architecture.com/schools)

### Rapid sanitisation

LapSafe® offers an extensive range of mobile storage and charging trolleys – the safest available on today's market. Having specialised in safe power management solutions, enabling convenient charging and data transfer for laptops, Chromebooks, tablets and other mobile devices, LapSafe® has now introduced a new item for 2021 in the form of the UV-C sanitiser station.

This innovative product can be added to an existing LapSafe® self-service locker configuration or used as a standalone appliance. The semi-automated UV-C sanitising unit will sanitise in around 15 to 20 seconds, deactivating 99% of bacteria and some viruses exposed to its high-intensity UV-C light. To find out more, contact [sales@lapsafe.com](mailto:sales@lapsafe.com) or visit [LapSafe.com](http://LapSafe.com)

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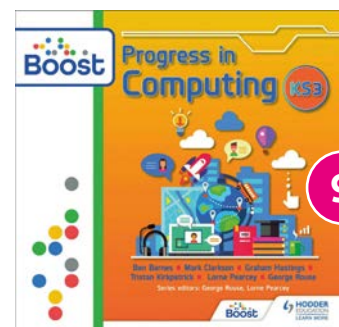


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### Left to their own devices

As schools settle into a new academic year, it's never been more important to keep children safe and responsible online. Step forward BCS Level 1 Smart Digital Award in e-Safety. Ofqual-regulated and aligned to the National Computing Curriculum, this qualification will give your students the tools to build themselves a responsible digital footprint and a solid learning foundation for their education and daily digital lives.

Supplied complete with teaching resources and automated testing, it's ideal for KS3 learners and also ESFA-funded for 14- to 16-year-olds. What's more, on successful completion of the Award, your students get certified. Find out more at [bcs.org/esafety-award](http://bcs.org/esafety-award)



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### Digital know-how

Hodder Education has listened to how you teach computing at KS3, and designed a fantastic new toolkit of digital and printed resources around you that contains everything you'll need to confidently deliver the National Curriculum in computing and develop your students' ICT and digital media skills.

Progress in Computing: Key Stage 3 combines ready-to-use lesson plans, presentations, videos and animations, multimedia assets, interactive resources, quizzes and assessments with an expert-written Student Book.

Want to find out why it won the 'Technology and STEM' category in the 2021 Teach Secondary Awards? Visit [hoddereducation.co.uk/PiC](http://hoddereducation.co.uk/PiC) to register for a free trial of Progress in Computing: Key Stage 3: Boost and request an inspection copy of the Student Book. For more details, contact [computing@hoddereducation.co.uk](mailto:computing@hoddereducation.co.uk)

### Gratis guidance

The digital resources offered by Eduqas are carefully designed to engage and inspire learners, and can be used as classroom tools or revision aids for each stage of the learning process. Above all, unlike similar offerings from other exam boards, all of our digital resources are entirely free.

Teachers will discover a range of useful material, including exam walkthroughs, blended learning modules and knowledge organisers, alongside advice from our subject specialists offering guidance on the best options for you and your students.

We can also provide marked exemplars from previous exams via our online Exam Review facility, and for some subjects, a Question Bank that enables you to generate your own assessments. Access your FREE teaching and learning resources today by visiting [eduqas.co.uk](http://eduqas.co.uk).

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# Has COVID led to LESS EMPATHY?

The pandemic hasn't just affected children's emotional development, observes HOPE not hate's **Owen Jones** – it's also made it harder for them to overcome prejudice and relate to others

**H**OPE not hate's Education Unit was launched in 2016, and has since supported nearly 90,000 students across the UK. The vast majority of our work in schools involves teaching pupils about prejudice and discrimination. We'll go through the psychology of these topics and then, most importantly, examine their social impact.

In order to understand the consequences of structural prejudices, such as racism, sexism, ableism and so forth, it's vital that students are able to develop a certain degree of empathic understanding with other groups in society.

The classes we offer are there to provide essential tools for children when it comes to understanding prejudice and discrimination. Although we are not born with prejudice, we are to an extent hardwired to lean into prejudicial behaviours. What's crucial is that we can learn to control such impulses. Prejudice

should be seen in a similar way to anger – something inherent in us all, but which we can learn to contain.

## Emotional intelligence

Many young people in the schools we visit lack the experiences and opportunities that individuals in more affluent and more urban

parts of the country take for granted. As a result, the comments they come out with could be seen as intolerant, when it's often the case that they're

actually just displaying ignorance, or fear of the unknown.

Lockdown has affected our experiences of supporting children. Following our educators' return to classrooms up and down the country in May 2021, they've been finding that lockdown has changed young people's interactions at school in many different ways.

We've all heard troubling reports of the increased levels of anxiety among returning students, as well as the growing inequalities between those pupils who had a laptop and a quiet space to study in at home, and those without access to such amenities, as well as the pressing need to catch up on missed learning. What we're hearing less about, however, is the regression in emotional intelligence pupils are presenting, especially those in KS3.

## Struggling to cope

Whenever I arrive at a school, there's always the smalltalk as I'm led from reception to my assigned classroom, usually consisting of questions that tend to follow a pattern. 'How was your journey?' 'Do you visit many schools?' I have to admit to not being the biggest fan of smalltalk. I usually offer cursory responses – 'My journey was uneventful ...' 'I visit around





*a hundred schools a year,'* – since I know no one's actually that interested in the answers. They just fill the time as we walk.

More recently, however, I've started to kick off these conversations with, *'How have the pupils been, post-lockdown?'* In asking this question, I've noticed something interesting. Teachers have often given very similar responses, telling me that they're experiencing a noticeable regression in the emotional development of KS3 pupils, and Y8s in particular. This mirrors what myself and the wider HOPE not hate Education Team have been seeing on a daily basis in classrooms nationwide.

The reality is that many pupils right now are struggling to cope with what the education system expects of them. A significant number simply aren't yet ready for the day-to-day realities of secondary school. By that, I don't mean their ability to cope with the academic content of the school day, but more the environment that surrounds the academia.

### Storming out

It's become increasingly common for teachers to find themselves before students who, given their age, one might normally expect to be behaving as young adults, but who instead exhibit behaviours more akin to primary-age children. For example, we've noticed instances of students taking teddy bears to class and seeing their teachers as parental figures.

Over the past two years, the majority of students in the country spent months separated from their normal school lives. Having spent so much time talking mostly to friends and family, they've had fewer opportunities to develop and retain the ability to interact with people they don't like, or who hold different views to them. For

the first time, we're seeing students storm out of classrooms not over an actual argument, but because of someone disagreeing with an answer they've given. Since the lessons we deliver typically involve discussion of sensitive issues, this has added yet another layer of complexity.

One problem we've always encountered, however, is that our message of respect and openness can sometimes go against prejudiced and discriminatory narratives that students have been fed at home since they were born. This is hard to break, since it's never easy to confront the possibility that your parents might have got things wrong. With the current KS3 cohort having missed out on a crucial period of their emotional development, though, these types of challenges have become even more severe.

For me, the changes we've seen in how children respond to being taught about prejudice and discrimination shows just how important Y6 really is. This is the year when pupils get to be heads of their

## “We've noticed instances of students taking teddy bears to class and seeing their teachers as parental figures”

schools, are expected to set examples for peers in lower year groups and get to experience transition programmes before entering secondary school. Our current Y8s are the cohort that will have missed out on all this the most, and it's showing in how class after class have struggled to engage with the material we're delivering.

### Barriers to entry

A regression in emotional development makes the process of broadening children's horizons and understanding that much harder, thus complicating the



## ANTI-PREJUDICE IN PRACTICE

Teachers can download the following HOPE not hate resources from our online resource collection at Teachwire:

### Come dine with me

A lesson with accompanying slides and handout that explores stereotyping, both positive and negative, and the impact it can have.

[bit.ly/hnh1](https://bit.ly/hnh1)

### Harmful Language

A lesson with accompanying slides and handout designed to help students better understand how the words and phrases we use can affect those around us in unforeseen ways, and the harms that can be wrought by discriminatory language – even 'low-level' examples.

[bit.ly/hnh2](https://bit.ly/hnh2)

### Who's missing?

Set of 10 slides to support a 20-minute whole class exercise intended to get students thinking about representation and diversity in relation to national demographics, institutions and where the power to shape society resides.

[bit.ly/hnh3](https://bit.ly/hnh3)

process of challenging racism and discrimination in remote areas of the UK.

These observations aren't unique to HOPE not hate. Without exception, every school we work with has

of having also missed out on the crucial emotional development normally provided by their classrooms.

Most charities in our sector will use deprivation indexes and the like when deciding which parts of the country to target. At HOPE not hate, we're lucky to have an outstanding research team that provides us with data to help track those areas most vulnerable to racist ideologies. But the pandemic, with the fresh set of problems it has presented, means we now need to see action on a widespread scale, across the country.

We believe it's time for a national conversation on the issue, before these habits become ingrained into the characters of a generation.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Owen Jones is director of education and training at HOPE not hate; for more information, visit [hopenothate.org.uk](https://hopenothate.org.uk) or follow @HNHEducation



# Geography 11–14

## Exploring our changing world



This new resource for students explores the connections and interactions within and between human and natural environments. It introduces geographical concepts, themes, places and skills early on and revisits them in later chapters to consolidate learning.

Written by practising teachers and geography educators, the book aims to:

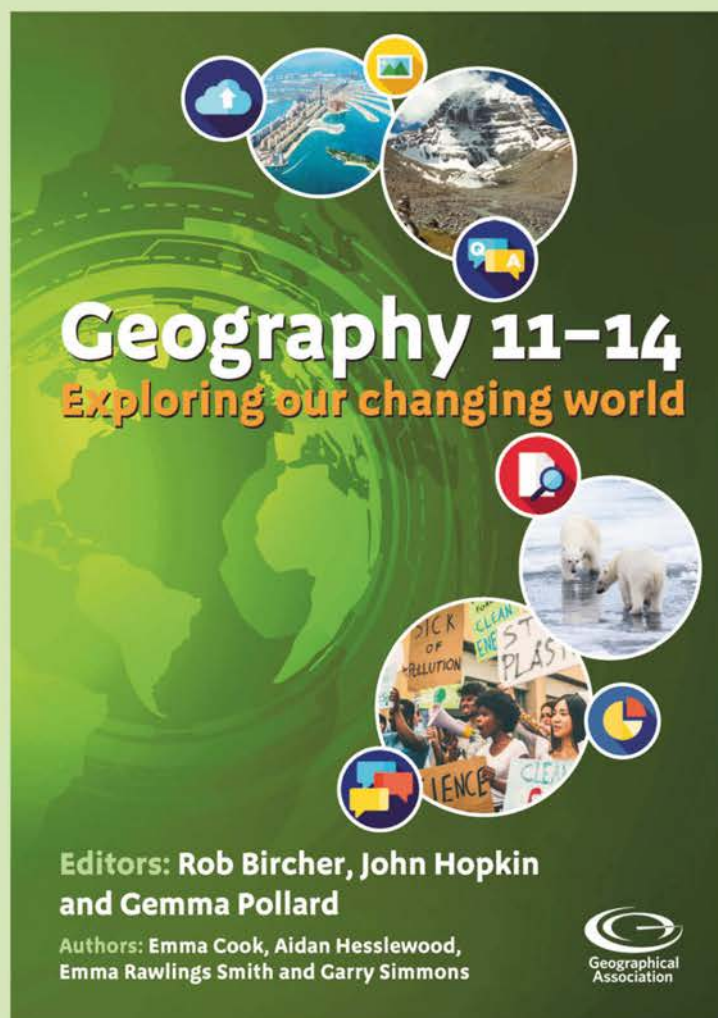
- enthuse and engage students, making them more globally aware and environmentally minded
- help students develop a better understanding and appreciation of the world
- build understanding and develop skills that will be needed for GCSE, while keeping key stage 3 (or equivalent) a distinctive phase of education
- suggest different approaches and ways of thinking in geography.

The complete **student book** has 18 chapters and is for 11-14-year-old students.

The accompanying **teacher materials** contain:

- a medium-term plan and guidance notes for each chapter
- activity, information and answer sheets
- a PowerPoint of resources for each chapter.

AVAILABLE NOW



### Student book

£27.99 (GA members)/£33.99 (non-members) (print only)

### Teachers resource

£120 (GA members)/£130 (non-members) (eBook only)



# A world of knowledge

**John Hopkin** talks us through a new initiative from the Geographical Association, aimed at supporting independent learning at GCSE and A level

**F**or two years, students and teachers have faced unprecedented disruptions to their learning and teaching as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Geographical Association has responded to this by creating a new, innovative service designed to support students studying independently for their geography GCSEs and A levels – be it at home or at school, individually or in small groups.

Funded by Innovate UK, Geography Education Online (GEO) is available to students entirely free of charge, with easy-to-navigate contents and a plethora of options to suit students' individual study needs. The material is designed to support the whole spectrum of GCSE and A level specifications across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and at this time of year, will be used by many students for revision and consolidation purposes.

## GEO knowledge updates

Since September 2020, around 65 short knowledge updates have been published on GEO, with a further 20 or



so due to be published throughout the remainder of this year.

Written by experienced secondary school teachers and geography educators, these web enquiries are intended to consolidate students' understanding of core GCSE and A level themes and content that's relevant to all specifications, focusing especially on tackling misconceptions. Topic examples include changing places, urbanisation, climate change, development, global governance, glaciated landscapes and processes, coastal landscapes and processes, and much more.

GEO's enquiries and content units include authoritative summaries of each theme linked to images, video clips and external websites for students to investigate further. These are designed so that students can access them independently via mobile devices or other platforms, thus potentially enabling teachers to initiate discussions in class that students can then follow up at home.

Many of the content units are complemented by over 40 interactive quizzes, which students can use to self-test their geographical knowledge

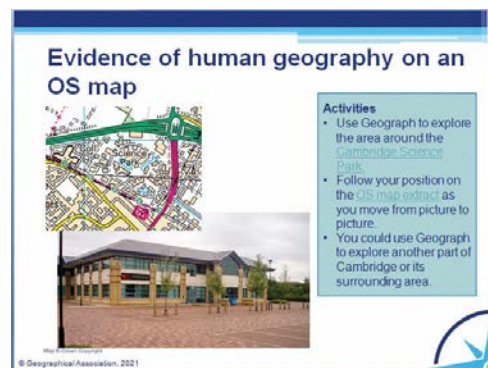
and track their rate of understanding and learning from the web enquiries. The A level units additionally link to further academic readings, which include opportunities for reflection that will stretch students' understanding and help to prepare them for studying university courses.

## GEO events

During the 2020-21 lockdowns, a series of specially commissioned online lectures were delivered live via GEO, recorded and archived, so that they're still available for anyone to access.

Intended to connect university academics to students, these lectures were able to give students access to authoritative academic thinking they could use to enhance their subject knowledge, while also inspiring them with new insights and understanding, and giving them a useful perspective from which to develop their university aims and preparations. While rooted in core A level themes, the lectures still contain some material that will be of interest to GCSE students wishing to extend their knowledge.

GEO has further partnered with the Field Studies Council and experts based at



the Geographical Association to offer a unique programme of online tutorials. These provide detailed advice and guidance for GCSE and A level students on how to improve their geographical skills, while placing a particular emphasis on independence.

The GA remains the leading subject association for geography teachers. Now, the GEO project has significantly extended the direct support we're able to provide for students in the 14–19 age group. It brings together a wealth of expertise from the wider geography community, many of whom have developed their own high-quality resources to support students.

Our hope is that GEO will effectively support geography students as they study for their qualifications, as well as those simply looking for new and flexible ways of studying the subject further.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Hopkin is a former head of accreditation at the Geographical Association; for more information, visit [geographyeducationonline.org](http://geographyeducationonline.org) or follow @GeoEduOnline





# teachwire

YOUR LINK TO THE BEST IN EDUCATION

## Quick & easy uploads



Have you ever devised...

- A memorable secondary activity?
- Any behaviour or assessment strategies that have helped save valuable time?
- An effective approach to engaging with parents?

If so, Teachwire's resource archive is now open for submissions from secondary teachers with creative and inspirational ideas.

Share yours at  
**[teachwire.net/teaching-resources/submit-a-resource](https://teachwire.net/teaching-resources/submit-a-resource)**



# LEARNING LAB

## IN THIS ISSUE

- + How school clubs can help students explore difficult topics
- + Why your lessons need orderly endings
- + Can we discern which school attendance interventions are most effective?
- + Help your KS3 cohort hone their cyber security skills
- + A new education support framework for students with a vision impairment
- + How one school moved its teaching and learning into the cloud
- + The short film with a message for teachers about students with SEND
- + 5 quick ways to gauge students' learning

## CONTRIBUTORS

### CAROLINE WEST

History curriculum team leader at Bedminster Down School, Bristol

### ROBIN LAUNDER

Behaviour management consultant and speaker

### CLAIRE BUCKLER

Director of learning commons and initial training in education lead, Devonport High School for Boys

### ZEPH BENNETT

PE teacher and school achievement leader



## How to...

# USE MEMORIES IN CREATIVE WRITING

One day, while minding your own business, a waft of freshly-cut grass, or a whiff of Chanel No. 5 might trigger a memory you haven't thought about in years. A family holiday, a forgotten friend – a golden moment in time, dredged up from the depths.

Olfactory signals reach the limbic system very quickly, while the memories associated with smells tend to be older and recalled less frequently – thus making the recollections unlocked by odours commonly very vivid.

For me, it's Play-Doh. One sniff of that sweet, slightly musty putty and I'm tumbling down a rabbit hole of nostalgia. For my father, it's the organic fumes of a farm. For my mother, it's the soapy perfume of an old-fashioned laundry tub. Memory is also powerfully connected to the other senses, like taste and touch.

In my book, *The Girl With No Soul*, powerful memories can be imprinted onto objects, creating treasures known as 'remnants'. A clock may have witnessed a murder from where it hangs on a wall. A pin badge fixed to a lapel can recall a bitter break-up. A well-hugged teddy bear might record

the deep, long-standing love of a parent for their child.

Memories can also be deliberately hidden inside objects to keep them safe, for there are people in this world who can steal recollections right out of people's heads. Any inanimate object can serve this purpose, but one to which you have a strong sentimental attachment is best.

### Creating writing exercise:

Describe the five objects you'd put in a memory capsule. Each item should represent one of the senses – smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch. A handkerchief or a jumper fresh from the dryer might represent smell, while a pair of gloves or a favourite pen could represent touch.

Why would you choose these items, and what memories do they represent for you? If you're struggling to think of any objects, think about specific memories first. Imagine yourself in the scene and fill in the world. What can you see? What can you hear? Are you sitting or standing? Are you holding anything? Using the five senses in this way can be a useful writing aid for improving world building and bringing scenes to life more vividly for readers.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Morgan Owen is the author of *The Girl With No Soul* (Scholastic, £7.99)



## USING CLUBS TO EXPLORE CHALLENGING TOPICS



Last September I started at a new school where, partly due to COVID, clubs and society uptake was at an all-time low. The whole school focus at the time was therefore on organising groups, trips and competitions, which gave me the opportunity to set up two new lunchtime clubs.

Colleagues predicted I would see zero uptake for our Debating Society and Genocide Awareness Project. They felt the proposed clubs had merit, but observed that our students weren't used to giving up their lunch times, and hadn't previously been exposed to such emotive and thought-provoking topics.

I've always felt that engaging in public speaking and debating is vital for students. My passion for Holocaust education and genocide awareness meanwhile stems from experiences in my early teaching career that

included teacher training in Poland and Israel. I've since found that subjects such as the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide engage both the most gifted historians, and those students who struggle with historical concepts and skills. I've additionally found senior leaders to be extremely supportive of such topics, especially given recent concerns over hate crimes and antisemitism.

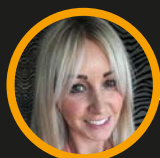
Students have slowly but surely found my door at lunchtimes, following assemblies run by Genocide Awareness Project members. We began with just three students, but they were so passionate about improving understanding of genocide among their peers that the membership has since grown to over 15.

It's been a similar story for our debating society, which recently debated with style and substance whether cultural artefacts should be repatriated.

Those might not be huge numbers, but each week I remind myself that neither club existed at the start of the academic year. I'm excited to see them grow, to the point that hopefully one day, the students will run the clubs themselves.

### Get your club going

1. **Treat the development of extra-curricular clubs with the same level of importance as outcomes**
2. **Base your club on your passion**
3. **Be confident of senior leadership buy-in**
4. **Have faith in the small number of students who will initially engage – they are your best ambassadors for spreading the word**
5. **Seek support among the wider teacher community and social networks**



**CAROLINE WEST IS THE HISTORY CURRICULUM TEAM LEADER AT BEDMINSTER DOWN SCHOOL, BRISTOL**

## TRY THIS

### ORDERLY ENDINGS

*EXERCISE BETTER CLASS CONTROL WITH THESE TIPS FROM ROBIN LAUNDER...*

We've all experienced rushed lesson endings. Perhaps we let an activity overrun, or went off on a tangent, but they're best avoided.

Rushed equates to disorderly, and 'disorderly' isn't a trait you want your students to associate you with. Far better to be orderly – organised and in control. When rushed, you're also more likely to miss something important, like explaining the lesson's homework or issuing important reminders. Students may additionally leave your lesson a bit 'hyper', making things harder for the teacher of their next lesson.

For an orderly ending, leave more time than you think you'll need for those concluding routines – issuing homework, putting away books and materials, tidying work areas. Once they're done, have the students stand behind their desks in silence. Remind them that you're expecting them to leave the lesson without any talking. When you're happy that they're ready to leave, let them – but stagger the exit one row or column at a time. Either take a central position or stand at the door and sprinkle some positivity as they go, be it a comment, a smile or a cheery goodbye.

If you end the lesson too early, have an educational game up your sleeve – or maybe end with such a game regularly, thus making it part of your closing routine. Games that incorporate retrieval practice – about that lesson, or one previously – are educationally very helpful.

**Robin Launder is a behaviour management consultant and speaker; find more tips in his weekly Better Behaviour online course – see [behaviourbuddy.co.uk](http://behaviourbuddy.co.uk) for more details**



# 88%

**of state school teachers feel that their teacher training didn't adequately prepare them to deliver careers information and advice to students**

Source: 'Paving the way' report on secondary school careers guidance by the Sutton Trust – see [bit.ly/ts113-LL1](https://bit.ly/ts113-LL1)

The Education Endowment Foundation has issued a new report that examines the findings of 72 studies into pupils' school attendance, and seeks to identify the strategies most likely to boost attendance figures. The report groups the studies into nine distinct categories, including 'Mentoring,' 'Parental support,' 'Behaviour interventions' and 'Extracurricular activities'.

Among those studies showing most promise was one that found a positive impact from parents being sent 'nudge' letters, outlining the importance of their child's attendance on both their own learning, and to the wider school community. Also highlighted was a study indicating some success from having a social worker identify barriers to attendance and put in place an appropriate intervention. One example given was assigning an older 'walking buddy' to a pupil with high absences due to transport difficulties.

Ultimately, however, the report's main takeaway is that existing evidence on how to improve attendance remains relatively weak, based on a small number of studies carried out at English schools, and that the effectiveness of several approaches are difficult to properly assess.

The full report can be downloaded at [bit.ly/ts113-LL3](https://bit.ly/ts113-LL3)

## INTRODUCING...

### CYBER EXPLORERS

A new online learning platform called Cyber Explorers has been launched with the aim of equipping KS3 students with essential cyber security skills. The free resource is open to schools across the country, and is part of a wider government effort to develop a talent pipeline for the UK's cyber security industry.

Topics covered by Cyber Explorers include open-source intelligence, digital forensics and social engineering. The resource is structured along the lines of a game, presenting users with a series of different online security scenarios and challenges, and awarding virtual badges upon their successful completion.

The resource will also seek to broaden the diversity of students opting for computer science courses at KS4, and demonstrate how digital, computing and cyber skills can open up a range of different career paths, from social media content creation to sports technology and medical research.

The included learning content is designed to be flexible, allowing for potential use in classroom lessons, after school clubs or

independent learning at home, while complementing the wider school curriculum.

Recent research published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport estimates the UK cyber security sector to be worth more than £10 billion, but also highlights that only a third of companies operating in the space are confident of being able to recruit employees possessing the necessary digital skills in the years ahead.

According to Julia Lopez, Minister of State for Media, Data, and Digital Infrastructure, "Cyber Explorers will give thousands of young people the opportunity to learn digital skills they need for the modern workplace and get the best possible start on their journey towards a career in cyber."

Accompanying the launch will be a series of events organised by local businesses and networks in Newport, Birmingham, Bradford, Newry and Inverclyde, aimed at ensuring young people from ethnic minority and disadvantaged backgrounds will receive any additional support they might need in order to access the programme.



TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT [CYBEREXPLORERS.CO.UK](https://CYBEREXPLORERS.CO.UK)



# 17%

of young people aged 14 to 18 in the North East say that a career in science would be of interest to them, compared to 29% in London

Source: British Science Association

## Need to know

Several vision impairment support organisations have co-developed a new Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI), in an effort to ensure young learners aged 0 to 25 can access an appropriate and equitable education.

Based on a two-year research project involving the RNIB, the University of Birmingham, Thomas Pocklington Trust and the Professional Association for the Vision Impairment Education Workforce, the CFVI document sets out to clarify and define the specialist skills, interventions and best practice considered essential for children and young people with vision impairment.

Its authors hope to engage government officials in making the CFVI widely available throughout the country, and either cited in official guidance or potentially given statutory status. According to Caireen Sutherland, RNIB's head of education, "We hope the framework will address the jigsaw provision and ensure children and young people with vision impairment get access to the specialists and opportunities to develop skills they need, and that this in turn will improve their life outcomes."

To find out more, visit [rnib.org.uk/cfvi](http://rnib.org.uk/cfvi)



## WHAT WE DO CLOUD-BASED TEACHING AND LEARNING

**We've been a worldwide Google reference school since 2015, an edTech Demonstrator school, and have invested in technology year on year to become a completely server-less, 'in the cloud' school. The decision to scrap traditional hardware PCs and servers was taken when most of the IT suites became no longer fit for purpose and would involve considerable costs to upgrade.**

For us, Chromebooks were the only devices that did everything we needed, at a price that could scale to meet our vision. Removing our ailing PC suites has sped up our lesson time while also enabling seamless transitions between home and classroom. This is because students are able to use the same software and systems on their Chromebooks that they do in school, and continue working alongside the same students with access to all resources.

Another benefit of using a cloud-based system is the ease with which you can onboard new students. Our new Y7s are all invited to complete an online digital skills quest before they start with us in September. This is a programme created by us that allows students to earn digital badges as rewards for making progress.

Moving to the cloud means being able to do away with expensive

servers, freeing up that funding to invest instead in a fibre-based network refresh. This has helped us ensure we have a solid foundation upon which to provide a collaborative, effective and dynamic learning environment in which everyone can succeed.

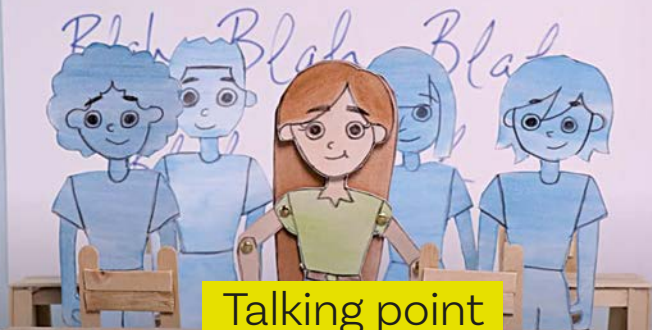
When you have an IT infrastructure that works, it allows teachers to use classroom technology in creative and innovative ways – to increase engagement, personalise learning and/or work towards embedding blended learning across the whole of the curriculum.

We also have a Digital Leader scheme, whereby students assume the role of an IT helpdesk technician and are made responsible for around 80% of our helpdesk tickets. Digital leaders also take on various other projects, including making old PCs cloud-ready, presenting e-safety assemblies and taking charge of our Chromebook repair service.

Digital Leaders offers an amazing leadership pathway for our students, and delivers a seamless IT support service for our community. After pursuing this digital strategy, we've become a more collaborative, effective and dynamic learning environment for our 1,250 students, who are now better prepared for the work and technical challenges that 21st century life will entail.

**CLAIRE BUCKLER IS DIRECTOR OF LEARNING COMMONS AND INITIAL TRAINING IN EDUCATION LEAD AT DEVONPORT HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS**





## Students with SEND in their own words

It's not often that an undergraduate film project is aimed squarely at classroom teachers, but that's the case with the seven-minute short documentary *Teach Me*.

Created by 21-year-old Anna Cottrill, a final year student at MetFilm School London, it combines papercraft stop motion with the voices of young people with SEND, describing their experiences of education in mainstream schools.

As Cottrill explains, "I made *Teach Me* because I wanted to raise awareness of the emotional and human side of SEN in the UK's mainstream schools, in the hope that by having the children speak for themselves,

conversations about how to adjust teaching to accommodate kids with SEN could be approached with empathy for their lived experience. If I could have one place this film could be screened it would just be in classrooms, in front of teachers."

Cottrill herself was diagnosed with dyspraxia shortly before starting secondary school, and was recently diagnosed with ADHD. Reflecting on her own experiences, she recalls how, "As a child it is hard to understand your own needs. It wasn't really that I couldn't write neatly – It was the emotional and nurturing support I needed, but I was

made to feel like a burden. I remember, when I needed the use of a laptop in a lesson, the teacher expressing to both me and the entire class what an inconvenience I was, needing to have a charger plugged in.

"It wasn't an isolated incident and these repeated occurrences just added to my own anxieties to fit in and be 'normal'."

*Teach Me* has since gone on to win Best Animated Documentary at the 'Story? International Student Film Festival', and earn an honourable mention at the Ealing Film Festival. The film can be viewed via [bit.ly/ts113-LL2](https://bit.ly/ts113-LL2)

## TRENDING

Our pick of the recent resources and launches teachers might find useful...

### MEIN NAME IST BOND

If you're struggling to engage KS3 with MFL, try Gaming Grammar – an iOS/Android and browser-based game developed by the National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy. Themed around espionage, the game tasks players with cracking codes by utilising the grammatical features of French, German and Spanish. [gaminggrammar.com](https://gaminggrammar.com)

### WELL PREPARED

As they head into their final few weeks of exam preparation, this year's Y11 cohort can make use of an online tool from Study Buddy called the 'Revision Reckoner' to help plan, schedule and pace their revision sessions more effectively. [thestudybuddy.com](https://thestudybuddy.com)

## TEACHER WALKTHROUGH

### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING – 5 QUICK WAYS TO GAUGE LEARNING

ADVICE FOR TEACHERS, BY TEACHERS, AS VISUALISED BY ZEPH BENNETT...

1



#### DELIBERATE ERRORS

Provide students with sources that contain errors or missing facts. Students must then piece together or correct the work.

2



#### ENTRY AND EXIT TICKETS

Start and finish the lesson with a short summative task. The use of interleaving topics is ideal for this methodology.

3



#### LOW STAKES QUESTIONING

Ideal for retrieval and encoding learning, low stakes questioning provides a platform for feedback and assessment of understanding.

4



#### COLD CALLING

Ask a question and select a response. Keep the question open to the whole group, ensuring all students remain engaged.

5



#### MINI WHITEBOARDS

Use these either alongside cold calling questioning, or for formative tasks and responses to questions to assess learning and progression.

ZEPH BENNETT IS A PE TEACHER AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT LEADER WITH 25 YEARS' TEACHING EXPERIENCE; YOU CAN FIND MORE OF HIS EDUCATIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS BY FOLLOWING @PEGEEKSCORNER

Got a great learning idea? Email [editor@teachsecondary.com](mailto:editor@teachsecondary.com) or tweet us at [@teachsecondary](https://twitter.com/teachsecondary)



➔  
MUSIC

# Drums for Schools

A package of instruments that can help you teach students about African culture and music from a standing start



## AT A GLANCE

- Contains five hand-crafted Djembe drums and ten percussion instruments
- Includes two step-by-step teaching guides written by a leading authority on world music education
- Extensive online audio and video support with accompanying lesson plans
- Drum sizes suitable for both teens and adults
- Aimed at beginners to intermediate players
- Supplied tuned and ready to go 'out of the box'
- One of a range of ready-to-go sets for from 5 to 30 players

REVIEW BY JOHN DABELL



The impressive 'African Drumming – Secondary – 15 Player Class Set' from Drums for Schools consists of five high quality wooden Djembe drums and 10 items of hand percussion for creating a range of authentic African drumming sounds, allowing any secondary teacher to lead a group or class to performance level in just one term. The djembe is a single-headed, goblet-shaped membranophone that's played with the hands, and is arguably the star of the West African percussion ensemble.

The mix of drums in the set will produce a good musical balance between the three voices in most African Drumming tunes. The drums come in three sizes, and are all hand-made from responsibly sourced sustainable wood. Built for serious, long-term classroom use, they're well-tuned, easy to learn and versatile, capable of producing a wide range of sounds.

The aforementioned hand percussion consists of two natural agogos, four beaded shakers and four basket shakers that fill out the ensemble parts, and help to ensure that your percussion sessions can become enjoyable teamwork activities.

The package also includes two teaching guides written by renowned ethnomusicologist Andy Gleadhill – one focused on African drumming and another on percussion – that cover basic playing techniques, include staged lesson plans and provide everything you'll need to get up and running in no time. These are supported with a free, extensive online library of further downloadable lesson plans, video

and audio clips, along with recorded examples of all the exercises in the books.

Playing these wonderful instruments will help students to understand how drums play an important role across many aspects of culture in African countries, spanning the physical, emotional and spiritual. They will learn how drums are played to communicate emotions, send messages, tell stories, celebrate, mourn and inspire, and how they're inextricably linked with singing and dancing.

By then making such music themselves, the act of drumming itself can help to enhance students' wellbeing and mindfulness, and

**“The act of drumming can enhance students' wellbeing and mindfulness”**

foster a sense of collective belonging and community. It's a perfect activity for encouraging self-expression, developing self-esteem and reducing stress, while at the same time improving students' dexterity, flexibility, strength, precision and endurance.

The Djembe has been dubbed the 'magic drum' for its ability to move people, and the 'healing drum' for its use in healing traditions. The activities facilitated by this brilliant class pack will really speak to students and get them energised. As well as giving students the chance to impress friends and family with their newly acquired rhythmic skills, it can lend a whole other layer of enjoyment to your musical offer and even play a role in providing music therapy.

The Djembe is known as the drum of a thousand voices. This set offers teachers a thousand opportunities to create something really special for all students.

**teach  
SECONDARY**

## VERDICT

- ✓ An affordable drumming solution that can be used in a range of teaching and extracurricular contexts
- ✓ Accessible activities, with no prior music experience required
- ✓ The equipment is extremely tough, built to withstand heavy use over many years
- ✓ Can help to foster an interest in other cultures and histories
- ✓ Will help to boost participants' listening skills, rhythm and musical confidence

## PICK UP IF...

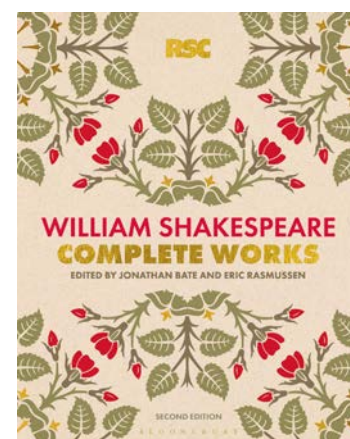
You're looking for a programme of inclusive musical activities that employ real instruments, in which everyone can be an active and engaged participant

£563 (excl. VAT) – for more details and free teaching resources, visit [drumsforschools.com](https://drumsforschools.com)



ENGLISH LITERATURE

# The RSC Shakespeare: The Complete Works (2nd Ed.)



A collection of Shakespeare's output that combines rigorous scholarship with theatrical expertise, courtesy of the RSC

## AT A GLANCE

- A fully edited version of Shakespeare's work based on the 1623 First Folio
- Staging notes based on RSC productions with accompanying photos
- Insightful introductions and astute commentary for each play
- Presents Shakespeare's plays as living theatre to be enjoyed and performed on stage

## REVIEW BY JOHN DABELL

This second edition of *The RSC Shakespeare: The Complete Works* has been issued just ahead of next year's 400th anniversary of the First Folio, source of the 36 Shakespeare plays contained within. Edited by Jonathan Bate (professor of environmental humanities at Arizona State University) and Eric Rasmussen (professor and chair of the English department at the University of Nevada) it's an extremely thorough and well-researched volume fit for 21st century students of The Bard's works.

As indicated by the title, what sets it apart is the inclusion of staging notes and accompanying pictures relating to around a hundred Royal Shakespeare Company productions, detailing the creative choices made by assorted actors and directors over a number of decades. This does make an already prodigious tome even larger, though – running to more than 2,500 pages, you may want to consider the e-book version.

*The RSC Shakespeare: The Complete Works* includes all of Shakespeare's plays, poems and sonnets, as well as *The Passionate Pilgrim* and *A Lover's Complaint*, and aims to present the text considered closest to Shakespeare's authorial voice and intent, while also attempting to convey the context of the plays' contemporary staging.

The preface to this second edition is something of a marvel in itself, making a convincing case that Shakespeare's works are truly timeless in that they can and do

speak to the challenges of the modern age – be it the pandemic, climate change, mental health difficulties, discussions around gender identity, the effects of fake news and so on.

There then follows one of the best introductions to a Shakespeare volume I've ever seen, comprising a wide-ranging theatrical and sociopolitical survey of the times when the plays were written and initially performed, while incorporating a superb overview of Shakespeare's life and reputation. This serves as a compelling taster for the excellent short essays appearing before each play in the book, which are similarly informative, thought-provoking and useful for students.

Readers will also find an exemplary use of footnotes that bring clarity to assorted unfamiliar terms and obscurities, as well as 'Key Facts' panels that provide plot summaries and additional background information on Shakespeare's use of various poetic and dramatic devices.

Taken as a whole, this latest revision of *The RSC Shakespeare: The Complete Works* comes across as an intellectual labour of love, and a fitting testament to Shakespeare's genius that places his remarkable work very much in the here and now. If you want to really get inside the Shakespearean canon, you need an entry point that can demystify the language while packing a critical punch – which is precisely what this excellent volume does.

## teach SECONDARY

## VERDICT

- ✓ Helps students with the nuts and bolts of reading Shakespeare, while presenting blueprints for different ways of performing the material
- ✓ Scrupulously researched, with a number of additions not found in comparable volumes
- ✓ Combines exceptional scholarship with user-friendly design and layouts
- ✓ Contains wonderful commentary and textual analysis by scholars who know the terrain intimately
- ✓ Indispensable for students and theatre practitioners, and highly appealing to general readers

## PICK UP IF...

You're looking for an erudite, Folio-based combined Shakespeare volume that includes many different routes into the hidden depths and rich experiences of The Bard's plays

Clothbound hardback £34.99; for more details, visit [bloomsbury.com/RSCShakespeare](https://bloomsbury.com/RSCShakespeare)





#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Lawson is a former secondary teacher, now serving as a foundation governor and running a tutoring service, and author of the book *The Successful (Less Stressful) Student* (Outskirts Press, £11.95); for more information, visit [prep4successnow.wordpress.com](http://prep4successnow.wordpress.com) or follow @johninpompano



#### THE LAST WORD

# "Teachers will expose nonsense"



As the government reminds schools of their obligations to ensure impartiality in their classrooms, John Lawson explains why teachers are way ahead of them...

The rules regarding impartiality and indoctrination in school classrooms have been in the headlines again recently, after the Education Secretary, Nadhim Zahawi, challenged a primary school for 'encouraging' Y6 students to criticise the Prime Minister.

Mr. Zahawi urged schools to root out 'activist teachers' and ensure that their teachers offer "Balanced presentations of opposing political views to their students." Now, primary schoolchildren might not be as partisan as politicians, but they're often remarkably astute people watchers.

My own great-niece adores Ant & Dec, and thinks Donald Trump, Kim Jong Un, and Vladimir Putin are "Fibbers who belong on the naughty step!" And having missed out on being able to have parties for her 7th and 8th birthdays, she wants whoever attended the Downing Street parties to be grounded indefinitely. Seems fair.

### Apoliticism versus impartiality

Mr. Zahawi went on to remind England's educators of the 1996 DfE directive to refrain from 'explicit partisan politics'. On the whole, teachers generally accept this ruling, so long as it doesn't amount to advocacy of propaganda or apoliticism.

Apoliticism serves to falsely imply that politics only concerns politicians. Since politics will now and forever touch students' lives, it's important that they're able to identify and understand political processes. Impartiality requires fidelity to open, critical, and truthful discourse in all subjects – which for teachers, should be as natural as breathing.

Thus, it's possible for teachers to state that the discovery and use of vaccines to treat disease should be applauded as an exceptional scientific achievement, while maintaining that the exams fiascos we've seen in the last two years were abysmal and entirely avoidable. Teachers may not always know the truth, but we certainly can and will expose nonsense when we see it.

If teachers are only ever permitted to highlight political positives, then the process of teaching itself becomes a mere propaganda exercise. If, back in February, teachers had briefly discussed 'partygate' with students asking for their views – as teenagers do – the safest thing would have been to say 'Let's

wait for Sue Grey's findings', despite that being a partisan position at the time. Though if teachers want to maintain the respect of their smartest students, they won't wait for them to point out that a civil servant who didn't attend the gatherings can't tell us what happened at them.

### A communal activity

Mr. Zahawi was correct when he asserted that, "The next generation is more than capable of making their own decisions." That's because trustworthy teachers teach them to think critically, carefully and as objectively as possible.

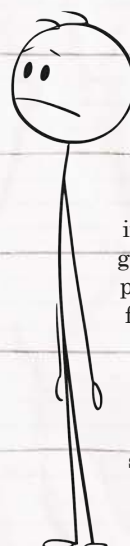
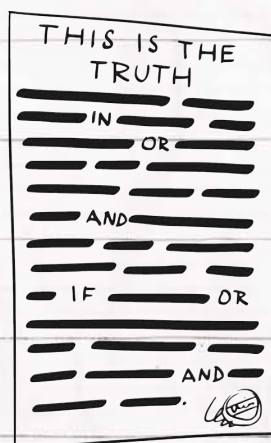
Students are taught to carefully assess the facts and opinions of others before forming opinions of their own. Even if rogue teachers attempt to promote certain sociological, religious, or political doctrines – it occasionally happens – the balanced curriculum, rights of free speech and diversity of opinions within the school community will make any subsequent indoctrination all but impossible.

I was a teacher in the US when George Floyd's arrest was first shown on TV. I told my students then that I'd witnessed the most cowardly act of policing in my life, and that I'd cried for a man I'd never meet. I later heard from a friend that a teacher at their school told his students that Floyd might still be alive if he hadn't '*Stupidly resisted arrest*'. Moments later, more than half of his students spontaneously walked out or switched him off.

Learning is a communal activity that's primed to root out prejudice, ignorance, rhetoric and dishonesty, and draws on the kind of classroom dynamics that have been sorely missed throughout the pandemic. Teachers can't dictate the direction of teenagers' views, because we demand that they think for themselves from primary school onwards.

Despite all the recent talk of 'levelling up', many poorer students feel the government is making it harder to access further education. The less affluent their family is, the more likely it is that a student will fear the prospect of getting into debt. That's not a party political view promoted by radical activists – if low-income families feel that their council or government isn't listening to them, teachers will advocate on their behalf.

By the same token, we'll happily sing the praises of any authority that treasures free speech and equal opportunities as much as we do. If that makes us partisan activists, so be it.







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