Teachers' Guide to Reading Comprehension Strategies
P5–S3

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Edinburgh Literacy Hub

The City of Edinburgh Council

East Lothian Council

West Lothian Council

Midlothian Council

Scottish Borders Council

Dumfries and Galloway Council

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Appendix

Introduction

As a result of Scottish Government funding, in 2013–2014 the Edinburgh literacy hub focussed on two main priorities: reading comprehension P5–S3 and developing a reading culture. The hub partners agreed that ideally schools should promote both reading comprehension skills and reading for enjoyment simultaneously to maximise the impact on learners' skills and to nurture the love and enjoyment of reading.

The reading comprehension operational group agreed to focus on improving the reading comprehension skills of learners in P5–S3 and the decision to concentrate on reciprocal reading strategies was grounded in international research. * [1]

This guide leads practitioners through the teaching of the key reciprocal reading skills in order to build confidence in the teaching of reading comprehension and provides templates and models of how comprehension lessons can be structured. Due to copyright restraints – it is difficult to provide numerous exemplar texts, but where copyright allows hyperlinks to on-line texts have been provided. Nevertheless, the generic strategies described can be applied to any text and, in a wider sense, to literacy across learning.

* [1] Appendix – A Summary of Research

Reciprocal Reading

This model for teaching reading comprehension was developed in Australia, New Zealand and the US and is credited with raising attainment in reading. Its popularity has grown in the UK and it has come to be known by a variety of names: Reading Detectives, Reading Circles, Guided Reading, etc. All of these versions are based on the same simple messages:

- It is reciprocal because you gradually give away more and more teacher control as pupils develop independence in groups, in pairs and the as individuals.

- The instructional concepts which underpin it include expert modelling, expert support as the child begins a task, children supporting each other and gradual reduction of support as pupils develop competence.

- Pupils are supported to develop reading strategies before, during and after reading.

- Pupils are encouraged to monitor their own reading abilities.

Research shows that proficient and confident readers employ a number of strategies to achieve comprehension of text. Once decoding, fluency and automaticity (the ability to do things without occupying the mind, usually achieved through learning, repetition and practise) have been addressed, young people need to be taught a range of strategies for comprehension. Most versions select prediction, questioning, identifying (or clarifying) and summarising, though more recent studies have demonstrated and subsequently promote the importance of visualisation.

Predicting

- Pupils preview the text to anticipate what may happen next. Pupils can use information from a text, accommodate it within their prior knowledge and use it to make logical predictions before and during reading.

- Use of title, illustrations, sub-headings, maps, etc.

- Prediction is used to set a purpose for reading. It encourages pupils to interact with the text and their prior learning; thus they are more likely to become interested in reading. A requirement of the new qualifications is that learners can identify the **purpose** of what they read and supply evidence to show how they know that is the purpose. Similarly, they must identify the target **audience** and give evidence to show how they know who the audience is. These reading skills can be developed at primary through prediction exercises.

Questioning

- Formulating questions can be a difficult and complex task. However, when pupils are told, prior to reading, that they need to think of a question, they read with more awareness and purpose.

- During reciprocal reading, pupils are asked to generate questions which are answered in the text. The questioning can focus on "Who, What, Where, When, Why and How" enquiries.

Identifying (Clarifying)

- Identifying encourages pupils to monitor their own comprehension as they encounter barriers to comprehension (especially with vocabulary).

- Teachers model with pupils how to figure out a difficult word (re-read, look for parts of the word they know, read on and look for context clues, read the whole sentence, etc) and call on peers to share their own ideas. *[2]

- Teachers and peers can also model dictionary, map-reading, encyclopedia and IT skills.

Summarising

- Research has demonstrated that practise in summarising is extremely important in developing comprehension skills as it helps pupils construct a concise understanding of text.

- Teacher modelling is vital here, as summarising can be a complex task. Summary wheels are a useful resource as they focus on the following questions: 'Who, What, Where, When, Why, How and So What?' http://www.dailyteachingtools.com/free-graphic-organisers-w.html

- Pupils are supported to construct summary statements based on their reading.

- See DARTS leaflets called 'DARTS' and 'Interacting with texts darts' on page ??

Visualisation

- Pupils are encouraged to translate their literal understanding of text into pictorial form through the creation of a mental image.

- Visualisation can be achieved in a variety of ways, including the creation of character studies, charts, timelines, graphs or illustrations, etc (often called *visual or graphic organisers*). *[3]

- In order to achieve success, pupils must engage fully with the text, glean important information and convert this knowledge into another form.

PROMPT CARDS FOR EACH ROLE ON PAGES 12–15.

[2] Vocabulary info for teachers (Page 47-50)
[3] Appendix – Resources (Page 110)

References

Palinscar, Anne-marie Sullivan and Brown, Ann L (1984) 'Reciprocal Teaching of Comprehension-Fostering and Comprehension-Monitoring Activities', *Cognition and Instruction*, 1: 2, 117–175

Resources and Lesson Plans

Predicting

- Use the story clues and illustrations to predict what is going to happen next in the story or text.

- Use bullet points and the following prompts to help you:

  I think...   **I bet...**   **I wonder if...**

  I imagine...   **I predict...**

- What is the purpose of this text?:
  to entertain?   to inform?   to persuade?
  and how do you know?

- Who are the target audience of this text and how do you know?

Questioning

- Ask questions to help your group understand and discuss what has been read next time you come together.

- You should think of at least 8 questions as you read the book or text.

- Use the following questions, words and phrases to help:

Who? What? Why? Where? How? When?

Clarifying

- Clear up any parts of the story you found confusing.

- Find examples of good vocabulary and explain their meaning.

- Find examples of unfamiliar words and punctuation and explain their use or meaning.
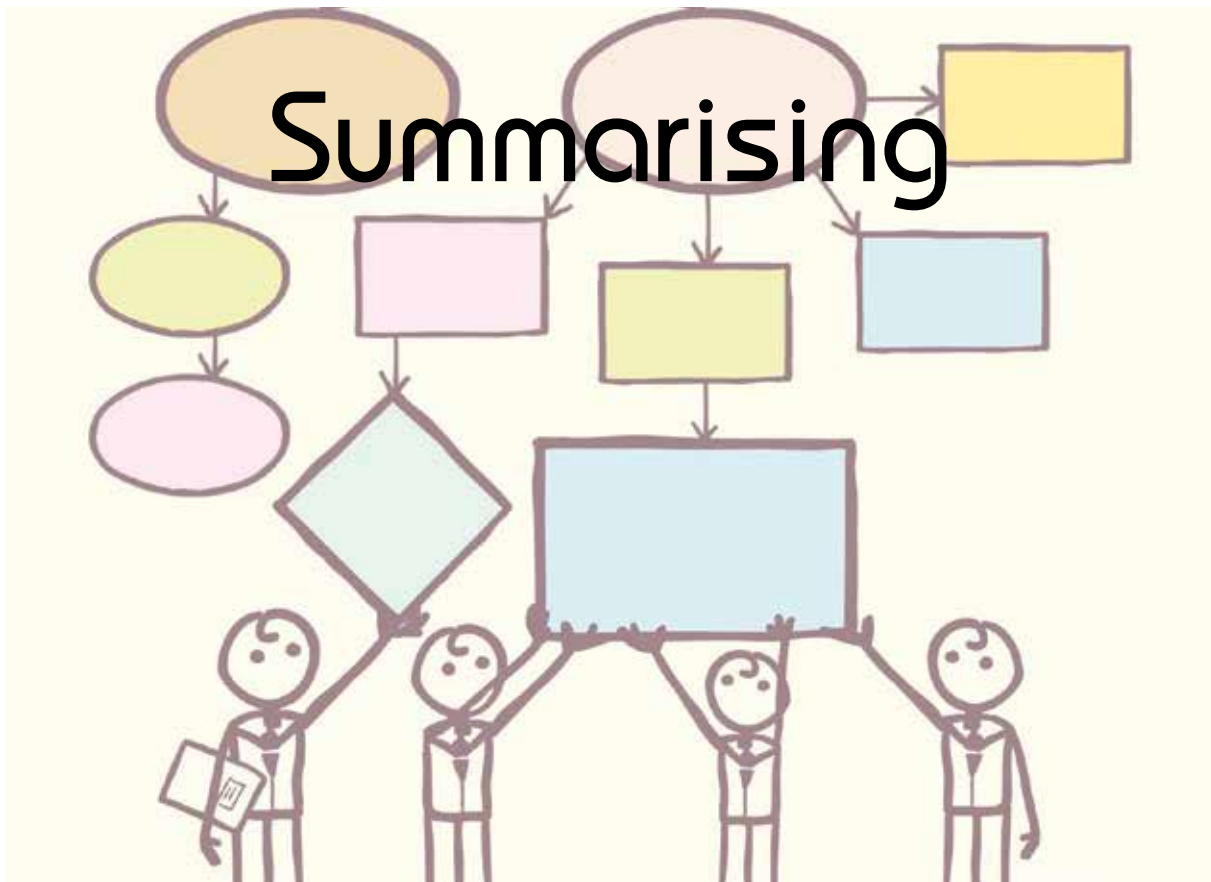
Summarising

- Summarise the main things that happened in your reading/story.

- Use bullet points and as few words as possible to do this.

- Use the following to create short summary sentences:

The main events were:

The problem/resolution was...

The character(s) involved was/were...

The story was set...

The most important part of the story was...

The Behaviours of a Good Reader

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Why?

1 Reading aloud is about being able to say words without making mistakes.

2 I always read from the start of the book to the end.

3 I can hear different voices when characters are talking.

4 I usually read in my head.

5 I can create pictures in my head of the characters, the setting and the action.

6 If I don't understand a word I try to guess what it might mean.

7 When I read, it sometimes makes me change my mind about something.

8 Sometimes I just flick through a book if I am looking for something special.

9 When I read, I ask myself questions about the text.

10 If I don't understand something I just keep on reading.

11 I often wonder what might happen next.

12 Sometimes I start reading from the back of the book.

A Reader will:

✔ choose to read when given a choice of activities

✔ listen to stories with focus

✔ use different strategies to understand text

✔ avoid distractions

✔ exchange ideas and interpretations with other readers

✔ reflect upon their own reading habits

✔ find it difficult to analyse the strategies they use because the strategies used to comprehend meaning have been practised regularly and rigorously until they are automatic

✔ If they don't understand: re-read; identify the problem; find out.

Text – breaking down the wall and how to use a wide range of texts/media

1   picture

2   lyrics

3   recipe

4   diagram

5   road sign

6   map

7   notice

8   match fixtures

9   text messages

10 prescription

11 advert

12 Facebook wall post

13 sign

14 label

15 address

16 diary

17 TV listings

18 speech

19 CD cover

20 book cover

21 news headlines

22 Film posters

23 holiday booking

24 weather broadcast

25 horoscope

26 concert tickets

27 Ebay

28 menu in school canteen

29 cartoon

30 maths problem

31 letter

32 prayer

33 blog

34 instructions

35 jokes

36 novel/short story

37 biography/autobiography

38 picture

39 radio article

40 tv programme

41 film trailer

42 film

43 you tube clip

Pupil Questionnaire

The Behaviours of a Good Reader?

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Why?

1   Reading aloud is about being able to say words without making mistakes.

2   I always read from the start of the book to the end.

3   I can hear different voices when characters are talking.

4   I usually read in my head.

5   I can create pictures in my head of the characters, the setting, the action.

6   If I don't understand a word I try to guess what it might mean.

7   When I read, it sometimes makes me change my mind about something.

8   Sometimes I just flick through a book if I am looking for something special.

9   When I read, I ask myself questions about the text.

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11 I often wonder what might happen next.

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Using Context Clues in Reading

(Below are suggestions of strategies pupils may use to access text and gain more of an understanding of what they read)

a) Read the word again

b) Look at the start sound/letter

c) Look at the shape of the word

d) Read the illustrations around the text

e) Read to the end of the sentence

f) Read to the end of the paragraph

g) Break up the word

h) Sound it out

i) Chop into syllables

j) Look at the end of the word

k) Say out loud what you think it is

l) Think of a word family

m) Look for smaller words inside the word

n) Look at the length of the word

o) Look at the title of the text

p) Look at the headings in the text

q) Look at how the text is set out

r) Look at the features of the text

s) Cover parts of the word

t) Does it remind you of another word/text/etc?

u) Does it have many long descriptive sentences or short, focussed sentences?

v) Chunk text to break up the reading or to re read to ensure greater understanding

w) Makes notes as you go (could be something you think is important/difficult vocabulary)

Identifying purpose and audience in texts you read

Good readers can explain the purpose and target audience of the texts they read and provide evidence to back up their answer.

Look at these texts below and for each one complete a grid like this. There is a blank grid over the page.

The purpose could be:

    to inform

    to persuade

    to entertain

For the audience – think about:

    - age

    - nationality

    - gender

    - interests

Text number	Purpose of the text	**Evidence** How do you know?	Target audience of the text	**Evidence** How do you know?

1   SCIENTISTS IDENTIFY BIOLOGICAL CAUSE OF ME

2   The Wizard of Oz 2.30pm Channel 4 – Dorothy Gale (Judy Garland) follows the yellow brick road of self-discovery in this much-cherished film. It is MGM's most magical musical

3   Simply Lake Garda – 10 days from £1,225 – Picturesque, peaceful and perfectly placed for visits to Verona and Venice, Lake Garda is a wonderful choice for a relaxing holiday.

4   Sticky Chicken Drumsticks – 1. To make the marinade, pour the honey into a small stainless steel saucepan and warm on a medium-high heat. Cook the honey until it starts to turn a deep rich shade of amber, then pour in the soy sauce and chicken stock.

5   Boots Hearing Care – Have you seen our invisible hearing aid yet? No? Not at all? Exactly.

Our fantastic invisible hearing aid is small. Really small. And because it fits slightly deeper in the ear canal than your average hearing aid, it's virtually invisible when worn.

6   The group of girls leaped off the bus, school bags flying behind them and then charged down the alleyway. I watched from a safe distance as the girls caught up with their prey and cornered him. 'You're dead,' the tallest girl squared up to Ryan, 'think it's cool to pick on little kids, do you?'

7   *ROYAL MAIL TO INCREASE THE PRICE OF STAMPS BY 1P*

Now your turn – write your own short paragraph for some of the following purposes and audiences:

1   To inform younger children about what to expect on their first school trip to the museum or local historical site.

2   To persuade local parents to send their children to your school.

3   To entertain your class – write a joke or funny story that would be suitable to read aloud to your class.

4   To persuade your parents to buy you the birthday present of your dreams.

5   To inform younger children of the rules of your favourite game or sport.

Think about how your word choice, type of sentences and style will help to create the right tone.

Text number	Purpose of the text	**Evidence** How do you know?	Target audience of the text	**Evidence** How do you know?
			22	

Text number	Purpose of the text	**Evidence** How do you know?	Target audience of the text	**Evidence** How do you know?
				23

Directed activities related to texts (DARTs)

Good readers use what they know about language and the world to interact with what they are reading. This helps them create meaning from the words on the page. Classroom activities that encourage interaction with texts, like directed activities related to texts (DARTs), improve reading comprehension.

Directed activities related to texts (DARTs)

- Types of activities used in DARTs
- Type of texts used in DARTs
- Advantages of using DARTs
- Developing DARTs

1   DARTs activities help interaction with texts. The aim is to improve reading comprehension and create critical readers. They can be done by individual pupils or groups.

2   Activities used in DARTs-DARTs can be divided into: **reconstruction** and **analysis** activities.

Reconstruction activities require pupils to reconstruct a text or diagram by filling in missing words, phrases or sentences, or by sequencing jumbled text.

Texts used: modified texts – the teacher modifies the original text, taking out words, phrases or sentences, or cutting the text into segments.

Types of activities:

- Text completion (Fill in missing words, phrases or sentences)

- Sequencing (Arrange jumbled segments of text in a logical or time sequence)

- Grouping (Group segments of text according to categories)

- Table completion (Fill in the cells of a table that has row and column headings, or provide row and column headings where cells have already been filled in)

- Diagram completion (Complete an unfinished diagram or label a diagram)

- Prediction activities (Write the next step or stage of a text, or end the text)

Analysis activities

Definition: activities that require pupils to find and categorize information by marking or labelling a text or diagram.

Texts used: unmodified texts

Types of activities:

- Text marking (Find and underline parts of the text with particular meaning or information)

- Text segmenting and labelling (Break the text into meaningful chunks and label)

- Table construction (Draw a table using information to decide on headings and to fill cells)

- Diagram construction (Construct a diagram that explains the meaning of the text, eg draw a flow chart to explain a process or a branch diagram to describe how something is classified)

- Questioning (Answer the teacher's questions or develop questions about the text)

- Summarising

Type of texts used in DARTs

DARTs can be used with traditional language texts like poems and extracts from short stories, novels and plays. You can also base them on extracts from magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, etc and passages from history, geography, science etc textbooks.

Advantages of using DARTs:

- Interaction with texts improves reading comprehension.

- Awareness of how texts are constructed.

- Makes readers think more critically by asking questions about what has been included and excluded from the text and about words and sentence constructions that the writer chose.

- Understanding of how text is constructed improves, which, in turn, improves writing.

- Interacting with texts also improves cognitive development.

- DARTs aid learning of how to produce graphic charts.

How to develop your own DART:

As an adult reader, read a text carefully. As you read, interact with the text (eg underline or circle important information, write questions, list main ideas and the supporting detail, draw a table or a diagram, etc.)

Note your own interaction with the text.

If the text …	you may have developed …
… compared and contrasted two or more things	a table or Venn diagram
… described a process	a flow chart
… described a fictional or non-fictional sequence of events	a flow chart
… described how something can be classified	a branch diagram
… described an object	a labelled diagram
… presented an argument	a spider diagram or mind map

Use your notes as a basis for creating your own DART:

• If you developed a flow chart while reading the text and you want your pupils to do a reconstruction activity, develop a relevant flow chart and then delete some of the information from the chart.

• If you developed a flow chart while reading the text and you want your pupils to do an analysis activity, write the instructions that will help them construct their own flow chart. Firstly, you might ask your pupils to underline the steps in the process that is being described. Then you might ask them to draw a flow chart and fill in information.

MORE DARTS INFORMATION (Page 81)

Lesson:

Focus: Note-making

Experiences and Outcomes:

I can make notes, organise them under suitable headings and use them to understand information, develop my thinking, explore problems and create new texts, using my own words as appropriate.
LIT 2–15a

Learning Intentions:

To make notes from various non-fiction texts.

Link to prior learning:

Refer to previous note-making activities and methods of note-making. Ask talk partners to discuss the methods they have used and for what purpose.

Take feedback. Prompt pupils to think of reasons for making notes:

- to summarise the main points of a text;
- to note particular aspects of the text;
- to make a record;
- as a revision tool – very important for assessments.

Tell pupils that different methods suit different purposes.

Explain to pupils that they are going to practise their note-making skills in this lesson. Say that note-making is a complex skill: it involves lots of other skills. You will be taking them through it step by step.

Model (Teacher-led explanation and demonstration):

Ask pupils what they know about the Winter Olympic Games 2014.

Ask pupils to skim read 'The Modern Olympic Games'.

http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/modern-olympic-games

Now tell them that you are going to scan the text with them as they read and listen. **The purpose of their listening and, later, their note-making will be to answer the question: Why did the modern Olympic Games begin?**

Ask pupils to follow along as you scan and to think about the main points to do with the origins of the modern Olympic Games.

Cover the text and ask talk partners to write on their whiteboards five or six key words that sum up the key ideas on the origins of the modern Olympic Games.

Take feedback and select five words to write on five blank cards, (eg education, excellence, fair-play, inclusive, evolving). Display the cards on the board or a flipchart.

Model selecting the important information from the text and turning it into two or three bullet points which expand on one of the selected words (eg inclusive). Copy the bullet points onto the card. Return the card to the board with the others.

<div style="border:1px dashed; padding:1em">

inclusion

• encourage all nations

• need NOC

• events for women

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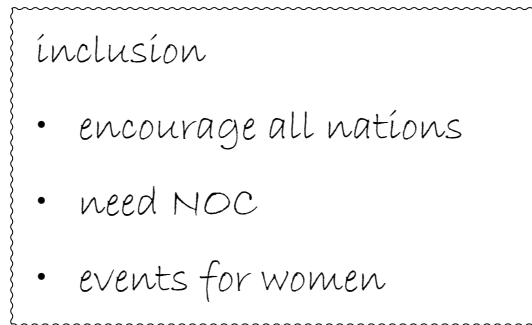
Try (Collaboratively with the support of peers):
Ask talk partners to make cards for their own key words, adding supporting bullet points drawn from the text.

Provide an overview of different kinds of note-making arrangements, eg linear, explosion chart, retrieval chart (or grid), tree diagram, …Tell pairs to decide how they will organise their cards - as an explosion chart, tree diagram, in a line, etc.

Select pairs to share examples of their bullet points.

Select other pairs to tell how they organised their notes and why they chose that format.

Apply (Independent working):
Direct pupils to 'The History of the Commonwealth Games'.

http://www.topendsports.com/events/commonwealth-games/history.htm

Explain that, working on their own, they are going to make notes to answer the question:
Why did the Commonwealth Games begin?

Secure (Plenary session – teacher checks learning of whole class):
With the whole class recap how pupils have learned how to make notes:

1   First **skim** to gain a quick impression of the information.

2   **Scan** to find the relevant information.

3   **Close read** to understand.

4   **Reread** and change into short form.

5   Repeat notes in your head to clarify what you are saying then **write them** down.

Next steps/consolidation of learning:

Pupils could be asked to research and make notes of the events that take place in the Commonwealth Games.

Pupils could be asked to research and make notes about the people who take part in the Commonwealth Games.

Pupils could be asked to research and make notes about another sporting event, eg Formula 1, Rallying, Horse Racing, …

Vocabulary:

bullet points	explosion chart	flow diagram
concept map	grid	headings
irrelevant	subheadings	timeline
tree diagram		

Resources:

mini whiteboards
small blank cards
board or flipchart
texts

Evidence of pupil achievement:

Pupils will be able to pick-out key points which are wholly relevant.

Lesson: World War II

Focus: Scanning for Information

Resource

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/   Catalogue ref: HS 9/612

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/worldwar2/theatre-assets/western-europe/resistance/pdf/we-resistance.pdf (see pages 7 and 8 – extracts a, b and c)

Experience & Outcome:

Using what I know about the features of different types of texts, I can find, select and sort information from a variety of sources and use this for different purposes. LIT 2–14a

Learning Intentions:

To know how to extract specific information.
To review their own reading strategies.

Links to prior learning:

To have some knowledge about the German invasion of Poland during World War II.
To have some understanding about the role of spying during the war.
To understand why the British would recruit the services of a foreign national.

Model (Teacher-led explanation and demonstration):

Explain that to find particular information in a text readers need to scan. This means not reading every word closely but searching for key words and numbers quickly. Tell pupils that they are going to be noticing what their eyes do when they scan for information.

Tell pupils that a good way to get an overview of a non-fiction text is to do a quick TAPS analysis. Ask them to identify the:

- Text type
- Audience
- Purpose
- Source

Ask pupils in pairs to make up 4 simple questions about the text using the question – Starters: who? what? where? when? how? how many? why?

Now model scanning to find the answers to the pupils' questions, using your finger or a pen to track eye movement. You could continue modeling locating the information, formulating the answer and demonstrating the written response for the next two questions, if you think the pupils need more guidance before working on their own.

Try (Collaboratively and with the support of peers):

After scanning the text pupils will work collaboratively to answer their remaining questions and to then sum up the main points from the extract they have read. They can compare their findings with another group.

Apply (Independent working):

They will develop a profile of the main protagonist and make a list of the skills that would have made him/her attractive to the British Secret Service.

Secure (Plenary session – teacher checks learning of whole class):

Ask pupils to work with their talk partners. One should explain to the other:

• what scanning is;
• how question words and key words can help a reader locate information.

Next steps/consolidation of learning:

More opportunities to be provided to allow pupils to scan text to find specific information using non-fiction texts. 'Where's Wally?' books can also provide a fun way to practise scanning.

Vocabulary: audience, close reading, continuous reading, purpose, scan, skim, source, text type.

Resources:

National Archives extract 'What was the role of special operations executive and what kind of people worked for it?'

Catalogue ref: HS 9/612

Evidence of pupil achievement:

Are the pupils able to extract specific information?

Are they able to review their own reading strategies?

Lesson:

Focus: Using different strategies to access text

Experiences and Outcomes:

I can select and use a range of strategies and resources before I read and as I read, to make meaning clear and give reasons for my selection. **LIT 2–13a**

Learning Intentions:

To be able to use a range of strategies to make sense of different texts.

Link to prior learning:

What makes a text difficult to read? What do pupils do already to help access text or when they do not understand a text?

1   Model (Teacher-led explanation and demonstration):

Before Reading – What kind of text is this? How do you know? What do you think this text will tell us about? Teacher takes note of 'before reading' responses. Teacher reads the text with the pupils. (Text 1 Mercury)

During Reading – Create questions as the text is read.

After Reading – Show prepared 'ideas'/concept map (Text 2) and draw connecting lines with explanatory notes along the lines. Explain that one word or phrase may connect to more than one other 'idea'.

2   Try (Collaboratively with the support of peers):

Continue to mark, annotate and link the given ideas map.

Ask partners/cooperative learning groups to share ideas. Add contributions. Invite different responses, eg Does anyone have anything different?

Ask pupils to take a different coloured pen, to read the text again and tick all the ideas noted.

Underline evidence to show ideas are correct. Ask pupils what makes the task easier, eg thinking about what you already know, making predictions, becoming familiar with some specialist vocabulary, knowing the purpose of the task, discussing ideas with a partner or in a small group.

3   Apply(Paired task):

Pupils work in pairs to activate prior learning/discuss quickly what they already know about, eg volcanoes.

Pupils should read the Text 3 – Volcanic Eruption text and highlight specialist nouns in one colour and action verbs in another colour. They should use the subheadings in the text to help them label the diagram on the activity sheet.

Pupils are able to present their learning of a volcanic eruption using an ideas map/diagram. Pupils should then share how they worked through the task and importantly, what they did when they found the text difficult to understand.

4   Secure (Independent working):

Pupils work independently to read Text 4 (Jade Burial Suits).

http://www.reading.org/Libraries/book-supplements/bk497-text-jade-burial-suits.pdf

They should present their learning in a format of their choosing and share the three main strategies they used to help them understand the text.

Plenary – teacher checks learning class by recapping how pupils have learned how to use different strategies to help them understand what they read.

Next steps/Consolidation of learning – teaching of how different kinds of texts require different strategies

Key vocabulary:

ideas map
concept map
grid
headings
subheadings
timeline
diagram
irrelevant
notes

Resources:

mini whiteboards
small blank cards
board or flipchart
texts

Evidence of pupil achievement:

Pupils will be able to use strategies which can help them understand more difficult/a range of different texts.

Key Stage 3 National Strategy Teaching Reading (Ref DfES 0104/2003, Crown Copyright).

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Text 1

Mercury

Mercury is the closest planet to the Sun. The orbit, or path, it takes around the Sun is not in a circle like Earth. The path it takes is called an ellipse, which is like a circle that has been stretched out. For this reason, the distance from Mercury to the Sun varies from about 27 million miles at its closest, to about 41 million miles at its furthest.

Mercury races around the Sun faster than any other planet. A Mercurian year (the time it takes for the planet to go once around the Sun) is only 88 days, while our year on Earth is 365 days. Mercury does not spin as fast as Earth, though, so a Mercurian day (the time it takes to rotate once) is 59 Earth days!

Mercury is the second smallest planet in the solar system. Pluto is the only planet that is smaller. Earth is about 7,200 miles in diameter, while tiny Mercury is less than half that size at about 3,000 miles in diameter. Put another way, if Earth was the size of a baseball, Mercury would be a little smaller than a ping-pong ball. Mercury is so small that Ganymede, one of Jupiter's moons, and Titan, one of Saturn's moons, are both larger.

Mercury is named for the Roman god of commerce and patron of thieves. It may have gotten this name because of the way it quickly appears and disappears from our view.

Mercury is one of the rocky planets of the solar system, along with Earth and Venus. Mercury is made up mostly of iron, with a thin rocky layer on the planet surface.

If you look at a picture, you will see that there are many craters on its surface. The planet has been hit many, many times through the years by asteroids and other objects. These impacts are responsible for all the craters on the surface. Earth probably had this many craters at one time, but our weather has worn them down over the years.

The weather on Mercury varies from extremely hot to extremely cold. If you were on the side of the planet facing towards the Sun, you would quickly melt, as the temperature would be around 700 degrees! The 'day-time' temperature on Mercury varies, depending on how close it is to the Sun. At the other extreme, the temperature on the 'night-time' side of the planet (the side away from the Sun) can be over 300 degrees below zero! Mercury is not a very pleasant place.

Source: http://www.dustbunny.com/afk/planets/mercury/mercury.htm

Teaching reading | Pupil booklet

17

Concept map for Mercury

the Sun

the surface

the Roman god of commerce
and patron of thieves

every 88 days

craters

Mercury

orbit

over 300 degrees below zero

mostly of iron

the Earth

a thin rocky layer

less than half the size

night-tirne
temperature

Teaching reading | Pupil booklet
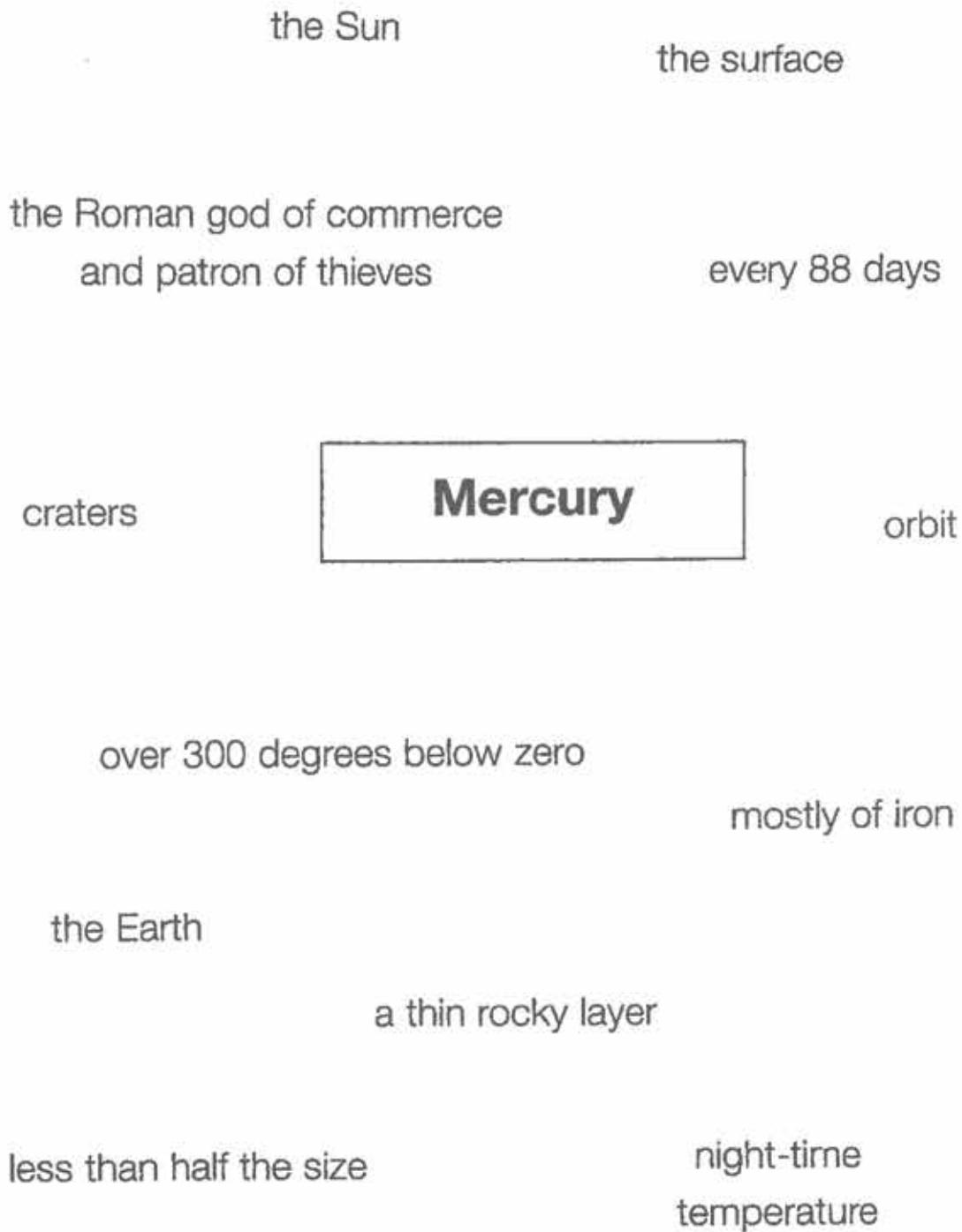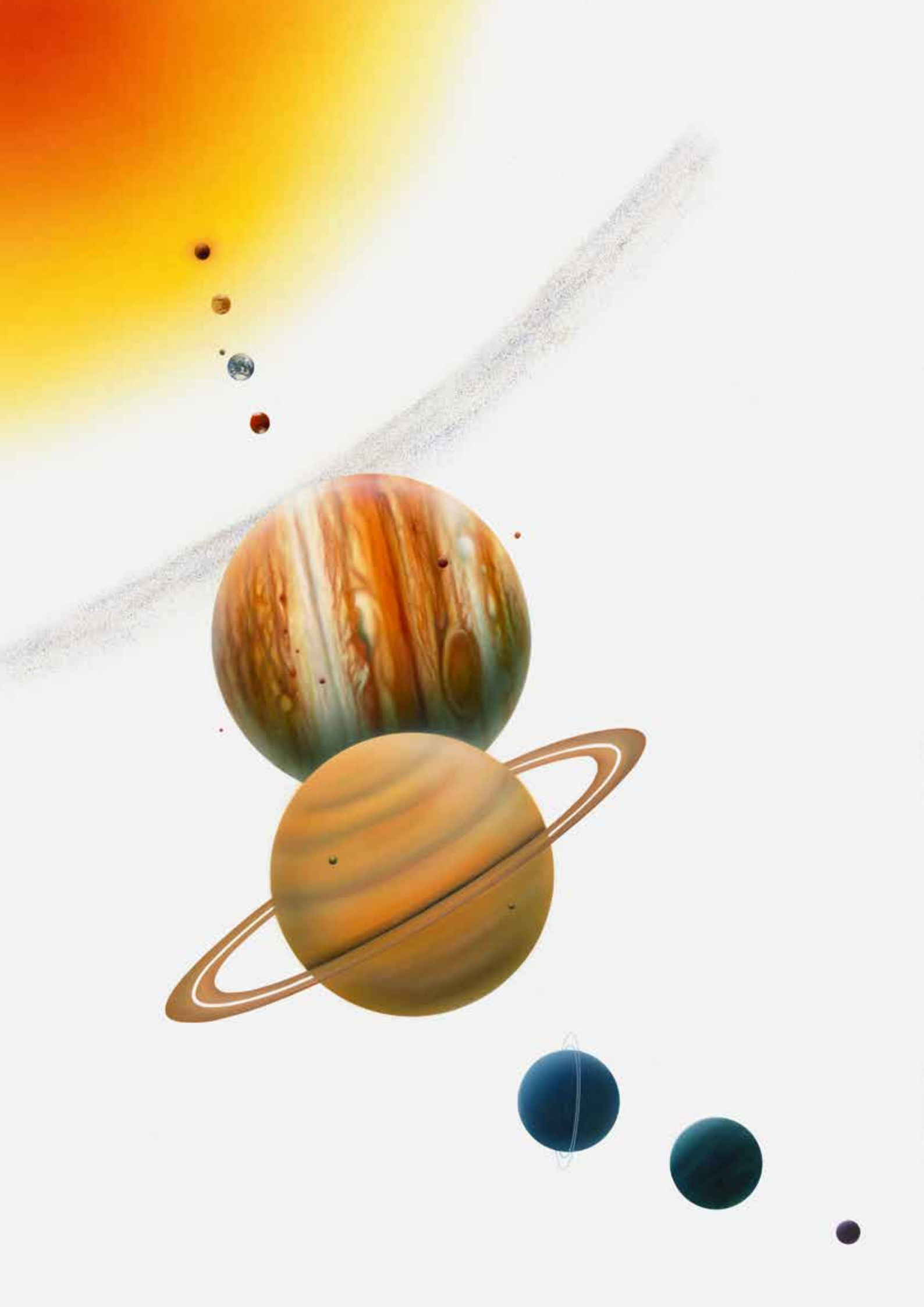
Volcanic eruption: text

Main Vent

The main vent is the path taken by the liquid rock from the magma chamber to the surface. It is like a pipe up which the lava can flow. Sometimes the main vent has branches which, if they reach the surface, may form secondary cones, or fumaroles.

When a volcano erupts, lava, gases and fragments of rock travel right up the main vent and are thrown out through the crater.

Ash and Lava Strata

The volcano in the diagram is made of layers, coloured light and dark grey. These are the layers of ash and lava which have been thrown out of the volcano during its life.

Magma Chamber

Deep below the Earth's surface, between 100 and 200 km down, the rocks are semi-liquid. In certain parts of the world there are 'hot spots', areas where the rocks are hotter than elsewhere. These areas are believed to be the sources of the magma which rises to the surface via volcanoes.

Crater

A volcanic crater is a funnel-shaped hollow at the top of the vent. It is formed as lava, gas and ash are blasted upwards from the main vent. Material falls back down to earth around the vent and slowly piles up, forming a rim around it. The inside of the crater is kept clear by the force of upward-moving material constantly removing any debris which falls there.

Ash and Gas Clouds

Gas escapes all the time from active volcanoes. It may be just steam (90% of all volcanic gas is water and carbon dioxide) but more often is water vapour containing dissolved minerals such as sulphur. During an eruption the volume of gas released increases considerably, tonnes of material being thrown into the atmosphere, forming a mixture of gas, ash and rock fragments. Along with the smaller particles there are often larger chunks of liquid rock, thrown high into the air by the force of the eruption. These pieces of rock cool as they spin through the air, forming rod-shaped chunks which are called 'volcanic bombs'. Dangerous though the bombs are, they are not usually the cause of most casualties. The hot ash and poisonous gases kill many more people.

Source: http: www.zephyrus.demon.co.uk/education/geog/tectonics/
volcanoes/comp.html.

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Volcanic eruption: activity sheet

In pairs:

* Read the text on page 18 and highlight specialist nouns in one colour (e.g. magma chamber, gases).

* Highlight action verbs in another colour (e.g. flow, erupts).

* Use the subheadings to label the diagram below.
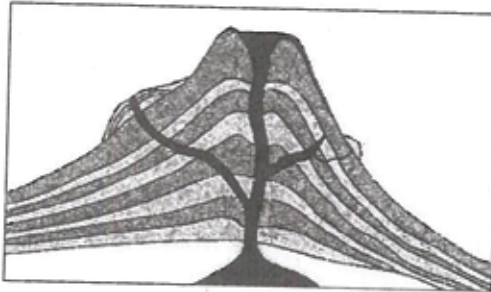
Diagram of a composite volcano

On your own:
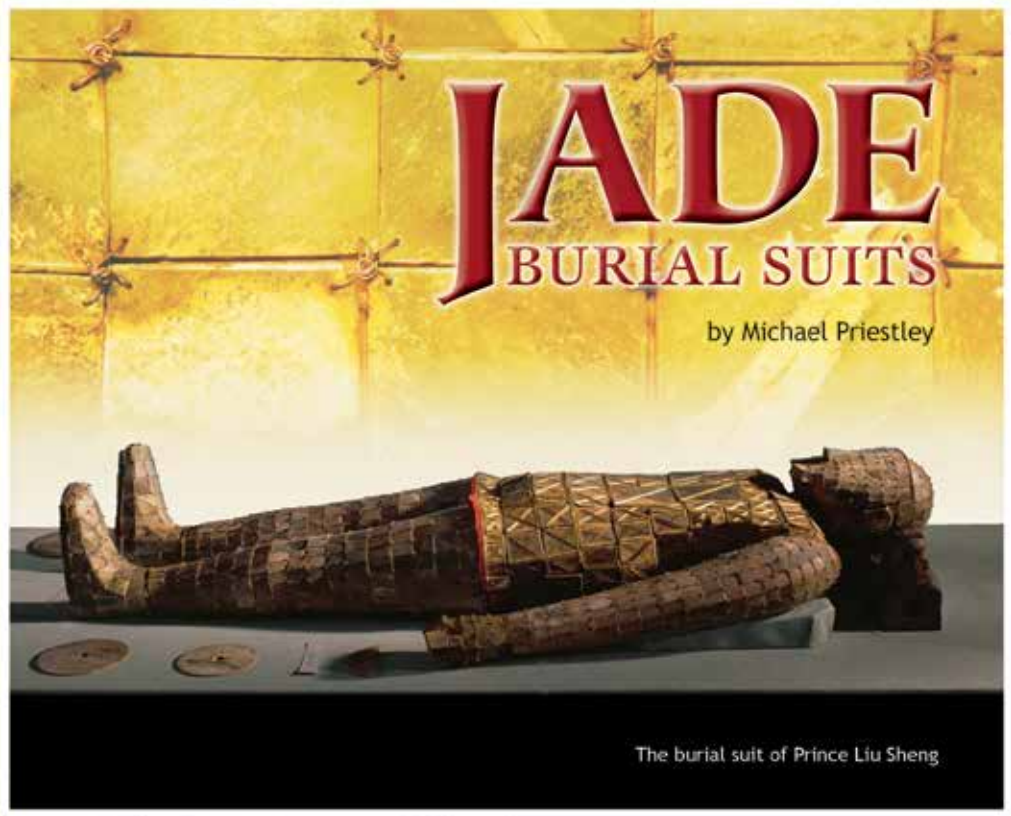
Use the diagram and text. Explain how a volcano erupts:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Teaching reading I Pupil booklet

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http://www.reading.org/general/Publications/Books/bk497/supplementary-material.aspx

JADE
BURIAL SUITS

by Michael Priestley

The burial suit of Prince Liu Sheng

Princess Dou Wan's burial suit

ONE AFTERNOON IN 1968, local farm workers in Mancheng, China, were digging on a hillside. As they dug into the soil, a gaping hole suddenly appeared. One worker nearly fell into it!

When the workers climbed down into the hole, they found a set of stone doors. The doors had been sealed with molten iron and could not be opened. Soldiers were soon called in, and they blew the doors open with explosives. Inside was a tomb filled with treasures!

TOMBS FOR A PRINCE AND PRINCESS

Archaeologists were called in next to explore the tomb. Based on artifacts found inside the tomb, archaeologists determined that it was the final resting place of Liu Sheng (lyoo sheng), a prince during the Han Dynasty. He died more than 2,000 years ago in about 113 BCE.

Workers soon found a second tomb nearby. It was the tomb of his wife, Princess Dou Wan (doh wahn). Archaeologists found some remarkable things in both tombs.

The tombs were large chambers dug out of the mountainside. Each tomb had an entranceway, two side rooms for storage, a large central hall, and a chamber in the back where the coffin was placed.

One of the side rooms (to the north) held jars of wine, grains, meats, and other foods. In the other side room (to the south) were chariots and the remains of horses.

The central hall was set up for a large banquet with wooden canopies and tables set for guests. Near the tables were pots, utensils, and clay figures made to look like servants.

At the back of the tomb was the burial chamber. It was lined with stone slabs. In addition to the coffin, it contained stone figures of servants, lamps, incense burners, and wine flasks. In short, the tomb held everything the prince might want in the afterlife.
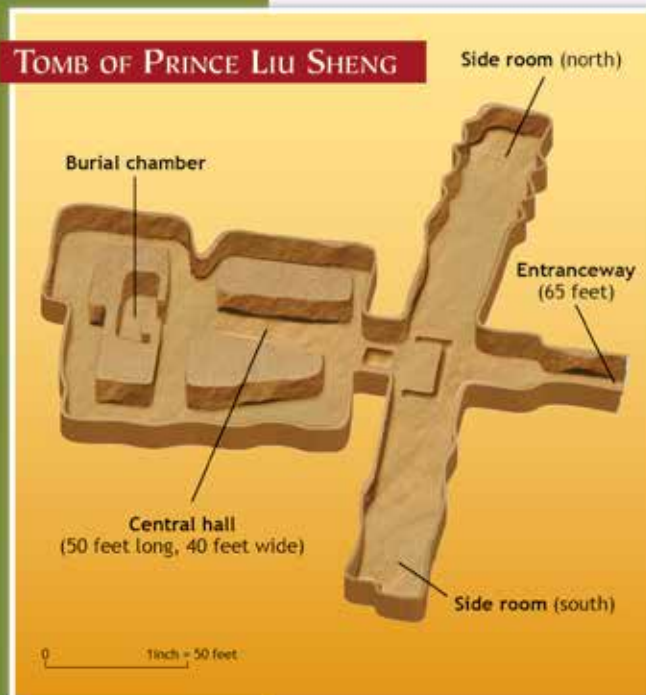
Bronze vase found in Prince Liu Sheng's tomb

TOMB OF PRINCE LIU SHENG

Side room (north)

Burial chamber

Entranceway (65 feet)

Central hall (50 feet long, 40 feet wide)

Side room (south)

0   1inch = 50 feet

JADE BURIAL SUITS | 2

THE HAN DYNASTY

China's kingdoms began more than 3,500 years ago with the Shang dynasty. A *dynasty* is a sequence of rulers from the same family or group. Some dynasties lasted a very long time. They usually came to an end as a result of war or other major events.

By the time of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–221 CE), China was a huge empire enjoying an era of peace. It had become very wealthy through trade, especially trade with foreign countries via the Silk Road.

CHINA'S DYNASTIES

FIVE DYNASTIES
Invent printing and paper money.

CHI'ING
Manchus conquer China. Europeans gain influence.

CH'IN
First centralized government.
Construction of Great Wall begins.

YUAN
Mongols conquer and rule China.

SHANG
First dynasty.

Wars and invasions

| 1030-221 BCE | 206 BCE-221 CE | 618-907 | 960-1279 | 1368-1644 |
| 1600-1030 BCE | 221-206 BCE | 220-618 | 907-960 | 1264-1368 | 1644-1911 |

HAN
Wealthy, peaceful empire. Buddhism emerges from India.

T'ANG
World's most powerful empire.

MING
Arts thrive. Western missionaries arrive.

CHOU
Uses iron and astronomy.
Confucius emphasizes education and society.

SUNG
Strong government and civil service. Invents gunpowder, compass.

Also during the Han dynasty, Buddhism was emerging in China. This was a religion that began in India and spread into China and many other places. The people of China began to practice Buddhism and adopted its central belief that people have an afterlife—that a person's soul lives on after death.

Rulers in the time of the Han dynasty began planning for the afterlife. Many years before their deaths, they hired workers and slaves to dig tombs for them. In those tombs, they placed everything they thought they might need after they died.

JADE BURIAL SUITS | 3

BURIAL SUITS

When archaeologists reached the burial chamber of Liu Sheng, they made an astonishing discovery. Prince Liu Sheng had been buried in a full-body suit made of jade. Dou Wan was buried in one, too!

In ancient China, jade was thought to have special powers. It was found mainly in mountains and riverbeds, and it represented the strength of the earth. It could ward off evil spirits and protect the body from decay. Liu Sheng and his wife were buried in jade suits for protection. This would be very important if the soul remained within the body after death. However, when the suits were discovered centuries later, there was nothing left inside them but crumbled skeletons.
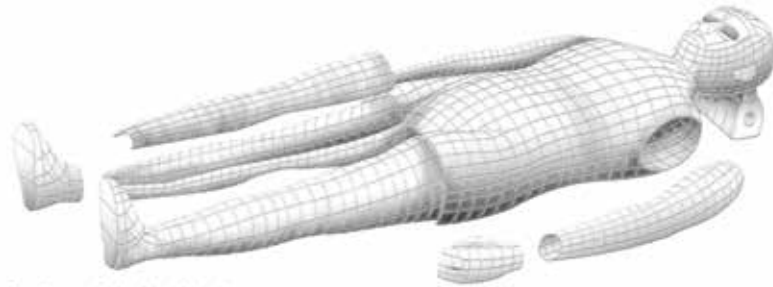
Sections of the burial suit

Each burial suit was made of 12 or more sections to cover the entire body, including the face and feet. Liu's suit was made with more than 2,500 pieces of green jade. Each piece, or plaque, was rectangular, from ½ to just under 2 inches long, and about ¹⁄₁₀ of an inch thick. Every piece of jade had holes drilled in all four corners, and the pieces were tied together with gold thread. In some burial suits, the chest piece had jade plaques glued to cloth.

Princess Dou Wan's suit was made with 2,156 pieces of jade. They were sewn together with silver thread, as befitted a princess.

WHAT IS JADE?

Jade (called "yu" in China) is a gemstone used to make jewelry and other objects. Technically, it is one of two minerals, nephrite or jadeite. Both are considered jade, but jadeite is less common and more valuable.

Jade is generally a rich green color, or greenish-white. But it may also be pink, white, red, black, brown, or violet.

Different types of jade are found mainly in Asia and Central and South America. The best deep green "imperial jade" comes from Myanmar (or Burma) in South Asia. In the ancient Mayan and Aztec civilizations of Central America, jade was considered more valuable than gold.

The word *jade* comes from a Spanish word meaning "stone of the loins." The loin refers to the pelvic area of the human body. Long ago, jade was thought to cure kidney diseases and kidney stones. (In fact, *nephrite* comes from the root word for "kidney.")

JADE BURIAL SUITS | 4

Close-up of a jade plaque tied with gold thread

During the Han dynasty, social rank was very important, and people's burial suits reflected their rank and wealth. Emperors, kings, and princes got gold thread. Dukes, princesses, and wealthy nobles got silver thread. Others got copper thread or red silk.

Only the wealthiest people could afford jade burial suits, though. Jade, gold, and silver were extremely valuable, and working with jade took great skill. An experienced craftsman would take at least ten years to cut, shape, and drill enough jade pieces for a single burial suit. One historical record suggests that more than 100 skilled craftsmen worked more than two years to construct the jade suit for Liu Sheng.

Close-up of Liu Sheng's suit

Because the jade and gold were so valuable, nobles did not want anyone breaking into their tombs to steal them. To protect their bodies and their suits, nobles built tombs with solid stone walls and sealed the doors with iron.

The custom of the jade burial suit began around 180 BCE and continued until about 222 CE. As the Han dynasty came to an end, jade burial suits were outlawed. They were considered too extravagant and too time-consuming to make.

JADE BURIAL SUITS | 5

Jade burial suits were mentioned in literature and folk tales for hundreds of years, but no one was sure they actually existed until the first was discovered in 1954. Between then and 1996, a total of 18 tombs with 49 partial or complete jade burial suits were unearthed. Only 8 of those tombs contained suits made with gold thread. Most of the tombs were found in eastern China within a few hundred miles of Beijing (bay jing). Today, you can see many of these burial suits in Chinese museums.

Jade dragon

CHINA'S BURIAL TOMBS

MONGOLIA

Beijing

Mancheng*

Dingxian*

Nanwei*

CHINA

Xuzhou*

Shanghai

East China Sea

INDIA

Hong Kong

Guangzhou*

South China Sea

MYANMAR (BURMA)

N

* Indicates the locations where tombs with jade suits were found.

0   250   500 Kilometers

0   250   500 Miles

JADE BURIAL SUITS | 6

Developing Vocabulary

Developing Vocabulary for Reading Comprehension

Why ?

Learners' vocabulary knowledge and in particular how completely they understand individual words, is important for their reading comprehension.

How can we develop learners' vocabulary?

It is quite easy to include regular focused vocabulary teaching in the classroom but it is important to follow these core principles:

- **Select the 'best' words for teaching.**

- Provide clear definitions, a **variety** of experiences and contexts for the words' meanings and help learners understand how the taught words **relate** to other words.

- Do it daily, repeat words often and use words in general classroom talk when you can.

- Record the words you have taught and revise them every few weeks.

Select the 'best' words

Choose 5–6 words from an interesting text.

These should be words that:

- learners are unlikely to know or to know well.
- are likely to occur in many different contexts.
- have good teaching potential.

Provide clear definitions

Teachers can find clear definitions in the Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's dictionary. These definitions put the word in a sentence that illustrates its meaning.

Definitions from this dictionary can also be accessed online.

Record and revise

Learners should note the words and teachers should help them revise.

EMBED WORDS INTO OTHER CLASS TASKS

Provide a variety of experiences and contexts

This is very important if children are to go beyond a superficial understanding of the words.

- Use the word to talk about different pictures.
- Help learners relate the word to as many situations as they can.
- Ask them to illustrate the words .
- Ask questions using the word.
- Act out words.
- Help them spot the word in other texts and contexts.

Relate the words you are teaching to other words

- Talk about synonyms, opposites and other words that 'go with' the word.

Teaching vocabulary in practice

These words will occur in other texts.

They may not be well understood and used by learners at the stage you are teaching.

Select the 'best' words for teaching from a text

The first thing he noticed was that someone had **tampered** with the window lock. **Fragments** of wood lay on the floor just under it. It worried him and he **glanced** behind him, feeling nervous. Then he saw that his books had been **jammed** back in the drawer as if someone had left in a hurry. He thought about what he should do and decided to **summon** help.

Provide clear definitions

Tamper – If you **tamper** with something you try to change it when you are not meant to.

Fragment – A **fragment** of something is a small piece or part of it.

Glance – if you **glance** at someone or something you look at them quickly and look away again.

Jam – If you **jam** something in somewhere push or put it there and you are not careful how you do it.

Summon – If you **summon** someone you tell them they must come to you.

These definitions come from the Collins Cobuild dictionary. Sometimes you have to reword them slightly to ensure that the children you are working with find them very easy to understand.

Provide a variety of experiences and contexts for each word, eg

Sort out pictures of things you might you might tamper with and things you would never tamper with, things that can jam and things that can't, etc.

Look at a picture of a scene and see how many words you could apply to it.

Ask questions such as ..Where do people get **summoned** to? Who would **summon** them?

Where would you **jam** things? Why would you **jam** things in?

Learners can draw pictures of things, eg that they might find **fragments** of (shells, glass, stone wood pottery)

Help learners notice and indicate when they hear the words in other contexts.

Use pictures when you can.

Use a variety of questions words to ask about each word, eg 'where' 'why' 'what' 'when'

Relate the words to other words, eg

Tamper goes with .... interfere, change, machine, problem

Jam goes with .. push, untidy, tight, difficult

Make mind maps of associations

Record and revise

- On the wall
- In learners' own files

EMBED WORDS INTO OTHER CLASS TASKS

If you want to know more ....

Useful books

1 Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., and Kucan,L. (2002 and 2013) Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction Guilford Press

2 Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., and Kucan,L. (2008) Creating Robust Vocabulary: Frequently Asked Questions and Extended Examples. Guilford Press

3 Clarke P. J., Truelove,E., Hulme,C. and Snowling,M. J (2014) Developing Reading Comprehension. Wiley Blackwell (see p62–71 for vocabulary teaching)

4 Stahl, S. E and Nagy, W. E., Teaching Word Meanings (2012) Lawrence Erlbaum associates

Helpful websites and web pages

Explicitly teaching words is one of a number of strategies for improving vocabulary . If you would like to read about others, have a look at this link.

http://eps.schoolspecialty.com/downloads/articles/Why_Teach_Vocabulary.pdf

This second link shows an example of a useful task for exploring the meaning of a word and some of its relationships

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson307/wordmap.pdf

(Read Write think Word map)

Developing Higher Order Thinking Skills

Developing Higher Order Thinking Skills

Using Bloom's Taxonomy

What do we mean by Higher Order Thinking?

Higher Order Thinking (HOT) is complex thinking that goes beyond basic recall of facts. It includes analysis, evaluation and invention, enabling students to retain information and to apply problem-solving solutions to real-world problems.

Why teach Higher Order Thinking Skills?

As outlined in Building the Curriculum 4, skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work (2009),

"Thinking skills across learning
Skills in thinking relate closely to skills in literacy and numeracy. Thinking allows learners to explore text and information of all kinds critically and to use them purposefully.

In Improving Scottish Education 2005–2008, HMIE states:

'Curriculum for Excellence sets high expectations of rigour. This means that teachers should plan consistently for appropriate pace, challenge, depth and progression and **consciously promote the development of high order thinking skills**.'"

A curriculum emphasising higher order thinking skills will better prepare students for the challenges of adult working and daily life and advanced academic study. One method of achieving this is through the use of Bloom's Taxonomy.

What is Bloom's Taxonomy?

Bloom's Taxonomy is a classification of learning objectives. Benjamin S. Bloom (1956) identified a hierarchy six levels of cognition, with knowledge being lowest and analysis, synthesis, and evaluation being highest. This was revised in 2000, to fit the more outcome-focused modern education objectives, including switching the names of the levels from nouns to active verbs, and reversing the order of the highest two levels.

Original Terms	New Terms
• Evaluation	•Creating
• Synthesis	•Evaluating
• Analysis	•Analysing
• Application	•Applying
• Comprehension	•Understanding
• Knowledge	•Remembering

(Based on Pohl, 2000, *Learning to Think, Thinking to Learn, p. 8*)

Bloom's Taxonomy

I can use the information to build new ideas	Creating	How could you change the plot…?
I can say what I think about the information and back up my opinion	Evaluating	What would you say is the importance of…?
I can break down the information to understand it better	Analysing	What evidence can you find to…?
I can use the information in a new way	Applying	What questions would you ask of…?
I can explain the ideas in the information	Understanding	How could you say that in your own words…?
I can remember facts about the information	Remembering	Where does it say…? When/why/how did…?

Bloom's Revised Taxonomy can provide a framework for planning that incorporates low to high-level thinking activities. As teachers, we tend to ask between 80 and 90% of our questions in the remembering and understanding categories. To address the balance and add cognitive challenge, we need to include questions that encourage learners to analyse and evaluate. These types of questions have to be pre-planned as they are not easy to invent during a learning experience.

How can practitioners use Bloom's Taxonomy to develop HOT?

By using Bloom's Taxonomy to pre-plan questions and activities for reading comprehension practitioners can engage students, helping them to become analysers of information and creators of new ideas. A set of question stems and potential activities are attached. These can be used to promote higher order thinking and questioning when using any type of text.

How does the use of HOT promote active learning?

The higher the order of thinking, the more active the role of the student.

Active Learning?

		Teacher Role	Student Role
H	Creating	Facilitates	Active participant
O	Evaluating	Guides	Active participant
T	Analysing	Guides	Active participant
L	Applying	Facilitates	Active recipient
O	Understanding	Demonstrates	Active recipient
T	Remembering	Directs	Active recipient

Where can I find out more?

Higher Order Skills Excellence Group Report for the Cabinet Secretary
www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91982/0114476.pdf

Research summary – fostering creativity
http://www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk/resourcesandcpd/research/summaries/rsfosteringcreativity.asp

Bloom's Taxonomy
http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic69.htm

http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Planning-your-questions-using-Bloom-s-Taxonomy-6072995/

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/cyberhunts/bloom.htm

Higher Order Thinking and Creativity
https://www.cliftoncollegeuk.com/docs/additional_info/Why_Develop_Thinking_Skills_and_AFL_in_the_Classroom.pdf

Question Matrix

The Question Matrix, designed by Chuck Weiderhold in 1991, contains 36 question starters. Proceeding through the matrix, the questions become more complex and open-ended.

The Question Matrix could be used:

- to help students create their own questions about a specific topic and to encourage in-depth thinking
- as question starters for teachers to elicit further information about a student's knowledge and understanding of a topic
- to formulate questions for a particular

		EVENT	SITUATION	CHOICE	PERSON	REASON	MEANS
To check what I know or need to understand I can ask…	PRESENT	What is	Where/When is	Which is	Who is	Why is	How is
	PAST	What did	Where/When did	Which did	Who did	Why did	How did
To learn more about it I can ask…	POSSIBILITY	What can	Where/When can	Which can	Who can	Why can	How can
	PROBABILITY	What would	Where/When would	Which would	Who would	Why would	How would
To challenge my thinking I can…	PREDICTION	What will	Where/When will	Which will	Who will	Why will	How will
	IMAGINATION	What might	Where/When might	Which might	Who might	Why might	How might

Reading Comprehension Questions

Here are some examples of reading comprehension questions for a fiction text based on the different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. These could be adapted to suit a non-fiction text.
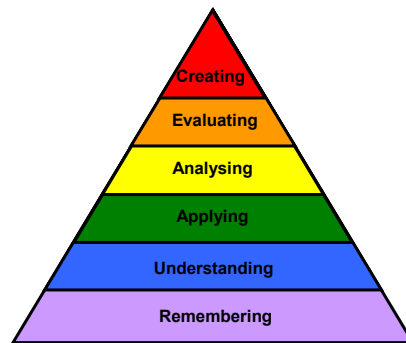
Remembering

- Who were the characters in the story?
- Write three things that happened in the text.
- Where did the story take place?
- When does the story take place?
- List six facts about the story.

Understanding

- Tell me about the main character using your own words.
- Explain the main problem of the story and how it was solved.
- Retell the story in three sentences.
- How did the main character feel at the beginning of the story?
- How did the main character feel at the end of the story?
- Draw a story board to show the sequence of events.

Applying

- How would you have solved the problem?
- Explain a time when something similar happened to someone you know.
- Would you have done the same as the character in the story?
- What three questions would you ask the main character if you met him/her?
- If the main character came to your school, what would they do?
- Can you think of another story with a similar theme or main character?

Analysing

- Who is the most important character in the story and who is the least important?
- Identify the different parts of story. (introduction, development, climax, resolution)
- Organise the text into parts and think of a suitable title for each part.
- Which things in the text were true and which were opinions?
- What things in the text would not have happened in real life?
- Compare this story to another one. How are they the same and how are they different?

Evaluating

- Did you like this story? Why or why not?
- Was the main character good or bad? Why do you think so?
- Which character would you most want to meet? Why?
- Why do you think the author wanted to write this story? Would you? Why or why not?
- Could this story have happened at a different time or place? Why or why not?
- Was this the best ending for the story? Why or why not?

Creating

- Make a story like this one but use your friends as characters in it.

- What will happen next in the story?

- Rewrite the story from another point of view. (another character or an object in the story)

- Write a different ending for the story.

- Pretend you are the main character in the story and write a diary about what happened.

- Create a book cover for the story.

PMI

A PMI is an effective reflection tool to allow students to analyse a text. Learners list the positives, the minuses and interesting factors. This analysing tool can be used to evaluate a text or to feed into a debating activity.

Plus	Minus	Interesting

Copy on pale lilac.

Remembering questions

Describe what happened after…?

Who was it that…?

Who were the main characters?

Which is true or false…?

Describe the setting.

How did the story end?

Copy on pale blue.

Understanding questions

How would you explain…?

What do you think could have happened next…?

What was the main idea?

Does everyone act in the way that _____ does?

Explain why the story has the title that it does.

Look at the picture. Explain what happened before and after the picture.

Copy on pale green.

Applying questions

Think of a situation that occurred to a person in the selection and tell what you would have done.

What would you do if you could go to the place where the main character lived?

If you had to cook a meal for the main character, what would you make?

Write/tell what you have learned and how you can use this information in your life.

Analysing questions

Which events in this story could not have happened in real life?

What was the funniest, saddest or most exciting part in the book?

If _____ happened, what might the ending have been?

How is _____ similar to _____?

Copy on pale orange.

Evaluating questions

What changes to this story would you recommend?

Compare two characters in the selection. Which was a better person and why?

Do you think ____ is a good or bad thing? Why?

Which character would you most like to spend the day with and why?

Creating questions

If you had been _____, what would you have done differently?

How many ways can you think of to…?

How would you improve …?

What changes would you make to …?

Can you design a … to …?

What would have happen if…?

Instructions for making Bloom's Question Starter Fans

Photocopy document onto appropriate colour of A4 paper to match category colours on Bloom's Taxonomy triangle.

Laminate and cut out cards.

Punch holes in bottom right corner.

Fasten each coloured fan using a 25mm treasury tag.

You should have 6 fans – one fan of each colour.

Bloom's Taxonomy

I can use the information to build new ideas	**Creating**	How could you change the plot…?
I can say what I think about the information and back up my opinion	**Evaluating**	What would you say is the importance of…?
I can break down the information to understand it better	**Analysing**	What evidence can you find to…?
I can use the information in a new way	**Applying**	What questions would you ask of…?
I can explain the ideas in the information	**Understanding**	How could you say that in your own words…?
I can remember facts about the information	**Remembering**	Where does it say…? When/why/how did…?

Copy on pale lilac card.

Can you recall….?
Remembering 1

Can you remember who, what, when, where, why, how…?
Remembering 1

Can you picture….?
Remembering 1

Who or what were the main…..? (or List 3….)
Remembering 1

Can you identify…?
Remembering 1

When/why/how did…?
Remembering 1

How would you explain…./describe…/show…?
Remembering 1

Can you find the word for……?
Remembering 1

Can you select….?
Remembering 1

Copy on pale blue card.

How could you say that in your own words?
Understanding 2

How would you compare/contrast….?
Understanding 2

Which statements/words/support/justify…?
Understanding 2

How would you summarise….?
Understanding 2

What facts or ideas or words show…?
Understanding 2

What do you predict will happen when/if…?
Understanding 2

Can you explain what it means by….?
Understanding 2

Can you explain what is happening? (and why?)
Understanding 2

Which is the best answer? (and why?)
Understanding 2

Copy on pale green card.

How would you solve/find/develop…using what you've learned? **Applying 3**

How would you solve/find/develop…using what you've learned? **Applying 3**

How would you solve/find/develop…using what you've learned? **Applying 3**

How/why is….an example of …….? **Applying 3**

How would you show your understanding of….? **Applying 3**

How/why is….an example of …….? **Applying 3**

How would you show your understanding of….? **Applying 3**

How/why is….an example of …….? **Applying 3**

How would you show your understanding of….? **Applying 3**

Copy on pale green card.

What examples can you find to…?
Applying 3

Can you explain what is happening? (and why?)
Applying 3

How would you apply what you've learned, to develop…?
Applying 3

How would you organise…to show…?
Applying 3

What elements/parts would you choose to change?
Applying 3

What facts would you select to show….?
Applying 3

What questions would you ask in an interview with….?
Applying 3

What would happen/result if…?
Applying 3

How would you use….?
Applying 3

Copy on pale yellow card.

What is the function of…?

Analysing 4

Can you work out what the structure of…is/would be?

Analysing 4

What are the parts/features of…?

Analysing 4

What is the relationship between…?

Analysing 4

What is the theme of…?

Analysing 4

Can you sort out the important information from the irrelevant?

Analysing 4

What evidence can you find to…?

Analysing 4

What patterns can you see in…?

Analysing 4

How would you group/sort/classify/categorise…?

Analysing 4

Copy on pale yellow card.

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How could you show differences/similarities?

Analysing 4

What inference/conclusions can you make?

Analysing 4

How could you show differences/similarities?

Analysing 4

What inference/conclusions can you make?

Analysing 4

How could you show differences/similarities?

Analysing 4

What inference/conclusions can you make?

Analysing 4

Copy on pale orange card.

How would you prioritise...?
Evaluating 5

Do you agree with the actions...?
Evaluating 5

Give arguments for and against...?
Evaluating 5

How would you prioritise...?
Evaluating 5

Do you agree with the actions...?
Evaluating 5

Give arguments for and against...?
Evaluating 5

How would you prioritise...?
Evaluating 5

Do you agree with the actions...?
Evaluating 5

Give arguments for and against...?
Evaluating 5

Copy on pale orange card.

What information would you use to support (and justify) the view…? **Evaluating 5**

Based on what you know, how would you explain…? **Evaluating 5**

What would you say is the value/importance of….? **Evaluating 5**

How would you prove/disprove…? **Evaluating 5**

Would it be better if…? **Evaluating 5**

What is your opinion of…..? **Evaluating 5**

Why did they (the character) choose…? **Evaluating 5**

How would you rate/evaluate the…? **Evaluating 5**

What would you recommend? **Evaluating 5**

Copy on red/pink card.

How could you change (modify) the plot/plan?
Creating 6

How would you improve…?
Creating 6

How could you change (modify) the plot/plan?
Creating 6

How would you improve…?
Creating 6

How could you change (modify) the plot/plan?
Creating 6

How would you improve…?
Creating 6

Creating 6

Copy on red/pink card.

What is the relationship between...?	**Creating 6**

Could you design/invent a new way to...?	**Creating 6**

Can you suggest an alternative/better way to...?	**Creating 6**

Can you predict the outcome if...?	**Creating 6**

Can you formulate (come up with) a theory for...?	**Creating 6**

Can you say more about the reason...?	**Creating 6**

How would you adapt... to create a different...?	**Creating 6**

How would you justify/test...?	**Creating 6**

Suppose you could... what would you do?	**Creating 6**

Bloom's Taxonomy

Colour scheme

Bloom's Taxonomy

How could you change the plot…?

What would you say is the importance of…?

What evidence can you find to…?

What questions would you ask of…?

How could you say that in your own words…?

Where does it say…?
When/why/how did…?

Creating

Evaluating

Analysing

Applying

Understanding

Remembering

I can use the information to build new ideas

I can say what I think about the information and back up my opinion

I can break down the information to understand it better

I can use the information in a new way

I can explain the ideas in the information

I can remember facts about the information

Appendix

Literacy Rich Edinburgh Leaflets

- Reading Comprehension

- DARTS

- Developing Vocabulary

- Critical Literacy

Improving Reading Through Drama

West Lothian

Summary of International Research on Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension Resources

Literacy Rich Edinburgh

Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy across Learning

2 Reading across Learning: an introduction to skills and strategies

'All practitioners are in a position to make important contributions to young people's literacy skills'

– Literacy across Learning Experiences and Outcomes

Reading Comprehension

Words in italics will be explained in the glossary at the end of the leaflet.

Reading Comprehension across Learning

Within Curriculum for Excellence, under the organisers 'Tools for Reading' and 'Understanding, analysing and evaluating', learners are expected to develop strategies to make the meaning of texts clear when they read.

Explicitly teaching comprehension strategies allows learners to engage more actively with texts and increases motivation. If they are given a range of these strategies and taught how and when to use them, they should be able to reflect on their reading with greater understanding, take part in discussion of their reading, offer opinions with greater confidence and think more critically about what they read.

The teacher's role in encouraging the use of comprehension strategies is crucial, through explanation, modelling, discussion of why a strategy is useful and when it might be used, and *scaffolding* in how to apply it. Learners should eventually be able to select the appropriate strategy independently in order to make sense of what they read.

What is reading comprehension?

The teaching of reading involves two processes – word recognition and language comprehension. Both skills are equally important in order to be a successful, competent reader.

- Word recognition involves the ability to hear sounds in words and to relate these sounds to the written symbol on the page.
- Comprehension is the understanding of words and ideas, beginning with literal comprehension and recall and moving on to more complex understanding, using *inference* and *deduction*.

Why is it important across learning?

Learners with poor comprehension skills will have limited knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and figures of speech. They may have difficulty in making inferences, picking out the main idea in a passage or in understanding the features of different *genres*.

Reading comprehension strategies – what the research says

Research has shown the following strategies to be most effective:

- Encourage extensive reading.
- Teach *decoding*, with an emphasis on *morphology*, the structure of words in a language.
- Teach the use of *context* clues and monitoring meaning.
- Teach vocabulary.
- Provide explicit work on sight vocabulary, ie words that are immediately recognised while reading (the, was, their, etc).
- Drill pupils on sight words, eg saw, there.
- Encourage pupils to ask their own 'Why?' questions about the text.

- Encourage reciprocal teaching, where the teacher models strategies and pupils are then *scaffolded* to help them become more independent.

In addition, further research has identified three important factors in the teaching of reading comprehension:

- vocabulary development and instruction (see *Links and Resources* section)
- interaction with the text
- direct teaching of comprehension strategies

(National Reading panel 2000)

Strategies to develop reading comprehension

Learners have to be taught a range of comprehension strategies to fully understand texts. The following strategies are all essential for good comprehension:

Before reading

Activate prior knowledge

- Help learners to develop understanding by making links between what they already know and any new information.
- Look at the book or story title, cover illustration or chapter heading and ask what it reminds them of.
- Ideas can be noted down, drawn or collected orally. Discuss key words and the memories associated with them.
- Encourage learners to compare a character's actions or behaviour to someone they know.

Predict what a text or part of a text might be about

- *Model* how to read sections of text to explain what is happening and use information from the text to predict/guess what will happen next.
- Encourage the reader to identify clues which helped to make the prediction and discuss supporting evidence. Ideas can be noted down on post-its and displayed, then reviewed and revised throughout the reading process.

During reading

Ask questions which deepen understanding

- Simple recall questions can be answered with explicit information from the story.
- Inferential questions must be answered by interpreting the content of the story.
- More complex questions require evaluation of the text and a response, following *Bloom's taxonomy* (see *Resources*).

Readers can be encouraged to generate questions before and as they read, modelled first by the teacher. When reading for information, questions could be recorded on a KWL or QUADS grid and answers added once they have been researched (see *Reading for Information* leaflet).

Create a visual image to link prior knowledge to new ideas

- *Visualisation*, drawing or drama can help learners make links between their own knowledge and experience and new ideas encountered in their reading.
- Readers can be asked to imagine a scene after hearing a passage being read aloud by the teacher, talking about the evidence presented in the text and checking for details.
- Information found in the text early in the story could be used to create a drawing of a character, with details added as the story progresses and more information is given.
- Maps, diagrams or models could also be created or learners could make a still picture of a scene from the story which could be photographed and comments added to show what characters were thinking or feeling.

Reciprocal teaching – predict, question, summarise, clarify

Reciprocal teaching is a discussion technique that uses four strategies to develop reading and understanding of text: predicting, questioning, summarising, and clarifying. The teacher and pupils take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading this discussion. Teacher modelling should always be done first.

Predicting, summarising and questioning have been discussed elsewhere in this leaflet.

Clarifying is particularly important when working with learners who have comprehension difficulty. When they are asked to clarify, they realise that there may be many reasons why a text is difficult to understand, eg new vocabulary, unfamiliar or difficult concepts. They are taught to be aware of the effect these can have on comprehension and to take the necessary measures to restore meaning, eg reread, ask for help.

Suggested activities to teach clarifying include:

* asking pupils to locate information or unknown vocabulary and make sense of it by finding and highlighting clues in the text, or looking for supporting evidence. This could lead to a discussion of cause and effect, or feelings and motives.

* writing questions to the author around a piece of text, eg Who is this? Why did this happen? This would initially be modelled by the teacher before the pupils try it for themselves, working individually or as a group. This can help readers engage with the text and differentiate between fact and opinion.

Teacher modelling of strategies and scaffolding

Showing learners how fluent readers monitor understanding and use strategies to clarify their understanding can help them to acquire the skills needed for good comprehension. The teacher thinks aloud, demonstrating the skills used by expert readers to show strategies used to find the meaning of an unfamiliar word or to speculate about character or plot, eg 'This is similar to another word I know', 'I wonder if she did that because…'

Pupils are then supported to use different comprehension strategies, eg taking a strategy modelled by the teacher and applying it to a new text, before going on to work independently.

After reading

Summarise

Effective summarising requires learners to identify the most important elements in the text and put them into their own words. This process helps them not only to remember what they have read but also to evaluate how well they have understood the information.

* As learners read, they should be encouraged to consider what important information they already know, don't know or need to know.

* The teacher could model how to *skim* a text and give an oral summary of short sections, then support pupils to skim and summarise short passages, possibly highlighting key sentences. Stop at regular intervals throughout a text to summarise the section that has just been read, either orally or in writing.

* Information could be re-presented in a different format, eg as a diagram, chart or labelled picture.

See DARTs leaflet for more After Reading activities.

See Reading for Information leaflet for more on KWL and QUADS grids, skimming and scanning.

Whole school approaches to consider

Each subject area requires learners to be able to read in specific genres, so comprehension strategies and skills should be taught across learning. It is important for all subject teachers to know the reading ages of their pupils and to ensure that they are presented with texts at the correct level.

Links and Resources

CEC materials

Resources to Enhance the Teaching of Reading and Writing – Anne Neil (examples of KWL and QUADS grids)

Edinburgh Thinks pack – Bloom's Taxonomy and Higher Order Thinking Skills activities

http://cec.intra.edinburgh.gov.uk/intranet/Business_areas/Learning/Programmes-initiatives/Curriculum-for-Excellence/info_3/team_2_3_1_2_1_1

Literacy and Dyslexia: Identifying and meeting needs – CEC publication

Vocabulary Toolkit booklets – GLOW http://egfl.net/ASL/ASLinEdinburgh/ASLinEdinburgh.html

Reciprocal reading

www.miamisci.org/tec

http://www.readingquest.org/strat/rt.html

www.primaryresources.co.uk/english/powerpoints/Reciprocal_Reading.ppt

http://www.justreadnow.org/strategies/active.htm

Secondary Schools

http://www.adlit.org – articles on adolescent literacy

http://www.adlit.org/strategy_library – strategies; materials

Knowledge about Language

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/knowledgeoflanguage/index.asp

Glossary of terms used

Bloom's taxonomy – see link to 'Edinburgh Thinks'

Context clues – context clues are hints within the sentence or passage that help the reader figure out meaning

Decoding – in reading, this refers to children's ability to read words, to translate the visual code of the letters into a word

Deduction – understanding based on the evidence in the text

Hot-seating – used in literacy work as a way of exploring characters' feelings. The teacher or pupil sits in a chair in front of the class, adopts the role of a character and answers questions from the group or class in role.

Genre – this term refers to different types of writing, each with its own specific characteristics, eg fairy tales, romance, horror, etc. Texts with these specific features – often related to story elements, patterns of language, structure, vocabulary – may be described as belonging to a particular genre. These attributes are useful in discussing text and in supporting development of writing skills.

Inference – reading between and beyond the lines; using information that is not specifically given in the text

Modelling – in literacy, this refers to demonstration of an aspect of reading or writing by the teacher

Scaffolding – the provision of sufficient support when concepts and skills are being first introduced to pupils, eg using sentence starters or writing frames

Scanning – a reading technique where the reader looks for specific information rather than trying to absorb all the information (see *Reading for Information leaflet* for a full explanation)

Skimming – reading in order to get an initial overview of the subject matter and main ideas of a passage (see *Reading for Information* leaflet for a full explanation)

Visualisation – forming a mental image from information in a text

Literacy Rich Edinburgh

Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy across Learning

3 Reading across Learning: an introduction to skills and strategies

'All practitioners are in a position to make important contributions to young people's literacy skills'

– Literacy across Learning Experiences and Outcomes

DARTs – Directed Activities Related to Texts

DARTs and Literacy across Learning

Within Curriculum for Excellence, and under the literacy organiser, 'Finding and Using Information', learners are expected to develop skills that allow them to select and sort information from a variety of texts, make and organise notes in a number of ways, discuss their findings and use this knowledge to help them create new texts. DARTS can be used as a dynamic way to support these outcomes.

What are DARTs?

DARTs (Directed Activities Related to Texts) are activities or teaching strategies that encourage learners to read, reconstruct, analyse and evaluate texts. First devised by Lunzer and Gardner (1984) to encourage active approaches to reading, DARTs can be used by many subject specialists across primary and secondary schools.

Why are they important across learning?

DARTs aim to improve learners' overall reading comprehension and support them in learning to read critically.

'They are **directed** because pupils are told why they are reading and what they should gain from the experience before they start. The activities are **active** because they make pupils think and make decisions.'

(DfES, 2004)

DARTs can be divided into two groups: reconstruction activities and analysis activities. These activities can be offered as individual, group or whole class challenges.

Reconstruction Activities

These are, by definition, activities that require the learner to reconstruct a text by filling in missing words, phrases or sentences (often known as cloze procedure), sequence text that has been jumbled or complete tables or diagrams with the help of the information contained in the key text.

Analysis Activities

These activities require learners to, for example, locate and categorise information, construct or label diagrams or mark specific aspects of the text according to a given criteria.

Types of texts that can be used for DARTs

It is possible to use any type of text as a basis for DARTs from traditional stories and poems to information texts, from comic strips to scientific textbooks. Therefore, using DARTS is a very flexible and economical approach.

Textbooks/Resource Books and Worksheets

These texts can all be suitable for DARTs activities. With textbooks, learners can lay an acetate sheet on top of the text to avoid damaging them. However, many schools now use electronic texts that can be printed

easily or, alternatively, learners can interact directly with the text online. Learners can also be encouraged to create their own textbooks, having consulted more than one source, and taught to summarise text in their own words and diagrams.

When choosing texts to use in their classrooms, practitioners can consult the following guide to help them judge the suitability of the text:

The SMOG Readability Formula

G Harry McLaughlin created the SMOG Readability Formula in 1969 through an article, *SMOG Grading – A New Readability Formula* in the *Journal of Reading*. This formula estimates the years of education a person needs to understand a piece of writing. Here is a simplified version of that formula, but for a full explanation go to: www.sph.emory.edu/WELLNESS/reading.html

Select a text

Count **10** sentences

Count the number of words which have three or more syllables

Multiply this by **3**

Circle the number closest to your answer:
1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36, 49, 64, 81, 100, 121, 144, 169

Find the square root of the number you circled:

1	4	9	16	25	36	49	64	81	100	121	144	169
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Add **8** = Readability Level

The lower the readability level, the easier something is to read and understand. A readability level of under **10** will be able to be understood by most people (www.amity.org.uk 'Choice of Material').

The Advantages of Using DARTs

Using DARTs allows learners to analyse, compare and evaluate texts encouraging them to become more critical readers. It is a strategy that can provide opportunities for collaborative work and exploratory talk and can be used to help both teacher and pupil tackle demanding texts. DARTs do not necessarily require a definitive answer but rather ask the learners to justify their choices and give reasons for their answers.

Since the learners are required to spend time problem solving and are actively involved in their learning, DARTs have been found to generate motivation. DARTs also allow learners to analyse the construction of texts in depth, looking at aspects such as vocabulary choice and sentence structure.

Consequently, using them in the classroom has been found to help improve young people's own writing. Crucially, this strategy can also help learners use the information contained in texts for their own purposes without plagiarising the text itself!

Using DARTs in the classroom

- **Text Marking** – The teacher gives the pupils a piece of text to read, for example a scientific text about how apples ripen and how fruit growers attempt to slow down this process (DfES: 2004). Working individually, or in pairs, the learners are asked to use one colour of highlighter to mark all the stages that an apple goes through before it ripens and then use another colour of highlighter to indicate the ways fruit growers try to prevent ripening. Similarly learners can highlight arguments 'for' or 'against' an issue in two different colours. The learners are then ready to feedback with this information to the rest of the class or use it to complete other DARTs, such as completing a table or a cloze procedure.

- **Sequencing** – The teacher can cut up comic strips, which are readily available in daily newspapers, and give them to groups of learners to discuss and reorder. They then have to explain their thinking and justify their decisions to the rest of the class. Comic strips are ideal for this type of task given their visual nature. Similarly paragraphs, steps in a list of instructions or a recipe can be cut up by the teacher and reordered by learners.

- **Diagrammatic Representation** – The learners are given a piece of text to read and are asked to either complete a diagram that they have already been given by labelling missing parts or they are expected to draw their own diagrammatic representation of the main information they have gathered.

Again a scientific text works well for this activity, such as a description of the stages of the water cycle. However, an extract from a fictional text could work equally well if it contains a detailed description of a setting. The learners could then be asked to create a visual 'map' of the place described using drawing or model making.

- **Cloze Procedure** – Cloze activities (where pupils fill in missing words, phrases or sentences within a text) can be split into two forms: targeted cloze and random cloze.

In targeted cloze, the practitioner can decide on the focus such as use of correct tense or forms of punctuation and ask the pupils to circle the answer from a range of possibilities, eg Goldilocks (eat, eating, ate) Baby Bear's porridge.

In random cloze, the learners can be confronted by an unfamiliar text and draw on their own knowledge of how language works to fill in the missing words or phrases, eg Sculptures are three- _____ works of ____. All kinds of _____ from hard stone to soft clay are cut, formed and _____ to _____ shapes.

DARTs and ICT

As mentioned previously, learners invariably have access to a great many digital text types online and a range of DARTs can be adapted to incorporate elements of ICT. WORD can be used successfully for activities that involve text marking, annotation, insertion and deletion of text or the formation of tables. Text boxes can also be used to good effect with DARTs that require learners to match, move, label or annotate text or diagrams. Drop-down menus can be incorporated to allow learners to select the most appropriate words or phrases during cloze procedure activities. To help with this aspect, 'Cloze Pro' (produced by Crick Software) is a tool that can be used to create cloze activities from any text in seconds. In 2009, each City of Edinburgh secondary school was sent 11 licenses for this software.

A Whole School Approach to using DARTs

Since DARTs are highly flexible and can be applied to a vast range of texts, they have excellent cross-curricular possibilities for enhancing reading skills. They were first introduced in science education and can be used equally successfully by many subject specialists including history, geography, religious education and modern languages practitioners.

One secondary school found it beneficial for all staff to compare textbooks, resource sheets and worksheets used across subject areas. They identified aspects of the text that they thought learners would find hard to understand. This shed light on the barriers the learners might have when they were asked to use these texts.

By finding or creating good examples of texts for young people to study and explore through DARTs, all practitioners can help develop learners' ability to read for a purpose, actively engage with texts in a motivating way and use talking and listening to increase subject learning.

Links and Resources

DfES (2004) *Literacy Across the Curriculum: For school-based use or self-study*

Lunzer, E & Gardner, K (1984) *Learning from the Written Word* (London: Heinemann)

Wray, D (1981) *Extending Reading Skills* (Lancaster: University of Lancaster)

Wray, D & Lewis, M (1997) *Extending Literacy: Reading and Writing Non-Fiction in the Primary School* (London: Routledge)

Wray, D (2006) *Teaching literacy across the primary curriculum* (Exeter: Learning Matters)

http://teachingenglish.org.uk

http://www.warwick.ac.uk/staff/D.J.Wray/index.html

http://www.sph.emory.edu/WELLNESS/reading.htm

http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/97968 – download the document, 'Literacy Across the Curriculum: For school-based use or self-study' (2004: DfES) for a wide range of practical approaches to the use of DARTs in secondary classrooms.

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/knowledgeoflanguage/index.asp

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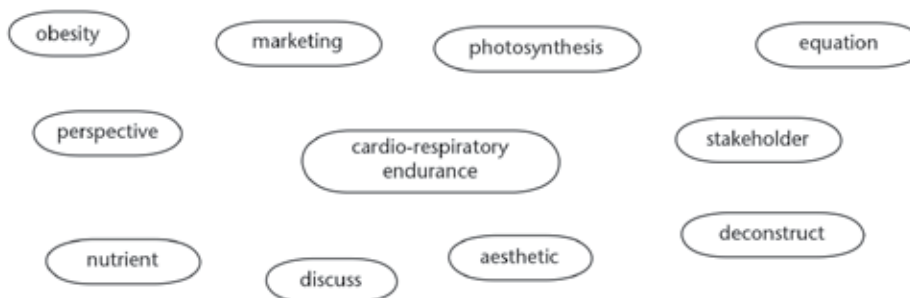## Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy across Learning

4 Reading across Learning: an introduction to skills and strategies

'All practitioners are in a position to make important contributions to young people's literacy skills'

– Literacy across Learning Experiences and Outcomes

Developing Vocabulary and Word Acquisition Skills

Words in italics will be explained in the glossary at the end of the leaflet.

obesity   marketing   photosynthesis   equation

perspective   cardio-respiratory endurance   stakeholder

nutrient   discuss   aesthetic   deconstruct

Developing Vocabulary and Word Acquisition Skills across Learning

Within Curriculum for Excellence, the Literacy across Learning Experiences and Outcomes, which are the responsibility of all teachers, recognise the importance of vocabulary in Listening and Talking, Writing and Reading. Experiences and outcomes relating to vocabulary can be found under the following organisers:

Listening and Talking

Finding and Using Information

Creating texts

Writing

Tools for writing

Organising and using information

Creating texts

Reading

Tools for reading

Finding and using information;

Understanding, analysing and evaluating

What are vocabulary and word acquisition skills?

Vocabulary skills are developed when teachers explicitly teach the meaning, spelling and pronunciation of subject terminology and unfamiliar vocabulary and provide learners with strategies to allow them to independently work out the meaning of new words, as they encounter them in texts, or promote an awareness of vocabulary through a range of other approaches.

Why are they important across learning?

There are clearly large disparities in levels of attainment in reading and writing and in the size of pupils' oral vocabularies. Without intervention, this gap in attainment grows wider as pupils progress through school. There are also obvious links between vocabulary and comprehension skills. Unsurprisingly, vocabulary acquisition is particularly important for EAL learners but all pupils will benefit from review and reinforcement of vocabulary.

When to teach new words?

Words can be taught before, during or after reading. It may be appropriate to:

- introduce targeted vocabulary **before** reading
- briefly pause and give a brief explanation of words **during** reading, without interrupting the flow of the text
- fully teach the meanings of targeted words **after** reading

Choice of words to teach – There are no fixed rules. Teachers should be aware that pupils may need support not only with specialist terminology, but also with words they will encounter far more frequently across learning. These questions may help teachers select words:

- Is it a generally useful word that pupils are likely to encounter across learning?
- Can the meaning be explained in everyday language, using words and concepts which are familiar to pupils?
- Is its instruction necessary for comprehension of text being read?

Answering yes to all or most of these may indicate that a word is suitable for in-depth teaching.

Features of an effective vocabulary programme

- instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words and learners' own ability to express themselves
- instruction in independent word learning strategies
- enhanced awareness and interest in words in general
- wide and extensive reading to expand word knowledge

Instruction in specific words

In-depth teaching of vocabulary is highly effective but learners need to see vocabulary in real texts and in rich contexts rather than in isolated vocabulary drills or lists.

Word Definitions

Clear and accessible definitions are an important tool for teaching new words. The Collins Co-Build Dictionary is one useful source of 'pupil-friendly' definitions.

Word-play activities

Learners need to practise using the words and to be actively involved in using and thinking about word meanings. Therefore, thought provoking, playful and interactive follow up is required to give learners short and lively opportunities to interact with new words. Discussion, repetition and revision are key to learners fully understanding and using a new word.

Repeated exposure to new words in more than one context will help to consolidate word learning. Personal dictionaries or a dedicated page in planners or diaries can be an effective tool for collecting new vocabulary.

Examples of classroom activities could be:

Syllables or letters in wrong order

Finish my sentence …

Multiple choice meanings

I'm going to describe some situations … if correct – say the target word (eg aesthetic)

Ask questions that require learners to apply the word's meaning in their answer

Ask questions that encourage learners to use the word to describe their own experiences. Have you ever…?

Ask a yes/no question using two new target words in one sentence

Cloze sentences – fill in the gaps (eg using Cloze Pro software)

Spelling (eg using Starspell software or websites such as www.spellingcity.com)

True/false statements using new words

List words with opposite meanings

Get pupils to create similar questions or tests for each other

Sort words into categories (depending on topic), eg Geography – Water/Landforms

Drama activities to mime a verb or adverb, pulling facial expressions to show an emotion

Ask pupils to draw a visual representation of the word that will help them remember it

Ask pupils to create colourful posters with the word, its meaning and a picture

Create a class database of words, word wall or personal dictionary

Once a class has learned a new word, points/stickers/praise stamp (whatever reward the teacher or school uses) for anyone who can use it appropriately in their work within the next week

Choose a department or school 'Word of the Week' which is taught and promoted by staff across all year groups

Always finish by asking a question which forces learners to say the new word again.

Visual prompts are also helpful in teaching and reinforcing words and their meanings, for example:

- Graphic organisers – maps, mind maps, webs and grids can help show how words are related
- Use of photographs, clipart, diagrams and other visuals when words are being taught
- Ask learners to cut out magazine pictures or images from the internet to show their understanding of a new word or to draw their own graphic representation of the meaning

Independent word learning strategies

If these strategies are promoted across a school they will help to foster independence in learners and help them to apply these skills across the curriculum.

Word part analysis

Pupils can be taught how to derive the word's meaning by analysing its meaningful parts – *prefix, suffix, root,* etc. With practice, they may be able to independently apply this word learning strategy as they read other texts.

Contextual analysis

Pupils can be taught how to *infer* the meaning of some words by looking at the context around the word for clues to its meaning.

Enhanced awareness and interest in words in general

Some schools have launched a 'Word of the Week' campaign, where pupils nominate words they feel would be useful. These words and their meanings are displayed and reinforced across the school. Pupils are then awarded house points or a merit for using the word correctly within a classroom. Personal dictionaries, glossaries, word banks, etc can also promote an interest in words.

Wide and extensive reading

This can be promoted by:

- the school and local library (and the city wide Library and Information Resource)
- reading weeks – where every class reads for a percentage of the day/every period
- teacher reading aloud in class
- quizzes, competitions and readathons
- staff modelling and discussing their own reading tastes
- photos of staff's faces hidden behind their favourite book
- reading groups and paired reading
- audio books
- author/celebrity visits as role models for reading
- literacy events for parents

References and further reading

Afasic (2009) *Including children with speech, language and communication difficulties in secondary school* (especially p 49–57). 2nd Edition, Afasic

Beck, I, McKeown, M & Kucan, L (2002) *Bringing words to life*. New York: Guilford Press

Diamond, L & Gutlohn, L (2006) *Vocabulary Handbook*, Baltimore, Maryland: Paul H. Brooks Publishing Company

Graves, M (2006) *The vocabulary book: learning and instruction*. Teachers College Press, New York, NY

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/knowledgeoflanguage/index.asp

Glossary

prefix – not a word but attached to the beginning of a word to modify its meaning. For example – 'un' meaning 'not' in unfinished

suffix – a letter or group of letters added at the end of a word to form another word. For example – 'ly' in quickly

root – basic meaningful part of a word that is left when any prefixes or suffixes are removed. For example – unjustly > just = root word

infer – to conclude something from reasoning.

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Literacy Rich Edinburgh

Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy across Learning

1 Reading across Learning: an introduction to skills and strategies

'All practitioners are in a position to make important contributions to young people's literacy skills'

– Literacy across Learning Experiences and Outcomes

Critical Literacy

Words in italics will be explained in the glossary at the end of the leaflet.

Critical Literacy across Learning

Critical literacy has been identified as a key area in supporting Curriculum for Excellence.

'Children and young people not only need to be able to read for information: they also need to be able to work out what trust they should place on the information and to identify when and how people are aiming to persuade or influence them.'

Literacy and English: Principles and Practice (Education Scotland)

In Curriculum for Excellence, experiences and outcomes relating to critical literacy can be found under the following organisers of Literacy and English:

* Finding and Using Information includes critical literacy skills.
* Understanding, Analysing and Evaluating statements encourage progression in understanding of texts, developing not only literal understanding but also higher order skills.

What is critical literacy?

Critical literacy involves pupils in reading, listening to or watching *texts* in order to question the underlying attitudes, values and beliefs contained in them. The reader is not only encouraged to examine what is in the text, but also to consider what is left out.

Many pupils read, watch or listen without questioning the text or analysing the author's viewpoint. It is important to provide them with the language and skills needed to *analyse* texts and to encourage them to ask questions, eg How do I know if I should believe this or not? What evidence is there for the claims this author makes? Can I trust what I read?

Why is it important across learning?

Pupils can be made aware of the ways texts can try to persuade them to think or act in a certain way and know how to resist such persuasion. They can be taught to examine their own and others' points of view and to clarify issues that are important to them.

Critical literacy can raise awareness that language can help to effect social change and make the world a fairer place. It allows pupils to recognise and challenge how their language and lives are portrayed through texts and to value cultural and social differences.

Key Concepts of Critical Literacy

* All *narrative texts* are constructions.
  How is this text like, or unlike, real life? What is its message?
* Texts contain beliefs and value messages.
  What do you think the author wants you to think, feel or do? From whose point of view is it told?
* Reading is an interaction between readers and texts.
  What does the text make you think?

- Texts have commercial, ideological and political interests.
  Who benefits from this text? Who does not?
- *Genres* have their own unique characteristics, forms and styles.
  What do you expect when you read/view a picture book, magazine, blog, etc?

Some Critical Literacy Strategies

The Ontario Model of critical literacy teaching involves the use of three key strategies.

- **Problem posing** – use of this technique consciously encourages pupils to take a critical perspective. They are asked questions such as:
  - Who created this text and why?
  - Who is the intended audience?
  - How has the message of the text been constructed?
  - How might other people understand this text differently?
  - How has this text coloured your view of reality?
  - What lifestyles, values and points of view are represented or omitted?
  - Who benefits if the message of the text is accepted? Who might be disadvantaged?
- **Juxtaposing** – this strategy allows pupils to reach an understanding of a point of view. Pupils are asked to compare two texts on a similar topic, looking at the strategies used to influence the reader/viewer, show bias or author perspective.
- **Switching** – this strategy allows pupils to consider alternative perspectives and to identify what is present or missing from a text. Some examples of switching are:
  - gender switch, when pupils are asked to replace key characters with characters of the other gender,
  - setting switch, when the story is set in a different time or the social class of the characters is switched, or
  - emotion switch, when the pupils are asked to make the characters show a different emotional tone.

(adapted from McLaughlin and DeVoogd, 2004)

CARS checklist

Another approach to text analysis is the CARS checklist (Credibility, Accuracy, Reasonableness, Support), originally developed to evaluate websites. (David Wray *'Developing Critical Literacy: A Priority for the 21st century'*)

Credibility

Finding evidence to prove the reliability and authenticity of a text is important. Pupils could be encouraged to ask questions such as: what makes this text believable, or not? how does the author know this information?

They should be asked to check the author's credentials by finding biographical details on education and training, experience in a relevant area ,previous publications, etc.

Tone, style and competence of the writing can also give clues to the quality of information. Bad grammar and misspellings can give a poor impression of the author.

Accuracy

It is important to ensure that information is up to date, detailed and exact and to check when something was written, as the position may have changed over time. Pupils should also be encouraged to read more than one text on a subject in order to have a comprehensive picture. Opposing views should be acknowledged and information on subjects which change quickly, such as Information Technology, should be up to date.

Reasonableness

Texts should be checked to ensure that they are fair, objective and moderate. The writer should offer a balanced argument and acknowledge opposing views, while minimising bias. Pupils could look for examples of exaggeration, sweeping statements and conflicts of interest which might indicate that the information presented is unreasonable or unbelievable.

Support

Support for the writer's argument from other sources strengthens credibility. Pupils could be encouraged to look at the bibliography or to make sure that any figures supplied are documented for accuracy.

Check that at least three other sources corroborate the information given by the author. If texts do not agree, further research may be needed.

Classroom activities

- Pupils could be asked to bring in examples of everyday texts relevant to the subject area or topic, eg magazines, CD covers, games. Questions could be asked about each one to start a discussion, eg What technique has the designer used to catch your attention? Why do you like/dislike this CD cover?
- The collaborative activity 'Four Corners' encourages pupils to consider different points of view by allowing them to engage in discussion with those who share their opinions and those whose opinions differ from theirs. The classroom is labelled with four points of view – Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Pupils are asked a question and move to the corner of the room that best indicates their opinion. They have to give a reason for their choice, or to record this on a chart.
- Producing their own texts helps pupils to understand how texts can position people. Pupils could be asked to rewrite notices around the school, create their own school booklet or produce a DVD for transition stages.
- Newspaper reports on a current event from a range of tabloids and broadsheets can be used for shared reading. Pupils can look at pairs of reports and list questions they have about conflicting items. Quotations, descriptive language and ordering of paragraphs can be compared to indicate, eg point of view, bias, credibility and accuracy.

Critical Literacy and use of websites

- Look carefully at how information is presented.
- Look for bias and inaccuracy.
- Check who owns the site (www.whois.domaintools.com).
- Look for information gaps – what is missing and why?

Links and resources

http://www.wordtrack.com.au/lit/critlit.html

http://www.readingonline.org

http://www.edugains.ca

http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/english/criticalliteracy.htm

www.squidoo.com/the-ugly-duckling

http://www.readwritethink.org

http://www.criticalthinkinginternational.org/archives/2005/06/critical_thinki.html

http://caledonianblogs.net/nilfs/

http://www.ukla.org/uploads/files/resources/Comber2.pdf

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/knowledgeoflanguage/index.asp

Developing Critical Literacy: A Priority for the 21st Century

http://www.warwick.ac.uk/staff/D J Wray/Articles/critical.doc

Critical Literacy in Elementary Classrooms – B Comber, 2001

Glossary of terms used

Analysis of texts – Text analysis is the practice of reading a text with a critical eye rather than for entertainment, looking at the author's choice and use of language, style and tone.

Genre – this term refers to different types of writing, each with its own specific characteristics, eg fairy tales, romance, horror, etc. Texts with these specific features – often related to story elements, patterns of language, structure, vocabulary – may be described as belonging to a particular genre. These attributes are useful in discussing text and in supporting development of writing skills.

Style – the way an author chooses words, arranges them in sentences or in lines of dialogue, and develops ideas and actions, eg with description or imagery

Tone – suggests an attitude toward the subject which is communicated by the words the author chooses, eg serious, casual, formal, ironic

Improving Reading through Drama

A Guide for Staff

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Introduction

This document is intended solely as a guide to help interested teachers use an alternative drama approach to help engagement with, and comprehension of, texts. Some of these approaches may already be familiar to practitioners and all are already established drama activities used by teachers over a number of years. These activities are simply more tools in a teacher's toolbox of strategies. These activities are just often the starting points for interesting discussion and exploration of texts. I hope that you find them useful.

Thank you to Nicky Tonei and Marion Scott of University.

Drama as a Learning Tool

Teaching Drama can be thought about in two ways. The first is learning about Drama as an art form – how to use voice and movement; the study of theatre practitioners; characterisation processes and so on. This is the subject based study of Drama that young people studying for Nationals and Highers experience.

The other approach to Drama is that the activities used to help teach the art form can also be used to help young people engage with, and understand, other topics – that is we can learn about something else through Drama. The use of Drama as a medium through which to teach other ideas is commonly known as Process Drama.

Process Drama is about the process of working through content to reach new understandings. The activities themselves are also a way for young people to demonstrate their understanding in a different way to traditional paper and pen approaches.

There are a number of dramatic activities which can be used to engage young people with, or elicit knowledge about, a text. Each dramatic activity has a different purpose and the choice of activity needs to be matched to the learning intention by the teacher.

For the purposes of this project, activities can be broadly grouped into the following purposes:

✔ To improve engagement with a text.
✔ To understand plot or action.
✔ To explore future action or consequences.
✔ To understand deeper meanings, ie theme, subtext.
✔ To understand and evaluate characters – their background, intentions, motivations.
✔ To understand and evaluate setting in time and place.
✔ To understand and evaluate mood and atmosphere.
✔ To reflect on the text.

Aims

The aim of this project is to empower teachers with a range of Drama strategies to help promote students' engagement with, and comprehension of texts.

According to Curriculum for Excellence "a text is the medium through which ideas, experiences, opinions and information can be communicated." Text types can include novels, short stories, plays, poems, reference texts, the spoken word, charts, maps, graphs and timetables, advertisements, promotional leaflets, comics, newspapers and magazines, CVs, letters and emails, films, games and TV programmes, labels, signs and posters, recipes, manuals and instructions, reports and reviews, text messages, blogs and social networking sites, web pages, catalogues and directories.

The activities suggested here are mostly in response to literary written texts such as stories and poems, although the activities can be easily adapted to help shape responses to other types of text.

Desired Outcome

Teachers will be familiar with a range of dramatic activities to promote students' engagement with, and comprehension of, texts. This will be demonstrated by the use of these activities in schemes of work. Students' engagement and comprehension may be evidenced through observation, filming and written evidence such as posters, mind-maps, journals, diaries and blogs.

CfE Experiences & Outcomes

When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can:

*   communicate information, ideas or opinions;
*   explain processes, concepts or ideas;
*   identify issues raised, summarise findings or draw conclusions.

LIT 3–09a

To show my understanding across different areas of learning, I can:

*   identify and consider the purpose, main concerns or concepts and use supporting detail;
*   make inferences from key statements;
*   identify and discuss similarities and differences between different types of text.

LIT 3–16a

To show my understanding, I can comment, with evidence, on the content and form of short and extended texts, and respond to literal, inferential and evaluative questions and other types of close reading tasks.

ENG 3–17a

I can:

*   discuss and evaluate the structure, characterisation and/or setting using some supporting evidence;

*   identify the main theme of the text and recognise the relevance this has to my own and others' experiences;

*   identify and comment on aspects of the writer's style and other features appropriate to genre using some relevant evidence.

ENG 3–19a

Before Starting Drama

Classroom Management

The activities suggested can easily be adapted for use in the regular classroom. However, should you wish to use a dedicated Drama space you may wish to consider some classroom management concerns. For some students, doing Drama activities may be completely different to their usual way of working in a classroom. It can be quite physical and may initially feel like play which may result in difficulties in classroom management. It is important that any teacher wishing to use drama activities with a group makes clear their expectations that the drama space is a classroom like any other. There are several ways that this can be signalled to students, a couple of which are described below.

✔ **Signing a Classroom Contract**

The teacher explains the purpose of the drama work and indicates that it will involve working in a different way to normal. The students then come up with the rules or guidelines that they think will allow for successful and effective drama; ie we need to be respectful and listen when others perform. Once the list is complete, all participants sign the agreement before moving into drama activities.

✔ **Having an Entry Routine**

In the same way that having a routine to the start of a regular class can set the tone for learning, having a set procedure for entering the drama space can help to settle students. Lining up outside the room and explaining the procedure, ie bags and jackets in the far corner, come and sit in the circle in the middle of the room, can remind students that this is a learning space like any other.

✔ **Circle Time**

Sitting in the circle at the start of classes to explain the learning intention and at the end of classes for the plenary discussion is useful way of physically signalling to students that the circle is a space for thinking about our learning. It can be returned to during the lesson after each activity for discussion and reflection.

Drama Skills

There are a number of key skills which help students to engage in drama activities more successfully which in turn, help to improve these skills further. It is important that students are fully aware of the skills that will help them to attempt the drama tasks asked of them.

✔ **Team Skills** – Students need to be able to work together quickly and effectively.

✔ **Focus** – Students need to be fully committed to tasks and listen where appropriate.

✔ **Energy & Enthusiasm** – Drama is a physical activity with meaning often conveyed through the body – students need to be physically engaged and warmed up.

✔ **Communication Skills** – Students need to understand how to communicate clearly through both oral language and physical movement.

There are a number of activities which can be used to introduce these skills and their importance for Drama. After each activity, stopping students and asking them to reflect on the skills they used to be successful in each activity can help them focus on the way in which they need to work. A good idea is to dedicate the first lesson of any drama unit to introducing and developing these key skills. Thereafter, warm up activities at the start of lessons can remind students of these key skills before beginning any content work. The important thing to remember is that drama is being used here as a way of engaging with a text – team skills, focus, communication and energy are more important than performance skills.

Physical Energy Games
- To work on building up energy levels.
- To improve speed of reactions and to encourage fast responses.
- To develop an awareness of space.
- To develop the ability to work as a group.

Focus Games
- To encourage students to focus on the task at hand.
- To develop 'thinking' time.
- Example games: Wink Murder, Count to 10, Eye Contact.

- To follow and understand rules.
- Example games: SPLAT!, Cat and Mouse, Tunnel Tig, Port and Starboard.

Communication Games

- To understand the voice as a dramatic tool.
- To develop awareness of vocal projection.
- To learn safe and healthy methods of using and protecting the voice.
- Example games: Tongue Twisters, Impressions.

Team Skills Games

- To develop team building and collaborative working.
- To work together to reach a solution.
- To create trust and generate the ability to work as equals.
- To break down barriers surrounding appropriate physical contact.
- To encourage social integration.
- Take a step away from feeling safe, out of comfort zone.
- Letting go and putting trust in other people.
- Example games: Trust Cars, Knee to Knee, Catch, Making Shapes.

During the Drama Activities

The activities listed below are but a small fraction of the potential drama activities available. Many of the activities can be altered slightly to achieve a different purpose than that specified below depending on your text and learning intention. The value of each activity is not just in the task, but in the questioning that follows the task to elicit knowledge and understanding and to reflect and evaluate on the choices made. It is not a matter of going through each of the activities listed in order, but to 'pick and mix' the strategies according to your learning intentions.

To improve engagement with the act of reading.

Reading Three Ways

Sometimes students aren't keen to read long texts because they are poor readers, but a play script is often a good way for reluctant readers to feel engaged with not only the words but what lies 'between the lines.' A useful activity to get students to not just speak the lines, but engage with them further is to ask them to speak a particular line three times in three different ways, changing pitch, tone, volume, pace, etc. Through questioning students can then reflect on the effectiveness of each delivery and decide which is the most appropriate and why.

Choral Speak

This is an activity where the group are asked to prepare a choral (group) reading of part of the text. Students are asked to use volume, pace, emphasis and other vocal techniques to read the text in such a way which draws attention to the most important parts or conveys the mood of the text. Reluctant readers are helped by the group.

A poem such as 'Only the Wall' by Matthew Sweeney on the theme of bullying would make a suitable text for choral reading.

To understand plot or action.

Tableaux

A tableaux is simply a freeze frame image. It is a non-threatening activity which is often a way of easing reluctant students into showing their work to the group. A simple way of getting students to show their understanding of a plot is to ask the class to form a series of freeze frame images illustrating key moments in the plot.

News Report

Most young people are familiar with the style of news reporting. This activity involves students showing their understanding of the key events of a plot by reporting them in the form of a news report.

Caption Making

Caption making is a way of developing a tableaux image in more detail. After seeing a particular frozen image representing a key plot moment, students are asked to name the image with a key caption to encapsulate the moment.

Overheard Conversations

Key incidents in the text are recounted by two or more students in role, either as characters within the drama or outside the drama (ie neighbours, witnesses, friends)

To explore future action or consequences.

Conscience Alley

A student takes on the role of a character facing a dilemma. Either side of the character the rest of the class form two lines. As the character walks down the line the other students offer advice about what the character should do. After the conscience alley, groups can improvise short scenes comparing the different courses of action and compare and evaluate their results.

Forum Theatre

Forum Theatre is a type of theatre where the audience are involved in evaluating and deciding the course of action for the characters in the drama. Students could role play a key moment from the text freezing the action at an important moment. The audience then suggest an alternative course of action and the actors improvise the consequences of that course of action. That course of action is then reviewed by the audience and further alternative approaches are explored.

To understand deeper meanings, ie theme, subtext.

Analogy

Sometimes it is difficult for young people to extract the deeper meaning or theme of a text. In this activity the teacher presents each group with another situation which is similar in thematic content to the text being studied. Each group then improvises a short scene to the others based on this situation. By watching each group's scene, the class then looks for similarities and connections between all the scenes and their text to come to a shared definition of what the text is really about.

To understand and evaluate characters – their background, intentions and motivations.

Thought-tracking

Thought-tracking is an activity where the action in a scene is paused and a character reveals what they are actually thinking about at that moment. It can help students to think about the difference between what is shown and what is meant.

She's Behind You!

An alternative to thought-tracking can also help students to demonstrate their understanding of reading between the lines. Some students simply re-enact a key moment form the text, but behind each student is another student whose job it is to voice their innermost thoughts and what they are really thinking about each situation. This encourages students to think about the difference between what is said and what is meant.

Voice in the Head

A variation on thought tracking, this is where the thoughts of others are articulated. For example- the main character may be the victim of bullying. Around this character are three or four people related to them i.e. mother, teacher, bully, friend. Each of these people say something about or towards the main character. It is a strategy of learning that character is also conveyed through the actions of others.

Objects of Character

In this activity students invent an object or possession that they believe their character would have. In the manner of a theatrical prop, students then make/ draw the object. They then introduce themselves to the group in role and explain what the object is and why it is important to them.

Hot Seating

Hot-seating involves a student taking on a role from the text and answering questions posed by the group in character. It can be used as a way of demonstrating understanding of key events and developing understand of character and 'reading between the lines' as students may need to infer what a character is thinking or feeling or their motivation for a certain action.

Hot Seating Panel

A variation on hot-seating is using a group of students as one particular character – any of the group can answer a question, thereby relieving pressure on the students.

Hot Seating – Teacher in Role

Another variation of hot-seating but in this version the teacher is in the role of the character and the students ask the teacher questions. This can be a way for students to gain insight into a character's feelings and motivations in an alternative way.

Solar Systems

A solar system is a way of both exploring relationships between characters in a text and thinking about viewpoint. At the centre of the solar system in the place of the sun, stands a student representing the main character. The rest of the group then have to form the planets of the system by taking the role of other characters in the story. Their distance from the main character depends on the closeness of their relationship. It is important to ask students to justify why they have decided on a particular placing in the solar system. Furthermore, the solar system could be used to generate ideas for other characters out-with the text itself, getting students to consider how perspectives can differ on an event.

To understand and evaluate setting in time and place.

Defining Space

A simple activity is to create and define the setting. It allows students to demonstrate that they can pick out key details about setting from a text, but also to infer details in order to build the world for drama. Believing in the space can also help young people to engage with the drama activities in more depth.

Guided Tour

A guided tour is where the students take others, perhaps the teacher or perhaps other students, around the performance space that they have just defined and explain their reasons for their choices.

To understand and evaluate mood and atmosphere.

Shaping Mood

A way of getting students to think about mood is to ask students to use their body to physicalize the feeling at a particular point in the text and create a still image. The still image may relate to what is happening in the text, be a different scene which conveys similar emotions or be an abstract representation of a feeling.

Soundscape

A soundscape is where students use noises to represent the mood or atmosphere of a location. Each group needs to create a sound which represents their setting. The whole class then faces each other in two lines to form a tunnel. The sounds from all the groups are performed together whilst one person at a time walks down the tunnel with their eyes closed. Once everyone has walked through the soundscape, the effectiveness of the combined sounds are then evaluated by the group by questioning of how the sounds made each person feel by walking through them.

To reflect on the text as a whole.

Marking the Moment

Students are asked to create a still image which marks the most important moment in the text – followed by questioning to explore why this moment is important and its impact on the text.

Mantle of the Expert

Following their study of a text, students take on the role of an expert or authority – perhaps the author of the text – and answer questions from the group about a range of aspects of the text.

After Drama Activities

Questioning

The key to any successful drama work is in the questioning and reflection during and following an activity. Doing the activities is the way in to the text; the questions that follow allow the students to reflect on the purpose of the activity and demonstrate their learning.

✔ Use open questions to encourage more detailed responses from students, ie *Describe... Tell me about... What do you think about...*

✔ Use key question words which match the purpose of your question. Using key question verbs inspired by Bloom's Revised Taxonomy is a useful way of ensuring that your questioning of students moves from simple understandings and explanations of their work, to thinking more deeply by analysing and evaluating their choices.

Understanding – *Explain, Select, Summarize*

Analysis – *Compare, Identify, Categorise*

Evaluation – *Judge, Compare, Justify, Decide, Choose, Rate*

What is interesting to note is that through the Drama activities you have asked students to **create**, construct and invent new ways of expressing ideas – creation being the highest order skill in Bloom's Taxonomy.

✔ Remember to use wait time. The student may have shown their understanding of a certain idea in their drama work, but still struggle to articulate it in words.

✔ Rather than questioning out loud and "putting students on the spot" key questions could be put to the group on flip chart paper and the students compose a group response to the question, deepening their individual understanding whilst feeling more confident with a team response.

What Happens Next?

The activities themselves could be used as evidence of a student's understanding of a particular text or idea within a text. Alternatively, the activities could be a jumping off point for further work on a text such as an assessment, class discussion or even a piece of writing.

The Benefits to Students

Using Drama to help students to engage with texts is an approach which can work with all range of classes, ages and abilities. It is a matter of selecting the most appropriate strategies for the students involved.

Further Reading

There are lots of helpful books and guides on-line to help you structure Drama work with students:

'Planning Process Drama' by Pamela Bowell & Brian S. Heap (David Fulton) 2001

'Structuring Drama Work' by Jonothan Neelands & Tony Goode (Cambridge University Press) 2000

'Learning through Imagined Experience' by Jonothan Neelands (Hodder) 1992

http://dramaresource.com/games

A Summary of International Research on Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension in Upper Primary and Lower Secondary School

Reading for Understanding

Reading without understanding has little value; comprehension has to be the goal. Some learners start secondary school without the necessary literacy skills to access the curriculum effectively. These learners are more likely to become disengaged with education and those individuals, and society, lose out. The European Union's High Level Group of Experts Report (2012) noted that if Europe achieved its current benchmark of functional literacy for 85% of 15-year-olds, this could lead to an aggregate GDP gain of EUR 21 trillion over the lifetime of the generation born in 2010. The report defines functional literacy as: '**The ability to read and write at a level that enables someone to develop and function in society, at home, *at school* and at work**'. (p103, italics added, 2012)

Reading for Enjoyment

Research from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2002) showed that reading for enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status. Reading for pleasure could therefore be one important way to help combat social exclusion and raise educational standards. The National Literacy Trust is dedicated to building a literate nation and stresses the importance of reading for pleasure as one way to raise children's attainment in literacy.

Tools for Reading

The simple view of reading (Hoover and Gough, 1990) sees reading comprehension as the product of word decoding and linguistic comprehension processes. Both of these are strongly associated with reading comprehension (Tilsha, McMaster, Van Der Broek, Kendeou and Rapp, 2009), and it is valuable to emphasise language, but fluency also has a role which is not explicit in that model. Similarly, morphological awareness (the recognition, understanding and use of word parts that carry significance, such as suffixes and prefixes) has a role.

Strategies

The National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) looked at thousands of research papers and identified a range of effective reciprocal reading strategies.

- **Co-operative learning** – where readers work together to learn strategies in the context of their reading.

- **Graphic organisers** – such as mind maps or illustrations that allow the reader to represent graphically (write or draw) the meanings and relationships of the ideas that underlie the words in the text.

- **Story structure instruction** – from which the reader learns to ask and answer who, what, where and why questions about the plot and, in some cases, maps out the time-line, characters and events in stories.

- **Questioning (both generating and answering)** – the reader answers questions posed by the teacher and is given feedback on the correctness of their responses. The reader also asks themselves and their peers a range of what, when, where, why, how, who and predictive questions.

- **Summarisation** – in which the reader attempts to identify and write or express the main or most important ideas that unite or integrate the other ideas contained in the text.

- **Multiple Strategy Teaching** – in which the reader uses several of the above procedures for interaction with their teacher over a text. Multiple strategy teaching is effective when the procedures are used flexibly and appropriately by the reader or the teacher to elicit meaning from text.

In support of this, Davis (2010) looked at *just* the multiple strategies component which had been identified by the reading panel above. He examined the research, looking at effect sizes. He concluded that opportunities for **summarisation, clarification, prediction and questioning along with visualisation/construction of visual images** were important. He recommended that children be taught how to **preview texts** before reading; to create **graphic organisers** as they read and to **take the time to analyse and reflect** upon what they had read in order to develop new knowledge (ie learn). **He noted that many studies did not work towards developing independence in these skills**. He advocates opportunities for students to practice these skills in groups then finally independently.

Biancarosa and Snow (2006) looked at research on reading in general for middle to high school students and identified the following strategies as having an impact:

- Direct and explicit comprehension instruction
- Interdisciplinary literacy across learning
- Motivation and self-directed learning
- Text-based collaborative learning
- Appropriate interventions(for those who need it)
- Diverse texts
- Intensive writing opportunities
- Effective use of ICT
- Formative assessment
- Extended time for literacy
- Professional development for staff
- Summative assessment
- Teacher teams across disciplines (secondary)
- Coordinated literacy programmes – these may include the local community and other organisations.

Additionally, Duke and Block (2012) looked at the research in the 1990s around developing reading in primary aged students in the USA. They advocated six key strands: **kindergarten access**, **word reading skills, vocabulary, conceptual and content knowledge, comprehension strategies** and **outside-of-school reading**. They found that although there was work on word reading skills in schools, other areas were being neglected.

Kintsch's Construction – Integration Model of Text comprehension (1998 in Kucan and Palincsar, 2013) proposes that we use information in the text to construct the meaning of ideas in the text. In addition we accommodate these newly constructed ideas within existing ideas that we have regarding the topic.

Van der Broek et al. (1999) extended Kintsch's model further to explain how the mental representations were created. We make meaningful connections within and between texts, which leads to coherence.

- Referential coherence is gained when a reader pairs a reference to something in the text with the thing referred to. For example, 'he' = 'Charlie', the person referred to in a story.

- Causal coherence is achieved when a situation or event has been explained satisfactorily. This is when a reader can use connectives (because, so, as a result etc) to work out the sequence or chain of events in a text.

This model allows for the importance of background knowledge and cultural capital of the reader. This model also helps to explain the importance of collaborative discussions, in that the background knowledge available to the group is larger than it may be to the individuals. Through these discussions children will learn strategies but also content knowledge.

In summary, reading for comprehension is a complex skill. Models and research tell us that **word recognition, fluency and language** have important roles. **Morphology** (the recognition of word parts) can help with reading and understanding. Furthermore, learners can be taught **reading comprehension strategies** directly, such as **summarisation, clarification, prediction and questioning along with visualisation/ construction of visual images, previewing** and the creation of **graphic organisers**. **Conceptual knowledge (including genre) and content knowledge** are needed for this reading to become meaningful and there are ways of developing them. Children **working cooperatively from texts** can support each others' learning and increase motivation. Reading frequently and from a **diverse range of texts** helps to develop language and reading skills. This highlights the importance of developing a reading culture so that this activity is not limited to time in class. In addition, **practice in school outwith literacy lessons and graded transition to independence** enables youngsters to become equipped with the literacy skills they need for life.

References:

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Reading Comprehension resources

Research

http://www.miamisci.org/tec/introduction.html

http://fla.sagepub.com/content/29/1/65

Research summary – fostering creativity

http://www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk/resourcesandcpd/research/summaries/rsfosteringcreativity.asp

Muckle Reading

http://www.andrelleducation.com/muckle-reading/

On-line resources

www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk – Rapid Readers

www.bugclub.co.uk – phonically based reading scheme

DFES 94 page narrative reading resource

http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/4825/4/nls_y6t2exunits075202narr2.pdf

The Daily What – specially written daily news stories written for the 9 – 16 age group

https://www.dailywhat.org.uk/

National Archive educational resources

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/

http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/grolier/   (costs)

http://www.visualthesaurus.com (some free searches)

http://www.guthenberg.org/freetexts – copyright expired or copyright bought

http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/4825/4/nls_y6t2exunits075202narr2.pdf

National Literacy Strategy

Narrative Reading Unit

Blooms and HOTS resources contained in this document

Blooms' fans for remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, creating.

Plus, Minus, Interesting worksheet.

Blooms' question stems.

Bloom's Taxonomy websites

http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic69.htm

http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Planning-your-questions-using-Bloom-s-Taxonomy-6072995/

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/cyberhunts/bloom.htm

Higher Order Thinking and Creativity website

https://www.cliftoncollegeuk.com/docs/additional_info/Why_Develop_Thinking_Skills_and_AFL_in_the_Classroom.pdf

Higher Order Skills Excellence Group Report for the Cabinet Secretary

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91982/0114476.pdf

Free graphic organiser resources

http://www.worksheetworks.com/miscellanea/graphic-organizers.html

Create Graphic organisers – free

http://my.hrw.com/nsmedia/intgos/html/igo.htm

http://www.dailyteachingtools.com/free-graphic-organizers-w.html

Interactive organisers with teacher notes on how to use them

http://my.hrw.com/nsmedia/intgos/html/PDFs/KWL_Chart.pdf

KWL

http://my.hrw.com/nsmedia/intgos/html/PDFs/Word_Map.pdf

Wider Reading

Comprehension Instruction Through Text-Based Discussion by Linda Kucan and Anne-Marie Palinscar

Supplementary resources on-line for Palinscar book

Guide for Teacher Education and Professional Development sessions (including four sample texts)

http://www.reading.org/general/Publications/Books/bk497/supplementary-material.aspx

Other texts

'The Book Whisperer: Awakening the inner reader in every child' by Donalyn Miller

 'The Power of Reading' by Stephen Krashen

'Readicide – how schools are killing reading and what you can do about it' by Kelly Gallagher. This book is available free on line at:

http://andreahnatiukliteracycoach-goodspiritschooldivision.yolasite.com/resources/Readicide[1].pdf