



T&L Times

Edition 12

Welcome

Welcome to our second newsletter of Term 4 and a very busy one as we work hard to identify any learning gaps and fill these. This is really key that we carry out what we are trained for and continue to develop our learners academic skills. However, it is really important during this time that we also continue to remember that the important thing is to make sure that we look at both the social and emotional needs of our pupils too.

"What do you want to be
when you grow up?"



"Kind" said the boy

Quick Kagan

This week we bring you our latest Kagan strategy that you can try out in your classroom. A big thank you as always to Mark Nolan (Assistant Head at Rivermead) for providing these. This week is 'Talking Chips'

Description: Each pupil receives one "talking chip." The chips can be any kind of game token, or a pen, pencil, eraser, slip of paper, or any other tangible item. It is preferable if each student has a unique colour for his/her chips. The students are given an open-ended discussion topic such as, Where in the world would you most want to live and why? In order to speak, a teammate must place his or her chip in the centre of the team table. It is his or her turn to speak. Teammates cannot interrupt and must practice respectful listening. When he or she is finished, another student places his or her chip in the centre of the team table and is free to add to the discussion. When a pupil uses his or her "talking chip",



he or she cannot speak until all teammates have added to the discussion and placed their chip in the centre of the table. When everyone has had a chance to speak, each pupil collects her or his chips and continues with the discussion, using "talking chips" or start again with a new topic.

Talking Chips regulates discussion, ensuring that everyone participates and everyone contributes. Shy students, low achievers, and less-fluent students are encouraged by the social norms of the structure to fully participate and develop their language skills, too.

Teaching and Learning Talk

Each week our Teaching and Learning leads in our schools are sharing with you something which they think will help you to develop Teaching and Learning. This week we have a contribution from **Lorraine Cave-Brown**, Assistant Head, Maths Lead and Key Stage 2 standards lead at Hoo St Werburgh. She has recently been reading '**Back on Track: Fewer things, greater depth**' **By Mary Myatt**, which she highly recommends. Below is her blog around using texts to support learning.

'A room without books is like a body without a soul.' -

Sir John Lubbock

In our efforts to make things accessible to pupils we have sometimes made things too easy. This effort to make things accessible has led to the atomisation of materials offered to pupils. A worksheet here, a gobblet of a text there, a random activity supposedly to engage them, too often delivered without thinking about challenge or coherence. There is a pushback to this, and this is a good thing. If we are serious about an ambitious curriculum for all our pupils, we need to think hard about the resources we provide to make sure that they are really stretching them.

And so we need to turn to texts. This applies to most, if not all subjects - to paraphrase Andy Tharby, research lead at the Durrington School, we need to consider texts as the beating heart of the lesson. What do we mean by texts? It might sound obvious, but it is worth spelling out - whatever we are teaching within a topic, whether in primary or secondary, should have, as its main driver and resource, a text which opens up the territory for pupils.

Why should we use a text? There are a number of reasons for using a text as the basis for a unit or topic.

- It is an efficient way of conveying a lot of information and information is important because we cannot reason or problem solve without foundational knowledge. A text is the most effective way of doing this
- A carefully chosen text will provide the hinterland and background context for what is being studied
- The written word is denser than everyday talk. It takes effort, in a good way, to unpack this. A text puts appropriate cognitive load onto pupils.
- Texts contain tier two and tier three vocabulary. These are the words of the academic disciplines and subject specific domains. They are the keys to scholarship. If we aren't using them in classroom talk, our pupils will not have access to them. The paradox is that using a text will up level classroom talk when the big words and concepts are highlighted and discussed in advance of the text, or discussed during the reading of the text or unpacked later. The text provides the vehicle for increasing the demand and level of challenge within classrooms.
- A carefully chosen text is a reflection of the domain from which it comes. It is likely to have expert knowledge underpinning it - and this can be critiqued and debated. This quality of source material cannot be underestimated. It overcomes one of the main problems with downloading resources from the internet - many of which are superficial, often incorrect and have gobbletised the original knowledge as to be downright dishonest. So this is a call to honesty and integrity.

So, what's stopping us? One of the things that is stopping us is time - or apparent lack of it, in order to find appropriate texts. However, if we are going back to the principles of essentialism and have stopped doing the things that make no difference to learning, we will have created some time. Furthermore, if we were to add up all the bits of time which we have spent searching for the 'perfect' resource or activity, we would find that we have gained plenty of time. Time which can be used to find a decent text.

A further barrier to using a text is that once we have sourced an appropriate, high quality text, our main work is done. But because we are addicted to the curse of busyness, we might feel guilty that we are not up until midnight crafting power point, creating or sourcing resources. We need to overcome this urge. The paradox is that the sourcing, reading and using a high quality text will improve our subject knowledge. The work itself develops us in a way that looking for trite superficial materials on the internet can never do. This way of working requires a different mindset.

What are the pupils doing? Again, the temptation to be seduced by 'busyness' means that we have concerns about what our pupils are actually 'doing' when we shift to basing our work on texts. This is a legitimate concern, particularly if we have been encouraged to have lots of activities. The problem is that many of these have been proxies for learning. We need to remind ourselves that learning involves a change in the long term memory. Offering pupils texts is one of the most efficient ways of doing this. The paradox is that learning is not visible, so how can we get a handle on this? First pupils need to be 'fed' intellectually.

Then we help them to make sense of it, primarily through talk. Then they can do something with what they have learnt.

So how to use a text? Either the teacher reading aloud by way of introduction. Or, pupils having their own copy, if appropriate and if funds allow, or they could follow an extract on the white board (making sure that the font is large enough for all pupils to see). This is what might follow from using a text: in books - these are the words we found really interesting and this is why. Pupils talk together about the words that intrigued them, that they don't know what they mean and start compiling the key vocabulary and ideas.

What might follow from this is: so, this is what we have learnt - a brief summary, modelled through a visualiser by the teacher to begin with. And then pupils might copy this example into their books. Why would we ask pupils to copy something from the board? Well if done well, namely the teacher summarising what pupils' ideas are, then this is really their work. The act of copying supports learning.

Wonderful Webinars

Creative Education have a range of really good webinars covering a range of subjects. All of these webinars are free and can be booked by clicking on the link at the bottom of this article.

1. **Successful Home School Partnership for Delivering PSHE**
2. **Supporting Autistic Children to Return to School**
3. **Mental Health Leads Network: Anxiety and School Return**
4. **What teens need to know about sleep and how to teach them**
5. **How to be your school's autistic champion.**
6. **Supporting a Safe Return to School**
7. **Working Together with Parents and Carers of Children with Mental Health Issues**
8. **Eating Disorders: When to Worry and What to Do**
9. **How to Support Anxious Online Learners**
10. **Mental Health of Staff in School**
11. **Loss and Bereavement leading a whole school approach that is supportive and sensitive.**
12. **Beyond Disability—Why You Need to be Careful When Cutting Kids Slack**
13. **Taking a Whole School Approach to Nurture—What works for us**
14. **Engaging PMLD Learners Remotely**
15. **Mindfulness in the classroom - What worked for us.**
16. **How can schools and colleges support students who are gender variant?**
17. **Affluent Neglect: recognising and supporting**
18. **Practical ideas for Supporting children who are reluctant to return to school**
19. **Giving pastoral leaders a voice**
20. **Low effort, high impact teaching and learning ideas**



[A Growing Range of Webinars - Creative Education](#)



Worthwhile Websites

The UCL Centre for Educational Leadership have compiled together a range of useful websites to support teaching and learning at both Primary and Secondary level. They cover a range of curriculum subjects and are free to access.

The sites can be accessed by clicking on the link below

[Free online learning resources | Institute of Education - UCL – University College London](#)



Sixty Second CPD

Do something with desks

With many of our classrooms adjusted currently with all of our desks facing forward due to Covid restrictions; how can we make our desks more welcoming and also more useful to develop teaching and learning. Our 60 second CPD for this week looks at this very question.

Desks are obviously great for sitting at and for resting books on, but what else could pupils do with them? Try these alternative ways of using classroom desks to enhance learning.

1. Draw on the desks.

Most school desks can be drawn on in whiteboard pen which easily rubs off when needed. Pupils can make notes, calculate answers or draw angles and shapes on their desks.

2. Cover the desk in paper

If you're not keen on drawing directly on to the desks, throw some backing paper over them. Your pupils can make notes without being restricted by size.

3. Stand at the desks

For certain lessons, standing up at desks is far more convenient. Interestingly, I am sure there will be a fair few pupils who prefer to stand rather than sit at their desk. If it works for them, I say let them do it.

4. Tape across the desks for maths.

Using masking tape to create lines can be handy for identifying and measuring angles, calculating the area and perimeter or exploring types of lines.

5. Tape to clarify boundaries

When pupils share a desk, this can sometimes cause distress. Taping off the desk to create boundaries can help.

Why try this?

These ideas will help you to mix up the ways in which learning unfolds.

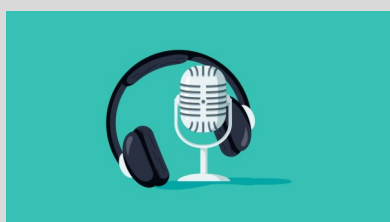
Top Tip

Consider what you keep on your desks. Pupils might need resources, but large quantities of these just get in the way.



Perfect Podcast

This week we have a podcast recommendation — [Sir Ken Robinson: Why schools need to tap into kids' talent](#)



There's something about the education system's evolution that constrains teachers, explains Sir Ken Robinson in this podcast where he also advocates for an education system which is sensitive to individual differences and values them equally. Ken is a British author, speaker and international advisor on education in the arts to government, non-profits, education and arts bodies. He was Director of the Arts in Schools Project and Professor of Arts Education at the University of Warwick, and is now Professor Emeritus at the same institution.

To access the podcast press CTRL and click on the Headphone picture to the left.

Digestible Documents

This week we look at some fantastic freebies which you might want to be looking into for developing your curriculum offer for our pupils.

Careers education

[Founders4Schools](#) is a free service that helps schools to arrange for founders of successful businesses to visit their schools and inspire their pupils.

Film club

All state-funded schools in England are eligible to set up an [Into Film Club](#) to gain access to thousands of free films available for after-school clubs.

Entrance to English Heritage properties

[English Heritage](#) allows schools to book a free self-led visit to one of its 400+ properties. Bookings are temporarily closed due to coronavirus.

Food education

[Pizza Express](#) offers free visits to its restaurants for primary school classes, giving pupils the chance to learn about cooking and different ingredients, as well as to make a pizza.

Animal welfare

[The Dogs Trust](#) offers free workshops linked to the National Curriculum for both primary and secondary pupils. Free online workshops are now available.

Solar panels

[Solar for Schools](#) helps to finance solar photovoltaics (solar panel) systems for schools.

Tickets to Merlin Group attractions

The charity [Merlin's Magic Wand](#) offers tickets to Merlin Group attractions to young people with disabilities or health problems and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

eBooks

The [Oxford Owl](#) website offers free tablet-friendly eBooks and resources for primary schools to support children's learning.

Potatoes

[Grow Your Own Potatoes](#), a project aiming to teach primary school pupils about potatoes, offers free potato growing kits to schools that register. Registration for 2021 is **now closed**, but you can sign up for 2022.

PSHE lessons

[Winston's Wish](#) offers free lesson plans and assembly content on loss and bereavement, for Key Stages 1 to 4.

Trees

[The Woodland Trust](#) invites schools to apply for trees to plant in their grounds. Applications for this planting season are **now closed**, but they'll reopen in spring for delivery in autumn.

Seeds

[Growseed](#) offers free vegetable seeds for science projects and school garden clubs.

B&Q community re-use scheme

[B&Q](#) runs a community re-use scheme across its stores, donating "unsellable products and materials" to be reused by local schools, other educational institutions and community groups.

Magazine

Children aged between 5 and 9 can get a free quarterly [LEGO Life magazine](#) subscription.

Sun awareness

Garnier Ambre Solaire offers teaching resources as part of its [sun awareness programme](#) for 3 to 11-year-olds.

Resource boxes

Schools can apply for a free [Hanson Box](#), which includes a range of resources including books, DVDs, activity kits, competitions and grant opportunities.

