

APPENDICES

DATA TABLE

No	Types of Idiomatic expressions	Data	Sentence
1.	Simile	2	1) “I go to see my learners <u>as more colourful thinkers</u> – I felt that I had given them a blank sheet to colour with their opinions (as a break from their typical English classes).” 2) “In fact, children with disabilities are determined <u>like everyone else</u>. ”
2.	Binomials	1	1) “Procurement Essentials is a series of articles from Crown Commercial Service (CS), the UK’s biggest public procurement organisation, to help you overcome common hurdles, understand key concepts, and make your life as a buyer of everyday <u>goods and services</u> easier.”
3.	Trinomials	1	1) “Taking sensitive approaches to bringing into learning has earned Sensations English British Council ELTons awards for <u>Equality, Diversity</u>

			<i>and Inclusion, and for Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action.”</i>
4.	Clichés	2	1) “...- <i>And it’s now possible to have hybrid meetings that combine the convenience of virtual with the familiarity of <u>face-to-face</u></i>” 2) “<i>As life returns to normal, but with some of us still anxious about the lingering presence of the pandemic, hybrid meetings can offer an ideal balance – providing practicality and <u>peace of mind</u></i>”.
5.	Fixed statement	1	1) “<i>Any teacher hoping to start or develop their use of GIS will find <u>plenty of excellent expert advice</u> and ready-made resources on the refreshed ‘Teach with GIS’ website.</i>”

OCTOBER 2022

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Dear Reader,



Welcome to the latest issue of Education Today. In the issue this month, we focus on SEND and the many aspects of its provision. In our first feature we hear from Jonathan Moore, Education Engagement Manager at SMART Technologies UK, who explains how technology in the classroom is allowing students of all abilities to prosper. In our second, Nick Gibb, deputy managing director at Willmott Dixon, argues that by adopting an 'all-needs, all-through' approach and designing educational facilities appropriately, local authorities can help mitigate these challenges and meet the ongoing pent-up demand, while in our third and final feature on the topic Jonathan Clarke, Head of School and Sian Talbot, SENDCo at Somersham Primary School, offer some practical advice on giving parents of SEND children a voice in their children's learning. To round out the features, we finish with two pieces on CPD – the first from Chris Read, the Head of the Centre for Professional Learning at Consilium Academies, and the second from Robin Macpherson, co-author of *The Teaching Life: Professional Learning and Career Progression*, who discusses how you can get the best from CPD.

Elsewhere, as always, we have news, views and our line-up of regular contributors, and of course our View from the classroom piece this month from Stonelaw Junior School in Donfield, Derbyshire.

Remember, we love to hear from you, you can get in touch with us via Twitter @EdTodayMag, as well as by phone or email.

Enjoy the issue!

Jonathan Swift
Managing Editor

In this issue...

04-10 NEWS

Selected stories from the UK education scene this month

06 FOCUS ON ONLINE SAFETY

12 WELLBEING

With Mark Solomons, Founder of Welbee

13 VIEWS

With authors Dan White and Hetty Steele

14 BESA CORNER

With BESA members Leadership Matters and Sensations English

16-17 VIEW FROM THE CLASSROOM

We hear from Catherine Robinson, Headteacher at Stonelaw Junior School

18 CONTRIBUTORS

With Edge Hill University alumna Jessica Booth; and Kirsty Bertenshaw

19 SPOTLIGHT ON SEND

With Joanne Gladders and Hannah Rix

20-25 VIEWS & OPINION

Featuring comment and insight from the UK education sector

26-27 FEATURE FOCUS: SEND

We speak to Jonathan Moore, Education Engagement Manager at SMART Technologies UK

28-29 FEATURE FOCUS: SEND

Featuring Nick Gibb, deputy managing director at Willmott Dixon

30 FEATURE FOCUS: SEND

With Jonathan Clarke, Head of School and Sian Talbot, SENDCo at Somersham Primary School

32-33 FEATURE: CPD

With Chris Read, Head of the Centre for Professional Learning at Consilium Academies

34-35 FEATURE: CPD

Featuring Robin Macpherson, co-author of *The Teaching Life: Professional Learning and Career Progression*

36-37 BUILDINGS, MAINTENANCE & REFURBISHMENT

38-41 IN OTHER NEWS

42-IBC RECRUITMENT

Selected job opportunities from talentedteacherjobs.co.uk

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BRITISH EDUCATIONAL
SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION

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Published by:

Datateam Business Media Limited,

London Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8LY

Tel: 01622 699128 (Advertising)

Tel: 07969 141997 (Editorial)

Fax: 01622 757646

Email: education@datateam.co.uk

Circulation: Curwood CMS Ltd

datateam@c-cms.com

Tel: 01580 883844

Fax: 01580 883849

Subscription Prices 2020

Number of editions per year: 11

UK: £52 Overseas: £132

The Publishers cannot accept responsibility for any discrepancies either in copy or between products and/or services listed. Nor can they be responsible for illustrations and/or copy for products which lead to infringement of copyright.



ON THE COVER....

The Holocaust Educational Trust is the UK's leading organisation supporting students and teachers as they explore the darkest days in our shared history, through our flagship Lessons from Auschwitz Project we offer students a "life-changing" learning opportunity with individual testimony at its core, ensuring the Holocaust will always be remembered.

► www.het.org.uk

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NEWS...



New free digital resources and training improve how teachers use geospatial technology in lessons

Esri UK has announced a major refresh of its flagship teaching resources and support for teachers, Teach with GIS, to help them improve how they teach with GIS software (Geographic Information Systems) across major curriculum areas.

Consisting of lesson plans, teaching tools such as videos, interactive maps, mobile apps and dashboards, events and training, the updated website aims to be the 'go to' GIS destination for those teaching ages 7 to 18. Esri's GIS software is powerful digital mapping technology, currently used by over 3,500 schools across the UK, helping students learn about geography and gain new geospatial skills.

"GIS has been on the National Curriculum for over a decade, making lessons more interactive and investigative, helping students to understand things more quickly but many teachers we talk to still struggle to use it," explained Katie Hall, Schools Manager at Esri UK. "The latest version of Teach with GIS is designed to help fix this."

"This is the first major refresh of Teach with GIS since it was first launched two years ago, designed to support teachers so they can integrate GIS into different lesson plans more easily and enrich their teaching," continued Hall. "The introduction of live lectures and a new training booking system will make it even easier for teachers to use GIS and bring geography alive for students."

"Any teacher hoping to start or develop their use of GIS will find plenty of excellent expert advice and ready-made resources on the refreshed 'Teach with GIS' website. One of the many great aspects of ArcGIS Online is its capacity to visualise change over time, so that we can 'see geography happen' – showing coastal erosion, for example," commented Brendan Conway, geography teacher at Notre Dame Senior School. "Career opportunities using geospatial knowledge and skills are increasing rapidly. The new website acknowledges this very effectively, with a range of judiciously placed profiles of people who use GIS in their work, demonstrating real world applications of geographical learning."

Teachers can also sign-up to Esri UK's free Education programme on the site, which provides free access to its ArcGIS software, teaching resources and training for all UK schools.

► <https://www.esriuk.com/en-gb/industries/education/overview>



Yorkshire student crowned national winner in NHS contest

Luddenden Foot student, Jessica Taylor-Calvert aged 10, has been crowned national winner in an annual contest re-opening this month to celebrate the NHS's upcoming 75th birthday.

The competition encourages primary school pupils to create a 'thank you' to NHS staff, while learning about the many careers in the NHS.

Jessica, a student at Luddenden CE School, created a bright and detailed poster displaying the range of roles within the NHS with facts about the health service. As well as a thank you to NHS staff, Jessica also challenged gender stereotyping in careers and included often-misunderstood roles.

Jessica said: "I enjoyed making the poster and adding details to supply information to others. The NHS helped my dad when he was unwell and supported my family through a really challenging time, so I wanted to say thank you."

All regional winners were invited to present their entries to a panel of judges via video call, where the overall national winner was crowned. The judges were extremely impressed with Jessica's entry.

Dr Navina Evans, Chief Executive, Health Education England, said: "I am so impressed with all the entries from Luddenden CE School this year, everyone who entered should be immensely proud."

"Congratulations to our national primary school winner Jessica on her detailed and inclusive poster. I especially like the focus on confronting gender stereotyping, and the drawing of NHS staff holding hands around a globe. Your winning entry will be an inspiration to others entering next year."

Health Education England (HEE) runs the Step into the NHS competition each year to raise awareness of the more than 350 career opportunities in the NHS, while supporting the career aspirations of young people in education.

This year's competition saw 916 entries from more than 1,080 pupils in 36 primary schools across England. As well as encouraging students to challenge gender stereotyping in health professions, pupils had the chance to say 'thank you' to the NHS in their own personal and creative way.

► www.stepintothenhs.nhs.uk



Procurement Essentials: Aggregations, eAuctions, and how schools can take advantage of the public sector's national buying power



Procurement Essentials is a series of articles from Crown Commercial Service (CCS), the UK's biggest public procurement organisation, to help you overcome common hurdles, understand key concepts, and make your life as a buyer of everyday goods and services easier.

What is aggregation?

Aggregation just means 'collective buying'. It usually involves bringing together more than one organisation with similar needs to buy common goods and services. It helps the public sector achieve savings that would not be possible through individual buying.

Aggregation works best when there is no urgent procurement need and timescales are flexible.

How does it work?

Suppliers on a suitable framework are given the opportunity to take part in the aggregation, offering their best price for goods and services collectively identified by the group of customers. Any organisation that is eligible to buy through CCS can join an aggregation.

Customers can also request that CCS organises aggregations for many additional goods and services, including common technology solutions such as software licences and IT hardware.

What kinds of goods and services can be bought through aggregations?

Aggregations work best with common goods or services that will attract more than one customer and supplier.

When customers with similar needs aggregate their buying power, it encourages a wide range of suppliers to take part, reducing the cost of goods and services that do not require complex, bespoke solutions. There are also time and cost savings for buyers as the aggregation is managed by CCS.

For example, we run regular aggregations for technology goods and services. Last summer, two educational establishments joined an IT hardware aggregation. The Academy Trust saved on average 15.3% whilst the Primary School saved just under 30% in comparison to market prices at that time.

More complex requirements, such as a contract for architectural services, may not be suitable for aggregation, since each customer will have distinct needs. In that situation, it makes more sense for customers to set out their individual needs to a range of suppliers on a framework.

eAuctions

An electronic auction (eAuction) is an online procurement tool that allows potential suppliers to compete against each other to win contracts. Suppliers bid against each other, in real time using web-based software, to offer the best price.

eAuctions bring together similar needs from lots of public bodies and encourage suppliers to offer the most competitive pricing to win higher volumes of business. For instance, several schools could sign up to buy laptops through the same eAuction, through a CCS framework. Suppliers have multiple opportunities to bid, whereas a traditional

tender only provides one opportunity.

Suppliers compete on price alone during an eAuction. Other criteria, such as quality and services levels, are agreed during earlier stages of the procurement. In some eAuctions a supplier's quality and technical scores are combined with their bid price to determine the overall result.

During the auction suppliers know their ranking but not who they are bidding against. The eAuction typically lasts between 1 and 3 hours, but can last longer. Once the auction closes a contract is then signed with the winning supplier.

CCS manages eAuctions from start to finish, with a dedicated and experienced team on hand to guide you through the process.

Our aggregation programme

We run dozens of aggregations every year, and it is free to take part. For more information on taking part in aggregation opportunities contact our customer services team by emailing info@crowncommercial.gov.uk.

Find out more

You can now find all of our Procurement Essentials articles in one place on our website, visit crowncommercial.gov.uk/procurement-essentials.

To find out how CCS can help you make better buying decisions, visit

► crowncommercial.gov.uk/schools



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FOCUS ON: ONLINE SAFETY

Young people spend more time online each week than they do in school – how do we keep them safe?



The children and young people of today have never known a world without the internet, social media, and freely available, often unmonitored, devices at their fingertips every day. Despite this, many are frighteningly ill-equipped to negotiate their lives online. Over the last decade, young people's internet usage has continued to increase, to the point where they are spending more time online each week than they are in school, with around 35 hours a week spent online. Similarly, the prevalence of mental health issues in children has increased - in 2021, it was one in six, up from one in nine in 2017.

While the internet has many benefits, from helping young people to access study materials, play games, and stay in touch with family and friends, there is also a darker side, and the negative impacts of this can lead to mental health issues. Ofcom discovered that over half of twelve to fifteen-year-olds have had some form of negative online experience.

Teachers across the country are growing increasingly concerned about how their pupils spend their time online and the effects it has on them. Julian*, an assistant headteacher at a secondary school, says his students 'need constant reminders' to be vigilant about their privacy settings and who they're following online. And Gillian*, a teacher at a different secondary school, fears that now her pupils spend far more time online than they used to, there are 'more opportunities for people to take advantage of them'.

Digital education innovator, EVERFI from Blackbaud's mission is to help teachers tackle these complex issues and help young people stay safe online, form positive relationships, and improve their mental health with their range of completely free mobile-first courses.

While cyberbullying can affect all age groups, it peaks between the ages of eleven to fourteen, and it can cause serious damage to young people's mental health. While bullying in school has sadly always been common, social media means it can continue beyond the school gates - and even anonymously. And while cyberbullying is not a problem unique to this country, the Teaching and Learning International Survey revealed that secondary school heads in England reported the highest level of cyberbullying among students compared to other countries.

Concerningly, Ofcom has found that three in ten eight to fifteen-year-olds think that if a website is listed by a search engine, it can be trusted, and while the majority of twelve to seventeen-year-olds were confident they could tell what is real and fake online, only 11% could identify a genuine social media post. These statistics, and those on social media usage and cyberbullying amongst this age range show this is the perfect time in young people's lives to undertake EVERFI's Ignition course.

The course is aimed at eleven to fourteen-year-olds, and teaches pupils how to safely and confidently navigate the digital world, as well as how to understand how to evaluate the accuracy and perspectives of online content. It uses flexible, simple real-life interactive and animated scenarios and role play to engage, teach and stretch pupils' critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. EVERFI originally launched the course in the USA and has seen more than 3.5 million pupils taking it since 2010. The course is linked to national curricula in PSHE, computing, and design & technology.

Matt Evans, a teacher from Shaftesbury High School, said of Ignition: "I was looking for a resource that tackled the topic of digital wellbeing and online safety and came across Ignition. It's ideal. It's structured with lesson plans and explanations that are teacher-friendly and easy to use. Teaching our students about online

safety is absolutely critical. Many of them are vulnerable and are consuming a wide range of media, including social media. So far, we've used the course to have a great group discussion about how people may not always be as they seem online and how to look after your personal data. Our students need to make the right choices and understand the risks and nuances of online behaviour. So far, this resource has done just that."

With the correlation between heavy internet usage and the rise in mental health problems, along with the impact of the pandemic, it is perhaps not surprising that in 2022, a record number of children and young people have been treated for mental health problems - over 400,000 a month. Mental health issues often start young, with 50% being established by the age of fourteen. Sadly, bullying is also most prevalent in these younger age groups and typically declines as children move through their school journey; twice as many ten-year-olds report being bullied in the last year compared to fifteen-year-olds. This data shows why it's vital to intervene early to minimise the effects of poor mental health on children's development, education, and employment, as well as teaching them at a young age about empathy and forming positive relationships with their peers, and in so doing lessen the likelihood of these issues in the future.

This is where the Compassion Project from EVERFI can help. The course - the first of its kind in the UK - teaches children how to be compassionate, resolve playground disputes themselves, notice how others may be feeling, and to think about different points of view than their own.

The Compassion Project comprises two courses: Kindness in the Classroom for seven to nine-year-olds, and Positive Relationships for nine to eleven-year-olds. On the courses, children are introduced to a group of cartoon characters who are preparing for a talent show and are playing games in the playground. Through interactive scenarios, animated videos and offline activities, pupils are shown what compassion is and how to practise it to overcome disagreements and get along better with their classmates. The courses are accredited by the PSHE Association, and are linked to national curricula in PSHE.

With so much evidence pointing to mental health issues being on the rise amongst young people, compounded by the damaging effects of living life online, or being cyberbullied, there is a clear need for timely and preventative measures. This academic year is the perfect time to support your students to develop the knowledge, empathy, and resilience to navigate this complex modern world.

Schools can register to access EVERFI's free platform and get access to Ignition and The Compassion Project - and many others - here: everfiteachers.co.uk/register

**Names changed to preserve anonymity*



Amplify Your Attendance.



Being able to offer parents appointments with class teachers virtually or in-person is the best of both worlds.

It helps to make sure we maintain the record-breaking levels of parental engagement we have seen through the pandemic, due in large part to improvements in technology.

Video parents' evening meetings hold the key to record-breaking attendances and engagement. And it's now possible to have hybrid meetings that combine the convenience of virtual with the familiarity of face-to-face.

As life returns to normal, but with some of us still anxious about the lingering presence of the pandemic, hybrid meetings can offer an ideal balance – providing practicality and peace of mind.

Being able to join parents evenings from work or home removes barriers such as transport and childcare. And from the teacher's perspective, the ability to organise appointments remotely from the comfort of their home - with discussion points raised in advance - enables a greater level of organisation to be established, along with a more relaxed atmosphere. No more rushing between appointments

for parents, and no more last minute preparations for the teacher. It all adds up to better quality communication for better pupil outcomes.

Hybrid meetings also make a lot of sense for split families living in separate households, or separated by work at opposite ends of the country or further afield. It presents your next parents' evening with a greater degree of flexibility for enhanced engagement and attendance. Since 2008 we have been pushing the envelope of educational booking system communication through technological innovation; providing schools with creative solutions to streamline their processes for parents' evenings, events, clubs, trips and wraparound childcare.

With Covid restrictions now removed, your school can once again plan to host clubs and events. These occasions

enrich the school experience for pupils, staff and parents, which is why we're offering free access to our Events and Clubs module until 2023. Whether it's dance lessons, football, or a Christmas panto, our user-friendly system can handle it all with ease.

But the virtual side is only part of the story. Some people relish the physical interaction, especially having been deprived of it for so long due to the pandemic. After all, we are social creatures at heart. With Parents Booking hybrid parents' evenings, you can keep both parties happy and lay the foundations for a fruitful discussion that will have far-reaching effects.

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SAVE TIME & MONEY



New research from Oxford University Press reveals that over a quarter of children wish their parents read with them more often

New research published by Oxford University Press (OUP) has revealed that over a quarter of children wish their parents read with them more often. Reading together is popular with adults too, with 84% of parents and carers also saying that they enjoy reading with their children. However, it can be a struggle, and 59% of parents wish they read more with their children. 43% of parents said it's difficult to get their child to concentrate while reading together, and other challenges include avoiding distractions from screens and gadgets, not having enough time in the day or being able to establish a regular reading routine. Parents who read regularly themselves report that their children are also likely to be regular readers, with 73% agreeing that children seeing them reading was a powerful motivation to read as well.

The research polled 2000 parents with children aged 3-11, over 1000 children who took part via a CHILDWISE omnibus survey, and over 300 primary school teachers. Key findings also reveal that 86% of parents believe reading will have a positive impact on their child's academic success later in life, and 80% believe that reading to their child improves the child's wellbeing and mental health.

The research is unveiled as part of the launch of OUP's Raise a Reader initiative: a three-year national campaign to help provide children and young people with the tools and opportunities to become lifelong readers in the wake of the pandemic.

As part of the launch of the Raise a Reader campaign, OUP has also announced a collaboration with the National Literacy Trust and has joined

Championing reading for pleasure, for children, for life.

Raise a Reader



the Primary School Library Alliance as a flagship partner. The 'Oxfordshire Raise a Reader Programme' will champion reading across 10 Oxfordshire schools in the first year with the goal of raising a generation of readers in schools and families in Oxfordshire's most disadvantaged and under-served communities. Schools will receive a donation of 500 books each (300 books donated by OUP and 200 donated by independent publishers), as well as a range of soft furnishings and books storage, in order to create their own dedicated reading spaces. Schools will also have access to in-person specialist training to help develop effective whole-school reading strategies as well as receiving a subscription to Oxford Reading Buddy, a digital reading service of nearly 500 books, and the opportunity to host exciting author visits.

► <https://globaloup.com/education/content/raise-a-reader>

Students invited to discover future farming in Broads' peatland



Young people and students are being offered a rare opportunity to try their hand at wetland farming (paludiculture) and learn about how farming can protect nature in the Broads.

Norfolk farms will open their gates this autumn for a series of workshops and open days where students and young people can get hands on practical experience of what future farming on Broads' peatlands might look like.

The peatlands of the Broads National Park are home to some of our most endangered wildlife; however, much peatland is degraded and emits carbon dioxide. Drainage of land for agriculture is one of the main reasons for degraded peat in this region.

To protect and restore these precious ecosystems new methods of farming to 'rewet' degraded peat are helping to store carbon, create new habitats for species such as Swallowtail butterflies and allow farmers to

produce agricultural products that have less of an environmental impact. Paludiculture involves growing crops which thrive in wet and waterlogged soils.

Young people play an important role in shaping these future landscapes and so the Broads Authority is running a series of workshops and open days where students can visit a farm at Horsey. They will investigate and measure the peat in soils using peat-coring devices, to understand how paludiculture works in practice and learn about the challenges and benefits of this novel way of farming.

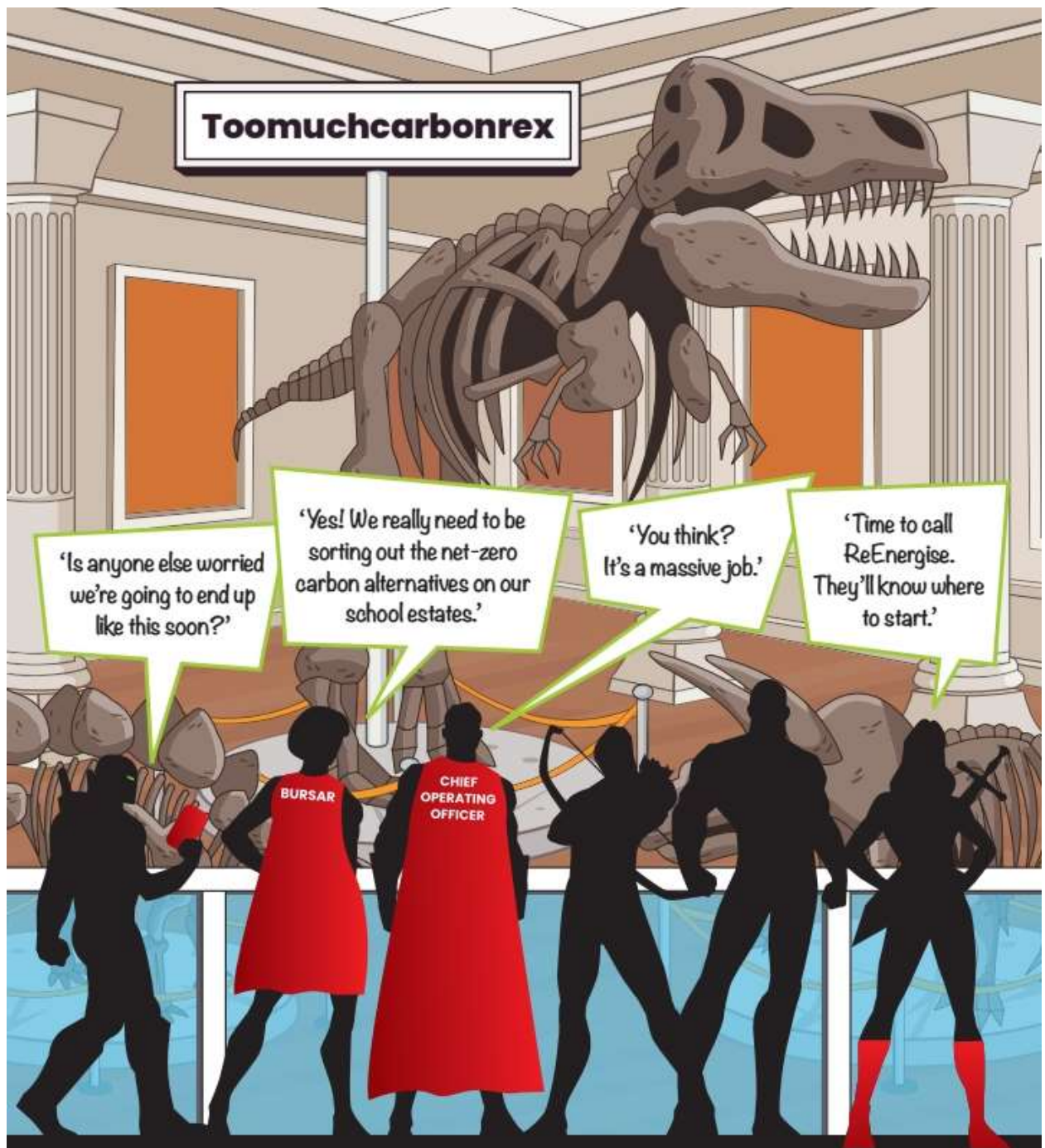
They can also get hands-on experience of traditional reed harvesting and meet a reed cutter to discuss their work in the Broads, the machinery used, issues faced by UK reed cutters and future ways of working. There will also be a thatching practical, where students can try out using reed bundles and traditional tools to thatch a roof.

The Authority is also hosting an event to explore 'How our peatland can shape the future of sustainable farming' at How Hill on November 14-16, around the themes of Agriculture, Architecture, or Fashion and Craft. Young people involved in these industries are invited to spend a day with industry experts to learn more about how we can farm to create lower carbon emissions from peatland soils.

Both sessions can be offered to groups this autumn and winter, free of charge. To find out more, or to arrange a suitable date, please contact, Chris Ford: chris.ford@broads-authority.gov.uk

The Free 'Paludiculture: Sustainable peatland farming for sustainable architecture and fashion' event, can be booked on Eventbrite at

► <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/paludi-what-how-our-peatland-can-shape-the-future-of-sustainable-farming-tickets-419608489287>



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NEWS

Six in 10 UK teachers believe today's pupils lack basic financial understanding when they leave school

More than six in 10 (64%) UK secondary school teachers believe today's young people leave school with a poor level of financial skills and 59% say their pupils don't understand what a credit score is.

The latest research from information and insights company TransUnion shows two thirds (66%) of teachers think financial education has stalled as a result of the pandemic.

Nearly three quarters of teachers surveyed (73%) say their pupils struggle to understand the importance of personal budgeting, saving, money management and calculating interest. The majority (74%) believe a lack of real-life experience for students, such as having a part-time job outside school and handling money regularly, has had the biggest impact.

Over half (53%) think the lack of understanding is because core subjects had to take precedence over financial education, with students now lacking



knowledge on how to budget and manage money.

Kelli Fielding, managing director of consumer interactive at TransUnion in the UK, said: "Following the serious disruption to learning caused by the pandemic, teachers are now dealing with the challenge of rebuilding financial education in schools and tackling persistent gaps in money knowledge which can put today's young people at a real disadvantage. With the ongoing cost of living crisis, it's essential to give students the skills to manage money before they leave school."

To support schools in improving financial knowledge for young people – aligned to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education frameworks – TransUnion is launching a new free online teaching resource:

Credit Scores Explained aims to give secondary school students the best start to their financial life, helping them learn about managing money and understanding from an early age the role that their credit report and score will play.

► www.transunion.co.uk/education

Pilot projects receive green light thanks to unique educational fund

Three new pilots have launched thanks to a £1 million fund supporting organisations to explore different approaches to assessment and innovative uses of technology.

Projects by Calderdale College, EasyCorrect, and the Centre for Education and Youth, will each investigate new ways learners can be assessed outside of more traditional methods, such as through Virtual Reality (VR).

The Assessment Innovation Fund, created by the educational charity and leader in vocational and technical education NCFE, is investing across a range of pilots developed by, but not limited to, training providers, qualification developers, awarding bodies, quality assurers, EdTech companies, and colleges.

Jessica Blakey, Head of Assessment Innovation at NCFE, said: "We're delighted to see three new pilots get underway that will each explore different areas of assessment and how technology can support and enhance learner feedback and experience."

"When we launched the Assessment Innovation Fund last year, our vision was, and still is, to break the boundaries of assessment with evidence-based disruption within our current education system. Our aim is to support and investigate potential solutions and deliver the best possible experience for our learners."

"With the addition of these three new pilots, we now have eight live research projects that focus on testing new concepts in a safe space, from using AI and digital badges, to engaging hard to reach learners, and we're really excited to see the results."

As well as the three new pilots, the current funding window is still open to expressions of interest until 3 October, offering up to £25,000 for any organisation with an idea and interest in changing the future of assessment.

To learn more about the current pilots or to submit your interest, visit

► <https://www.ncfe.org.uk/help-shape-the-future-of-learning-and-assessment/>



Common Seas and Kids Against Plastic urge secondary schools to become 'Plastic Clever'

Common Seas and Kids Against Plastic have launched their Plastic Clever Schools resources for 11–16-year olds.

The movement is designed to empower students to drive impactful change in their schools and beyond through three key stages, including:

Inspire: Learn all about plastic and share that information to engage your whole school community.

Investigate: Complete a plastic audit to discover the problem plastics in your school and get ready to do something about it!

Act: Create exciting campaigns to act on plastic waste and celebrate the difference you're making in your school and community.



In addition to almost 500 primary schools, Common Seas and Kids against Plastic are urging secondary schools to come on board and help make a plastic waste free future a reality.

The online platform provides supporting resources such as interactive toolkits, illustrated fact sheets, hands-on activities and presentations.

Following the launch, Amy Meek, Head of Youth Action at Common Seas & Co-Founder of Kids Against Plastic said: "This event brought together some incredible speakers to showcase the power of youth in the fight against plastic. We know young people are passionate about this topic and want to make meaningful change."

With a projected 24 million new jobs being created as we move towards a circular economy, many of the future careers of our young people don't exist. We need to ensure students are not only prepared for this bright future but are empowered to be part of the journey to get there."

► <https://plasticcleverschools.co.uk/>



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makes a difference

Self-talk and the power of positivity



In his regular column for Education Today this month, Mark Solomons, CEO of School Wellbeing Accelerator – an acclaimed wellbeing expert with over 12 years' experience developing leadership and culture in UK schools and creator of Welbee a highly effective online evaluation and staff wellbeing improvement tool, winner of the ERA 2022 Wellbeing Award – shares his top tips on positivity and the power of self-talk.

We all recognise the impact high workload can have on stress levels and personal and team wellbeing. While it's often impossible to complete all the tasks on our ever increasing to-do list, we invariably continue to ask ourselves - how will we get everything done?

At the end of each day, many of us think about the tasks we didn't get done and our mistakes, rather than our achievements and successes.

What will help switch from focusing on negatives to positives? There is one thing that is within our own control and part of our personal wellbeing toolkit that is guaranteed to make a difference – self-talk.

Self-talk, as it suggests, is the way you talk to yourself. It combines conscious thoughts with your inbuilt beliefs and bias, heard through an internal monologue throughout the day. This might be reasoned and logical, yet it is also influenced by the stories you have created about yourself. If thoughts are mostly negative, they can cause self-doubt and lack of confidence, meaning your outlook is more likely to be pessimistic. If thoughts are predominantly positive, you are likely to celebrate achievements, be confident and optimistic.

What is the power of positive thinking?
Positive psychology aims to discover and promote those factors that allow individuals

and communities to thrive. Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi define it as 'the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life.'

Psychologist, Barbara Fredrickson, proposes that a ratio of at least three positive emotions for every negative emotion, serves as a tipping point, which helps determine whether you languish in life or flourish.¹ Fredrickson's proposal emerged from a wide range of analysis of the perception of images and situations by successful individuals, and comparisons with research on flourishing marriages.

This ratio scale can serve as a point of reference when considering self-talk. On a daily basis, most of us experience a ratio of positive to negative thoughts of about two-to-one, with those who suffer from depression and other emotional disorders at a ratio of one-to-one or lower.²

Fredrickson's mathematics have been challenged and debated and it is more likely the positive to negative ratio will vary for individuals. However, many researchers exploring the effects of positive thinking and optimism on health and wellbeing, have reached a consensus on the likely benefits, including: improved psychological and physical wellbeing; increased resilience and the ability to bounce back more quickly from adversity; greater creativity in solving problems; greater social connectivity and higher levels of trust, leading to better (win/win) outcomes, more effective individuals and teams and improved academic performance from students.

Striking a balance is important and it is very easy to slip into the negative and reflect on what hasn't been achieved and the mistakes made, rather than what has been achieved and successes. So how might you counteract this?

You can use any of the tips below and see how these help.

You won't get everything done so quit trying: Instead, learn how to prioritise effectively to make sure the most important tasks are completed - focus on those that have the greatest impact for the least effort, and remember - perfectionism is overrated.

Be aware of what you say to yourself: The person you hear the most is you - being conscious of what you tell yourself each day is important, so creating time to regularly reflect on your thoughts is a good place to start.

Focus on achievements and successes: At the end of each day, reflect on at least 3 positive things done. Using a trigger to remember helps start to form a habit – maybe set a reminder on your phone or put a sticky note on your steering wheel.

Boost your own self-esteem: If tasks seem impossible or overwhelming, switch the focus to your strengths and what you are good at - compile a list. If you struggle, ask your line-manager, colleagues or friends to share what they think - it's easy to forget about your good parts.

Put it in perspective: Will any task worrying you, have an impact in a week, a month, a year? What is the worst thing that could happen? When we are too wrapped up in a task, we can lose sight of the whole picture.

Think about what you are grateful for: What brings enjoyment and fulfilment into your life? Think about these when you are having negative thoughts.

The goalposts always move: Life isn't fair and things are bound to change – learn to accept this as part of your beliefs and move on.

Share your situation: If you feel negative or lack confidence, talk to your line-manager, colleagues or friends and ask them to help. Review achievements, strengths, behaviours or targets. The more you keep problems to yourself, the greater stress you are likely to feel.

In the words of author, Roy T Bennett, 'The more you feed your mind with positive thoughts, the more you can attract great things into your life.'

Our mindset, the set of beliefs we have about ourselves, others and the world, plays a huge role in how we approach and respond to difficulties, challenges and setbacks. We can choose to be our own greatest critic or loudest cheerleader.

After all, we are the person we listen to most each day.

For further information, support and advice about measuring and improving staff wellbeing please contact

► [Welbee.co.uk](https://www.welbee.co.uk)

Notes to authors

¹ <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>

² Positive Affect and the Complex Dynamics of Human Flourishing - PMC (pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)



From the pen of... DAN WHITE

"Too many publishers are writing things that are 'too safe' about disability"

In the first of a special double bill of authors' columns this month we hear from DAN WHITE, author of the new children's book cluster 'Look, Brook', part of Pearson's Bug Club collection for primary readers.

When's the last time you read a book that featured a dynamic character with disabilities? An authentic, messy, fun protagonist determined to achieve? How many plotlines can you recall in which 'having a disability' was not the primary focus of a character's story?

I'm willing to bet there's not much springing to mind. And, to my mind, it's time that changed.

Inclusion is not a delusion – that's my motto, and it's what informs my work every day. As a policy and campaigns officer for Disability Rights UK, as an author, as an illustrator, and as a very proud father to Emily, who uses a wheelchair, I write books that have leads with disabilities; stories that don't infantilise or explain disabilities to readers.

The reality is there's little out there showing children with disabilities in a strong, positive light; full of action and adventure; with characters who have a disability and get into mischief, explore, dream, misbehave; even with characters who show strength and confidence.

The scarcity of options used to frustrate my daughter no end. She found no characters she could relate to. The narratives she encountered at school didn't fit with her experience. In so many respects, they still don't.

In fact, children with disabilities are determined like everyone else. They want to do everything that other children their age are doing – and why shouldn't they? Moreover, why shouldn't they have access to stories and characters that they can relate to, and which they can share with their peers? If their friends want to understand disabilities more after having a read, that's a great result. The main thing, though, is that they find the stories fun and gripping, and make more positive associations with characters who have disabilities.

That's why I created the character Brook, for a new illustrated cluster of books for Pearson's Bug Club. Brook is a very confident girl. She uses a wheelchair and is very proud of her disability, and empowered by it.

The first story, Look Brook, features astronomy: Brook travels to the moon, fulfilling a dream that many children share. In the second, Brook enters a time machine and encounters different inspiring people from history who have disabilities. In the third, Brook meets children who are new to using a wheelchair – using the story to highlight how much they can do, and make it clear that the transition needn't be scary.

Too many publishers are writing things that are 'too safe' about disability. The stories are clinical and uninspiring. Instead, we need to understand the realities of life for children. They can push the boundaries. They are little humans with huge ambitions, which we need to recognise and allow them to pursue.

By sharing Brook with the world, we have a chance to help break the mould for young readers, whatever their ability or background. Disability deserves its time in the books we read, right at the forefront.

To explore the full Bug Club range, visit <https://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk/primary/subjects/english-literacy/bug-club>



From the pen of... HETTY STEELE

Making light work of the Bard

In the second of our special "From the pen of..." double bill, we're delighted to hear from HETTY STEELE, author of 'How to get a 9 in Shakespeare' published by John Catt Educational.



The odds are, if you enter a Year 11 English Literature classroom in this country the students will be studying Shakespeare for GCSE. Shakespeare has become synonymous in some ways with what it means to study English, what it means to read or write English. And yet, almost invariably, our students struggle with the historic works – whether that be with plot, language or context.

There are those that have called for Shakespeare to be removed from our syllabi, citing a lack of relatability, antiquated tropes, inaccessible language and just ancient history. However, I would argue that there is still a place at the table for Shakespeare's plays and poems, and that it is possible to remove the barriers to learning and secure these iconic works in our specifications for years to come (and for us to be glad about it).

Firstly, when students question (as they will) the relevancy of these seemingly nonsensical characters to their day-to-day lives, we need only reference Christopher Booker's seven basic plots to illustrate that these stories are unfolding all around them.

Overcoming the monster: Macbeth. Also, every Avengers film ever created and Stranger Things. Rags to riches: The Tempest. Also, The Wolf of Wall Street and Skunkdog Millionaire. These are challenges and notions fictional characters have been grappling with for hundreds of years. Shakespeare is just one snapshot of that, and students have many more ways to access these characters than it might first appear.

In terms of barriers to learning, increasingly over the course of my teaching career it has become apparent that teachers can be as intimidated by the works of the bard as students. The language is unfamiliar, there is no way around that. But, in my opinion, part of what our students can gain from studying Shakespeare lies here: code-breaking, resilience, delayed gratification. We teach them how to tackle problems, how to piece together evidence and how to build on prior knowledge. Do we know what this word means? No? Is there another word we know that sounds similar? What could we replace it with, and still have the sentence make sense? If we really have no idea, shall we keep reading and see if we can take an educated guess? Modelling what it looks like to struggle, to fail, and how to move past that, is perhaps the key teaching strategy for Shakespearean language.

If we look to the upper end of the GCSE grades, what unites exam boards is their desire to have our students engage perceptively, critically and sophisticatedly with Shakespeare. These adverbs are rooted in something that transcends whether the "perfumes" of Arabia are concrete or abstract nouns: they want our students to consider the big picture. Is Macbeth a purely evil character or does he have moments of vulnerability? Why might Shakespeare do this? What is it saying about the human condition? How to Get a 9 in Shakespeare is essentially dedicated to this wide lens notion: how do these Shakespearean ideas fit into our understanding of the world?

The beauty and the essence of teaching Shakespeare comes in our students' ability to volunteer a suggestion as to how his themes, and images, and characters speak not just to the original audience, but to humanity across time. That's why his works are on our syllabi today and that's why they will remain.

<https://www.johncattbookshop.com/how-to-get-a-9-in-shakespeare>



This month, in our ongoing feature highlighting the work of members of the UK education suppliers' trade body BESA, we hear from LEADERSHIP MATTERS about their leadership development programme; and we learn more about SENSATIONS ENGLISH learning materials.

What makes great leadership development?

As we start to move through the new school year, our thoughts are on how we can provide maximum support to our staff and students following the recent challenges of teaching and learning throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

School leaders this year face a budgetary meltdown with energy price rises and a significantly unfunded pay rise for all staff. Coupled with a challenging year for recruitment of both teachers and leaders, it is going to take strong leadership to carry schools, students and staff through the next academic year.

The Leadership Matters team have been thinking hard about these challenges over the summer and have returned to the subject of leadership development as a keystone for keeping everyone on track as we move through this year.

This model for leadership development looks at 10 areas that require thought before embarking upon any sort of leadership development. It's an aide memoire when planning INSET, twilight sessions or investigating leadership programmes available from providers both internal and external.

The model

The Leadership Matters Development Model comprises 10 areas for consideration by leaders. Each area is a characteristic of good leadership development that is supported by evidence (see number 21) that you should ensure is included in any leadership development programme you carry out with your staff.

The model has been created over many years of delivering leadership development in schools, MATs and LAs and is highly practical.

The Leadership Development Model – Key Areas

- The approach distinguishes between **learning** and **development**, with both included as part of a clear pedagogical framework.
- It offers **evidence-based** leadership knowledge within a carefully constructed curriculum that leaders can then apply within their **context**.
- This leadership knowledge sits within a coherent **leadership framework**.
- Learning with and from **peers** is a key feature of the approach.
- There is an implicit understanding that leadership habits and skills take **time to develop**, and the programme length reflects this.
- An appropriate blend of **teaching, mentoring, coaching, personal reflection** and **goal setting** are integral parts of the approach.
- Tools that support **self-awareness** such as personality predisposition and 360 feedback are available towards the start of the process.
- There is an opportunity through carefully curated **publications** and **online resources** for participants to personalise their learning.
- There is a focus on the **evaluation** of impact throughout the process.
- The overall approach should **stretch, support** and **challenge** leaders, leaving them feeling **empowered** and **positive** about the future.

How to use the model

- Familiarise yourself with the model. This will allow you to recognise what makes for good professional development for leaders.
- Create a checklist for reviewing new leadership development. This will help you to ensure that all of your training (internal and external) will meet the needs of your leaders in school.
- Review each session you run, or is run for you in the context of these ten principles. This will allow you to evaluate all professional development and plan sessions in the future.
- Finally, return to the model termly and look at how best to improve your leadership development.

If you have any comments or thoughts about this model, we would love to hear them, please write to info@leadershipmatters.org.uk and tell us.

► www.leadershipmatters.org.uk



Sensations English: promoting life skills and a global outlook to empower all developing speakers of English.

"I got to see my learners as more colourful thinkers - I felt that I had given them a blank sheet to colour with their opinions (as a break from their typical English classes)."



These are the words of a teacher involved in a classroom-based study of Sensations English learning materials. These news-based resources are always created at five different levels of difficulty to provide learners with content that activates higher-order thinking, whatever their level of English. Bringing life skills, soft skills, critical thinking skills, or 21st century competencies into learning has enormous benefits in preparing our learners for the knowledge economy and their roles as responsible citizens. However, it can require significant amounts of preparation and energy to develop and engage students' higher order thinking skills and ensure resources scaffold inclusive behaviours while offering learners a diversity of perspectives.

News has always had benefits in raising interest, heightening learners' awareness of global and local issues and bringing the real world into the classroom. As such, it has great potential as a foundation for work on critical thinking skills. However, there's also a need to avoid one-sided accounts, fake news, reliance on hearsay and learners depending on existing, less considered opinions when dealing with current affairs. We founded Sensations English to provide reliable news-based resources which present balanced, objective and accessible content on a wide range of current issues.

Multimodal resources succeed in reaching, motivating and encouraging learners who are visually inspired and those who are aurally inspired, as well as students who prefer engaging with ideas through reading. But combining these inclusive resources with balanced, level and age appropriate news-based content brings further benefits. This accessible material establishes a two-way route to inspiration for students.

News brings into students' learning novel perspectives and contexts on topics and issues, helping learners to be inspired by the world around them. It also gives students new insights into their own worlds through seeing, hearing and reading about people to whom they can directly relate, or can aspire to be like. Furthermore, by looking at situations or issues outside their immediate experience, it allows them to tackle familiar subjects such as disasters, grief, war, unemployment, and health crises – gathering information and perspectives from which to form opinions, test lines of reasoning and work together on finding potential solutions or coping strategies.

This positive, critical engagement with news can also uncover weaker thinking, lead to gentle questioning of beliefs and allow the teacher to scaffold a sense of collaborative exploration within the classroom, including: "encouraging them to think more colourfully, i.e., to recognise and avoid stereotyping." And since news reports are based on person-centred accounts of situations, they also open a space to help students discuss their own feelings about common situations.

News can also help learners explore common challenges such as talking about themselves, as people often do in news reports; and consider difficult but important life decisions, frequently covered by news. These activities could emerge, for example, from seeing an artist talking about their work on climate action, or a doctor weighing up whether to continue working in a disaster zone. For learners who use English as an additional language, hearing people speaking in their own words and in their own authentic accents helps establish near-peer role models who can represent motivating, achievable goals for learners' own development.

Taking sensitive approaches to bringing news into learning has earned Sensations English British Council ELTons awards for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and for Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action.

► www.sensationsenglish.com



CPD in Key Child Mental Health Topics: for any professional working with vulnerable children and teenagers



Centre for Child Mental Health Evening Lecture Programme 2022–23
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Thurs 6 October 2022 5 – 6.30pm

Social media, technology and the impact on children and teenagers

Annie Chappell

Thurs 20 October 2022 5 – 6.30pm

Working with children and young people who self-harm with reference to eating disorders

Lynne Davis

Thurs 3 November 2022 5 – 6.30pm

Trauma informed approaches to behaviour support

Julie Hamieson

Thurs 17 November 2022 5 – 6.30pm

How Adverse Childhood Experiences make children prone to radicalisation and how political grooming works: what can be done by schools to address radicalisation

Rob Allen

Thurs 24 November 2022 5 – 6.30pm

Using polyvagal theory to help children and young people overcome panic and anxiety

Karen Stallard

Thurs 12 January 2023 5 – 6.30pm

"VoiceSING Trauma": An introduction to the theory and practice of expression and regulation through the voice

Emily Foulkes

Conferences and trainings 2022

Sat 29 October 2022
10am – 4pm

In-person event

Dr Dan Hughes presents:
Connecting with angry, violent and highly defended children and teenagers

Sat 3 December and Sun 4 December 2022
10am – 4pm

In-person event

David Taransaud Presents:
Positive ways of working with challenging teens through understanding the adolescent within us

More details and bookings:

www.childmentalhealthcentre.org or telephone: 020 7354 2913

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FEATURE FOCUS: VIEW FROM THE CLASSROOM



Building self-esteem, trust and a sense of belonging



In our ever popular View from the classroom feature this month we are delighted to hear from Catherine Robinson, Headteacher at Stonelow Junior School in Dronfield, Derbyshire, who outlines the positive impacts on pupils, parents and staff of becoming a Trauma Informed School (TISUK).

Tell us about your school

Stonelow Junior School in Dronfield, is located in north Derbyshire, in the suburbs between Chesterfield and Sheffield. We have 170 pupils aged 7-11 years-old, 53% girls and 47% boys, with 23% of our pupils receiving Pupil Premium Funding (PPF).

Why did you decide to become a Trauma Informed School (TISUK)

Children learn best when they have strong self-esteem, a sense of belonging and trust. When I first came to Stonelow, I was concerned by the seeming lack of support for pupils who found school challenging and were therefore challenging in the classroom.

Although 'nurture' was on the schedule, it was not very apparent, so in 2017, we introduced nurture group provision, with fully trained staff, to support pupils who were not ready to meet the social and intellectual demands of the classroom. Two TAs run the nurture groups, offering short-term focused intervention to support children who are experiencing difficulties with learning due to social or emotional difficulties.

Building strong partnerships with parents impacts directly on pupil behaviour and attainment - everyone should feel involved and part of school, by supporting parents and families, we are supporting our children. So we used some of our PPF to appoint a full-time Family Support Worker (FSW), Shona Hardcastle, and created a dedicated space for her to work with both pupils

and parents.

Pupils unable to cope fulltime in the classroom or those needing time outside the classroom to regulate themselves, spend time with Shona, she also checks in with other pupils in classes throughout the day and deals with issues that arise at playtimes. She runs a lunch-time club, parenting workshops, and is available to listen and give advice and support to parents who are struggling.

When we first began the service, Shona was inundated with requests from parents, it was definitely needed and appreciated. Even when children have progressed to secondary school, parents still come back to us if they are experiencing difficulties and need to talk.

We also developed our own whole school communications policy which put in place clear guidelines to define effective and ineffective communication, it was agreed by all and is regularly revisited. Staff witnessed the positive impact that the shift in adult behaviour, language and reactions had on our pupils' behaviour.

Trauma Informed training was a natural progression in our school development - we wanted to provide support for all our pupils and staff, and ensure our school was a mentally healthy place to learn and work. The decision to go ahead was taken by all our stakeholders and everyone was keen to make this 'official' by achieving the Trauma and Mental Health Informed School Award.



What does a trauma informed school "look like"?

At Stonelow, as a TISUK school we feel empowered to place the well-being of all children and staff above curriculum expectations without diluting learning. We strive to be a school that supports all children and staff without judgement, where everyone is met with an empathic and curious response.

We encourage our pupils to be respectful of themselves and others, be independent and have healthy positive relationships. Our pupils understand that failure and making mistakes are all part of the learning process, and we understand children and staff are individuals and may need a different approach to learning or support.

A big part of being trauma informed is the approach is empathic, and the language we use is positive and reassuring. We do not meet the children or each other with judgement, we take the time to see what lies behind their behaviour. The training empowered all our staff to make the positive change that was needed. The training also included the scientific basis to a trauma informed approach, which we also share with the children and their parents, to show that it is based on extensive scientific research and is not 'airy fairy'.

TISUK recognise the importance of providing alternative environments and connections to nature, so all pupils have the chance to regulate themselves. The school was built in the 60's and we are fortunate to have lots of open outside space. Over the past two years we have developed a forest school area fenced with willow with wooden seating, renovated our overgrown pond, replanted the flower garden and planted a woodland wild area.

Since returning to school after lockdown, many pupils are experiencing difficulties socialising



with their peers and solving problems, so at the moment we are zoning our large playground to provide more structure. We are creating areas for quiet play, games and spaces for louder more boisterous play - hopefully the new zones will give the children more choice about the environment they need.

What has changed at Stonelow since becoming a TISUK?

TISUK is a holistic approach - it impacts on

the whole school community and determines how we behave, react, respond as well as the language we use, the way we speak and our body language. Empathy is shown to all and this impacts on the fantastic relationship we have with parents and the support we can offer as they feel that they can talk to us without judgement.

Prior to the TISUK training, staff would sometimes become frustrated with children's behaviour, and meet children in anger, dismiss the underlying reasons for their lack of attention, and focus purely on academic achievement. Now staff have the 'permission' to give children time outside class if they are upset and dysregulated, so that they can talk to an adult and regulate their feelings, returning to class ready to learn. This is now accepted as an everyday part of school life.

Pupils joining us from other schools with 'history' as school refusers, disruptive behaviours such as repeatedly running and hiding, or violent outbursts, quickly settle into school as they feel valued and listened to.

The importance of taking time to 'unpick' and understand behaviours is recognised and staffroom chat has become a discussion about children being vulnerable, dysregulated or anxious, rather than 'disruptive' and 'naughty'. Corridor conversations and 'whisperings' have stopped as staff know that they can talk to each other without fear of judgement. Staff can also be open and honest about their own mental health, and we can offer time and support.

We call ourselves the 'Stonelow Family', we work together so closely as a team that it truly feels like a school family - school is now a place that everyone wants to be.

For more information on Trauma Informed Schools (TISUK) please go to

► www.traumainformedschools.co.uk

► info@traumainformedschools.co.uk





CONTRIBUTORS

Enjoying reading before learning to read

This month, in our ongoing collaboration with Edge Hill University curated by ALICIA BLANCO-BAYO, Early Years Lecturer and WTEY Programme Leader at the University's Faculty of Education, we're delighted to hear from JESSICA BOOTH, recently completed her undergraduate degree in Early Years Education with Qualified Teacher Status.



Should we expect children to say 'I can read' without first encouraging them to say the equally, and arguably more exciting words, 'I WANT to read!'? A domineering approach to the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that prioritises the decoding of words over additional reading skills could be showing negative effects towards children's willingness to read for pleasure in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Recent evidence (Wyse and Bradbury, 2022; Weale, 2022) indicates that a more balanced approach that teaches children not only how to read, but an understanding of what they are reading, would have positive impacts on their motivation to read for pleasure in the future. However, in contrast to the idea that phonics teaching should be relaxed (Merga, 2017), it could be suggested that children who lack confidence in their ability to read will be much less willing to do so. Although this could hold some truth, I question whether the skill of reading is necessary to enjoy engaging in reading experiences, especially given its broad definition in the EYFS.

The National Literacy Trust (Clark and Rumbold, 2006) define reading for pleasure as 'reading that we do of our own free will, anticipating satisfaction', and continues to explore how reading for pleasure can be a continuation of reading that comes from the request of others. But, if we are to 'request' that children participate in reading with a heavy focus on phonics, I wonder what could be done to leave children wanting to read more. This is not to say that children cannot enjoy learning to read through phonics, but to admit that not all children do (DfE, 2019).

When searching for ways in which early years practitioners can promote a love of reading in the EYFS, several sources expressed the importance of children accessing high quality reading experiences at home as well as in school. Children who do not engage in reading at home risk falling behind in reading at school and, as a result, have limited access to other areas of the curriculum, such as by struggling to read questions in mathematics (Sullivan and Brown, 2013). Local authorities in England have made significant efforts to promote reading as a result of these findings by reviewing school policies and communicating with libraries. This involved pushing the need for investments in adult literacy projects to help parents in understanding how they can support their child in developing essential literacy skills with the aim of increasing exposure to reading related discussions at home (Institute of Education, 2022). Further projects, such as the 'Bookmark Reading Project' (2021), have shown to improve children's enjoyment, attainment, and confidence in reading by providing more frequent reading interventions with an adult.

Regardless, there still appears to be a worry that the current nature of phonics teaching does not promote a love of reading, and what use is the skill of reading without the motivation to pick up a book in the first place.

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SEND in science

In her regular column this month, STEMtastic founder KIRSTY BERTENSHAW offers some great and practical ideas to liven up STEM lessons.



Sometimes it can be difficult to think of new ideas to practise skills in a fun and engaging way or teach concepts that are straightforward but not exciting. Here are a few ways activities can be used to introduce a new concept, or to practise important skills.

The game Countdown can be used with both the letter game and the number round. Letter rounds allow students to practise spelling and vocabulary. They could be allowed dictionaries to help or given time limits to increase difficulty. There are online Countdown solvers and generators to help find the longest word. Alternatively, they can be given a specific technical term and asked to come up with as many linked words as possible.

The number round of Countdown makes a great starter, encouraging the use of mental maths, times tables and division. The level of difficulty can be changed by adding more than six numbers or changing the settings on an online countdown generator which can be projected onto the board.

Board games that use dice, e.g., snakes and ladders, are a sneaky way to practice maths skills in smaller groups. Multiple maths dice could be added up to make each move, increasing the pace of the game as well as the difficulty.

When teaching fractions of amounts, instead of using pictures on paper, use cuddly toys and counters, sweets, or Lego bricks for them to share out. If teaching money literacy, set up a play shop using toys, play kitchen food or empty food boxes. Students can pay with play money, working out how much they can buy and how much change is required depending on if they are the customer or the shopkeeper.

In science, experiments are often explained before they are carried out, removing some of the independent thinking. Reverse the process, give students the minimum of instructions and let them explore the concept and make conclusions themselves before explaining the science. For example, by using red cabbage indicator, students can safely experiment by adding them to various substances such as vinegar, lemon juice, or baking powder solution and work out what is happening. They can group substances by whether they turn red or blue-green, and may be able to identify some by their smell. This is a great problem-solving and scientific technique to teach, alongside knowledge of acids and alkalis in the example given.

Doing physical tasks backwards can be used in other parts of science too. Instead of presenting a torso model with organs already in place, give students models with the pile of organs in front of the model, and the instruction that they should reconstruct it. Name labels can be added to the organs so students can work out which one is which and see how they fit together, learning about organ systems in the process.

Reverse tasks can be used in maths too. Show students one squared equals one and see if they can determine what the squared symbol means. Once they have consensus, show them that two squared equals four and see if their conclusion still applies. Repeat with a few more examples to confirm the conclusion. Not only is this teaching them how squared numbers work but also how theories evolve with information.

Kirsty is the founder of STEMtastic, an education consultancy with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths www.stemtastic.co.uk



Remember, remember...

In her regular column for Education Today this month, independent Specialist Teacher and Assessor JOANNE GLADDERS looks at the notion of working memory, and examines how best to get young learners to use their working memory skills and how to develop strategies to support them.



As this new term progresses and we acclimatize to our new way of working we must remember to take care of ourselves and to find time for our own nurture and growth. It is also important to cascade this message to our learners and help them to continue to focus on moving their learning forward.

As a Dyslexia Specialist I enjoy piecing together a young person's strengths and areas of difficulty to determine if they have a specific learning difficulty. The aspect of this I enjoy the most is the discussions that take place, encouraging the young person to unpick their own strategies and consider how will they overcome their barriers to learning. I believe that this is something that we can all do within our learning environments.

Key to learning is the ability to utilise our working memory. The current SASC guidance defines 'working memory' as:

The term 'working memory' refers to 'the ability to maintain and manipulate information in active attention' (SASC 2019:9)

Working Memory is fundamental to all our learning. Many of our young people have difficulties retaining the information they need to work with. In addition, processing difficulties can also impact upon their ability to work with the information they are given.

Processing Speed is the 'ability to perform relatively simple repetitive cognitive tasks, quickly, accurately and fluently.' (SASC 2019: 9)

Take time to observe how your young people attempt tasks; question them about how they attempted to solve a problem, encourage them to explain what strategies they used. Do they visualise the problem in their head? Break it into manageable chunks visually. Do they count the number of steps on their fingers? Whisper the information under their breath so that they can aurally hear the information? Do they benefit from a 'scribble pad' where they can make notes to help them retain the information? Do they recall the last piece of information they are given but forget the first piece of information? Does additional information get slotted in accidentally as they get confused with the task in hand? Does a task planner for specific operations aid the retention of the steps?

There are so many elements to consider and for many of us this comes naturally but for others, it doesn't.

How do we address this issue? In addition to modelling different strategies we can help our young people to determine what works for them. This will equip them with the tools that they can then apply to all aspects of the curriculum.

I challenge you this month to consider how some of your learners utilise their working memory skills and to look for ways to develop strategies to support them.

Signs a child is struggling with reading

In her column this month regular contributor HANNAH RIX, SEND English teacher and co-founder of Readingmate Ltd, offers advice on identifying and addressing reading problems early.



As a keen reader, it can be quite easy to underestimate the complexities of learning to read. Like many habits, you forget what it took to develop it. But for some children, reading does not come naturally because of their environment or ability. For these learners, it can feel like an impossible and even terrifying task.

To prevent learners from being traumatised, it's imperative teachers spot any issues early. And it's equally important for parents to highlight them too. Early intervention is the best and most efficient way of supporting or even preventing reading problems. This will ensure that their confidence and attitude towards reading won't be entirely dismantled and there's a greater chance of overcoming it.

Here are some areas to look out for with your struggling readers:

- Has a difficulty with rhyming words (hat / sat / pat) – making links between these words and saying them correctly is not something that comes naturally and certainly needs practice. But if you notice your child has difficulty processing the sounds of language after working on it, this could be a sign of dyslexia or apraxia of speech (motor speech disorder).
- Can't remember sight words (the / a / her / to / it / was / for) – children should recognise these words instantly. They're taught these words so they can easily read sentences without having to stop and sound them out each time.
- Doesn't read the ending of words (-s / -ing / -ed) – if you notice your child is missing the ending of words in their speech, this could be a signifier of a phonological or articulation disorder.
- Cannot remember what they've read or what was read to them – if your child takes a long time processing a story or decoding words on a page this can be simply a sign of a short attention span. However, if their long-term memory and working memory is lacking this could be a sign of dyslexia.
- Spells the same word differently in one document (because = becuz / bekaus / becus) – it's very common for children to misspell a word consistently. But if your child is spelling the same word wrong in different variations this could be a sign of a language-based issue.
- Doesn't remember letter sounds (/d/ as in dog) – if your child isn't remembering the phonemes (letter sounds) it could indicate an auditory problem, processing issue or another learning issue.
- Muddles look-alike letters (b / d / p) or sound-alike letters (f / v) – this is perfectly normal for early readers to get these letters confused. If this is still occurring after age 7, it could be an indicator of a bigger learning issue.

To be clear, a lot of these mistakes or signs are very common in the early stages of learning to read. It does not in any way mean their intelligence is lacking or you've not done a good job teaching. Addressing your concerns or worries straight away will ensure the learner has the best toolkit for tackling it which should prevent it being a barrier to their learning.

VALIDATION SHEET

The thesis data entitled Idiomatic Expressions Used In Education News in “*Education Today*” Magazine by Afida Sari Wardatul Mila had been checked and validated by Ullin Ni'mah Rodliya Ulfah, M.Pd. on :

Day : Tuesday

Date : June 25th , 2024

The statement made truthfully in accordance with the theory and applicable rules without coercion.

Kediri, June 25th , 2024

Validator

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