

Glossary of activities suggested in the Primary Framework for Literacy:

Book-talk

The ability to talk about books, developing the confidence to offer ideas and then reshape them in the light of other contributions. It deepens children's understanding, shifts their ideas; they think together as a group and move comprehension forwards. Children change their minds in the light of what others say. They are encouraged to raise questions as well as make points and suggestions. For more detailed information visit <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/154522>.

Writer-talk

The articulation of the thinking and creative processes involved in all stages of the act of writing. It is talk that helps children to think and behave like a writer. It involves externalising these thoughts and making them explicit, through 'reading as a writer' and 'writing as a reader'. For more detailed information visit <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/154523>.

Magpie

Children need to be encouraged to 'magpie' words. This involves gathering words from reading, as well from other children adults, and recording them in reading or writing journal. It is the notion that we "never waste a good word". Children need to be encouraged to read a range of texts.

Crossing the river

Imagine you are at the edge of the river and you have to get to the other side, how are you going to get across? Gather initial ideas from the children. Children the work in twos and threes to create imaginative ways of getting across the river. They can get across in any way they like!



Hot-seating

Hot-seating focuses closely on a character and enables motivation to be explored. It is also a good way of exploring the gaps in a character's story. Hot-seating involves the class in asking questions of someone in role as a character, fictional or historical, who sits in the 'hot-seat'. The questions can be prepared or improvised. This works best if both the role player and the questioners are familiar with the character and the narrative or situation.

Word tennis

This is a way of making a story with a partner, and emphasises listening for key words, main points and events, focusing on the need to make sense. Each person says one word or phrase in turn so that the story is continually passed backwards and forwards.

For example: *once/ there/ was/ a/ queen/ who/ wanted/ to/ fly/ so/ she/ sent/ for/ ... or: once there was a girl/who liked writing plays/ so she began ...*

Paint a picture

This activity is about developing a setting and then getting the story going. In the first instance the teacher models the process of painting the picture for the children so they can see the story in their heads. Use the words, 'you can see' to communicate a picture or an image.

For example: *You can see the edge of the estate, you can see the park. You can see a young boy playing on the park. You can see the skateboard ramp on one side of the park and he's whizzing up and down doing tricks. You can see in the distance the park pond and you can see a group of children feeding the ducks. You can see the ice cream van with a long queue of about 15 children waiting in the queue. You can see the swings and the slides and the roundabout where everybody else is playing. You can even hear the whoops and the yells of excitement. You can see the skater again, on his own, the only person there, nobody else has come along to play. You can see him whizzing up and down. Bang! Crash! He falls down and you can see the ripped jeans, you can see the blood on his knee, he's hurt himself and he's lying there now holding his leg. All that's going through his head is this: his mum bought those jeans, she couldn't really afford to buy the jeans and he's torn them and he's thinking, oh no I'm in real trouble now.*

Children can then work in pairs, taking it in turns to paint the picture saying 'you can see'.

Storytelling and story-making:

This involves learning and repeating oral stories, building the confidence to develop them through telling, extending this development into writing and creating 'new' stories orally as a preparation and rehearsal for writing. The development of storytelling is built through a 3-step sequence.

- **Imitation:** straight retelling of learned stories.
- **Innovation:** developing, extending and changing elements of a story.
- **Invention:** creating a 'new' story.

For more detailed information visit <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/154524>.

Story map

Story maps are graphic representations of the sequence of events of a story, which clearly outline the relationships to each other. Components are usually the setting, the characters, the problem, the plot and the resolution.



Story maps can be used as an outline for creating a story or to summarise the story events. They help children visualise the people, places and events of the story. In a creative writing exercise, children use story maps to help with the initial process of organising their thoughts before proceeding with the story writing. As a post reading exercise, they can reflect on the story and summarise it using a story map.

Talk the story

One example of using this activity is to create a new character. All you need to do is illicit responses from the children using the phrase, 'tell me a bit more about ...' They are not questions; you are inviting them to expand on their thinking. For the majority of the time you are picking up on something the children have mentioned that you think is interesting. For example: *tell me a bit more about that, tell me a bit more about the car he's in, tell me a little bit more about the bakery.* Using this technique, children can work in pairs to help the other person develop their character. It moves the character from being two dimensional into beginning to become three dimensional.

Boxing up

Paragraphing is helped substantially by thinking in 'boxes' when analysing the structure of stories or when planning to write them. Introduce the idea of 'boxing' stories by taking any simple, known story (e.g. 'Humpty Dumpty') and, through discussion/interactivity, segment it into boxes representing the main stages of the narrative:

- 1 Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall / *Main character in dangerous setting*
- 2 Humpty Dumpty had a great fall / *Disaster strikes*
- 3 All the King's horses and all the King's men / *Rescue attempt*
- 4 Couldn't put Humpty together again / *He cannot be repaired*

Through teacher demonstration show how a simple story can be written, based on the above and organised on the principle of one paragraph per box

Zone of relevance

These are used with activities where there is no clear outcome but a lot of evidence that needs sorting. In this activity the children take a bank of words, sentences, statements or ideas and decide how important it is in relation to a character, situation or question being studied and justify their opinion. The card is then placed in the zone that reflects its relevance.



Text map

These are based on the organisational features of texts, including chapter titles, headings and subheadings, boldfaced words, and illustrations and other graphic information. A central feature of a text map is a framework that a teacher develops based on the organizational features of content materials that students will be reading. The goal is to teach students about the important features of the material and how they can be used to build new understandings. The example in Figure 1 illustrates a text map based on a lesson from a 1994 social studies series, which requires students to participate in activities that involve the text organizational features that recur in the series. A similar text map based on a science magazine such as Ranger Rick is shown in Figure 2. Before students read a selection, the teacher uses the text map to support an interactive introduction of the text. Students are required to carefully examine the text features to build and update relevant background knowledge, make predictions, clarify understandings, and develop purposes for reading. After students have read the text, they revisit the text map to modify and to elaborate on their initial response.