

Cross-Curricular Learning

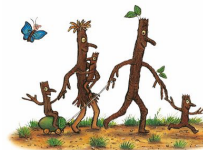
Cross-curricular learning involves the application of different skills, knowledge and attributes through interconnected subjects within a curriculum (Barnes, 2015; 2018). Donaldson (2015) underline the importance of this approach within the three cross-curricular responsibilities. Within his pedagogical principles for effective teaching, it is conveyed that practitioners require to reinforce these responsibilities within the curriculum in order to provide young learners the opportunity to become successful in the modern world (ibid; Impact Wales, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2015). However, it is essential for us to acknowledge the challenge that not all subjects have a natural link (Hayes, 2010). Therefore, advocates assert that these cross-curricular responsibilities are not obligatory but should only be used

MODEL ONE —OPPORTUNISTIC APPROACH (Barnes, 2015, p.75-78)

“Opportunistic cross-curricular teaching **allows children to dictate the depth and direction of learning** in subject categories arising from a shared theme or experience” (Barnes, 2015, p. 75). This is a pupil-led approach to teaching and learning which requires practitioners to facilitate the learning desire of the learners by **providing skills, knowledge and challenge to previous learning** (ibid.). Csikszentmihalyi (2014) underlines the importance of revisiting skills as learners are dependent on prior knowledge which results learners to become in the ‘flow’. This has been described when the challenge of the learning is appropriate to the learner which develops their concentration during a task (ibid.). The voice of the child has become a prominent aspect of planning because of the United Rights of the Child (Barnes, 2015)

This unit of work will particularly focus on the book ‘Stick Man’ by Julia Donaldson. It is advised that the practitioner conduct the learning in a local forest to replicate the home of the main character of the book. Estyn (2011), Donaldson (2015) and the Welsh Government (2015) synthesise with an approach to outdoor learning as they suggest that learners should be provided the opportunity to learn in environments beyond the classroom. This has been considered a fundamental aspect of education as learning can arise from interactions with the world (Barnes, 2015; Dewey, 2011). Positively, a visit to the forest will provide **learners the confidence to develop their social and emotional well-being**, a need required to be met for learners to achieve their potential (Welsh Government, 2019a; Maslow, 1970, cited in Underdown, 2006, p.4). This will provide the practitioners the opportunity to observe the learners and capture moments which allows the learner to develop their skills and knowledge (Barnes, 2015). Some of the opportunities have been discussed below:

- Learners may consider to use iPads in order to **capture photographs similar to the book. This may be used in a digital piece of work** in order to sequence these photographs to help the **learners to memorise the story with some support**. Corbett and Strong (2011) and Didau (2014) initiate the importance of oracy as a language is often learnt by hearing and speaking the language. By developing their language, rhythm and rhyme, this will support their written language in the near future (ibid.).
- Learners may **show curiosity of the world** by **working collaboratively in group discussions** to sort natural objects by **comparing their weight, length, shape and capacity** (WG, 2019e). Allowing learners to work in pairs will provide learners the opportunity to **share skills that may be of benefit to others**. As highlighted by Vygotsky (1978), social interaction enhances cognitive development as their partner can assist their learning by supporting the learner. He defines this as the ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ibid.).
- Learners may **identify animals in their natural habitats** and **share what they have experienced** with other peers (WG, 2019f). Here the learners will be required to **consider the impact of their actions** and therefore handle nature with care. This is explored within Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) through the theme of natural environment (WG, 2008). This is essential in order to equip learners with the skills, knowledge and attributes to become effective citizens (ibid.).



Additional Activities

Opportunities in Cross-Curricular Teaching and Learning

Key: **Model One** **Model Two** **Model One and Two**

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| <p>QUALITY OF WORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a positive impact on the quality of work produced by the learners (Estyn, 2019a; Arseven, 2014). <p>SELF-CONFIDENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will develop their self-confidence which will result the learners’ personalities to be expressed (Arseven, 2014; Estyn, 2019b). | <p>SEVERAL DISCIPLINES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May enhance the learners’ understanding between several disciplines (Jones, 2009; Barnes, 2015;2018). This is effective as Estyn (2016) highlights that practitioners have reduced the time allocated to non-core subjects due to significant pressures on literacy and numeracy. | <p>MULTIPLE SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunity for learners to develop their creativity and criticality to overcome an issue (Barnes, 2018). These skills are required for the future of young learners (Jones, 2009). <p>ENGAGING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A holistic approach to teaching will increase the engagement shown by learners by incorporating several subjects within lessons (Hayes, 2010; Estyn, 2017). |
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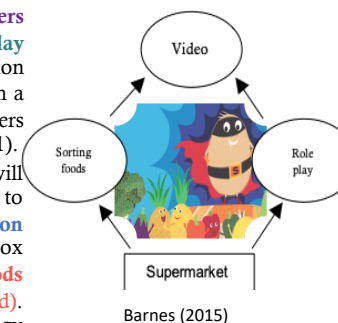
appropriately to support the learning (Oates, 2014; Laurine 2015). For this reason, the publication of this poster underlines useful ways to embed the three-cross curricular responsibilities in a cross-curricular approach. The proposed activities discussed within this poster will commence over a term with an overarching theme of ‘bedtime stories.’ Although it is advised for these activities to be appropriate for learners within a reception class, the publication of the new curriculum highlight that learners will learn along a continuum, hence, this unit of work can be used learners of all ages (CMAU, 2018). Therefore, practitioners are required to **set high but reachable targets** that meet the needs of the learners within their class (Donaldson, 2015; Impact Wales, 2018).

MODEL TWO - INTER-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH (Barnes, 2015, p.72-75)

“Inter-disciplinary cross-curricular methods aim at progression in two or more subjects, and the **promotion of creative thinking and connection-making between the subjects involved**” (Barnes, 2015, p. 72-73). The progression in the subjects involved often comes as a result of a powerful shared experience and learners will connect the skills learned in order to create a final product (ibid). TED (2007) and the World Economic Forum (2015) suggest that creativity is a just as important as literacy by providing learners the opportunity to **take an element of risk**, an aspect of learning which will educate learners for their future.

Alongside the use of this model, it has been considered that this unit of work will commence over a course of a week and will have a particular focus on the book ‘Supertato’ by Sue Hendra. The powerful shared experience received by the learners will be a visit to the local supermarket. According to Barnes (2015), this experience is essential in order to stimulate the involvement and learning conducted. The application of real-life experiences will enhance the learners’ skills and confidence by providing the learners the opportunity to **build upon prior knowledge and allow them to apply these skills in different contexts** (Estyn, 2017; Donaldson, 2015). Nevertheless, practitioners are required to provide learners the sufficient support to complete the final product as it is often identified that learners contrast in their experiences (Bruner, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978). The lessons have been explored below:

- Develop the learners’ understanding that we **require a balanced diet to maintain good health** (WG, 2019d). The learners will be required to **read simple texts and frequency words** to **classify foods under the criteria of healthy foods**. Associating words with the picture on flashcards is important to deepen the learners’ understanding and to consolidate their thinking (Didau, 2014).
- Learners will create the character Supertato from vegetables by applying **experiment creative techniques to develop their imagination** (WG, 2019c). Using a shopping list, **the learners will use money to pay for items** whilst **using relevant language to contribute to role play activities**. They will be required to buy these in the shop located in the continuous provision area. Practitioners will require to be aware of the misconceptions that may arise and plan a lesson on coin recognition prior to this activity. A common misunderstanding that learners may counter is to count all the coins instead of adding the values of the coins (Hansen, 2011).
- Using the information taught in previous lessons, learner will create a video. The learners will use the programme ‘Morfo 3D Face Booth’ to bring their Supertato from the prior lesson to life which will allow learners to **explore different compenonce of media (sound, animation and video)**. **Using simple words and sentences**, they will be required to create a lunchbox for Supertato **that equivalences to 25p**, whilst **considering healthy and non-healthy foods** by **applying knowledge that our diet has a detrimental effect on our health** (WG, 2019d). Future Lab (2010) supports the use of technology as it identifies that the use of technology allows learners to develop their creativity and their curiosity.



Challenges in Cross-Curricular Teaching and Learning

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| <p>POOR ATTITUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners may steer clear of AOLE’s, that they may find difficult (Hayes, 2010). <p>BLAND BROTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application of more than one discipline enhances the possibility of the meaningful skills to become lost (Roth, 2000, cited in Barnes, 2015, p.74). | <p>PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning can be very time consuming and complicated with several disciplines to consider during planning (Kerry, 2015; Jones, 2009; Barnes, 2015). When learning outcomes are not clear, this will be difficult to assess the learners (Didau, 2014; Barnes, 2015). | <p>SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners will require sufficient subject knowledge on all areas of the curriculum which is impractical (WG, 2019a; Pollard et al., 2019). <p>REDUCED CONFIDENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners will require confidence and a bold teaching style to provide inclusion (Barnes, 2015) |
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