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AI Acknowledgement

I can confirm I have not used AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment.

[The Very Hungry Caterpillar Book.mov](#)

[Digital Story.mov](#)

Storytelling in early years to support Language and digital literacy.

Benefits of storytelling and the use of incorporating digital tools

Lucarevschi (2016) states that the definition of storytelling is when a reader uses a narrative with dramatized vocals and images to capture the listeners. Their use of gestures, tone of voice and expressions are used to connect the reader, listeners and the story. Satriani (2019) states that there are many benefits to storytelling in early years. Some of the benefits are that children develop a wide vocabulary throughout the story being told and what context to use the newly learned words in, children develop a wider imagination through story telling as this will spark interest by an adult helping children visualise, guide and interpret the meaning of a story.

Hibbon (2016) states oracy through story telling is an important part of learning as this is key to learning language and picking up new words, providing reading with rich vocabulary throughout the story. Harjono (2021) agrees that digital storytelling can encourage children develop their communication as digital tools allow children to express themselves creatively before developing the ability to write. Harjono also suggest have access to digital tools, such as an iPad or tablet it can help to build on their problem solving using online games to sequence a story while building on their early knowledge of technology.

Maureen (2022) emphasises the importance of story telling helps children to learn structure, by an adult dramatizing and pointing out important parts of a story like the setting or the characters of a story. Maureen also found that allowing children to access digital stories this gave children more motivation as children could access this independently, giving them clearer images of the story closely. Cremin (2016) Agrees that story telling encourages early awareness of developing language and structure through stories. However, the article also supports that once adults have modelled a story to children, they will be able to go off on their own to express themselves telling a story and using their confidence to act out the story amongst peers showing the development of newly learnt words or phrases but also gestures and non-verbal cues and communication skills.

In the videos the practitioner presents the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. The story was told to children of the ages 3-4 years old. The setting for the story set by the practitioner was on the floor at the children's level where the children were able to access as Foundations (2024) states that children should feel comfortable in their surrounding and it should be appealing to children to join like the practitioner in the video used pillows and a blanket on the floor for a cosy setting.

Modelling Language

The practitioner utilised the variation of the tone of their voice to express different emotions and used repeated phrases such as “but he was still hungry” to develop vocabulary development and phonic awareness. Repetition of phrases and sounds has shown that children will develop better listening skills, recognising patterns and will become more aware of basic concepts helping, them in later life when they begin their reading and writing journey (Aspire Early Education and Kindergarten, 2025).

The practitioner used repetitive use of descriptive language such as ‘big, fat caterpillar’, “tiny Caterpillar” and the use of pointing out colours. The use of adjectives demonstrates to children how to use these words but also context to use them in. children are becoming aware of new descriptive words to associate with images shown to them (Davies, 2024).

Encouraging Engagement

Throughout the storytelling videos, the practitioner used questioned directed towards the listeners, to make them feel involved in the story. Using questions such as “can you see the caterpillar?” Or “What colours can you see?” and encouraging the children to join in when counting with the practitioner by saying “shall we count the fruit together?” This coincides with the Foundation Phase Framework which shows that oracy is a fundamental factor in literacy, as practitioners should support children to communicate what they are doing. This will encourage children to develop their prediction and reasoning skills (Welsh government, 2015).

Social and Emotional Development

Social Care Wales (no date) states storytelling can help support children when developing their social and emotional skills. By emphasising the emotions in a story and showing the children through dramatizing the acting from a practitioner can help children build their nurturing side and empathy but also can help them understand their own emotions along with others. The practitioners group story telling gave opportunity for a collaborative learning experience for the children, this included turn-taking when asking questions but also shared attention by opening those questions to the children for them to share their thoughts too. When asked the questioned the children were asked individually and waited until their turn to speak, showed interest in the story, showing that they listened and cooperated with the practitioner when asking direct questions like “can you see the little egg?” and they pointed to the image (Wesh Assembly Government, 2008)

The story has a message of change which could invite feelings of curiosity of the children’s own body changing. The practitioner exaggerated the change of the caterpillar turning into a beautiful butterfly, to which the children respond with awe and excitement of a beautiful creature. Horton (2016) suggests that this allows children to feel the excitement of change and the positives that it comes with making connections with those around them with the similarities but also the curiosities of

the differences allowing children to develop their literacy skills but their emotional skills in recognising and processing change.

Scaffolding and Sustained Shared Thinking Approaches

During the video the practitioner showed that they could demonstrate scaffolding, by guiding the children by repeatedly demonstrating instructions through questions or prompts of modelling. For example, the use of digital tools of clicking the next button, how to scroll or zoom in and out. The practitioner used visual tools to represent the change in the book, such as using props of small caterpillars then to use big caterpillars to represent the size change. This helps the children understand the change by visibly and verbally, allowing there to be shared sustained thinking by allowing the children and practitioner to work together highlight the change in the stage of the book (Learning Journals, No date). Hamaza (2025) suggests this links with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. As the practitioner gives a gentle nudge of support to steer the children in the right direction, it gives the children opportunity to progress their current skills further. Tomasello's theory of social interaction agrees with Vygotsky's theory, as it states children learn through modelling and interactive guidance from an adult and having the experience of joint shared attention to allow children to take in what is being modelled to them like when the practitioner in the video would ask "what colours is the egg?" followed by "can you find something else that colour?" guiding the children to make those connections and only once that connect has been established will shared sustained thinking be achieved (UCL, 2019,)

Floating theory (2012) states that Steven Pinker's theory suggests that language development is basic instinct rather than a skill we learn throughout our childhood. From this theory the linking to the story the practitioner chose, the story gives children the ability to enjoy the story as it is simple and repetitive allow this to support children's development. However, he believes that this is just human instinct to enjoy a story rather than an enriched learning experience. Furthermore, according to the Welsh government (2022) it highlights how children have learning experiences when reading a story by holding a physical book, turning the pages and being able to sit and observe the book with an adult. Or when using digital stories, a child is learning the ability to scroll, click and identify icons new to them. Pinker's theory gives a useful understanding of how children find stories so engaging but as early years practitioners there are many sources to follow to find the right learning experience for children.

How Storytelling effects everyday experiences?

Toronto Metropolitan University (no date)_suggests that story tellings is a fundamental part of developing imagination. Children who have been exposed to stories will use the knowledge and experience of seeing a story modelled to them. During their play, children will use the techniques to create imaginative characters

based off what they have seen and heard when the practitioner named everyday foods or creature in nature.

TeachKloud (2025) states that Jean Piaget's theory on cognitive development, through stages, in which the child starts at one stage and develops and learns climbing up the stages. This theory can be enriched by the help of those around the children, but the child will take what has been learned and test the new knowledge during their play. Practitioners can change the environment to suit the children's interests and plan activities that with help develop their curiosity. When the practitioner was reading the story, they used gestures and sounds to imitate the caterpillar eating to make the story more capturing by the sounds effects to keep their interest but also showing them to be confident in their role play. The practitioner named everyday food items that the children can use in their role play, or insects that they can use to find and explore during an outdoor learning experience, to carry on with the knowledge they learned from that story.

Like Piaget theory of stages, David crystal's theory is that children learn over 5 stages, where each stage shows great progression on the development of language as a child grows but some stages may intertwine with others (Camerons Blog, 2017)

Crystal disagrees with Piaget's theory and believes that children learn and develop their language through social interaction by listening, talking and joining in with other children or adults. So, when the practitioner is reading the story in the video, the children are developing and learning language by shared story telling through the using props, repeated phrases and the continuous conversations and questioned initiated all the way through the story. This supports crystals theory that learning through playful communication. Hwb (no date) shows that children in early years should be encouraged to participate in story time. Linking to Crystal's theory children should be talking, asking questions and exploring together rather than waiting until they reach the higher stages that Piaget suggests.

Practitioners hold a huge role in the learning journey of children, when story telling is a fundamental part of their language and literacy development, communication and digital literacy skills. Practitioners show children through expressive storytelling, repetition, open-ended questioning, practitioners a key element in children expanding their vocabulary, developing understanding of the structure of stories and improving listening skills. Practitioners should choose to incorporate digital tools such as iPads and tablets into their story time to encourage creativity and engagement, allowing children to independently explore while building technological competency. The use of various methods such as sustained shared thinking, scaffolding and modelling support children's social and intellectual development. Overall storytelling, traditional or digital, create enjoyable experiences to create confident language growth in early years.

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