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Media and Digital Literacy

UK Safer Internet Centre (2020) say that research has taken place in children's use of technology and the results they found are mixed. Then experts say that young children should not be introduced to a screen, while others says if it is done in a familiar environment and mixed with lots of other activities then it will be beneficial for the children. As physical activity, human interaction and reading are a big part of a child's development, screen should not replace the experiences. If they are used in the right environment, they can bring new education experience to young children. Some skills they may develop and benefits are:

Hand-eye coordination – they may have education games where the child would have to follow an object and interact with them. It will help the hand-eye coordination and their understanding of how to relate with the system. An example is the child pressing the right button to get the action they want.

On the other hand, children can learn hand eye coordination outside with different games. Here are some suggest on Bellamy's Organic (2020). They say that play is a big part of children developing their hand- eye coordination. As they believe that play allows children to learn to reach and grab things and understand cause and effect. They also show options that children five and over can do to improve hand eye coordination:

- Balancing on a beam
- Playing catch
- Juggling
- Lego
- Jenga
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Sewing
- Walking on a wall
- Throwing a ball
- Tennis

Able to find a variety of Information – Children will only learn from what they have access to which is normally their parent, family, friends, school, and the local community. Having a digital device gives them a library of material to help they learn and discover new things.

Language development is supported according to UK Safer Internet Centre (2020) – children know they can ask a digital device whatever they want or need to know and children can use their voice to ask the questions. They will then read and look over what ever come up. They language will develop over time as they will be faster and quicker to find the information they desire. Also using the digital device, the quality of information, they may have can help their language development because they are reading a variety and different types of text online rather than just books.

In addition, FluentU (2020) describes Chomsky's theory on language development as having deep structures and surface structures in every sentence. This is why you can form many different sentences with similar meaning using a different combination of words. So deep structure are thoughts and meanings that need to be expressed and then the surface structure are the words, sounds and symbols

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that are used to express the thoughts and meanings. When children read things in books a lot then have similar plots an endings and they see it formed in different ways. This can help expand their vocabulary and the way they word things. Digital sources of language patterns would enhance this further.

Problem solving - Games and website that are interactive will help children develop the skill to solve problems. Children will work their way through any of the challenges that they are given to move on to the next level. When children simply use a digital device, it can help them develop the skill for problem solving by engaging in tasks to move to the next level or engaging with different aspects of the programme. Also, when programmes are not working or when the device losses a connection children have to be resilient and fix the problem to return to the game or activity.

Children can learn problem solving without looking at a computer. Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (2020) highlights that playing is one of the best ways that young children can learn how to problem solve. Some toys that children have are shape sorters and puzzles are bests. Also, board games will help children think critically and see patterns, even hide, and seek is problem to solve as you have to look for people or find somewhere good to hide. If the children have an argument, they will have to figure out a way to resolve the problem, but if they are having trouble just offer some suggestions of what they could do.

The London School of Economics and Political Science (2018) mention that Children have a lots of different opportunities to learn Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) every day. Examples of these are baking, playing with puzzles, and even splashing water about. However, London School of Economic and Political Science (2018) highlight how different media can also enhance STEM knowledge and skills, such touch screen devices, online games, and television where children learn things such as counting, weather, gravity, and computer coding. The London School of Economics and Political Science (2020) highlight that media could promote a child's STEM learning as it can show them things, they cannot see in everyday life. As the children's parents can show them videos on YouTube of animals and things them may have not seen before such as whales or tropical plants and natural disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes. They can also watch videos of science projects that they could do at home like how to a volcano erupt with vinegar and baking soda. There are also a lot of children television shows that can introduce children to STEM ideas in an appropriate way for their age. An example of this is a television show called 'Nina and the Neurons' produced by the BBC, which shows children many science facts such as how the senses work and what they help you with. Another example is 'Sid the television programmes Science Kid' produced by PBS kids, showing on Netflix, as this programme teaches children what germs are and shows children how to wash their hands.

Informal Science (2018) mentioned that the Centre on Media and Human Development had done surveys. Experiment and evaluation. This was to find out the best way to support a child's learning of STEM from media. They were motivated as Stem skills are valuable and important for the child when they are older and looking for employment. Media is seen as a powerful learning tool for all children before they start school. It can expose them to things that they may never be exposed to like earthquakes or what lives underwater. They agree with The London School of Economics and Political Science (2020) that media does help with children's learning of STEM.

However, STEM can be taught using simple toys according to Mashable (2018). A professor at Stanford University called Jo Boaler believes that parents should have a range of toys that draw children in visually and lets them have an open mindset when they learn code. For children to become successful later in life they need have a lens on the world to see the patterns and order. Boaler believes children use computational think and reasoning to learn coding. Boaler also discusses that for maths they

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emphasis numbers as it helped children that have numerical thinking or work. But undeveloped their visual thinking and the thinking in different forms that can help brain communication. Boaler wants children to know and understand that maths is about thinking visually and deeply. It will also allow them to use reasoning, flexible thinking and approach a problem to solve it in different way. When children think numerically, they should see what it looks like visually and what it would look like if they were to draw it or model it. Mashable (2018) have provided some examples of toys that can help them build STEM skills without looking at a screen. They are:

- Building Blocks – Using these are the best way for children to practice their maths and coding skills. they can also offer the chance for children to develop and work on physical computing methods. Children will be creative in three dimensions using the blocks as they don't have any instructions to follow,
- Think and Lear Code-a-Pillar – it has colourful lights and let children arrange the toy segments in their own unique patterns. As each part of the toy has a different function and once the children have completed the arrangement they want. Then they turn the toy on and the Code-a-Pillar will perform the programmed movements. It can also help with math as the segments can be put in a numerical order. This type of creative play will help a child's coding skills.
- Robot Turtles - This was created by a former Google executive called Dan Shapiro. It's a board game that will stimulates children's critical thinking skills and programming methods. Then to direct the turtle you must use silly turtle sound. This enhances coding skills. When a turtle reaches a certain point on the board the children have to programme it with the way they want it to move to reach a jewel. It also has a bug card which can undo moves. Coding helps children thinks visually, be creative and offers them movement.
- Lego Boost Creative Toolbox - lets children learn to build 5 different robots which help with engineering part of STEM. Each model is harder to build than the previous one. But it does include screen time but it is very limited as once the robot is built; they have to use the app Lego boost. To programme the robot to do tasks. Once they have finished one model, they take it apart and rebuild it of build another one.

Little Bins Little Hand (2019) mention that LEGO has fun computer coding ideas for children as we know technology is becoming a big part of our everyday lives. Children love to use iPads and build things with LEGO brick. So, there are a couple ways people have come up with to join together computer coding and LEGO with and without a computer. Lego have designed a game for coding called Bit and Bricks. It is a part of the Hour of Code initiative which is directed to children of the age 5 and 6. This is to help them become exciting about coding. An hour to code which launched in 2013 has become a global project that lots of children get involved in. the people who use LEGO spend it with Bit the Bot.

Young children enjoy playing video games on devices. A game that is highly popular with young children is Minecraft. This games was created by LEGO. According to Parent Zone and NCA-CEOP (2020) who say it is one of the world's most popular games, spread by word of mouth and with a small marketing budget. It is a big topic on a school playground and in classrooms. Teachers try to find ways to use the game for educational purchases. It is portrayed as a 'sandbox game' which means it a virtual land where children can build and put together their own world and gain experiences from it. So, children will use building blocks and any resources they find in the game. This game is available to play on lots of different platforms like, Xbox, play station, computer, smartphone, tablet, or Nintendo.

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The Minecraft game helps children build their creative thinking and investigation. It also helps them gain problem solving, organisation and planning skills. When they play with friends, they may find it easier to work as a team as a result of playing the game. They have seen certain effects with children who have autism play this game and help them improve their social and communication skills. This game has been catching on in schools and is used as a teaching technique encouraging young children to consider how to build things. There is a version the teacher and pupils can use free in Wales on the digital platform Hwb, where programmes are made available to all Welsh pupils.

However, playing these games means the children can be stationary for long periods of time. It is recognised that children should be up and moving about and playing outside, not stuck indoors. Children learn through doing something rather than being told about or watching something. This conflicts with the idea of using a digital device, where children are sat down not doing anything but looking at a screen. The theorist Vygotsky and Piaget (Nest in the Woods Community Interest Company, 2013) believe that children learn by being active and will develop skills through having hand on experiences. Piaget says that children think in different ways as he came up with the idea of cognitive development as a child thinking changes as the learn more from experiences that challenges what they know. Also, they have development stages for learning and development for children. Vygotsky say if a child becomes engaged in doing something then they will gain more knowledge and intelligence. Vygotsky believes that a child's learning is an ongoing process.

In addition, if children are sat down for a long time can also to child becoming obese. Obesity is a health concern that is increasing with young children in Wales and the U.K. This could be because they are playing video games daily or are on digital devices. Guardian News & Media (2020) note that children who spend more than half an hour on video games and devices are more likely to become over weight compared to children who hardly spend time online or devices. Children who play games or a devices are not only sedentary for long periods but also will see adverts showing junk food which leads them to begging their parents for it and influencing their eating habits.

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Tips for Parents

- **Make a plan for the family's media use** - It should link with your family values and parenting approach. As when used right screen time can improve your daily life, If used wrong it can make things like face to face conversations, outdoor play, exercise, family time come second and as important as they should be.
- **Media should be dealt with the same as any other environment that your child has in their life** - They should follow the same rules in the real and the virtual world. You should have restrictions as the child expects them and need them. You should know your children's friends on and offline. Also know what social media sites your children are on and what they get up to when they are online.
- **Limits should be set and promote playtime** - The children's media time should have a time limit. They should have playtime outside daily as it very important especially for young children. Having play outside with no structure help improve the child creativity.
- **Be a role model for your child** - Model good manners and kindness online. As children will copy and also limit how much media you use. As you will be connected with your children when you interact with them. So, play with them rather than looking at a screen.
- **Youngest member of family should have limited time on digital media** - Children who are under 18 months should avoid digital media. Children 18 to 24 months should watch any digital media with an adult as they will learn from watching and talking to them. Children who are 2 to 5 years old should have only about 1 hour of screen time a day on a high programmed device.
- **Have a place free of devices** - Keep bedrooms, mealtimes, and social gatherings screen free zones. Any background TV should be turned off if you are having face to face time with your children. Devices should be charged at night outside the children's room. Have device free zones, create more family time and better sleeping habits.

Here are some points that can help keep your child safe online:

Make sure that your internet provider has parental controls so you can ensure there is security for your children and block inappropriate content. Also, if your children have a mobile phone check their settings.

Make sure you talk to your children about being safe online and be involved on what they do online. Let them know that they can talk to you about anything that worries them online.

Online passwords should be kept safe and change them often. Make sure that none of the networks you use are open or disclosed.

Have a group of rules in place at home for the safe use of the internet.

A lot of devices can download app purchases so just be app aware. The privacy setting and permission of apps downloaded should be checked.

Check your device security settings that use the internet are safe, including game consoles and smart televisions.

Be safe and report any concerns you make have when using the internet, you can report them to Child Exploitation and online Protection Command (CEOP) website. Here is the link:

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

(Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership, No Date)



(Springwell Learning Community, 2020)

Websites for Parents

UK Safer Internet Centre - The website gives guidance on how the internet works and how to use it. Also, how to use new technologies safely. It shows parent practical resources, news, and events which can help with responsible and safe use of internet.

www.saferinternet.org.uk

Childnet International - It is a non-profit making organisations that works with others and can make the internet and great and safe place for children. You can access things like Jenny's story, Becky's Story and Let's Fight It Together and lots of other resources on this site.

<http://www.childnet-int.org/>

Internet Matters - This is a portal which will direct parents and carers to information on how to help keep children safe online.

www.internetmatters.org

Digizen - this site helps us deal with online hazards, setting up safe profiles on social media. Also helps with how to manage personal information.

<http://www.digizen.org/>

Think you know - It has the latest information on the sites young like to visit, new technology and mobiles. There are different age groups: 5-7 years old, 8-10 years and 11-16 years old. It has a parents/career and teacher/ trainer sections. It talks about what's good and what's not. Also, what are online risk and what you can do about them. <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

That's not cool - It was created to help young children and their parents understand phones, instant messaging and profiles on social media are extension of who we are. It will provide young people and children with information to help them understand what is ok or not ok in a digital relationship and to resist any peer pressure they may get.

www.thatshotcool.com

(Parents Protects, 2018)

Positive points

Some positive uses of digital media:

- Learning about things you cannot do in real life - Children can watch video about them or read articles that they find online.
- Making videos - So they have used to learn the camera on the device.
- Looking for programmes to fit different emotions - If child is upset, they can find a programme that can cheer them up and make them laugh.
- Video chatting with people they know and parents - this way they will keep in touch with people they may not see all the time.

(MJH Life Sciences, 2018)



(Alamy, 2020)



(BestParentalControlApps.com, 2020)



(Dribbble, 2020)

Video's to watch with you children about internet safety:

Online safety: Staying safe online [FREE RESOURCE]
(Discovery Education, 2018)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9Htg8V3eik>

5 Internet Safety Tips for Kids (Common Sense, 2016)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMSHtE42mmI>

Negative points

Here are some negative things of children using media:

- Children that spend more than 4 hours on the device are the mostly likely to be or become over weight.
- If children watch violent shows or things on YouTube, can cause them to be copying the behaviour and fear that the world they live in to be scary or they can think that something could happen to them
- If the children play violent video games or app, like fortnight can cause them to have aggressive behaviour.
- If they watch TV shows with characters who have risky behaviours, they could copy that o later in life thinking it cool or ok to do it.

([Kids Health Medical Experts](#), 2020)

Activity Plan		
Activity: A scavenger hunt to find mini beasts in forest schools and take pictures of them. Also find out facts on 1 of the min beast they like.		
Number of children: 3	Age of children: 5 to 6 years old	Number of adults: 1 adult s
Location: Forest school	Preparation time: 5 minutes	Activity time: 20 minutes
Resources: • iPads • Check lists • Clipboards • Pencils • Wellies • Waterproofs • First aid kit		
Aim/s of activity: Using a Camera on iPad – the children will have to take picture of the mini beast Research – Use the search engine on the iPad to find facts on the chosen mini beast.		
Links to outcomes: Collaboration - The children will work with other on a piece of digital work Health and wellbeing – The children should be able to use any digital device in different environments, times, and context Creating - The children must choose the right software to complete task they are given. (Digital Competence Framework, 2020)		
Differentiation: More able: • These children could research more than one mini beast on the iPad. • Have a longer list of min beast to take pictures of. Less able: • To only find out one fact on the mini beast they have chosen . • Have a shorter check list of min beast to take pictures of .		
Role of adult/adults: To supervise the children always so you can see them and watch them. Make sure that the iPads are fully charge and ready to use. That all items that children need to use are easy to get and they know where they are.		
The activity: First thing is to help the children you are talking to Forest School change into their waterproofs and wellies. Then you tell the rules they have follow when at forest school so they are safe and will not hurt themselves. Then you will help the children gather the items they need you will hand them the checklist. Then one child will grab a clipboard and pencil. Another child will pick up an iPad to take with them. Once we get to forest school the child with the checklist will say what the first mini beast is, and they will start the scavenger hunt. They will be allowed to look under rocks in the leaves and in the grass. The child with the iPad will take pictures of where they find the mini beasts at forest schools. Once they have found every mini beast on the list they will go back to class. Then they will sit down with the iPad and decide together what mini beast they would like research together. Once they have found information about the mini beast, they have chosen they will write in down in their books.		

Evaluation

My activity is for children in Year one. The children go on a scavenger hunt for mini beast and then carry out research on one mini beast that they choose. The outcomes I choose for my activity from the Digital competence framework (DCF) (2016) are:

- Collaboration
- Health and wellbeing
- Creating

IN BRIEF (2016) mention that the Welsh Government state that a digital competence is a set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes to empower confident, creative, and critical use of technology and systems. It is a skill set that can allow a person to become a digital citizen, collaborate digitally and produce any work digitally. It can also make them comfortable in handling data and computational thinking. The activity I have planned would allow young children to develop their handling data skills in particular when using J2e to record their finding in a block graph, the outdoor nature of this task blends activity and digital competence enabling young children to develop digital skills and collaborate with their peers.

IN BREIF (2016) also points out that the DCF is not intended to replace ICT or Computer lesson in schools. The framework will work alongside the programmes that are already in place for ICT and computer lessons. It will also help inspire the use of technology across all lessons. It is known as the 'Cross- curriculum Responsibility' and thinks that being digital competence is as good as literacy and numeracy. The mini beast hunt is a cross curricular activity, encompassing science, literacy, numeracy, geography, ICT and could even lend itself to creative development.

Successful Futures by Donaldson (2015) say that all teachers and school staff have the job to teach the digital competences. The teachers would need the skill and knowledge so they can do it. For the future, the child's progression in literacy and numeracy would build on the work that has been done. The digital competences have been worked into the heart and across the Welsh education system. According to the structure of the curriculum there are expectations for literacy and numeracy would create part of an underlined within the Languages, literacy and communication and Mathematics and numeracy. The mini beast hunt plan touches on all aspects of this with young children and they would naturally record and research on digital devices such as iPads or tablets outdoors, just as easily as inside. They would also be active and using physical skills in the process.

Digital Competence plays a strong role in lives of children, for communication, information, networking, leisure, and entertainment as well as for an improving range of transactions and educational products. Having the ability to be able to use digital technology skills creatively is a growing element of the modern workplace. An example of them in work place is developing stimulated models that test out ideas safely or are using complex medical equipment that has to be set to suit patient's needs. There was a recommendation by the ICT Steering Group the skills should not primarily be built on changing technologies, although it should focus on the pedagogy transferability, deeper skill development and understanding as well as a potential application of the competencies. A part of the development that comes from a review of the Digital competence progression framework and the additional 'Routes to Learning Digital Competence' would develop using the recommendations out of the ICT reports (Successful Futures, 2015). At its earliest stages, pupils in year 1 carrying out the mini beast hunt would be developing communication skills, sharing information naturally with peers as they find bugs and producing data to be shared with a wider audience. The activity could be adapted to support national research when organisations such as RSPB (2020) and the Butterfly Conservation society (2019) ask the public to help with research and complete surveys such as the 'Big Garden Bird Watch' or 'Butterfly Count'. As well as recording their own data on personal devices the pupils can share their finding with these national organisations and reaching a wider audience.

Successful Futures (2015) mentions that children and young people will have an opening to learn how technology is used to design products that can improve the quality of human life and then apply their scientific and other knowledge to practical purposes and challenges. It will be providing children and young people with a chance to learn technological skills, understanding, knowledge and attributes when developing designing and developing products. Children will be able to explore the impact that technology has on a community and on an environment.

The children could write up what they find out about the mini beasts on a word document or J2 write on the classroom computers. This will help them learn how to use a keyboard. They will also learn how to control the mouse so copy paste things that they find out or want to write down. Also, this will help them learn how to save a file which is a part of the Interacting and collaborating strand of the DCF (2016) and the element is Storing and sharing. So, the child will learn how to save the work using a file name that will help them remember what the work is and what it is for. For children who are less able they will need support to understand that they can save their work by clicking on the save icon at the top of the page and that the work can be recovered, if they work on J2 Write a free app provided on the Hwb platform by Welsh Government, the work is saved automatically as the pupils work.

An extra part that the more able children could do is mark down how many of each mini beast they find as they do their scavenger hunt. Then when they are back in class and have done the research, they could do a graph of how many of each mini beast they found. The children can make their graph on the Welsh Government Hwb (2020) on Just2easy (J2e) which have loads of different tool that children can use to do on line. The children will then log on to their username and password then click on tile with J2e on it and it will open up with loads of different tiles of what they can do. It also shows how to put data they have collected into a suitable format, which they need to know according to the DCF (2016). A suitable format would be a block graph or pie chart. The children who find doing a graph hard can make pictogram of how many of each minibeast they found (DCF, 2016).

To make it accessible for all children I would have to think of doing it somewhere else other than forest school. as children who have mobility issues such as a child who may move around in a wheelchair could find it hard moving around Forest School. So, I could move the scavenger hunt to the garden on plant bugs around the playground for the child to find. Or they could maybe do a virtual bug hunt online at National Pest Management Association(2018) which have different games on there to do with bugs you can sort them into groups of what they are and a game that looks at what habits that mini beast live in. there is also a game made by the BBC on CBeebies (2020)called Minibeast spotter that children can play.

In conclusion this activity provides numerous opportunities for children to develop digital competencies and use them in a range of cross curricular subjects.it can also be adapted to challenge more able pupils and enable less able pupils to still achieve and engage in the activity.

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