



PNGio (2019)

Introduction:

The New Draft Curriculum for Wales state that Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence need to be taught as cross-curricular responsibilities (Welsh Government, 2019), as they are arguably the most important skills for life. Barnes (2015) believes there is not one single approach for teaching through a cross-curricular approach, he argues there are eight different approaches. This poster will exemplify and justify the use of two of the models suggested by Barnes (2015) following the theme of "Animals" for a Year 1 class.

Cross-Curricular Approaches within Foundation Phase

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First Approach - Interdisciplinary:

As presented by Barnes (2015) the interdisciplinary approach is where learning in different disciplines are taken forward from a shared experience and the skills are then used to create an outcome. For this example, the experience will take place within the local forest. Arguably the outdoor environment is ideal for experiential learning (Welsh Government, 2009), it can also encourage enthusiasm (Estyn, 2019). The students will be asked to find any animals they can and record the number by tallying. Next, the students will look at the data they have collected and they will present their findings using pictograms on 'hwb', this may be done within pairs to enable a range of data to be used. From this the students will then create posters for the forest to show visitors how many different types of animals are in the area. Considerations would need to be made for particular schools regarding the resources available if this was to be carried out, if a forest is not available then considerations of environments available would need to be made.

Benefits of the Approach:

- There is a clear outcome,
- Interesting for learners (Barnes, 2015)

Limitations of the Approach:

- Requires a great deal of teacher subject knowledge and confidence (Hayes, 2010).

Skills being developed:

Numeracy

Sorting and classifying objects (Welsh Government, 2008a)

Literacy

Communicating observations (Welsh Government, 2008a)

Digital Competence

Record data in a suitable format (Welsh Government, 2008b)

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Making observations and keeping records (Welsh Government, 2008a).

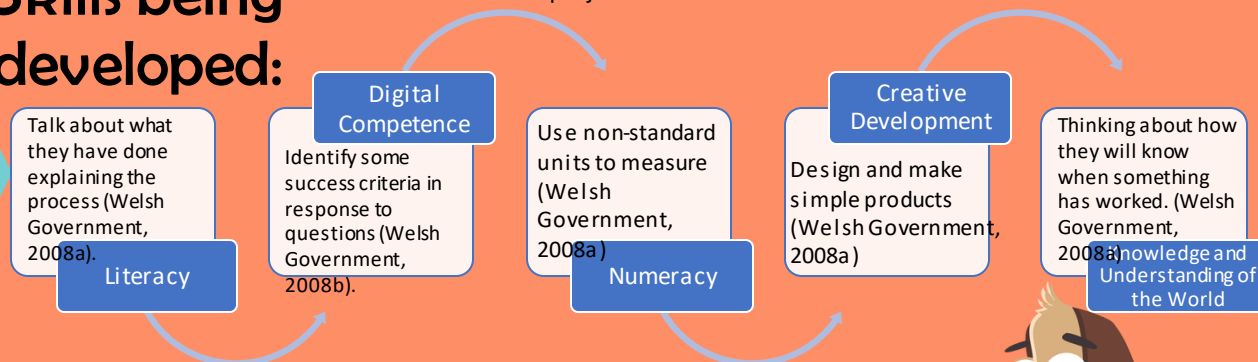
Second Approach – Theme-based:

A theme-based approach uses a meaningful theme to teach across two or more subject areas (Barnes, 2015), the theme being used here is "animals". This approach continues from the previous activity, the learners will use the data collected from their forest visit and use this to design and create their own woodland homes for the animals that live within the forest. This will enable the children to develop their environmental well-being (Grigg and Hughes, 2013). The outdoor environment enables learners to develop their numeracy and literacy skills more effectively within meaningful contexts (Blatt and Patrick, 2014). The children will work within small groups using recyclable materials such as bottles, to create their animal homes. Working within small groups enables social communication skills to develop more (Tolmie et al., 2008). The children will also record their progress using images and videos, to create an overall project video to show their creation.



Planet Science (no date)

Skills being developed:



Benefits of the approach:

- Easily flexible and adaptable for any theme/year group (Kerry, 2015).
- Makes learning interesting for the students (Min, Rashid and Nazri, 2012).
- Better communication skills (Varun and Venugopal, 2016).

Limitations of the approach:

- Teacher subject knowledge and confidence is needed to create meaningful experiences.
- Risk of being too vague (Hayes, 2010).



Vexels (2019)

Conclusion:

To conclude, the use of these approaches within foundation phase will enable the creation of various opportunities that can develop and extend pupils skills within literacy, numeracy and digital competence. However, a great deal of teacher subject knowledge is required if these are to be carried out effectively. In addition to this, resources within the school would need to be rich to enable these activities to take place.

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