

Create a thematic resource that is suitable for teachers to use as an inspiration for children's learning (either 3 – 7 or 7 – 11yr olds) in a modern curriculum context. Choose a modern artefact as a basis to the work. The resource could include music, drama, dance, art, design, film and/or media activities.

Justify your reasoning with references to theorists and relevant current research.

Creativity is defined by NACCCE (1999) as an 'imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value'. Desailly, J (2012) explains that a person's creativity allows them to envisage new ideas and see things in a new light.

Desailly (2012) also highlighted a theory by Croft, A (2000) who believes that creativity is a cycle of five stages. In order to be creative, Croft (2000:32,33) says that an individual must first prepare themselves by getting into an appropriate physical and mental position before progressing to the next stage. The second stage involves 'letting go' and clearing a mental empty space to create in preparation for 'germination', where creativity commences. Following germination, ideas take root. This transpires over a length of time in a stage labelled as 'Assimilation'. The final stage is 'Completion', where the idea is finalised and a final product is established.

In an attempt to predict creativity, Guildford (1967) introduced the psychometric approach and developed an Alternative Uses Test, in which participants were asked to explore the unconventional ways that common objects could be used. This is one of many divergent thinking tests that have been created in order to attempt to predict how creative a person is. Tests include title tasks, where participants must provide titles for a written plot, and the Rorschach Inkblot Test, in which participants are scored based on their number of individual responses.

'If intelligence is the measure of a person's cognitive ability to adapt, creativity is the gift that might allow one to better adapt' - Heilman (2005).

Heilman separates creativity from intelligence, inferring that intelligence is needed in order to apply creativity. This begs the question ‘Can creativity be tested?’. Many researchers, such as Sternberg and O’Hara (1999), state that there are many potential relationships between intelligence and creativity ranging from them being the same, unrelated and overlapping but independent. This holds strong links to Gardner, H (2006) Multiple Intelligences theory.

This essay will discuss the presence of the expressive arts in the curriculum and how teaching using a thematic approach can be used to create a cross-curricular learning experience for pupils. The creative arts include: Music, Design and Technology, Art and Technology, Film, Drama & Digital Media. Film, Drama and Digital Media are areas that have been proposed to be introduced in the new Successful Futures curriculum. The chosen artefact to implement a thematic approach is Groggs (Appendices 1 and 2), a Pontypridd based company that specialises in hand-designed and hand-painted clay caricatures of a range of celebrities. The company is world renowned for their creative interpretations of rugby players although they have also made works of other celebrities including Elvis Presley and Pavarotti.

‘Having a Grogg is something special’ JPR Williams (2015). For many rugby players world-wide, having a dedicated Grogg is recognised as one of the ultimate achievements in the sport. Many pupils in the Key Stage 2 age range will find these creations fascinating as they depict famous sporting personalities who may be known and idolised by both the pupils and their families.

The overriding theme for the activities to follow is ‘Gwawdlun Gymreig’, meaning Welsh Caricatures, the activities are designed for pupils within the Key Stage 2 age range. Key Stage 2 would be the ideal age range for this theme as it has strong links with identity. At an age where pupils are preparing to make the transition from primary school to secondary school, it is vital that they are reminded of the importance of individuality and staying true to themselves. This holds strong links with the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning, see Appendix 1.

Included in this resource (Appendix 1) is a mind map. Mind maps are a creation of Buzan, T (1974). Described as a ‘diagrammatic thinking tool’, mind maps are estimated to be used by 100

million people world-wide, including large corporations such as Nabisco. Buzan is responsible for the establishment of multiple charities that have the main goal of promoting brain skills.

‘It’s so blazingly obvious that the first thing you have to do is teach people how to learn, how to think’ - Buzan (1995).

Here he explains the significance of pupils understanding how to process the information that they are given. If pupils are unable to process the information correctly, it will be virtually impossible for them to remember it.

At the beginning of a new scheme of work, it is vital to consider what the pupils already know. Drawing on pupils’ prior knowledge provides them with the tools to process and understand new information. For this topic, the ITV Documentary ‘It’s a Groggs Life’ would be a greatly informative resource to provide pupils with a rounded knowledge and understanding of Groggs as a company. As mentioned in Appendix 1, the Grogg Shop, Pontypridd, has its own Grogg Museum. It may be beneficial for pupils to visit the museum to allow them to contextualise their learning, also highlighting that the size of the shop and museum are relatively small when compared to their world-wide reputation. Inside the Grogg Shop, there are also opportunities to observe Richard Hughes, the artist, as he works on new creations and moulds pre-existing Groggs ready for painting.

Creative teaching involves making links between a range of subject areas, essentially adopting a cross-curricular ethos for learning. Barnes, J (2015) discusses this at length in ‘Cross-Curricular Learning 3-14’. Barnes explains that the “real-world” outside of education is cross-curricular so children should be taught using a range of disciplines, shining a light on topics from all angles and preparing pupils for the diverse and complex society outside of school. Malaguzzi, L (1945), based his Reggio Emilia approach to pedagogy on a similar, cross-curricular approach. Children are able to express their ideas and experiences in a variety of ‘languages’, thinking and learning being encouraged by translating it between ‘languages’. Examples of such languages include observing, moving and acting.

Gardner, H (1993) theorised that humans have multiple intelligences, although a maximum of two can be used effectively at one time. This contradicts Barnes (2015) theory of successful learning using a cross-curricular approach, utilising a range of intelligences at one time. Gardner theorises that humans have eight intelligences, every individual having different strengths in each.

Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig (YCC) concentrates on the Welsh aspect of the curriculum within Wales and 'helps pupils to understand and celebrate the distinctive quality of living and learning in Wales in the twenty-first century' QCCA (2003). The components of YCC are cultural, linguistic, historical, environmental and economical, all aspects should be implemented in teaching children within Wales. Choosing a twenty-first century artefact, that was made in Wales, as a stimulus for learning allows pupils to improve their understanding of both the historical and cultural background of Wales. Groggs hold strong links with the cultural background of Wales as a passionate sporting nation, as explained in 'It's a Grogg's Life' ITV (2015).

The importance of creative approaches for teaching was highlighted in an NACCCE report as children find it easier to make connections within their learning when a creative teaching approach is adopted. Creative teaching can occur in a range of forms, linking to a creative curriculum, much like the one proposed by Professor Donaldson, G (2015) in his Successful Futures document. Donaldson makes his intention of creating a curriculum that encourages creativity clear within the four purposes of the new curriculum (Appendix 1). He explains that the curriculum should assist pupils in becoming 'enterprising, creative contributors'. Establishing the importance of creativity with children within their education will ensure that it is a more central aspect of their being as they progress into their adult lives.

Professor Smith, D (2015) calls for creativity to be given a more cardinal role in the curriculum as he believes that 'nurturing the creativity of children' may lead to improvements of behaviour, attainment and motivation. This follows comparable concepts to Professor Donaldson's curriculum review. In opposition to this, Skinner, B (1938) believed in a punishment and reward approach to behaviour management and learning. Through his research, he was able to use this

method to train rodents to complete tasks to avoid punishment and gain a reward. This follows the behaviourist learning theory.

When children are immersed in the arts in a cross-curricular, integrated manner, Bloomfield & Childs (2000) (Appendix 1) explain that pupils' learning across the curriculum is complemented and enriched. According to Bloomfield & Childs, putting the arts in the centre of learning empowers children, thus enabling them to express themselves and improving their self-confidence, linking to the Health and Well Being Area of Learning and Experience. It could be argued that Bloomfield & Childs put a high value on creativity linking to the curriculum purpose of becoming 'healthy, confident individuals', as advised in Donaldson's Successful Futures review. Bloomfield & Childs also discuss that using an integrated, cross-curricular approach provides pupils' learning with a real-life context, helping it to be committed to the long-term memory.

Studies, such as those carried out by Priestly and Pipe (1997), Gee & Pipe (1995), and Goodman & Aman (1990) have shown that contextualising a topic by using nonverbal cues, such as artefacts, help young children to provide more information about an event during interviews. If these studies are to be believed, it would be natural to assume that an artefact that is present during a child's learning, should assist them in prompting the retrieval of the learning from memory.

Creativity allows for learning to utilise processes other than reading and writing. Contrastingly, the opinion can be formed that teaching in such a way can lead to a lack of understanding between teachers, senior management and parents as there will subsequently be less written work in pupils' books. However, it could be argued that there are a range of methods for pupils' work to be documented, for example, using QR codes to document a dance routine they have been working on.

Thematic, cross-curricular approaches to pedagogy allow pupils to take control of their own learning and lead their own educational journeys. Nevertheless, there is currently a plethora of constraint on practitioners to ensure that all aspects of the government-written curriculum are

covered. This limits the teacher's ability to teach creatively as they must ensure that all bases are documented and covered to a standard decided by local authorities. Although this may be true with the current National Curriculum, the Successful Futures curriculum promises to be one that encourages creative pedagogy and allows practitioners to broaden their teaching capabilities. Barnes (2015) explains that creative thinking opportunities that are poorly planned can cause students to become stressed and 'increase levels of self-consciousness'. Adversely, Ratey (2008) discusses how providing rich opportunities for children to use creative thinking may lead their brain to function more effectively. Further positive and negative aspects of teaching creatively are featured in Appendix 1.

A thematic approach to pedagogy could follow a range of paths. This essay, along with its supporting documents, will exemplify how Groggs can be used to teach creatively whilst also encouraging pupils to be creative in their learning.

Activity 1 – Art

The session would be based on pupils drawing a self-portrait, paying attention to perspective, mainly the size and position of their features. The element of art that the pupils will be developing is line, although they will also be using shape. Using line requires making marks to depict the basic outline of the focus. To begin the lesson, pupils will watch 'It's a Grogg's Life', a short documentary that introduces Groggs and explains the history and culture behind the company. The pupils will then progress to draw their own self-portraits using a mirror for perspective and sizing. Bloomfield & Childs (2000) claim that the ability to draw is fundamental to practical experiences within art. However, it would be advised to provide pupils with a range of mediums, including pencils, sketch pens and charcoal.

This session has strong links with the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) theme of Identity and Culture as learners will be given the opportunity to understand that everyone is an individual with qualities that are special and different. Understanding one's self-worth is also an aspect of emotional well-being.

There are three skills within art: Understanding, Investigating and Making. This lesson develops the skill of exploring, experimenting with and applying the element of line, mainly within the visual language of art. Within the Art Program of Study, it is stated that pupils should use a variety of processes. This session is the first of a series of sessions that allows pupils to experiment with painting, drawing, multimedia and craft. This session also incorporates the range of understanding, where pupils are able to develop their understanding by studying practicing artists. Additionally, as the pupils will be drawing themselves, they may be developing the skill of Investigating, for example, finding out how far apart their eyes are.

Allowing learners to make choices in their learning within the arts authorises them to lead their own learning and development, another aspect of Donaldson's 'Successful Futures' curriculum. This is also supported by Pestalozzi, J (1801) who believed that conventional education was 'too dull' for children, inferring that a curriculum should be more concerned with pupils' interests and providing them with concrete experiences that are able to deepen their understanding. Conversely, Winnicott, D (1896), stated that insufficient adult participation in an activity may strain the development of the relationship between the adult and the child, for this reason, practitioners may be reluctant to facilitate too many child-lead tasks, questioning Donaldson's pupil lead curriculum.

Following on from this, pupils will compare their self-portraits to both the modern Groggs, as made by Richard Hughes, and the original Groggs, as made by John Hughes, Richard's father. Pupils would be encouraged to notice that the features of modern Groggs are far more refined than the earlier works to bare a closer resemblance to the person that they represent. The learning objective for this lesson would be taken from the current programme of study for Art and Design, using the skill 'describing and making comparisons between their own work and that of others'. Making comparisons is a vital aspect of Art and Design as it is featured in every attainment level descriptor from Level One through to Exceptional Performance.

Some pupils encounter difficulties when asked to draw, or even utilise their creativity, subsequently the creative habit of mind of persistence will be required. This activity is in compliance to the cultural aspect of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig as pupils will be delving into the

expressive arts within Wales. Refer to Appendix 1 for details on the lesson to follow this, and Appendices 3 & 4 for the range and skills being utilised within the tasks. The investigating range is not so prominent within this activity.

Art has changed progressively throughout the years from portraits, to abstract, to digital. It could be predicted that the arts may progress with technology within the next 50 years and become more digitally orientated. This may prove difficult to teach within a primary school setting as it may require specialist equipment which may prove costly.

Activity 2 - Design

The second session (Appendix 1) would be centred on design. The session aims for each pupil to design and make a Grogg inspired model based on their ambitions for the future. The model would be made using modelling clay and wire, allowing the models to stand up. The element that will be developed the most significantly for this session would be form as pupils will be creating a range of 3D shapes and learning techniques as to how to ensure that the sculpture remains standing. After allowing the clay to dry, an additional lesson would be needed to paint the sculptures in which they would be experimenting with the artistic element of colour.

This session mainly utilises the skill of making, where pupils are using the elements of shape and form as well as designing and making 3 dimensional artefacts. Activity 2 uses a different medium to Activity 1, giving pupils access to a range of materials and processes. These experiences are in line with the making strand of the art program of study. The further skills being developed within this session are highlighted within Appendices 6 & 8.

One of the habits of mind being developed within this activity is imagination. Pupils are using their imagination to design their sculptures based on their ambitions and are then using their creativity to produce an artistic piece. The ESDGC theme of Identity and Culture is progressed further in this session, continuing from Session 1.

McMillan, M (1904) theory is based on the importance of the outdoors and fresh air in education to improve the health and well-being of the children. This lesson could be improved by

incorporating use of the natural environment and investigating how natural materials could be used to create a similar piece. For example, using twigs and leaves to carve the clay into the desired shape, introducing pupils to a wider range of mediums and exposing them to the element of texture within their work. However, it may also be supported by Bloomfield (2000) who believes that in order for children to comprehend the work of other artists, they must first be given the opportunity to part-take in the practical experiences of making their own artistic piece.

Session 3 - Drama

The final session (Appendix 1) would concentrate on Drama, whilst incorporating Digital Competency. Pupils would be working in pairs to create a scene of their choice incorporating their sculptures. Characters would be given dialogue using the 'Morphe' application on iPads. This session has a strong emphasis on oracy, a skill featured in the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. Drama is not yet included as a creative element in the Welsh Curriculum as it is only referred to under the reading and oracy strands of the English Curriculum. This is set to change in Professor Graham Donaldson's 'Successful Futures' curriculum. Baldwin (2007) expresses that drama can be a shared or individual activity which enthuses the imagination of all involved. It may be believed that drama is best experienced by children in a collaborative effort, further encouraging the use of their oracy skills.

Working collaboratively and exercising team-work skills is fundamental within the Montessori Method of pedagogy. As well as teamwork, Montessori, M (1870) put emphasis on innovation and creativity, skills that are developed by using a cross-curricular approach to pedagogy. The Montessori Method relies upon links within the community, much like the cultural aspect of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. Collaboration and communication is also one of the habits of mind discussed by Lippard (2018).

A new ESDGC theme is being introduced in this session where pupils are working cooperatively on a task within the theme of Choices and Decisions. They are given the opportunity to have their ideas listened to as well as listening to and considering those of the other pupil in their pair. Pupils will also be encouraged to find ways to resolve conflicts when a difference of opinions arises.

This session is in-line with the idea of Bloomfield, A (2000) who stated that ‘the classroom becomes the window to the world, supplemented with the latest technology’. An activity such as this adopts the skill of combining a selection of multimedia components to produce a finished product, as detailed in the ‘Producing’ strand, under the ‘Creating’ element of the Digital Competency Framework. Appendix 7 highlights any additional skills that are being developed within a digital competency aspect.

Conclusively, creativity is understood to be a complex but vital skill with the potential to be used in all aspects of day-to-day life. This resource contains ideas that represent three areas of the Expressive Arts, linking with creativity, Yr Cwricwlwm Cymreig and the Digital Competency Framework. The artistic elements of line, form and shape will be developed through the use of this resource, as well as the skill of combining multimedia to produce a finished product.

This resource is effective in emphasising creativity and modelling a cross-curricular approach to pedagogy. However, there are many improvements to be made. The natural environment is a vital aspect of pupils’ educational journeys and should be implemented wherever possible. Giving pupils the opportunity to experience creativity in the natural environment would be beneficial in incorporating the artistic element of texture and pattern.

This plan of activities uses two of the seven Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship themes. These themes being Identity and Culture, and Choices and Decisions. Throughout the use of this resource, learners will be developing their communication across the curriculum using oracy to develop and present ideas. A more influential resource may cover more themes of ESDGC to provide pupils with an even broader spectrum of knowledge and understanding.

The communication skill of writing is also not developed directly within this resource. This links to the positive and negative features of creativity (Appendix 1). Pupils will have significantly less work documented in their books than if they were to be taught the information by rote. On the other hand, without physically completing tasks, pupils will find it almost impossible to

develop the skills that said task promotes. There is also a plethora of ways in which work can be documented, for example, QR Codes and photographs. These would allow practitioners to evidence the work of the class in a way that can be understood by parents, senior staff and inspectors.

Using an artefact to facilitate learning brings the learning to life as it provides context to learners. It also lends itself to a creative, cross-curricular approach to pedagogy, avoiding 'the three-part lesson' that has become a prominent structure followed by practitioners. Hughes (2006) explains how the National Curriculum has 'tidied up' teaching, making it predictable. Creative teaching relies upon the creativity of the practitioner, allowing them to improve their own standards of pedagogy. Despite this, teachers who are not naturally creative may struggle as the National Curriculum attempted to 'raise the floor' so all teachers improve their methods. The adverse thought to this is that restricting teachers may 'lower the ceiling' for those who are of a higher standard.

It can be understood that incorporating creative teaching techniques may be difficult for practitioners after teaching using such strict guidelines as those within the National Curriculum. Nevertheless, it can be argued that exercising the creative habits of mind of perseverance as well as creating, imagining and innovating, would be beneficial in exploring original, creative lesson ideas. It may also prove fruitful to collaborate with other practitioners to invent new methods of pedagogy.

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