

I will be using the traditional tale, the three little pigs to demonstrate a knowledge of the curriculum and how I can implement the Six areas of learning through a cross curricular approach, with the inclusion of Donaldson's, four purposes. My lessons will be aimed at Year four, ages 8-9.

Following Donaldson (2015) Report, changes are due to take place with the current curriculum. His aim is to structure the curriculum to underpin the four purposes of learning. 'Each of the Areas of Learning and Experience should make distinct and strong contributions to developing the four purposes of the curriculum' (Donaldson, 2015, pg 38). With this in mind the Welsh government plans to implement his recommendations where the curriculum is separated into 6 areas of learning. Donaldson (2015), believes that by reforming the curriculum into six areas, it encourages a cross curricular approach to learning and allows children to draw on existing knowledge and link the knowledge they have in other areas and disciplines. 'The structure should promote progression in learning, establishing sound foundations and signalling the need for connections amongst and application of what has been learned'. Donaldson, G, EWC (2015)

As well as allowing children to draw on existing knowledge it promotes a child-centred approach to learning. (Barnes, 2011, pg.53) argues that 'cross curricular learning occurs when the skills, knowledge and attitudes of a number of different disciplines are applied to a single theme, problem, idea or experience'. He states that the western education adopted a 'child-centred' approach to education. Dewey (quoted in Barnes, 2011, pg.45), believes that children should have involvement in their education. He argues that 'children should be deeply and personally involved in the creation of knowledge through problem solving and experiment, and that community would be enriched by individuals whose personal experience had been enlarged through education'.

The Six areas of learning include:

- 'Expressive Arts
- Health and Wellbeing
- Humanities
- Languages, Literacy and communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology'

Donaldson, 2015

As well as the six areas of learning Donaldson highlights the importance of the wider skills, such as, Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF), Digital Competency Framework (DCF), thinking skills, Education for Sustainable development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) and Curriculum Cymreig. One of Donaldson's recommendations is 'The expectations for the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills should be embedded within the Areas of Learning and Experience' (Donaldson, 2015, pg 43). By creating a cross curriculum approach it allows for continuity where the three cross curricular responsibilities and wider skills can be applied to all areas of learning.

Donaldson found that there was a 'trend' with areas of learning throughout the world, highlighting that the foundation phase within Wales has the seven areas of learning. He proposed that the KS2 curriculum should be changed to areas of learning and experience. This is to show that experiences help 'to broaden children and young people's horizons, stimulate their imaginations and promote enjoyment in learning' (Donaldson, 2015, pg 38). (Rowley, C, 2009, pg 20) states, 'it is through play that children are able to bring together and consolidate concepts and skills, and form them into experiences where they are in control and can therefore spend the time getting grips with sorting out their lives and making new sense of what surrounds them'. This is supported by several theorists who believe that children learn by gaining experiences through play. Piaget (cited in McLeod, S, 2018) highlights play is a way for children to unify experiences, knowledge and understanding. 'Children construct an understanding of the world around them, then experience discrepancies between what they already know and what they discover in their environment'. 'A Cross curricular approach to teaching is characterised by sensitivity towards, and a synthesis of knowledge, skills and understanding from various subject areas' (Savage, J, 2010). The idea is that it allows children to link life experiences to their learning. It allows children to have 'active' and 'experimental' learning and encourages a broad range of learning opportunities, allowing teachers to become more innovative in their teaching (Savage, J, 2010). However, the challenge arises for teachers to ensure there is relevant links between subjects and themes. The teacher will need to keep in mind, each child's different memories, links, associations and understanding (Barnes, J, 2011, pg 273). Barnes also considers that not all teachers are creative and therefore could struggle to make links between areas and disciplines within one theme or topic.

Arguments supporting cross curricular approach is backed up by a discussion (Rowley, C, 2009 pg 2), has with a School in Cumbria who are beginning to move back to cross curricular planning. He identifies that children find it hard to visualise and therefore benefit from themes or topics to keep

them engaged, while linking a range of subjects or areas of learning to that theme. This is supported by Bruner (cited in Arthur J, 2010, pg 32) 'for him the role of the educator was to establish what the learner was paying attention to and then to intervene, focussed on this, to take learning forward' However, (Rowley, C, 2009, pg 2), draws attention to the issues cross curricular has on teachers. He highlights the difficulty of long term tracking for schools. This is reinforced by (Barnes, J, 2011 pg 215), where he states that cross curricular learning is often hard to assess.

(Eaude, T, 2006), promotes cross curricular teaching as he discusses Children Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC). He argues that by teaching SMSC as separate subjects, other subjects areas within the same theme could be missed. He considers how SMSC and other subjects can compliment each other ' the opportunities to enhance SMSC in English are endless'. (Eaude, T, 2006, pg 100).

(Morrison, K, 1994, pg1), emphasises that 'in an era which is categorised by change the need for personal and social education is more pressing than ever'. With this in mind cross curricular teaching enables teachers to prepare children for the future and to be able to adapt to different situations.

This is complimented by (Catling, S, 2018), where he emphasises that a 'high quality humanities subject and cross-subject curricular' allows children to understand the world in which they live, it allows them to make comparisons between themselves and others. By using a cross curricular approach, 'Big ideas' about the world can be linked to SMSC, Literacy, humanities and other areas and disciplines.

When lesson planning, it is important to consider the 8 cross curriculum approaches, which are described as:

- tokenistic
- hierarchical
- single transferable subject.
- theme-based
- Multi-disciplinary
- inter-disciplinary
- opportunistic
- double-focus

Barnes, 2015 (third addition) pg 66

With this in mind I will be using the theme The three little pigs, giving a Multi-disciplinary approach to develop several disciplines under a theme. Using a hook strategy, my first lesson will be designed to engage and excite the pupils. The overarching cross curricular approach for this lesson will be hierarchical, with the main focussed area of learning being Design and technology.

After reading the story of the three little pigs, the pupils will be asked to think about why the wolf was able to blow the house down? Key questions will be asked, to draw on existing knowledge and experiences. During this part of the lesson the children will be developing their literacy, Language and communication skills as they will be expected to 'participate in group discussions, they will be required to' listen and talk confidently' and 'respond, giving views'' (DCELLS, 2008, English). The children will also have an opportunity to develop new vocabulary. The children will then be asked to get into groups of 4. Working in groups allows the children to develop their social skills, this will develop their ability to 'express their views and ideas confidently' (DCELLS, 2008, Personal and Social development, PSE). (Barnes, 2011) believed that education was not a 'individualistic activity' and stressed the 'importance of the group'. This is expressed in (Donaldson, 2015 pg 25), where he states that 'children and young people's responses emphasised the social significance of going to school'. This is also supported by (Vygotsky, 1978) "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level'. In their group they will be given the instructions to 'design' and 'create' a bridge, which they will then conduct a 'fair test' to find out which bridge is the strongest (DCELLS, 2008 Science). The children will be asked to 'plan and choose materials' and 'research and design the shape' of the bridge. (DCELLS, 2008 Design and technology), The children will be given an opportunity think 'creatively' to design their bridge and build it. When thinking about materials and man made-structures, it encourages discussion and allows children to think about ESDGC. When discussing materials the pupils will learn about 'the properties of materials relating to their uses' (DCELLS, 2008, Science).

This will be a child lead activity, the children will be able have choice on materials and shape and design of the bridge will be completely up to the pupil. This links with (DCELLS, 2008, PSE) ensuring the children are 'prepared for lifelong learning', they will be given the opportunity to 'enjoy and value learning and achievements' and 'take increasing responsibility for their learning' Once they have finished their final product the children will have an opportunity to test their bridges and Evaluate (DCELLS, 2008, Design and technology) 'evaluate their design ideas as they develop,

considering the needs of the user'. This also links with (DCELLS, 2008, Science) where the children have an opportunity to 'evaluate outcomes against success criteria', 'describe how they have learned and identifying the ways that worked the best' and 'link the learning to similar situations, within and outside school'.

Throughout the lesson the children will be using their thinking skills. they will have an opportunity to use ICT when designing their bridge and to research ideas, materials and famous bridge structures. The inclusion of Maths is described as tokenistic. The children will need to draw on existing knowledge of maths to think about shapes, they will also be required to measure accurately in their design process.

For the next lesson, I will be continuing on the theme of the three little pigs, the class will discuss what happened in the book. They will be asked to consider why the wolf may need to get in to the house. (DCELLS, 2008, PSE) states 'They can be helped to extend their personal insights, and to reflect upon their experiences and upon some of life's deeper questions and issues'. The children will be asked to look at the story through the eyes of the wolf. This will allow the children to think about other peoples feelings developing social skills and empathy. (DCELLS, 2008, PSE). They will be developing their thinking skills, establishing where the wolf might of been and what he has been doing. Maybe he was lost? wanted a friend to talk to? or was hungry and tired? Encouraging the children to use literacy and creative skills, they will be asked to write a version of the story, but in the eyes on the wolf. This gives the opportunity for the pupil to 'use the characteristic features of an increasing range of continuous and non-continuous texts in their writing, using imagination where appropriate' (DCELLS, 2008, English). Using the information from their stories they will be encouraged to write an email of apology to the three little pigs explaining why they blew the houses down, teaching pupils to understand 'that personal actions have consequences' (DCELLS, 2008, PSE) This will combine literacy skills, allowing the pupils to explore and use appropriately the different forms of writing on-screen to interact with others (DCELLS, 2008, English) ICT skills and PSE. It opens up a topic of discussion, where the class could think about how the three pigs felt when there houses got blown down. They will be encouraged to think about natural disasters in the world that would cause people to loose their homes, such as tsunamis, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes. This will give the children the opportunity to discover new places and countries around the world. (DCELLS, 2008, Geography)

A brief insight in to the next lesson allows the children to think creatively, as well as developing their music and social development skills. They will be asked to work in groups of 5. Each group will be given a scene from the three little pigs. Using percussion instruments, they will be set the task of coming up with sounds to describe and enhance the scene.

In conclusion, I am very excited about the future of the Welsh curriculum and to be a part of it. With keeping Donaldson's 4 purposes of learning at the fore front of our minds, I believe that pupils will really benefit from a cross curricular approach and give them the opportunity to flourish. As a teacher, it gives you the flexibility in creating and planning lessons to meet the pupils needs and ability. I feel that the new curriculum reform will aid children in becoming good citizens and prepare them for the world that awaits them.

2195 word count

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