

Element 2 Reflective log

Brief description of the activity (no more than 50 words)
A story-telling activity. Reading an acrostic poem about the King Fisher in the outdoor environment. The age of the children is 5 to 6-year olds. There are 10 children, and 1 teacher and 1 teaching assistant. According to NSPCC (2019) the child to adult ratio in an outdoor environment away from the school for children between ages of 4 – 8-year-old are one adult to six children.
Aim/Objective of the activity
My aim for the activity was to introduce the children to poems and support them in developing their use of language and vocabulary. An additional objective was to get the children excited and curious of the outdoor environment as the activity took place in woodland area adjacent to a stream. Furthermore, as the poem book is made up of different flora and fauna poems that are native to the UK, the children will be introduced to and able to identify the plants and animals in their gardens
Your role
Leading the activity by reading a story encouraging children to participate. Managing behaviour and ensure all children are engaged. I found my role also making sure the children's welfare was at the forefront of the activity. And having a happy and fun experience.
Positive aspects – why?
Children enjoyed the activity this was demonstrated by the children's enthusiasm toward the poem. When reading the poem, I used actions to emphasis the vocabulary and helped to demonstrate what the word was describing. The children showed that they enjoyed this by joining in with the actions and repeating back the words. The outdoor environment was engaging and exciting providing the children with multisensory benefits.
Challenging aspects – why?
The most challenging aspect of the activity was a lack of time due to the activity being outdoors the children were extremely excited and wanted to explore their surroundings. I needed to direct the children to keep them on track of the activity but felt if I had more time then the children could participate in child lead play, Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (2008) highlight that children should be able to follow their own interests and ideas through free play. Children's learning is most effective when it arises from first-hand experiences Balancing the voice of the child with need to direct the activity and ensure foundation phase learning outcomes are achieved. Furthermore, the pace I read story was too quickly which gave the children limited time to respond.
What knowledge was demonstrated?
The main knowledge demonstrated for this activity are the Foundation Phase requirements and outcomes that enable the children a deeper level of learning through this activity. It was important to have a knowledge of the children's interest and abilities help the activity run smoothly. Understanding if any of the children need additional help with understanding the language and vocabulary or with mobility in using the outdoor environment. This was achieved by having background knowledge of the children before hand and having two practitioners at hand. Knowledge of safeguarding and promoting welfare for the children are paramount for any activity especially for my reading activity due to being in the outdoor environment. I acquired knowledge of governments safeguarding policies and carried out a risk assignment before the activity carrying out the activity to reduce any potential harm or risk that might happen during the activity.

What skills were demonstrated?
Skills that I have been demonstrated during this activity are the use of different techniques for an effective storytelling. For example, repetition, alliteration props and actions. Being able to effectively story-tell for children can be beneficial, The Foundation Phase Framework (Department of Education and Skills, 2015) highlight story-telling can increases enthusiasm for reading, improves listening skills, enhances relationships with school peers and encourages purposeful talking and discussion. My organisation skills also were demonstrated throughout this activity, as I organised and made kingfisher puppets enough for each of the children to participate in the story. Working with children it is important to be enthusiastic and during this activity I feel like I was enthusiastic from the tart to the end.
Which values were demonstrated?
During the activity the values that I demonstrated being mindful of each child's individual needs and making sure each child feels included in the activity. I achieved this by creating individual puppets for each of the children to participate and feel involved. I personally always value and the respect the voice of the child and felt I achieved this during the activity by taking the opportunity to listen and try and answer the children's questions, even when I needed to stay on track with the activity. Furthermore, with this activity I wanted to demonstrate the value of respecting the outdoor environment to the children by teaching them to respect nature, teaching them leave the outdoor environment just like we found it with no litter or disturbing habitats.
What could have been done differently? Why?
I found on the day I was fortunate to have great weather, and honestly, I did not plan for bad weather. Reflection on this I would make sure that next time I build a shelter out of tarp before the activity day. Having smaller groups of children, maybe 5 or 6 will be an aspect that I would have done differently. As a smaller number of children are easier to manage but also, I felt the lack of time could of be managed better with a smaller group of children. I then would have more time to respond to children curiosities and questions.

What is reflection?

Reflection in its simple's form is looking back at an experience or an activity and thinking and analysing in a deeper mind set with the aim to a better and clear understanding. One can achieve this by asking themselves questions about what we did, how we did it, and what we learnt from doing it. By reflecting on an experience/activity and thinking about personal feelings, actions, responses and then analysing the information the person gains a deeper understanding and knowledge and inevitably deepening learning. (Atkins and Murphy, 1994; Open University, 2013)

Reflective practice is encouraged for effective development in multiple professions such as educators, health workers and therapists as reflective skills can improve skills, gain deeper understanding, aiding personal development and support learning in day to day practice (Hargreaves and Page, 2013). Schon (1983) defines reflective practice as the practice by which professionals become aware of their implicit knowledge base and learn from their experience.

Critical Thinking.

Reflection and critical thinking work together in correlation to achieve deeper personal and professional development. Critical thinking is thinking outside the box, analysing and evaluating from every angle, questioning everything even he/she believes and having an open mind to new perspectives (Paul & Elder, 2006).

Leicester & Taylor (2010) highlight that critical thinking needs to be taught to children throughout the curriculum, as a tool for skills which empower children to think more deeply and help them to be better informed and less open to biased persuasion. By children thinking critically they understand there are many ways of thinking and doing things.

Knowledge, skills and values.

Knowledge, skills and values are important elements for reflective practice as a means of maintaining quality services for young children. The Foundation Phase (Department of Education and Skills, 2015) acknowledges these elements throughout the whole curriculum. Here are examples of good working practice;

Knowledge.

Practitioners must understand every aspect of a child's development and be fully aware of their involvement in the child's learning. Particular when interacting with each child with open questions, share and sustain thinking. Practitioners that knowledge the importance of planning, developing and reflecting for each child's individual needs will help them acquire a deeper understanding and enables them to understand and explore the world around them. Practitioners need prior knowledge of each child (DES, 2015). Furthermore, practitioners need to be fully aware and know the articles that make up The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) and know and understand government policies.

Skills.

Department for education (2015) state that pedagogical skills are crucial for a successful practitioner working with children. As pedagogy involves being able bring knowledge and skill in ways children can understand, remember and apply but also in a fun way. By practitioners having the skills to reflect on past experiences and teach and show the children how to think critically and creatively, be able to carry out task, analyse and evaluate their findings and reflect on their learning children will be competent learners (DES, 2015).

Values.

The Foundation Phase Framework (DES, 2015) highlight many important values throughout the curriculum, one of the biggest values they promote is to eliminate discrimination for all children. They maintain that each child had equal opportunity regardless their age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. They expect practitioners to respect each child voice and support the ethnic and cultural identity.

Commented [PR1]:

Commented [PR2R1]:

De Bono (2009) came up with a simple concept in possessing thinking, De Bono calls it 'Six Thinking Hats'. The hats represent different type of thinking process which allows people to focus more productively on problems and issues. By symbolically wearing each hat and seeing each point of view the individual or group can consider issues, problems, decisions, and opportunities systematically.

The six different hats are represented by a different colour and meaning. Here are the 'Six Thinking Hats':

White Hat – Information Hat

- What are the facts?

Red Hat – Feelings Hat.

- How do they feel about this?

Black Hat – Judgment Hat.

- What is the weakness of this information?

Yellow Hat – Positive Hat.

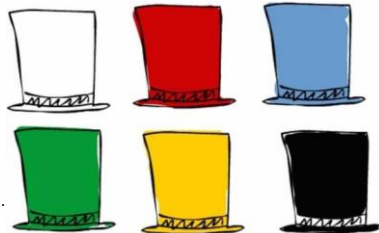
- What are the good points?

Green Hat – Creative Hat.

- Finding new ways to work out the information.

Blue Hat – Thinking Hat.

- What thinking is needed?



(source: Jeffrey, no date)

Schon (1983) discusses his on action in action reflective theory as a practice which professionals become aware of their knowledge base and can learn from their experiences. Bager-Charleson 2010 highlights that Schon's on-action in-action model challenges practitioners to reconsider the role of technical and instrumental knowledge in favour

In-action is to reflect of an activity or an experience as it happens, whereas, on-action is reflecting after the event, to review, analyse, and evaluate the situation. Schon acknowledges his reflective practice allows practitioners to combine their already know knowledge and skills with the ability to be totally open to a new perspective.

Reflection-in-action

- Works on getting to the bottom of what is happening in the experienter's processes, decision-making and feelings at the time of the event or interaction.

Reflection-on-action

- Works of sifting over a previous event to take into account new information or theoretical perspectives available in conjunction with the experienter's processes, feelings and actions.

(Source: University of Bradford, no date)

Examples of quality services for children

Wales Pre-school Providers Association.

Wales Pre-School Providers Association (Wales PPA, no date) highlight that a part of the Welsh Government's Early Years Development Assessment Framework and the Foundation Phase Profile supports children's learning and developing by practitioners using appropriate assessment criteria throughout their time in the Foundation Phase. The main aims for the assessment of children is to provide a national consistency through the curriculum and to support and follow each child's personal development. Using observation and formative assessment, practitioners can provide a profile that support children's developmentally appropriate holistic curriculum. Furthermore, the profile has been designed to work in correlation with assessments carried out by health professionals to help identify any development delay, special education needs, or additional learning needs to ensure that every child has the fair chance and support they need.



(Source: Wales Pre-school Providers Association, no date)

Care Inspectorate Wales

Here are some CIW standards of care with childminders:

- **Information**

Parents are given accurate information to be able to make informed decisions about the services provided.

- **Assessments**

Each child has their developments and needs recorded and share the information with parents.

- **Inclusive**

Each child individual needs at met with no discrimination from any practitioners or setting.

- **Opportunity to play**

Children have a range of experiences and have opportunity for unstructured and self-directed play that enable their emotional, physical, social, intellectual, language and creative development.

- **Nurture and well-being**

It is paramount that children feel safe, secure, happy and comfortable with the setting environment and all staff. With child's right and voice respected.

- **Food & drink.**

Children are provided with food & drink regularly with appropriate quantity.

Variability and quality according to Estyn.

Practitioners.

Estyn's annual report (2015 -2016) have clear expectations what children can achieve by key characteristics of effective teaching. Estyn highlights to be classed as a successful teacher they must be able to guide learners to develop through skilful questioning that stimulates thinking and achieving independent learners. These teachers can vary their teaching approaches and are engage with children's interests and curiosities. Teachers that think about pedagogy in a creative way and are willing to adapt and be open to new ideas of teaching tend to be stronger practitioners.

School/Settings.

Estyn's annual report (2015-2016) highlight schools/setting that are of high-performing quality have expectations on learning, not just for children but for practitioners. As senior leaders have a clear view for all staff in deepening their working practice and knowledge. Additionally, these quality settings understanding all practitioners working and sharing information together makes a high standard of learning and working. And through providing strong support for all levels of practitioners and helping to be open to new ideas, inevitably makes the setting a greater impact for learners.



Further Reading

- Estyn. (2015-2016) 'The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales' https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report%202015_2016_English.pdf
- Department of Education and Skill (2015) Foundation Phase Framework. Cardiff: WAG.
- Department for Education. (2015) *Pedagogy in early childhood education and care (ECEC): an international comparative study of approaches and policies*. London: HMSO.

Element 4 Personal Development Plan

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
1. <u>Knowledge</u> Apply for master's in social work in Swansea University	Keen to work with vulnerable children and deprived communities.	- Research online - Make an appointment to meet careers adviser.	- Contact Swansea University and book for open day (date of open day 6th March 2019) - Go to student services make an appointment.	On-going
2. <u>Knowledge</u> Knowledge of the world.	- Understanding and learning about new cultures. - Making connections with people around the world. - Learning about climate and cultural difference.	- Researching about different destinations. - Traveling and being open minded. - Apply and attend talks and presentations.	- The internet/book - Apply for as much volunteering opportunities as I can. - The List – a platform where there are multiple listings of talks and presentations.	On-going.
3. <u>Skills</u> Sign language	Beneficial for me as a practitioner to support children with hearing impairment	Found a night course in Pembrokeshire College. The course is over 2 years.	Pembrokeshire College	Summer 2020.
4. <u>Skills</u> Experience working with children of a variety of ages and abilities.	Want to pursue a career supporting vulnerable children.	- Contact local school to arrange placement across foundation phase and key stage 2. - Contacted my local Ty Hafan hospice for possible work experience.	- Speak to head teacher at Cardigan primary. - I am in contact with the manager of Ty Hafan hospice.	On-going

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5. <u>Values</u> Being social aware of the hardship that some communities and developing countries face.	• Good for my personal growth • To be socially aware • Making a positive impact	Apply to ICS (International Citizen Services)	• I have enquired and sent an application, I am now on the third set of the application and have an interview o the 12th of February.	If successful, this summer.
6. <u>Values</u> Safeguarding and understating the rights of children.	• Paramount for my professional development.	• During studying for my degree in Early Years. • Find additional safeguard courses	• Speak to lectures • Research about what courses are there.	Before finishing my degree in May 2020.

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