Literacy and Language in the digital age

Storytelling is a powerful and reliable method of nurturing a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development. The benefits of storytelling for babies and children are multifaceted and well-documented and as Nedovic (2018) agrees that reading with babies and children help their development in many different ways. In addition, storytelling strengthens the relationship between children and the adults who care for them. Telling stories together fosters a unique moment of closeness and connection. Babies and children can grow to trust and bond with it because it creates a routine that is reassuring and secure. Storytelling also has the power to promote moral and ethical principles. Numerous tales provide morals and teachings that help children in discriminating between right and wrong, so promoting their moral and ethical development.

Concerns around young children entering settings with inadequate language development are becoming more widespread in the UK (Hurd, 2021). Language development is encouraged by storytelling and as Visser-Bochane (2019) suggests the development of children's language is crucial to their success in life. (welsh.gov, N.D), believes that babies even at 3 months recognises their parents voice and they will start learning their language development at this stage. Children who listen to stories have a more robust vocabulary and improved cognitive abilities. They improve their communication skills by learning to recognise and use a variety of words. Additionally, storytelling encourages imagination and creativity by getting children to visualise the characters and scenes, which paves the way for creative thinking. Several studies carried out and funded by BookTrust have demonstrated that reading has a significant positive impact on a child's development. According to one study, reading has a positive impact on children's eventual literacy abilities, fosters social connection between adults and children, and motivates children to engage in their environment.

The Practitioner reading the story has chosen a book using rhyme and repetition as this captures the attention of the child. Rhyming words and repeated phrases have a pleasant character that makes reading enjoyable and memorable. Children may anticipate and participate in the story more easily because of the predictable rhythms, which can boost interest and comprehension. Children as a result read more enthusiastically, laying the foundation for a lifelong love of reading. Rhyme and repetition can help with language development. Children who are exposed to rhyming in storybooks develop the ability to break down words into their phonemes, which enhances their decoding and comprehension skills. Almon (2020) clarifies how contemporary studies validate the significance of rhymes for young children. Repetition improves vocabulary and comprehension since children come across words and phrases more than once, which makes it simpler for them to comprehend and recall the information in the story. Acquiring phonological awareness is crucial for learning to write and read. Rhyming enhances children's oracy skills by helping them to notice small changes in rhythm and intonation that are essential to reading aloud (Felt, 2019). Additionally, rhyme and repetition boost self-assurance. Children

are more inclined to participate, enthusiastically reciting rhymes and repeated phrases. Through their active participation, they improve their language proficiency and self-esteem. Additionally, it develops a sense of accomplishment and mastery, which motivates students to take on harder books as they advance in learning.

Intonation which the reader has used also plays a vital role in storytelling, especially when it comes to engaging and benefiting children. Intonations described by dictionary.Cambridge.org, (N.D) is the variations in voice pitch that occur when someone is speaking. For generations, oral storytelling and children's literature have been essential to the cognitive, emotional, and social growth of children. Intonation improves this experience in a variety of ways, making stories for young children more fascinating, useful, and emotionally meaningful. Intonation, first and foremost, aids in keeping children's attention. Although children are naturally inquisitive and curious, they can have short attention spans. A simple narrative is transformed into an engaging trip with the use of effective tone. Important story developments, character emotions, or dramatic occurrences are indicated by changes in the pitch. A storyteller might, for instance, use a louder voice to describe an exciting experience or a quieter one to convey suspense. Children are guided through the tale by these vocal cues, which keep their attention and motivate them to take part in the story.

Puppets and props have a vital role to enhance storytelling since they give stories more depth and interest. Using props, and other non-verbal clues can help scaffold the children's learning, and eventually they will begin to mimic and repeat specific parts of the story. Furthermore, studies have shown that children with childhood apraxia and language impairments benefit from hearing predictable and repetitive stories, according to Atlanta Speech Therapy (2016). Props and puppets that are skilfully made have the power to ignite feelings and provide an emotional experience that words cannot. The use of puppets and props encourages the investigation of imagination and creativity. This is especially beneficial when reading stories to children since it helps with their emotional and cognitive growth and asTailor (2016), explains stories like Julia Donaldsons "The Gruffulo" are repetitious, which reduces the "cognitive load" and frees up children's focus for vocabulary, pronunciation, and content comprehension. Furthermore, puppets and props are appealing to people of all languages and cultural backgrounds. They give storytellers the ability to interact with a wide range of audiences through the use of globally understood gestures and visual clues. By improving visual and sensory experiences, igniting imagination and creativity, and bridging communication gaps, props and puppets enhance storytelling. Although there is evidence to believe props are beneficial Medlicott, (2019) believes that people are too ambitious at times, assembling an entire assortment of items that they then attempt to introduce at the right moments in the story. This can work with talent and practice. It can, however, also be distracting for

the storyteller as well as the audience. It's best to keep things simple. Use your prop to draw people in before you start, then set it away.

According to Estyn (2021), childcare facilities in Wales understand the value of using literacy-based activities, such storytelling, to enhance children's writing, reading, and oracy abilities. A child's literacy skills are constructed on the basis of oracy, or the capacity for successful speaking and communication. Reading to children offers a chance for discussion between the storyteller and the children in question, allowing children to participate in conversation, which is beneficial for vocabulary development and oracy abilities (Children's Bureau, 2017). Telling stories to children helps them express themselves and improves their vocabulary, fluency, and understanding. Children learn how to express their views clearly through storytelling sessions, when they both engage and listen. This is an important skill for effective communication. A child's ability to listen and communicate is enhanced when they actively participate in storytelling sessions by asking questions, offering remarks, and starting discussions. Their vocabulary and linguistic structures increase as they listen to various stories, challenging them to use more words and patterns.

Storytelling also heavily supports reading skill development to. Owl, (2016) states Children can pick up positive reading habits by listening to storybooks read aloud to them. Children learn the rhythm and structure of language through storytelling, which facilitates their understanding of the patterns found in written texts. During storytelling sessions, they are exposed to a variety of narrative styles and genres, which stimulates their interest in reading. Furthermore, interactive elements like reading aloud together, making predictions, and discussing the story are frequently incorporated into storytelling. These exercises help children develop the understanding, reasoning, and inference skills necessary for successful reading. Children are also encouraged to experience various viewpoints and emotions through storytelling. They gain the ability to relate to the story's characters, which in turn makes it easier for them to relate to the characters in the novels they read.

In addition to enhancing a child's oracy and reading abilities, storytelling establishes the groundwork for successful writing. Children who participate in storytelling frequently write or illustrate their own stories. Their narrative skills improve as a result of these creative exercises that help them arrange their ideas and thoughts. Children might go from sharing stories orally to writing them down as they get older. They can readily transition their developed narrative talents from storytelling sessions to writing assignments. With their expanding vocabulary, comprehension skills, and critical thinking abilities, they may create engaging essays, stories, and other written works. Moreover, narrating stories to children fosters an appreciation for the composition of stories, encompassing the opening, middle, and conclusion. Gaining knowledge of narrative structure is helpful when writing essays and stories.

The Practitioner in both videos, have retold the same book to the children. There are various reasons why it is crucial to revisit a story that is associated with Bruner's spiral curriculum. A key component of gradual, repetitive learning is narrative, according to Jerome Bruner's theory of cognitive development (Ed.Gov,2019).

Children can improve their comprehension of basics and further develop their cognitive abilities by going over stories again. revisiting a story within the framework of Bruner's Spiral Curriculum is crucial for its role in building on prior knowledge, reinforcing learning, promoting critical thinking, and accommodating individual learning needs. This approach enriches the educational experience, making it more engaging, meaningful, and conducive to cognitive growth. Children gain a great deal from revisiting stories since it fosters their emotional and intellectual growth. It creates a safe environment where individuals can explore difficult ideas, feelings, and moral teachings by fostering a sense of familiarity and security. Rereading stories encourages understanding and critical thinking. Children who read the same story more than once develop a greater comprehension of the plot, character motives, and underlying themes. This helps children to ask questions, form connections, and hone their analytical abilities—all of which are critical for success in language and literacy development. Reading stories again helps you remember them and use your language. Repetition promotes language growth and vocabulary acquisition. Children's communication skills improve when they pick up new words, phrases, and sentence structures in context.

In the videos both traditional storytelling and digital storytelling were used. Gillien et al,(n.d) suggests that digital books for children along with apps that promote literacy can improve children' enjoyment and education through reading. Children can be encouraged to read and appreciate stories by providing them with digital books that combine high-quality text storytelling along with interactive multimedia elements. Crystal has talked on the problem of the "digital divide," which is the situation in which some people do not have equal access to digital technology or the know-how to use them efficiently. In order to guarantee that everyone has the chance to become digitally literate, he highlights the significance of closing this gap. So as a practitioner it is important to give the children many opportunities to be in contact with digital learning. Digital competence framework (2018) tells us that they want practitioners to allow time to help children discover a range of digital skills which allow the child to thrive in the increasingly digital world.

In conclusion, while digital storytelling has many benefits, it should be used selectively. In order to promote a well-rounded development of literacy skills and a love of reading in children, children should still be exposed to physical books and face-to-face storytelling experiences. Children and babies benefit greatly from storytelling as an effective tool for both education and holistic development. According to Welsh Government (2020), "Learners who listen and read effectively are prepared to learn throughout their lives as ambitious, capable, and lifelong learners," and the new curriculum places a strong emphasis on the value of rich language and literacy experiences. As a practitioner using both digital and traditional stories will help and encourage each child to achieve this.