

Reading at Sir Martin Frobisher Academy



Just Imagine- Take One Book Framework

Here is a quick introduction to the Take One Book Framework.

BEFORE READING

Hook

Setting up the learning to engage children and excite them makes a huge difference to the way they approach a new book. A hook can:

- provide an immersive multisensory experience with artefacts, images, sounds...and even smells
- start with a dramatic scenario to provoke questioning
- kick off with a visit to a place of interest
- present a problem for the children to solve
- be an attractive book display which encourages browsing and roaming around a topic for a period before the book is introduced
- begin with a visit from a writer or an illustrator

On occasion you might create a 'bells and whistles' immersive experience that captures the children's imaginations through stimulation of all the senses. However, on other occasions you might prefer a simple, perfectly pitched, introductory sentence or two: 'Imagine that you could wish for anything that you wanted, anything at all. Now what would you wish for? Do you think that it would be good if all your wishes came true? That is exactly what happens to the children in the story that we are going to read together. Will it be the dream that they have always hoped for? Let's find out...'.

Orientation

The orientation gives consideration to what needs to be put in place for children to access the text. This could be achieved through:

Activation of prior knowledge

Helping children make connections between their own experiences and a text is a useful way into a new book, particularly if the context is unfamiliar and the connections are not immediately apparent. This part of the process is important for teachers to gauge children's prior knowledge. It is also an opportunity for children to share different cultural experiences and learn from each other.

Building background knowledge

In some instances, it is beneficial to develop background knowledge prior to reading. For instance, knowing something about the coal mining industry before reading *Town is by the Sea*, could enhance understanding and appreciation of the story. Consider the context, the children's experiences and the assumptions about prior knowledge assumed by the text. It is advisable not to over explicate; we learn through reading as well as direct experience. A

judgement has to be made about what to teach in advance, and what is best left to emerge through the course of reading.

Key vocabulary

Take One Book uses a blended approach to vocabulary teaching which is woven into the teaching sequences.

Some key vocabulary may be pre-taught to help children access the text. However, judgements need to be made about what is essential. Too much pre-teaching of vocabulary can disrupt the child's construction of the text schema. Generally, when readers encounter new words in texts, they can approximate an understanding from the context. This is usually sufficient for understanding the gist. Unless the vocabulary is likely to be a barrier to accessing the text, it may be preferable to leave the focus on word investigation and definition until after a first reading; more precise understandings can be clarified later.

Where pre-teaching is considered necessary, creative ways of introducing new vocabulary is built into the orientation stage. For instance, audio visual strategies are used for introducing words from a semantic field, which are essential to the visualisation of the text. Exploring high concept words prior to reading is used occasionally to develop an open-mindedness when approaching the text. Contextless teaching is avoided.

DURING READING

First Encounters

A principle of the Take One Book approach is that the first encounter with a book should be a wholly pleasurable experience. One of the best reading lessons, that reading is rewarding and pleasurable, is taught implicitly through sharing a book. It can be an emotional experience, which initiates laughter or tears. It can prompt us to thought and to action. It has a purpose, indeed many purposes, which are greater than the sum of curriculum statements or learning objectives. In our view at the heart of the reading lesson is the reader, and this is what fundamentally drives the teaching and learning. The first encounters are therefore crucial for eliciting children's responses and provide an opportunity to make formative assessment. With this in mind, it is important not to move too quickly into instruction mode, or over analyse a book before the children have had an opportunity to develop a personal response.

It is also important to take time to find out whether the children understand the text at a literal level. Without a surface understanding, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for them to appreciate deeper layers of meaning in a text.

Some of the approaches used in Take One Book for introducing the text include:

Reading aloud

Reading aloud to your class is important throughout the primary years, well beyond the stage at which children can read the words for themselves. As children encounter increasingly challenging texts, with language that does not replicate the patterns of spoken language, it continues to be important to read aloud, developing their ear for reading an increasingly wide range of texts. When listening to an experienced reader read with expression, pace and sensitivity to rhythm and cadence, children will internalise the writer's voice. Reading aloud develops 'the ear for reading', which is essential for the acquisition of reading fluency. Furthermore, uninterrupted reading gives children time to build a mental image of the text. Mental processing will be inhibited if there is too much interrogative questioning mid-flow. For this reason, children should be allowed to simply listen to a first reading (stopping occasionally at a natural break to check understanding is appropriate for long chapters or passages). Children can also be encouraged to monitor their own comprehension and ask for clarification if they don't understand. It's a matter of making a judgement between becoming immersed in the story and securing literal understanding.

Some predictions may be encouraged but should not be overused to the point that little is left to discover as a story unfolds.

Exploring ideas

First encounters with a new text will include an element of exploration. The children might discuss initial ideas and share their thinking with you. Alternatively, they might explore their ideas in independent reading circles. One of the observations that we made when conducting the 4XR research for the London Schools Excellence Fund was that teachers moved very quickly from reading to direct instruction, with little opportunity for children to meaningfully explore their own understandings. Consequently, teaching was often pitched inappropriately. Making the minor change to include an exploratory element in the teaching sequence proved beneficial to the children, who were more lively, engaged and able to make relevant links. Teachers reported feeling better equipped to move the learning on.

Checking literal understanding, clarifying and explaining

After the first reading children's understanding is monitored by having them explain the text. This might be in response to a simple question, 'What has happened so far?'. A character led piece might be explained with a question such as, 'What do we know about Jack?'. These questions require recall but are sufficiently open to allow readers to tell what they know. Another strategy for explaining a text is to ask the learners to annotate the text and to use the annotated examples to identify priorities for teaching.

Some vocabulary, grammar and punctuation work might be undertaken at this point, particularly to unravel tricky passages or unfamiliar constructions. Looking at the way images are constructed in order to convey specific meanings or elicit responses is as important as a focus on verbal text.

Expose thinking

One of the outcomes of the first encounter phase is to provide an opportunity for children to demonstrate their thinking. A learning environment where risks are encouraged will allow children to show what they think without fear that their ideas will be dismissed.

Tools like graphic organisers and thinking maps can be usefully employed to:

- help children to shape their thinking
- help teachers plan the next steps in the learning journey
- provide a record of the learning.

Digging Deeper

Securing a surface understanding, exploring the children's initial responses and questions, leads on to uncovering the multiple layers in text. The form this takes is dependent on the type of text. Literary texts offer themselves for interpretation, historical texts may require some thinking about historical literacy, a simple procedural text may not lend itself to much analysis or investigation.

Refining a response

There are many aspects of textual analysis that can be developed more deeply. For example, you may want to reflect on character and to consider decisions taken at pivotal moments. Drama conventions are particularly useful for working through these ideas. Visualising helps learners to elaborate their understanding, which can support more complex interrogative inferencing.

Expanding thinking

Teacher and pupil questions initiate dialogue which promotes deeper thinking. Statements are used to develop argumentation and encourage the justification of ideas. Children are encouraged to look beyond what they already know and to consider alternative viewpoints. More experienced readers are challenged to consider how characters are represented and to decentre and consider how different readers might respond. Different types of thinking, such as 'compare and contrast', 'cause and effect' 'identifying the writer's intention' can be modelled and supported with graphic organisers.

AFTER READING

Review and Reflect

Review

After reading the focus is on reviewing the text as a whole. In fiction this might include looking at changes that have occurred during the course of the story. Have any characters grown and developed? Have problems been solved? Themes are identified and discussed.

With fiction and nonfiction, children might summarise a text by distilling key information. Making evaluative responses requires thinking beyond the book to consider how it measures up against other texts. Is it a good example? What criteria can we use to judge?

Opportunities are provided for children to discuss the relevance of the book to the wider concerns of the world. These text-to-world discussions are usually engaging and lively. Returning to the text after reading allows the children to make further connections and deepen their knowledge.

Reflect

Reflection is an ongoing process. Each lesson in the framework includes a reflective element. At the end of the reading sequence children reflect on what has been learnt. Children are encouraged to evaluate their learning and identify the strategies that were particularly useful so that they can use them in their independent work.

Writing Opportunities

The first stages of the Take One Book process focus on developing greater depth in reading. Many of the lessons lead seamlessly into writing opportunities. Some of these will be short recording tasks, which are indicated within the lesson outlines.

In this section, we describe some writing possibilities which can be developed over a sequence of lessons. Some are genre specific, but others are content driven. As a rule of thumb, we consider it important that space is left for children to make choices about their writing. Pinning down the form, content, audience *and* purpose leaves little room for the child's imagination, or freedom of expression. If the goal is to write about a theme or topic, we will generally leave the structure open, and if the goal is to develop writing in a specific genre, we will leave space for children input original ideas.

Wherever possible, we encourage writing with authentic purpose and for audiences beyond the classroom.

Wider Learning Opportunities

Some of the book choices in Take One Book lend themselves to wider learning opportunities – making connections with other areas of the curriculum. We have not forced the connections; some books have more potential than others.

Wider learning is likely to run alongside reading the book rather than being left until the end of the sequence, although it appears at the end of our framework.

Book-based planning units for reading, writing and wider learning