

LEARNING JOURNEYS: MOVING IMAGE EDUCATION IN THE EARLY YEARS



by Mairi Flood



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FOREWORD

Learning Journeys: Moving Image Education in early years

Though they dominate global culture and communication, moving image media (film, TV, games) are not yet systematically addressed in Scottish schools and the Scottish curriculum, as means of expression, as multi-modal texts, or as cultural heritage: as 21st Century literacy.

That said, there are positive developments, not least Scotland's developing *Curriculum for Excellence*, which presents a generational opportunity to develop more relevant and effective learning experiences in schools, including moving image education. We should also acknowledge that some education professionals have been using moving images in their work for decades; and new technology, cheaper and more accessible, has greatly extended the horizon of what is possible.

However, moving image education has traditionally been least well developed in the early years, despite its particular benefits and relevance for these stages. In an attempt to improve this situation, during 2006-08, Scottish Screen seconded lead practitioner and early years teacher Mairi Flood to develop and trial moving image education teaching practices for nurseries and primary years 1 and 2.

Learning Journeys: Moving Image Education in the Early Years contains an account of Mairi Flood's work, with a host of ideas and case studies, together with a full rationale. An accompanying *Resource Box*, films of teaching and films by children are all available free at www.movingimageeducation.org. Their purpose is to support the development of moving image education in early years across Scotland.

In addition, an independent evaluation of (*inter alia*) the early years work in the classroom was undertaken by the University of Glasgow Faculty of Education, and is available for download at www.scottishscreen.com/education.

Scottish Screen wishes to record its enormous debt of thanks to Mairi Flood. Her dedication and commitment, coupled with her special genius as a teacher, have produced a superb resource for Scottish education. We are also extremely grateful to Angus Council, both for supporting the secondment, and for facilitating Mairi's work in several early years settings in Angus schools and nurseries. Finally, we wish to thank the members of the advisory group who contributed significantly to the work and to these publications.

Scott Donaldson,
Head of Education Development, Scottish Screen

INTRODUCTION

Learning Journeys: Moving Image Education in the Early Years

This document is the result of a two year collaborative action research project in a number of early years settings within Angus, Scotland, including children from nurseries, primary one, two and three. A variety of educators were actively involved including parents, early years practitioners, early intervention staff, teachers and primary school assistants. In addition members of the local and wider community were invited to contribute to the project. This led to a diverse mix of fellow travellers, who through a very fluid process constructed a vision of moving image education for the early years. We were travellers and explorers who roughly knew our destination but had to map out the route to get there.

Our initial aim was to promote moving image media literacy as part of a wider literacy. Soon key themes began to emerge: cross-curricular linkage; collaborative working; learner connectedness; co-construction of learning. I was also keen to see if moving image education could address the transition gulf between nursery and primary one. Building the Curriculum 2 was being debated at a national and local level and our experiences so far provided an excellent conduit for the key aspects of Active Learning, and our aims broadened out to promote a wider range of learning and teaching outcomes. For the remainder of the project we developed the potential of moving image education to facilitate:

- Exploring texts
- Problem solving
- Making film texts
- Play
- Partnership with parents
- Documenting, reflecting and evaluating learning.

Throughout the process qualitative evidence was collected and the University of Glasgow independently evaluated the project as part of an assessment of Scottish Screen's Education Initiatives. Foremost, to us, was the evidence of our own eyes and ears – this was powerful stuff that so many of our young learners connected with! Since the project's conclusion all of the settings involved continue to use moving image

education. The Glasgow University report identifies “enhanced active and collaborative learning” and significant improvements in the children’s listening and talking and levels of confidence. Furthermore, “promoting a wider range of learning outcomes had addressed the boundary in pedagogic practices between the informal nursery context and the more structured context of the first two years of primary school.”

Central to the success of the project were those that invested in it and my heartfelt thanks go out to all the children, their families, community members, educators who courageously stepped off well-trodden paths and the management teams who supported them in undertaking this journey. Without them none of this would have been possible.

This document aims to share our experiences and thinking with you. It is not a definitive work but an exploration into the educational potential of 21st century literacy in the early years. I hope that our learning journeys will inspire and support others to ‘dip in’ and ‘have a go’ thus continuing and enriching our route map.

Mairi Flood

Project Leader

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Rationale – The Role of Moving Image Education in Schools Today



Rationale – The Role of MIE Today

“The children are ready to jig in a world that they jointly make. The grown-ups might best flex their knees, bend their elbows, and show the children some new (literacy) steps as well.”

Dyson, 2003, *The Brothers and Sisters learn to write; Popular Literacies in Childhood and School Cultures*

Today, children are surrounded by screens with regular exposure to television and other media texts. The *Digital Beginnings* Report (Marsh et al, 2005) demonstrates that most young children are at ease with this multi-modal world, assimilating as if by osmosis the numerous skills required to operate within this mode of communication. The report also provides evidence that young children’s interactions with media are not necessarily the sedentary, solitary experiences we often assume them to be.

Within this world children are offered huge choice, a recent OFCOM Report (2007) stated that in the UK there are 25 dedicated channels and 113,000 hours of programmes each year targeted at children. This then raises the question: how well do our educational establishments prepare children to become discerning consumers who can decode these multimodal texts, make informed decisions about them, and use them as effective literacy and communication tools within society?

To obtain an answer we must examine the impact of this new era on our education system and “recognise that the complex challenges that affect our lives have implications for learning and teaching”. Livingstone (2007). Children learn through interaction and the cultures and communities they grow up in have a significant influence on all that they learn (Fisher 2008). Therefore we must familiarise and explore these modern childhood experiences, challenging our attitudes and assumptions, recognising the positive attributes and potential of these resources (Dyson 2003) and give them status in the learning environments we co-construct with children. Furthermore, we must work outwards from children’s interests and needs (The Child at the Centre 2007) to create “learning which engages and challenges children’s thinking using real life and imaginary situations. (Building the Curriculum 2, 2007). In making strong connections with these new

cultural experiences and reviewing current educational fare we can adapt and develop methodologies to provide relevant experiences that truly meet the needs of 21st Century learners.

Moving image education explores the often neglected and richly expressive language of film, enabling children to engage, analyse, create and make informed responses. However, it is not solely about literacy; it maps out rich cross-curricular learning journeys created through relevant contexts, providing many opportunities for learners to construct and extend their thinking.

Furthermore it is an excellent and accessible medium for parents to support and develop their child's communication, literacy and play skills. Investigation of the place and potential of these new texts alongside traditional ones can assist in alleviating concerns about the impact of our media-steeped environment on young minds.

To conclude, moving image education in the early years creates a synergy between modern and traditional pedagogy, making a valuable contribution to the life-long learning processes that empower individuals to participate effectively in modern society.

What is Moving Image Education?

“Moving Image Education refers to learning and teaching practices which develop moving image media literacy. These practices also provide uniquely valuable means to realise the aspirations of Scotland’s new curriculum, a Curriculum for Excellence.”

Put simply, moving image media literacy means ‘reading’ and ‘writing’ moving images, understanding, enjoying and sharing them.”

www.scottishscreen.com/education

In this early years model we have broken this down into six key themes. These can be used individually while practitioners gain confidence and develop new skills, but ultimately they all cohere together to provide rich cross-curricular contexts. There is no hierarchy to the themes, but often projects spark off from the exploration of a moving image text.

The six key themes are:

EXPLORING FILM TEXTS
PARENTS AS PARTNERS
PLAY
MAKING FILM TEXTS
PROBLEM SOLVING
DOCUMENTING, REFLECTING AND EVALUATING LEARNING

12 good reasons to use Moving Image Education

- Films, television and other media texts are great starting points because they acknowledge children’s cultural experiences and interests.
- Children are growing up in a world surrounded by multi-modal texts so the more they understand them the better equipped for life they become.
- Moving Image texts are rich in aural, visual clues that help children make sense of the world by linking, actions, emotions, colour and sound to spoken word.
- Some parents may be more comfortable and confident using this media to develop and support their child’s literacy, communication and play skills.

- Play is strongly linked to creating texts as both are about exploring the possibilities of narratives. Play is a representation of our thinking processes, just as an author will play with abstract thoughts before writing these down.
- Exploration and play using texts enables us to experiment with new emotions and roles safe in the knowledge that we can return to reality at anytime.
- The processes of creating moving image texts provides real problem solving situations, through reviewing and evaluating these children can understand the effectiveness of them.
- Use of moving image texts can challenge children's thinking and broaden their understanding and use of all texts.
- Most children connect with this medium and are keen to respond and articulate their personal opinions, views and hypotheses in discussions.
- It provides a context where learners can work collaboratively to achieve a jointly decided goal.
- Children actively engage with this learning process.

Theory, Practice and Evidence



CASE STUDY

Case Study – Journey to the Past and Rocket Rescue – Part 1



“The purpose of the programme is to improve the learning, attainment and achievement of children and young people in Scotland. It is also about ensuring that pupils achieve on a broad front, not just in terms of examinations. It is important to ensure that children and young people are acquiring the full range of skills and abilities relevant to growing, living and working in the contemporary world. Curriculum for Excellence aims to ensure that they will enjoy greater choice and opportunity to help realise their individual talents.”

www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk

The Curriculum for Excellence creates a climate that empowers practitioners to explore different methods of delivering the curriculum, moving the balance away from content and focusing on the importance of skills, strategies and attitudes for the learner to be a fully functioning member of modern society.

“Nothing was set in stone, our plans did change as the project moved on and the children had to make informed decisions and solve real problems as they met them.”

Class Teacher P1-4

Moving Image Education exemplifies this through creating relevant experiences that learners can connect with; its open framework approach enables learners and educators to work in collaboration, jointly constructing the learning experience. Here the educator takes the role of facilitator, pulling back, giving the learner freedom to explore possibilities. Then, through skilful observation and responsive intervention, the practitioner supports learners to achieve their intended or new objectives. Each learner brings to the experience their unique repertoire of knowledge, skills, interests, attitudes and aptitudes. Importantly the experience provides an opportunity for all participants to contribute these and apply, test out and refine them. As part of this process new learning agendas will emerge and be met. This develops resilience and an understanding of how the real world operates. It is an active learning process:

“which engages and challenges children’s thinking using real-life and imaginary situations. It takes full advantage of the opportunities for learning presented by:

- spontaneous play
- planned, purposeful play
- investigating and exploring
- events and life experiences
- focused learning and teaching

supported when necessary through sensitive intervention to support or extend learning.”

Building the Curriculum 2 (2007)

It fits in very well with the principles of active learning. The children enjoyed planning and following through their own ideas. It is important that they are allowed to do this. Their ideas were surprising and interesting.”

Class Teacher, P1

This case study follows a seven week period in a rural school with no prior experience of Moving Image Education. Separate projects were developed in the nursery and the P1-4 class. This case study demonstrates and explores how the experience met the aims of the Curriculum for Excellence.

Aims

- To use moving image text/s to generate a cross-curricular learning experience that fits the remit of Curriculum for Excellence.
- To explore and develop pupils’ understanding and use of moving image texts through decoding texts and creating their own.
- For pupils to play a major role in planning, implementing and evaluating their learning as a group.

Parents and Local Communities

“A source of constant conversation! She has loved this project. It has made her question and think in more depth about what she is watching realising there is more to the pictures than simply an image on the TV screen.”

Parent

Information sheets were sent to all parents and carers at the start of the project. More information on MIE was shared during the project. During the making of their Victorian text the P1 – 4 pupils composed and sent a letter asking for help and an invitation to attend the premiere of the film at the school’s Museum Day. At the project’s conclusion parents were invited to comment on their child’s experience.

Planning and Implementation Strategies

“Initially it was very hard to stand back and let the children make the decisions but because I did this the sense of achievement for the children was far greater – it truly was their own work.”

Class Teacher



Due to time constraints and to ensure coverage of certain basic elements in this new experience, a planning framework was adopted to guide the class through the processes of responding to and making their own moving image text. However, the plan was very flexible and each stage was designed to maximise freedom for the children to develop their own thinking. The timescale also generated pupil discussions, reflection and decisions relating to what they could as a team realistically achieve in the given time, another vital life skill. With a longer timescale a more fluid approach could have been taken. The pupils now have that basic knowledge and it is anticipated that future projects will be planned and directed by them from the start. The planning sheets contained all the capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence, and over each week these were reflected on and retrospective indications made of those that had been covered. The class teacher also followed her own cross curricular plan based on the Victorians but the two quickly merged and the film centred on a Victorian school experience.

Learning Opportunities

We used two main approaches

- Open-ended experiential frameworks where we considered the learning potential of a situation, observed and interacted with the pupils during the experience. At its conclusion we 'unpacked' the experience to identifying the actual learning outcomes, how they occurred, resulting in possible steps to take learning forward.
- Formative Assessment where we shared specific learning objectives with the learner and the process success criteria that were reviewed at the end of the task by the learner.

We used all three of Fisher's (2008, 68) types of learning: child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-focused (teacher directed). Fisher states that in any early years setting there should be a balance of these learning experiences but it is not static, the balance will shift from day to day in response to the learners need, thus creating an effective learning environment.

Generally the formal adult-focused style was used when teaching new skills. During film analysis and creating their own text an open framework, using both child and adult initiated learning, was used to encourage pupils to follow their intuitions, experiment and create. Laevers (2007) describes this experience as a 'circular process' the children and adults involved both experience the roles of learner and teacher and through co-construction of meaning learning progresses. Investigation of one aspect will lead to new questions and ideas to be explored. However, towards the end of the project we witnessed genuine child-initiated responses.

Example 1

On the final day of the project as pupils represented their responses to the experience in our two comments books a group of three children gathered around a whiteboard next to the book corner.

Once child picked up the pen and invited: "Let's talk about our next film". The others responded eagerly and started suggesting story ideas, characters and a title all of which were discussed and recorded on the whiteboard. Unfortunately the lunch bell rang and the budding directors were halted and I had to leave, so who knows what might have transpired or may still be?

Example 2

As Christmas approached one of the children brought in the DVD *Shrek the Halls* and asked if the class could watch it. The class teacher agreed and watched the short film with the children with no real intention of turning the experience into an MIE lesson but at the end of the film the children spontaneously initiated a lively discussion about the film using what they had learned about film grammar to communicate their views and opinions.

These examples demonstrate that the children had progressed in their learning. They were now able to spontaneously transfer and apply the skills we had taught them. More importantly we had empowered them, they believed that they could make another film, confident that they possessed the knowledge and skills but able to seek the support of their peers or adults to build on and refine that process.

Collaborative Learning

"This is an excellent and meaningful vehicle for co-operative learning. Because the children identified with the project it gave greater purpose to co-operative working and they wanted to work as partners and the quality of their work improved. They became more accepting and accommodating to the ideas and abilities of others"

Head Teacher

In education we do need to focus on the needs of individual learners, but social interaction plays a central role in thinking and making sense of our world. Fisher (1995) states that the success of the human

species is attributed to our ability to “combine the flexibility and experimental brilliance of individuals with the generative powers of co-operative effort.” The four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence affirms this through highlighting the need for learners to “work in partnership and teams, take the initiative and lead, think creatively and independently, relate to others and manage themselves, and communicate in different ways and different settings”. The co-operative learning style already in use in the P1-4 class complimented our open framework approach, there were not necessarily right or wrong ways, only different ways or views, and as the pupils progressed towards their commonly agreed goal they generally understood and became more respectful of the views and abilities of their peers. It was a democratic process where if a general consensus could not be reached the final decision was agreed by a vote. In the nursery the pursuance of a commonly agreed goal provided a vehicle for a group of strong individuals to successfully collaborate and work co-operatively. This was a strong theme in all our settings: MIE provided a social and cognitive framework for learning where the participants are ‘not simply taking in new information or ideas – they are creating something new with the information and ideas’, (The Journey to Excellence – Collaborative Learning 2007).

Identifying Possible Learning Opportunities – examples from *Journey to the Past* and *Rocket Rescue*

This section will focus on one of the learning experiences from the project to:

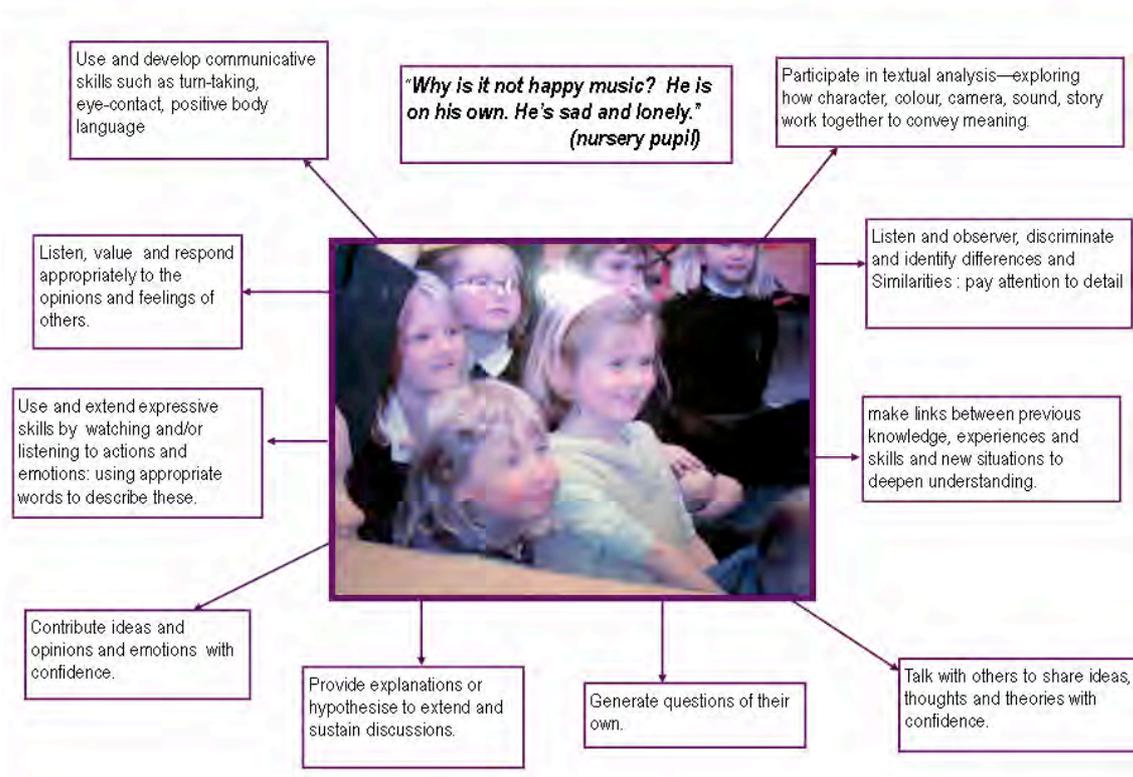
- **Identify possible learning opportunities within an MIE experience**
- **Outline the actual learning which children experiences**
- **Demonstrate how the experience was extended**

Because MIE is a cross-curricular and holistic experience the learning opportunities have not been separated into discrete curricular areas.

These examples relate to *Journey to the Past* and *Rocket Rescue* and may not necessarily generate the same outcomes with children in other settings. Any learning situation is dependant on the learning environment and what each learner brings to that community, thus creating the potential for a unique set of learning opportunities. When planning your own MIE experiences we would suggest that the following examples be used only to generate discussion in how you can identify opportunities to meet the needs of children in your nursery or class or whole school setting.

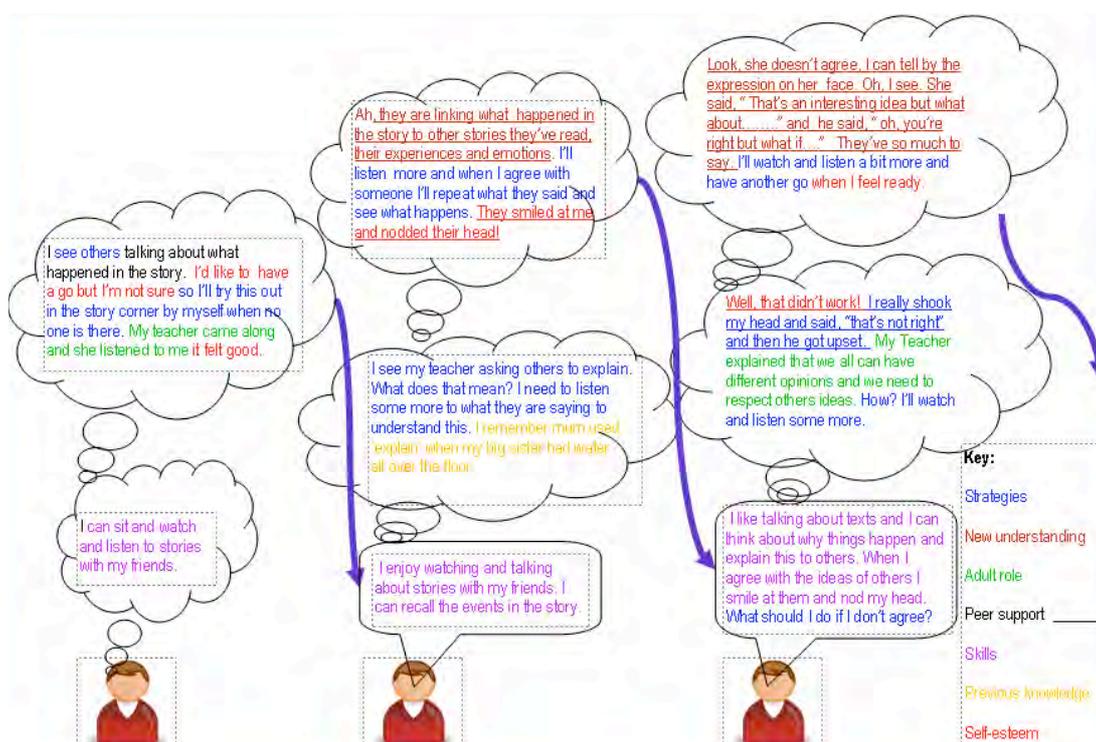


Possible learning opportunities



Learning which the children experienced

- The learning opportunities were sufficiently broad to encompass a wide range of developmental and learning needs. In this way all the pupils could engage with these opportunities at a level and pace that suited them. For example: some pupils needed support in developing their understanding of conversational turn taking while others who already understood this might be refining their use of body language.
- Working with such a broad range of abilities and developmental ages enriched the experience, as pupils who are proficient and able in certain areas modelled these skills, thus extending and supporting the understanding of other learners. The diagram below suggests the possible processes involved when a learner, through re-visitation, develops the understanding and skills to contribute explanations and respond to those of others. These strategies, along with understanding and skills, previous knowledge, self-esteem, metacognition and the support of adults and peers can all play a part in driving this forward. The balance of these will change throughout to meet the needs of the individual learner at that particular point in the spiral process. There is no finite goal as the learner through revisiting and reinterpreting will continue to refine their skills to meet new and more challenging situations.



- It is important to explain to pupils that we each have personalised responses to texts and that these are valued and respected by others. There were indications that an increasing number of pupils across the whole age range were opting to respond and share their opinions. This could have been influenced by the relevance of the chosen text or the questioning techniques used, which invited pupils to share their opinions and explain them, accepting and recording all responses equally.

Extending the experience

This section includes:

- A description of the entire extended experience in the nursery – **Rocket Rescue**
- A detailed description of one of the writing extension activities featured in the Journey to the Past PowerPoint presentation – **How did Baboon get to the moon?**

Rocket Rescue

- The nursery children listened to the film sound track and were provided with a box of real props from the film to see if they could match the objects to the sounds.

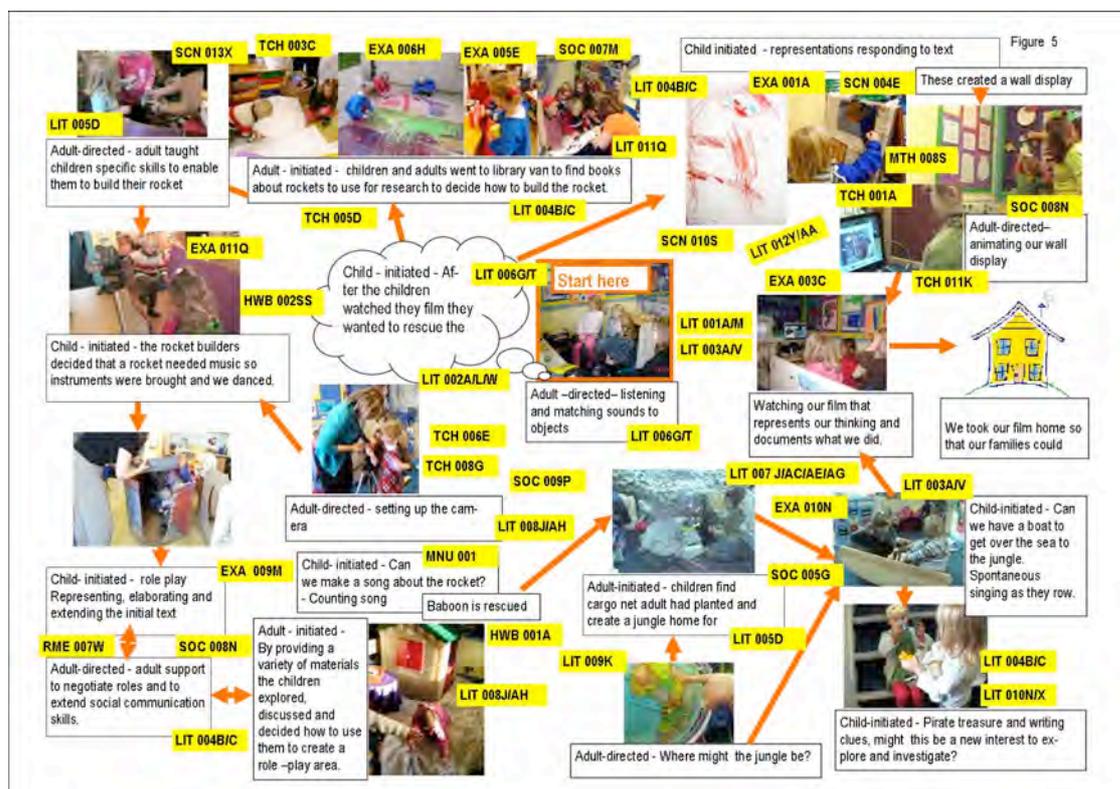


- This activity is an example of teacher directed learning. It was planned with the specific outcomes of revisiting: listen and observe, discriminate and identify differences and similarities paying attention to detail. Later the children requested that the props be added to a role play area they created. This afforded the pupils hands-on exploration of the objects and their sounds and opportunities to repeat and consolidate their previous experience. In addition the children used the props to act out and elaborate the film storyline. After the listening activity the children requested to see the whole film and at its conclusion a spontaneous discussion took place regarding the predicament of the main character, Baboon. This discussion enabled the adult to assess the pupils' understanding of the text, their understanding of cause and effect and their abilities to explain, hypothesise and suggest appropriate solutions. By listening to the children's ideas and wishes a plan was co-constructed - child initiated, with the adult facilitating them by providing support to order and record their thinking. Below shows a record of that discussion.

23.10.07.



Below is a mind map demonstrating how the children’s thinking was taken forward and the educator’s role as facilitator. The learning experiences are also linked to the Curriculum for Excellence. Aspects of the experiences and outcomes in all curricular areas observed during the eight week period have been highlighted. The experiences and outcomes for the Early Years Stage cover a developmental period of about 3 years and are of a progressive nature with opportunities to revisit, consolidate, broaden and extend learning.



It would be unrealistic to provide opportunities that would address a complete learning experience or outcome on this timescale but this could be the case with longer term use of these materials.

See Appendix 2. For key to Curriculum for Excellence Draft Outcomes and Experiences

See Appendix 3. for the early years practitioner’s plans providing information on learning activities, adult support, general notes and highlighting the capacities of Curriculum for Excellence that were observed over the 8 week period. Again these capacities are of a progressive nature, for example with, **demonstrate resilience** there were many opportunities to cope with the view points of others and the group decision not incorporating all individual contributions. Obviously there are numerous ways of developing resilience and opportunities to build on current skills and experience new situations will be met through future learning experiences.

Documentation of the Learning Experience

As the context unfolded, a wall display evolved to track the children's learning. Many questions were posed by children and adults and several of these were recorded. Photographic evidence was gathered on a daily basis and pupils were invited to view the pictures, review them and their comments were added before incorporating them in the display. Learning Outcomes from the 3-5 curriculum guidelines were highlighted as they were covered. Each child in the nursery has a wall space and a folder displaying examples of their representations of their learning. This might include written comments, photos, mark-making, scribed texts, collages and other art works. This is the standard way that learning is documented in the nursery, but the DVDs of the pupils' building their rocket and Rocket Rescue were viewed and added to the wall. Copies of the final film went home so that parents could share and understand the learning experience. The children can view their films at any time and they could be used as transitional objects when starting Primary one, providing common ground for discussions that would give the educator valuable information about the children's interests and abilities. The experience could be revisited to give the pupils a secure and comfortable introduction to their new environment.



Photographic evidence with children's comments

CASE STUDY

How did Baboon get to the moon?

Co-operative Writing Groups Primary one to four composite class

- After watching Baboon on the Moon the pupils discussed and decoded the text using the Film Detective Characters: *Carmen Character, Calvin Camera, Crystal Colour, Serena Story, Simon Sound and Sebastian Setting*
- In their co-operative groups they were asked to consider how the Baboon had arrived on the moon and create a narrative based on this. The aims of this educator-directed task were to familiarise pupils with new skills and develop their understanding of the dual nature of the Film Detective framework. It can be used to discuss and decode films and for creating film and other narratives.
- In sharing the criteria with the pupils they were asked to:

Social Goal

- listen to the ideas of others

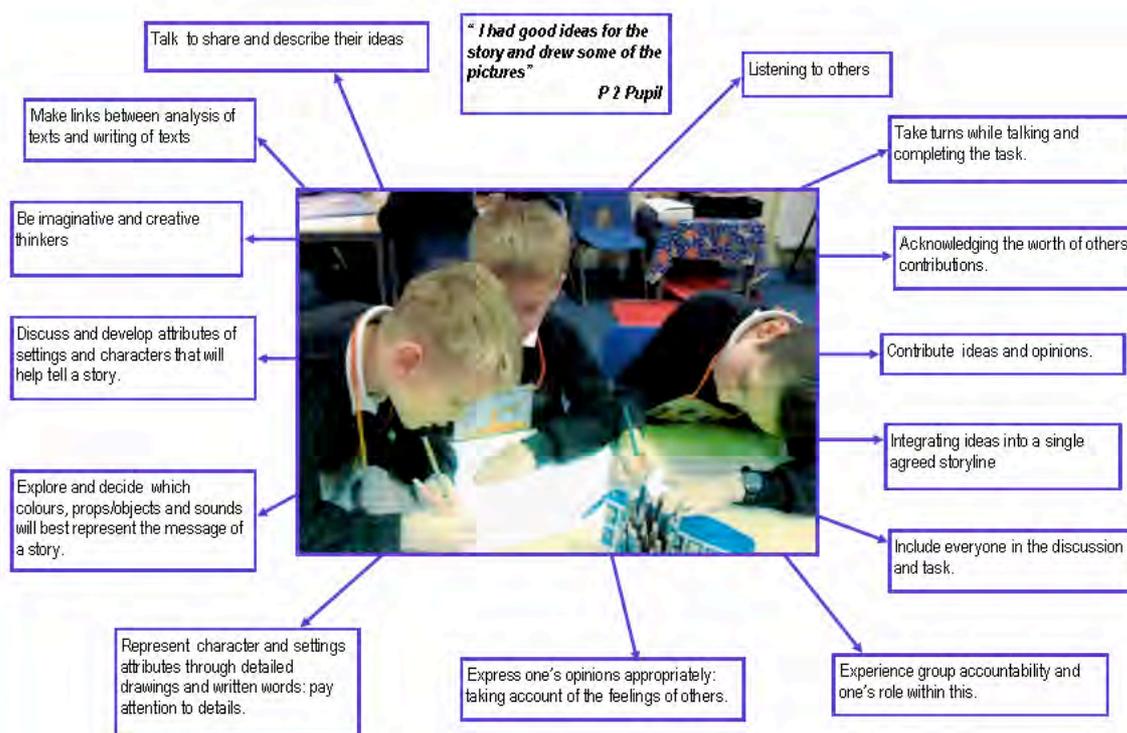
Task Goals

- Be creative and think up a group story about how Baboon arrived on the moon
- Be like Calvin Camera and think about what the camera would see to tell your story, you will need to think about the setting, props and characters as well.
- Be like Simon Sound and think about the sounds that would help tell the story
- represent your story on the storyboard

Although not used in this instance the Film Detective rubric in the Resource Box could have been used to support the pupils to follow through the task.

Possible Learning Opportunities

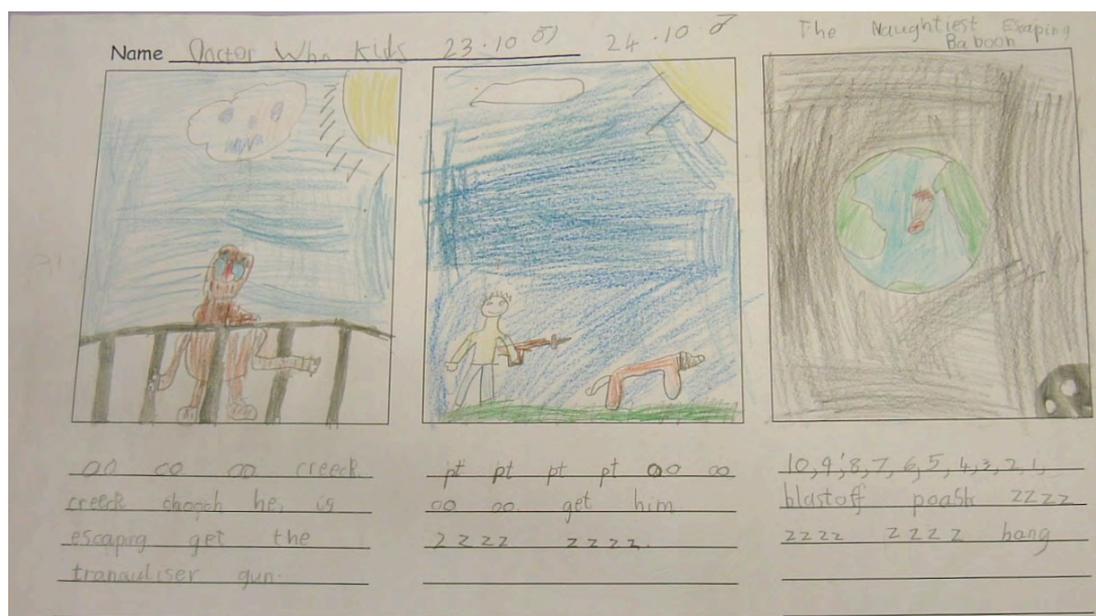
Although only specific criteria were set and discussed with the pupils there are a considerable number of other potential learning opportunities that could occur, some are shared below.



Actual learning outcomes the children experienced

- We did find evidence of all these through observations and the finished stories. Using groups for creative writing helps develop pupils' confidence and the emergent writers are supported by the more proficient writers. More importantly, the emergent writers develop an understanding of the process, possibilities and expectations involved and their role within this. The more able pupil has the challenge of explaining his thinking to others and sensitively helping others to expand and represent their views.
- The final storyboards were presented by each group to the class and to camera. Some almost stood alone as the illustrations and written sound suggestions clearly conveyed the meaning of the story, while others needed more explanation. By presenting their finished storyboards to each other both the educators and pupils were able to assess their efforts and pinpoint successes and pointers for development in further activities.

Storyboards for Baboon's arrival on the moon



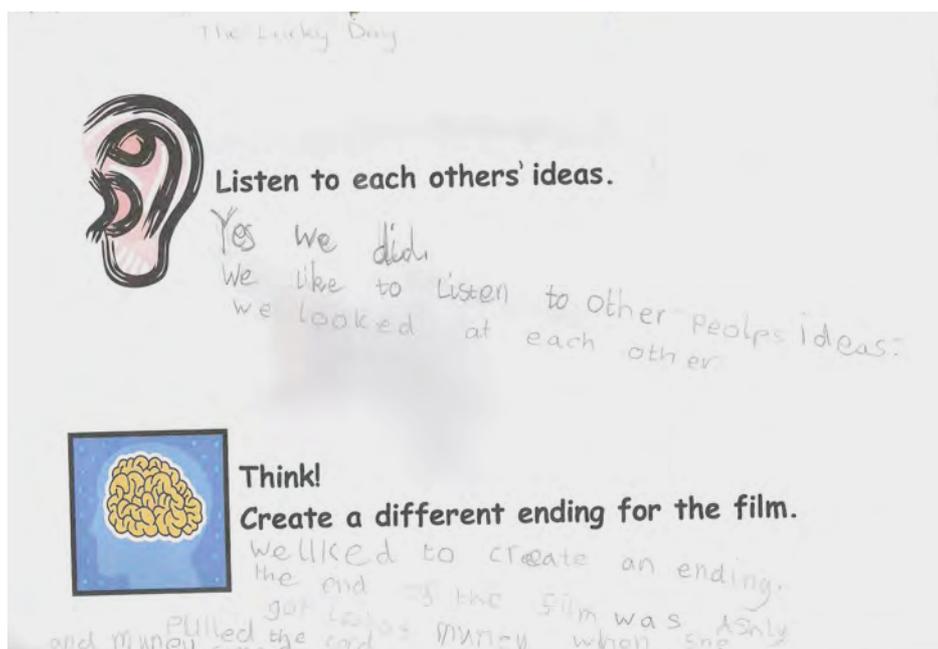
Extending the experience

- The pupil clearly enjoyed the activity and bolstered by the success of these activities the class teacher independently chose and viewed other moving image texts with similar story writing activities with the pupils working in groups or pairs. These were rich learning experiences in their own right but they were also building up the pupils' skills and understanding for making their own moving image texts.

Pupils were asked to provide an imaginative alternative ending to the BFI text *Dangle (Starting Stories 2)*



The class teacher also devised response sheets for the pupils to reflect and record their performance in relation to social and academic goals.



Documenting the experience

The pupils were photographed and videoed during parts of the task. These were kept for discussion and review, where the pupils were invited to comment and explain the activity, the possible learning and how they felt about it. The rubric and the response sheet demonstrate that pupils were asked to think about the skills involved and then review how well they had achieved them. Again, both these provide opportunities to suggest or plan progression through revisiting for consolidation or to extend / learn new skills. All of the pupils storyboards and evaluations sheets were compiled into a book that was kept in the class library so they could be revisited or shared with and explained to visitors.

Why did the pupils respond so positively?

The writing framework was so successful that the pupils and educator regularly use it for a number of writing experiences. As the class started to develop play contexts around the story of the Three Little Pigs the pupils began to link this to their previous MIE experience and gradually the plan unfolded to make a film of the text. Over the next few weeks, pupils constructed a straw house to play in where they could actively practice and elaborate character roles and narrative structures. In writing activities they developed these ideas creating the 'Three Little Penguins and the Big Bad Polar Bear' and 'Three Little Fish and the Big Bad Shark'. Now puppets and back drops are currently being designed before filming begins but what is most apparent on entering the class is the vitality and enthusiasm as these children actively engage with their learning. It is clear that children certainly engaged with and are inspired by the use of moving image texts. Bazalgette (2003) believes that when children begin to learn to read in more formal situation they are 'becoming bilingual' for they have already acquired many 'reading' skills (voice, sound, picture, emotion, movement, body language) through their interpretation of film and TV in their home lives. She believes that if educators 'encourage (children) to articulate their existing knowledge of the way moving image media communicates' this will benefit their understanding of the 'systems and rules' of verbal communication. Similarly experiencing and sharing the socio-dramatic play that children create around moving image and other cultural experiences should assist in their understanding and composition of narratives (Hall and Robinson 1995). However, the crucial factor is context; by using and giving status to moving image in the classroom, the pupils are making positive links between an important cultural part of their lives and more formal writing and reading skills. They are intrinsically

motivated because they see the activity as 'necessary and interesting' (Bazalgette) to them.

Before embarking on a moving image project of your own it may be valuable to visit the Resource box and try **Practical Task – Identifying the possible learning opportunities within an MIE experience.**

Appendix 1.

These exemplar planning sheets evidence some of the processes of implementing a Moving Image Education experience. As explained in the accompanying text, the process was documented in a number of ways and was reflected upon to generate next steps for learners.

We have cross-referenced our observations to the capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence. However it would be preposterous to claim that all or many of these were completely met by such a short project as the capacities are continuums for life long learning!

We have highlighted capacities where we observed pupils applying, deepening and extending skills, knowledge and attitudes encompassed in that capacity. We observed rich opportunities in relation to literacy and communication, collaborative learning, citizenship, problem solving and creativity.

The relevance to particular curricular areas will be dependant on the source material used for each specific project. In this case Social Studies – 'People, past events and societies' came to the fore. Another setting currently using MIE aims to create a documentary text about plants growing, thus addressing several aspects of 'Our Living World'. This is testimony to the versatility of moving image education.

Appendix 2.

Planning Sheet – MIE trial Oct 15th – 29th Nov. Aberlemno P1-4 Miss. Spink

Learning Activities derived from the pupil's planning and interests	Adult support / direct teaching	Notes	Capacities of Curriculum for Excellence observed over this planning period	
<p>Pupils decided names for their co-operative groups based on their interests. Nearly all groups chose names that referred to TV or Film.</p> <p>15/10 – visit DCA Discovery Film Festival to watch a series of short films called Animation.</p> <p>16/10 – All pupils to discuss films to create a film review. Each group will prepare a response to one of the films. Each group will film this response, agreeing the roles of cameraman, director and presenter.</p> <p>Pupils decide they want to share their finished film with their parents at a special showing.</p> <p>19/10 – Pupils watch and discuss their film review as a class. Next in groups reflect and review, highlighting things they did well and agreeing actions points to work on. Each group creates a written record of this. (we will return to these when we resume filming)</p> <p>22/10 – Pupils to develop their understanding and use of film grammar, using the Film Detectives to decode Baboon on the Moon.</p> <p>23-24/10 In co-operative groups create a prequel to the film and draw the three shots that tell this story. Then write below the shots then sound that would accompany them to tell the story.</p> <p>Each group to share storyboard with the class.</p>	<p>School staff to liaise with DCA and arrange parent helpers to accompany children on bus and at cinema. (Miss.S)</p> <p>Adult to explain task to children. When discussing films encourage children to provide reasons for their thinking. Adult to model roles and language of filming with goal of pupils working independently as a group. (Mrs. F) Adult to film groups. Adult to edit clips.</p> <p>Adult provides and shares clear criteria for task with pupils. Adult to model and support pupils to respond appropriately to their MI text. Their written record for evaluation is to focus on good ideas. (Miss. S) Adult to explore the idea of a Film Detective (FD) with the pupils. Introduce the FD characters and support the children using these to decode the film. Adult to scribe the pupil's responses on the FD concept map. Film this for evaluation (Mrs. F)</p> <p>Explain task using Calvin Camera and Simon Sound. Share criteria on the rubric. If required provide an example story line of your own. Support pupils during task encouraging them to use the rubric to check their story board. Which of the criteria have they achieved? (Miss. S)</p>	<p>16/10 Used pupils' numeracy skills to vote on agreed course of action.</p> <p>Some pupils not volunteering ideas when Miss Spink says they are capable – use "no hands up".</p> <p>Miss Spink is keen to explore other MI texts with the class. She reports that it easily provides opportunities for writing, listening, talking and thinking.</p>	<p>Successful Learners able to:</p>	
			Demonstrate enthusiasm and motivation for learning	✓
			Demonstrate determination to reach high Standards and achievement	✓
			Use literacy	✓
			Use communication	✓
			Use numeracy	✓
			Use technology for learning	✓
			Think creatively and independently	✓
			Learn independently	✓
			Learn as part of a group	✓
			Make reasoned evaluations	✓
			Link and apply different kinds of learning to new situations	✓
			<p>Responsible citizens able to:</p>	
			Respect others	✓
			Demonstrate commitment to participate responsibly	✓
			Develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it	✓
			Understand different beliefs and cultures	
			Make informed choices and decisions	✓
			Evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues	✓
			Develop informed, ethical views	

Learning Activities derived from the pupil's planning and interests	Adult support / direct teaching	Notes	Capacities of Curriculum for Excellence observed over this planning period.	
<p>25/10 – Practical activity – setting up shots and developing an understanding of the different camera shots. Social goal – turn taking. Each group to use a digital still camera to take a specific list of shots. Print out shots and then as a class sort them into groups. Name the shots and create a class camera shot book.</p>	<p>Use Calvin Camera to explain the task. One adult to work with younger pupils while other circulates and supports groups to stay on task. Film children during this task for evaluations purposes. At end of activity provide a variety of options for shot names – can pupils choose the correct one and give reasons why. (Miss. S & Mrs. F)</p>	<p>Archive provided pictures of Victorian cameras. Extended lesson by creating a human number line and placed camera photos and those of TV and modern cameras on this.</p> <p>Challenge to older children – counting back and forwards in 50s and 100s. Everyone involved in some way. Pupils fascinated by photos and the fact that Victorians had no TVs in their home.</p>	<p>Confident individuals able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate self-respect ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate secure values and beliefs</p> <p>Demonstrate ambition ✓</p> <p>Relate to others ✓</p> <p>Manage themselves ✓</p> <p>Pursue a healthy and active lifestyle</p> <p>Be self-aware ✓</p> <p>Develop and communicate their own beliefs and views of the world ✓</p> <p>Live as independently as they can ✓</p>	
<p>29/10 – As a class watch- The Visit – Tarfside PS and Mitchell and Kenyon – Audley Range School. Discuss Sebastian Setting in relation to when the films were made. Explore fictional and nonfiction texts. Discuss and agree if class film is to be a story or a documentary. Introduce Serena Story and Carmen Character to develop a story line for their film.</p>	<p>Support and record the pupil's responses during the discussion and decision making processes. Provide information when required. Explain the time scale of film making setting out clear criteria for this for their film so that they will achieve their goal.</p> <p>Record the pupils' ideas to create a storyline. Assist them in splitting the story into five equal portions. Assign a story portion to each group. Explain that each group will develop a bit of the story. Talk about continuity. Introduce the idea that we need a director and assistant director to keep all groups on task. Ask pupils to offer the qualities the director and assistant must have – assist them with this. Get them to nominate pupils for these roles and vote on it if necessary.</p>	<p>Miss Spink to display timeline on hall wall with pupils. She will do this with the younger pupils to facilitate their understanding of this.</p> <p>They will add other items to the line as their Victorian project continues into January.</p>	<p>Achieve success in different areas of activity ✓</p> <p>Effective contributors able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate an enterprising attitude ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate resilience ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate self-reliance ✓</p> <p>Communicate in different ways and in different settings ✓</p> <p>Work in partnership and in teams ✓</p> <p>Take the initiative and lead ✓</p> <p>Apply critical thinking in new contexts ✓</p> <p>Create and develop ✓</p> <p>Solve problems ✓</p>	
<p>30 -31/10 – Continue to develop the story line and characters as a class. Break the storyline up into 5 chapters and give each group a chapter to work on. Appoint a director and assistant director.</p>	<p>Record the pupils' ideas to create a storyline. Assist them in splitting the story into five equal portions. Assign a story portion to each group. Explain that each group will develop a bit of the story. Talk about continuity. Introduce the idea that we need a director and assistant director to keep all groups on task. Ask pupils to offer the qualities the director and assistant must have – assist them with this. Get them to nominate pupils for these roles and vote on it if necessary.</p>	<p>Pupils decided to display shots in a book. Got Director and Assistant Director to update me on the storyboard. They did this well and involved the individual groups in feeding back to me.</p>		
<p>01/11 – Continue to work in groups. Storyboarding their section of story as they did for Baboon on the Moon</p>	<p>Support groups to stay focused and keep their ideas manageable for the timescale. Focus on thinking through their ideas. E.g. Can you explain how we could make that happen?</p>			

Learning Activities derived from the pupil's planning and interests	Adult support / direct teaching	Notes	Capacities of Curriculum for Excellence observed over this planning period.	
<p>Camera and sound crew to become familiar with their roles and equipment.</p> <p>Agree on filming days and plan these.</p> <p>Filming</p> <p>Editing film clips using Ulead studio on the whiteboard.</p> <p>Enterprise day – School open as a museum to parents. P1-4 The Victorians. Screen film to parents and visitors as part of this event.</p>	<p>Explain why and how to mark shots. Demonstrate how to use equipment.</p> <p>Provide organisational and other support as necessary</p>	<p>Problems marking the shot – Discussed this with R (director) and we agreed to leave this out.</p> <p>Decided to have a second camera crew. Put all the interested parties through their paces and Director and Assistant director helped me choose the second crew. Invited their views first and they chose the pupils I would have, providing the reasons that they were good listeners and managed to work the camera well.</p> <p>After two demonstrations of how to edit with Movie Maker on the whiteboard all the children were keen to do this independently with a small amount of adult support. As we edited it was clear that the children were beginning to think like film makers often commenting on the choice of shot and continuity issues. They were thinking and problem solving suggestion good solutions.</p> <p>The pupils were extremely proud of their achievements and at the end of the project spontaneously wrote thank you letters to the director, assistant director etc.</p> <p>Miss Spink commented that MIE provides opportunities for the children who often are hard to engage to become involved and take responsibility. There were clear indications that these children had developed their confidence in their own abilities.</p>	<p>Confident individuals able to:</p>	
			<p>Demonstrate self-respect ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate secure values and beliefs ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate ambition ✓</p> <p>Relate to others ✓</p> <p>Manage themselves ✓</p> <p>Pursue a healthy and active lifestyle ✓</p> <p>Be self-aware ✓</p> <p>Develop and communicate their own beliefs and views of the world ✓</p> <p>Live as independently as they can assess risk and make informed decisions ✓</p> <p>Achieve success in different areas of activity ✓</p> <p>Effective contributors able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate an enterprising attitude ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate resilience ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate self-reliance ✓</p> <p>Communicate in different ways and in different settings ✓</p> <p>Work in partnership and in teams ✓</p> <p>Take the initiative and lead ✓</p> <p>Apply critical thinking in new contexts ✓</p> <p>Create and develop ✓</p> <p>Solve problems ✓</p>	

Appendix 2.

Key for Figure 5, Curriculum for Excellence – the project provided experiences and opportunities within the following draft learning experiences and outcomes.

EX 003C	I have been inspired by the magic, wonder and power of the expressive arts and can respond by describing my thoughts and feelings about my own and others work.
EX 001A	Inspired by a range of imaginative stimuli, including popular culture, and working on my own and with others, I can express my ideas, thoughts and feelings through creative work in the expressive arts.
EXA 005A	I have had the freedom to discover and choose ways to create images and objects using a variety of art materials, exploring line, shape, form, colour, tone, pattern and texture.
EXA 006A	Through natural curiosity, exploration and imagination, I have worked on my own and with others to solve design problems.
EXA 009M	I have freedom to choose and explore movement, expression and voice in different kinds of role play.
EXA 010N	I can use drama to explore real and imaginary situations, helping me to understand my world.
EXA 011Q	I have had the freedom to use my voice, musical instruments and music technology to discover playing with sound and rhythm.
SOC 007M	By exploring my local community, I have discovered the different roles people play and how they can help me.
SOC 008N	I make decisions and take responsibility in my everyday experiences and play, showing consideration for others.
SOC 009P	Within my everyday experiences and play, I make choices, about where I work, how I work and who I work with.
SOC 005G	I have experimented with imaginative ways, such as modelling and drawing to represent the world around me, the journeys I make and the different ways I can travel.
SCN 004E	I have experienced the wonder of looking at the vastness of the sky, and can recognise the Sun, Moon and stars and link them to daily life patterns.
SCN 010S	I am becoming more aware of my own senses and can use them to explore the world around me.
SCN 013X	Through creative play I have experiences a range of different materials. I can show different materials are useful for different purposes, giving reasons for my ideas.
MNU 001	I have explored numbers, understand that they represent

	quantities and I can use them to count, create sequences and describe order.
MUN 008S	I enjoy investigating objects and shapes and can sort, describe and be creative with them.
LIT 001A/M	I enjoy exploring and choosing stories and other texts to watch, read or listen to and can share my likes and dislikes. <i>Listening & Talking & Reading</i>
LT 002A/L/W	I enjoy exploring the patterns and sounds of language and can use what I learn. <i>Listening & Talking & Reading</i>
LT 003A/V	I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways. <i>Listening & Talking & Reading</i>
LIT 004 B/C	As I listen and talk in different situations, I am learning to take turns and am developing my awareness of when to talk and when to listen. <i>Listening&Talking</i>
LIT 005D	I listen and watch for useful or interesting information and I use this to make choices or learn new things. <i>Listening & Talking</i>
LIT 006G/T	To help me understand stories and other texts, I ask questions and link what I am learning with what I already know. <i>Listening &Talking &Reading</i>
LIT007J/AC/AE/AG	Within real and imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in ways that communicate my message. <i>Listening &Talking &Writing</i>
LIT 008J/AH	I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts and I use what I learn to invent my own, sharing these with others in imaginative ways. <i>Listening and Talking &Writing</i>
LIT 009K	As I listen and take part in conversations and discussions, I discover new words and phrases which I use to help me express my ideas, thoughts and feelings. <i>Listening &Talking</i>
LIT 010N/X	I explore sounds, letters and words, discovering how they work together, and use what I learn to help me as I read and write. <i>Reading & Writing</i>
LIT 011Q	I use signs, books and other texts to find useful or interesting information and I use this to plan, make choices or learn new things. <i>Reading</i>
LIT 012Y/AA	As I play and learn, I enjoy exploring interesting materials for writing and different ways of recording my experiences, feelings, ideas and information. <i>Writing</i>
TCH 001A	I enjoy playing with and exploring technologies to discover what they can do and how they can help us.
TCH 003C	Within real and imaginary settings, I am developing my practical skills as I select and work with a range of materials, tools and software

TCH005D	Throughout my learning, I share my thoughts with others to help further develop ideas and solve problems
TCH 006E	Through my learning, I explore and discover different ways of representing my ideas in imaginative ways
TCH008G	I capture and present my world and experiences by taking photographs, or recording sounds and moving images
TCH 011K	As I play and learn, I am gaining confidence whilst using computer technology and can use my skills in new and different situations
RME 007W	As I play and learn, I am developing my understanding of what is fair and unfair and why caring and sharing are important
HWB	I am learning that we all experience a variety of emotions that affect how we think, feel and behave.
HWB	I know how to describe my feelings about what is going well or where support is needed.
HWB	I value the opportunities I am given to improve and manage my learning and, in turn, I can offer my skills to help encourage learning and confidence in others.
HWB	I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and reduce the potential for harm where possible.
HWB 001A	In my everyday work and play, I make choices to help my learning and I enjoy sharing and using my experiences.
HWB 022SS	I recognise that we possess similarities and differences and that we are all unique.

Appendix 3.

Planning Sheet – MIE trial Oct 15th – 2nd Nov. Aberlemno Nursery

Learning Activities derived from the pupil's planning and interests	Adult support / direct teaching	Notes	Capacities of Curriculum for Excellence observed over this planning period.	
<p>Children keen to help Baboon – decided to go to the moon to see him. They will take flowers, do a dance and tickle him.</p> <p>They want to build a rocket and take him back to nursery.</p> <p>M - Spontaneously singing a song about Baboon on the Moon.</p> <p>Children keen to create a new song with actions.</p> <p>Children enjoyed looking at books to gain information about baboons and rockets.</p> <p>Children noting that baboons are sociable animals so the baboon is lonely – requires friends.</p> <p>01/11/07 Lots of interest in building rocket. Children noting shape and requesting cardboard etc see plan.</p> <p>1/11 -Children keen to create Baboon's house, noting props in film required by Baboon.</p> <p>Children very taken by 'Bringing Down the Moon' DVD – "we could draw a picture of the mole with his friends with the Baboon on the moon."</p> <p>Children very keen to create large rocket to visit baboon. Have decided to paint it outside due to size.</p>	<p>22-23/10 – Listened to sound track of film and matched sounds to props. The watched film.</p> <p>24/10- Adult support children to devise a simple story line for rescue and draw a simple storyboard of this.</p> <p>24/10 -Use books with DVDs, 'Can't you Sleep Little Bear' and Bringing Down the Moon' to explore light and dark – link to seasonal changes.</p> <p>26/10 -Visited library van to find books on rockets and baboons for our research.</p> <p>Scribed song words, typed out and placed in 'songs we sing in nursery' book.</p> <p>Discussed how we could support someone who is sad. Encouraged children to problem solve – What could they do to help alleviate his sadness?</p> <p>Discussed size of cardboard, where could we paint it?</p> <p>Discussed with children why the baboon might need these items? Do we use similar things and why?</p> <p>Added a variety of white fabrics to make the moon.</p> <p>30/10 - Encouraged children to share what they would like to put on the display picture. Ensure resources are available to create display.</p> <p>7/11- Might the weather affect the cardboard? What if it rains what will happen to the cardboard?</p>	<p>Having fun making stories. See display on wall.</p> <p>Child during rocket building and setting up camera demonstrated good understanding of electricity and batteries. Looking for a pretend socket in the rocket to plug the clock radio in. Decided that it needed charging and returned to Baboon's house where it was put on charge. Note – at no time did he attempt to plug clock into real sockets – aware of safety?</p>	<p>Successful Learners able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate enthusiasm and motivation for learning</p> <p>Demonstrate determination to reach high standards and achievement</p> <p>Demonstrate openness to new thinking and ideas</p> <p>Use literacy</p> <p>Use communication</p> <p>Use numeracy</p> <p>Use technology for learning</p> <p>Think creatively and independently</p> <p>Learn independently</p> <p>Learn as part of a group</p> <p>Make reasoned evaluations</p> <p>Link and apply different kinds of learning to new situations</p>	<p>✓</p>
			<p>Responsible citizens able to:</p> <p>Respect others</p> <p>Demonstrate commitment to participate responsibly</p> <p>Develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it</p> <p>Understand different beliefs and cultures</p> <p>Make informed choices and decisions</p> <p>Evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues</p> <p>Develop informed, ethical views</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>

Learning Activities derived from the pupil's planning and interests	Adult support / direct teaching	Notes	Capacities of Curriculum for Excellence observed over this planning period.	
<p>Children requesting to see DVD of 'Can't you Sleep Little Bear'.</p> <p>Rocket "We have to sort the inside to make it comfy"</p> <p>13/11 -"We need to add more things"</p> <p>"Could we make a song about the rocket?"</p> <p>Lots of interest in film equipment. Microphone not working so taken apart by children to replace batteries. – They suggested that this might be the problem!</p> <p>Children very keen to create a jungle to take baboon to once they have rescued him from the moon.</p> <p>Children decide to travel by boat to the jungle. "I need string to tie the boat up so it doesn't float away"</p> <p>Children curious and keen to have a turn at animating the wall display rocket. "I'll take the pictures to start with." "I'll move the rocket."</p> <p>All children delighted with end product.</p>	<p>12/11 -Encourage children to recall events in story.</p> <p>Access books on rockets. Provide a wide variety of craft materials.</p> <p>13/11 -Wall display not complete? Encourage children to evaluate display, is it finished? Could we make it better? What might we need? Help children create a counting song (counting needs developed) about the rocket. Scribe, type and display song to ensure home link. Mrs. Flood arrives with camera, tripod and microphone. Review storyline with children – Start filming Rocket Rescue Children found formal filming tiring so will try filming their role play of the story.</p> <p>Discussed what a jungle would look like accessing books. Who might live there? Access globe to show them where Africa is, discuss distance and travel.</p> <p>Filmed children at play rescuing Baboon. Discussed how to make rocket fly in sky used Lethnot nursery animation to demonstrate this. Supported children to understand the roles and processes of animation. Working together in pairs.</p> <p>Mrs. Flood to edit film and return it.</p> <p>Watched film several times</p> <p>Children took film home.</p>	<p>Comfort was an issue as cushions were added and air filled plastic packaging to the sides of the rocket.</p> <p>Quietly setting up animation equipment as the children played worked well as they were drawn to the activity through their natural curiosity and at a pace that matched their needs. All took part and worked well in partnerships.</p>	<p>Confident individuals able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate self-respect ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate secure values and beliefs ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate ambition ✓</p> <p>Relate to others ✓</p> <p>Manage themselves ✓</p> <p>Pursue a healthy and active lifestyle ✓</p> <p>Be self-aware ✓</p> <p>Develop and communicate their own beliefs and views of the world ✓</p> <p>Live as independently as they can ✓</p> <p>Assess risk and make informed decisions ✓</p> <p>Achieve success in different areas of activity ✓</p> <p>Effective contributors able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate an enterprising attitude ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate resilience ✓</p> <p>Demonstrate self-reliance ✓</p> <p>Communicate in different ways and in different settings ✓</p> <p>Work in partnership and in teams ✓</p> <p>Take the initiative and lead ✓</p> <p>Apply critical thinking in new contexts ✓</p> <p>Create and develop ✓</p> <p>Solve problems ✓</p>	

Meeting the Needs of Individual Learners



“ The teacher’s role is to create an environment where young people are willing and able to work collaboratively, where there are plenty of opportunities and stimulating contexts for learners to work with others, where they feel safe to share their emerging ideas and understanding.”

The Journey to Excellence – collaborative learning, HMIE 2007



As educators we continually endeavour to deliver effective strategies and a classroom ambiance where all pupils (a group of highly individual young people with differing learning agendas) choose to opt in and actively engage with their learning.

How can moving image education play a role in establishing and sustaining such an environment?

To answer this question, let us consider two major determining factors:

- Collaborative Learning
- Context for Learning

Examination of the theory and principles behind these key factors justifies the use of moving image contexts and the positive attributes that collaborative approaches can afford learner needs.

“The children are now more able to work together as a team. They make sure that everyone is involved and praise each other on their achievements. The pride and ownership that they have for their film is overwhelming and has been commented on by staff and parents.”

Early Years Practitioner

Collaborative Learning

A collaborative approach requires pupils and educators to become a community of learners where all are stakeholders, with their contributions shaping and influencing the shared environment. The learners will develop a positive interdependence as they jointly strive to achieve shared goals, in doing so they will learn and refine many skills, attitudes and responsibilities. While these processes should involve co-operative group work, they must also provide opportunities for individuals to take responsibility for independent tasks that will ultimately contribute to the completion of the group’s shared goal. For example, while making *The Three Little Piggies*, one child with an interest in writing took on the role of researching and creating a list of resources needed to make a pig mask. The group then used the list to facilitate the construction of the four pig masks required for their film. The educator initially may feel that they have less control through the establishment of this autonomous community but through adopting the role of facilitator and co-learner (Laevers 2007) they will be able to contribute their opinions and views in group discussions but not impose them on the learner. Where factors may prevent the realisation of a group decision, the adult must support the children to deepen their understanding of these factors, seeking a solution or alternative approach. The educator becomes a skilful observer and listener so that they can fine-tune their responses to all the learners within the community. Their interactions with learners will be more subtle, less directorial but ultimately more instrumental in supporting the learner to interact, think and learn.

Communities of learners can ultimately extend beyond the classroom, to the inclusion of other school members, parents/families and people in the local and wider community, thus providing real-life interactions.

Contexts for Learning

The Journey to Excellence research summary – *Collaborative Learning* 2007, states that co-operative learning environments for pupils of all developmental ages work best when tasks are relevant and meaningful to learners. Fisher (2008) identifies that young children learn through active engagement with experiences using their existing knowledge and understanding to 'construct their view of the world'. She cites Wells (1986) to explain the powerful role of language and interaction with others to not only 'crack the language code' but to connect with and deepen one's understanding. Furthermore, Blenkin and Kelly (1996) explain that a child's ability to represent their thinking is influenced by 'internal factors' such as their 'existing competence in symbolising experiences' and preferred style of doing so but also extrinsic factors 'including, most importantly, the public mode of symbolising experiences in use in the society in which the child is living and learning'.

Today, most young children are very familiar with and enjoy the multi-modal experiences that modern society provides. Moving image education fulfils the requirements for a suitable context: providing a common interest, knowledge and skills base, relevant concrete experiences and a social context that will generate real opportunities for sharing ones ideas and skills to achieve an agreed goal.

"His ideas were taken on board and that counted for something. It really increased his confidence. It was a positive experience for him."

Parent of nursery child

The case study concentrates on a filmmaking experience for six nursery children and their early years practitioner. Within the group there were four children in their second nursery year, one child with English as a second language and a gender balance of two girls and four boys.

The group ranged from those that were highly confident in communicating their ideas and views in most situations to those who were less so, depending on the demands of a situation, their self-esteem and confidence levels.

This **case study** shows how the educators generated a climate that enabled and empowered all these young learners to actively join in and collaboratively author their own non-traditional version of a fairy tale.

As this was their first project the early years practitioner decided to use a well known and liked text so through consultation with the pupil it was decided to create their own version of *The Three Little Pigs*.



The children get into character

The experience required them to make collective democratic decisions, take on responsibilities and roles and think creatively to solve problems. The processes of resolving these required pupils to reach out from the nursery setting to establish dialogues with others in the school, at home and in their local community.

“The children set their own pace made lots of decisions and really took control of their learning.”

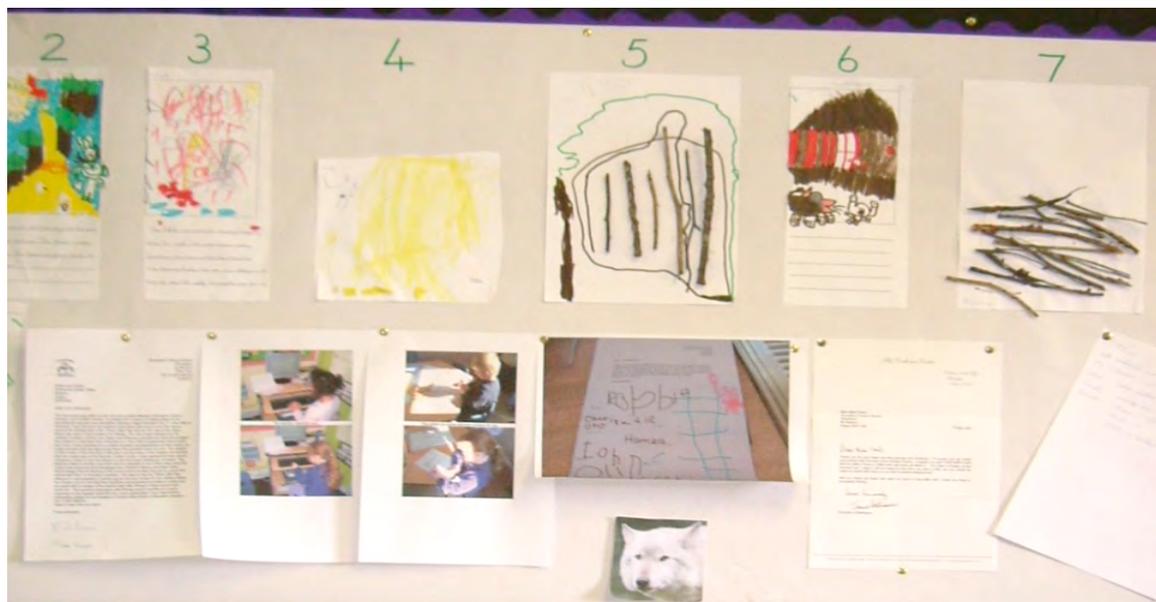
Head Teacher

We adopted a very fluid and responsive approach to the children’s needs. Specific roles were not defined at the offset so that we could accommodate the strategies of all the learners within the community. This afforded them time and space to opt in when comfortable with the demands of the situation, thus building their self-belief and confidence.

“Children who are normally reluctant to share their thoughts with their peers are now starting to find their voice, bringing forward some fantastic ideas and entering into extended conversations rather than one word answers.”

Early Years Practitioner

For example, we started with individual storyboards, but this was too onerous a task for some pupils and we needed to retain the initial enthusiasm and motivation of all pupils. The community of learners discussed these matters and decided to view all the pictures drawn so far, nominate ones to be used, arriving at the final decision through a vote. Each pupil then negotiated and agreed to represent one of the remaining shots using their preferred choice of media to do so.



The young learner's collaborative storyboard

Once the storyboard was on the wall we documented the experience with the children by adding photographs, letters, planning meeting minutes, pupil's inventions /ideas and the comments of the children and their parents. The children naturally, incorporated their parents into the community through their excited chatter about the project and requests for help with costumes, props and transport.

"The children share their storyboard wall with the other staff visitors and parents. Links with parents have grown as they helped with costumes and shared their children's enthusiasm."

Early Years Practitioner

Masks were designed for the characters so there was a great deal of interchanging of roles and by the end of the project all but one of the children had chosen to dress up and act a role. We shot far more film than required but everyone experienced being cameramen. This role particularly satisfied a child who used English as a second language, he has a passion for technology and this provided a medium for him to work with others and extend his spoken and other communication skills. By letting him choose and giving him time in this behind the camera role he familiarised himself with the expectations and role of an

actor, gaining enough confidence to accept an invitation to dress up and be filmed as a piggy during the final stages of the project.

"One child who has always sat back in all activities is now able to take a lead role and for the first time is saying, "I can do that" during a wide range of experiences."

Early Years Practitioner

At the start of a session we would discuss the shots to be filmed that day and then set up the props and camera. The children would spontaneously move from their free play to filming and acting – the adult offering open invitations if required or standing clear of the camera to allow for a bit of quiet exploration.

One child who was very articulate found it challenging to join in group drama and other activities, even when they succeeded, any attempt by the adult to acknowledge their presence would cause communications to shut down. Her mother told us that she often made up and directed dramas with her brothers and sisters at home. The child clearly loved the story and was fascinated by the characters so she entered the forum by taking a major role in designing and constructing the costumes. Through this role she supported peers in the planning and making of these. Once the costumes were made, they were not solely kept for MIE days but accessible to the pupils for every nursery session so that they could quietly be used in a corner or another room.

One day, a little piggy sidled through the doorway and up to the early years practitioner and started to chat. This was the start of more to come and the same child volunteered to be filmed as mummy pig, excitedly discussing what to wear and actions for the part. It was clear that a great deal of thought had gone into this and we had to get it right so we followed her lead and directions.

Bolstered by the success of this role the same child asserted that they would take on the role of the wolf – a part that no other child had shown interest in. On the morning when we filmed the pigs leaving home at our local miniature railway, the child asked to wear the wolf suit and confidently acted out the huffing and puffing scene despite being completely away from the comfort zone of the nursery. By the time we filmed the concluding scenes of the story this child had rehearsed the role, created dialogue and thought through and addressed safety implications. On the last day of filming, with great confidence and self-control she convincingly portrayed this role to create a dramatic final chapter to their tale.



Literacy and Communication



Literacy and Communication

Literacy and communication are the cohesive glue that holds all other learning together. Language and communication skills enable learners to engage with people in their daily lives and all aspects of their learning. Without these, individuals will fail to thrive and interact effectively with society at large. The paper *Literacy across the Curriculum* CfE 2008 that accompanies the new draft experiences and outcomes for Literacy and English emphasises the importance of this. It advocates extending literacy skills across other curricular areas in more overt ways. This provides opportunities for pupils to apply listening and talking, reading and writing skills while developing 'critical and creative thinking' and 'important personal, interpersonal and team working skills.'

Moving Image Education is an excellent medium for this. Because it uses a broad variety of textual tools and communication methods, all learners irrespective of their ability to use and create print based texts can access this. Furthermore, it harnesses and utilises the skills and understanding of film and television texts that many children have intuitively developed out with the school environment. The British Film Institute publication *Look Again* (2003) stresses the positive impact of working between all types of texts, resulting in an increased understanding of analysis, application and the intertextual links between all texts.

Appendix 4.

below shows the Literacy and English Draft Outcomes and Experiences mapped to experiences and activities incorporating a wide variety of texts and communication methods during the making of the *Three Little Piggies*.

For the purpose of this model, the reading and writing experiences and outcomes have been linked together as there is a strong attachment between the two. The more we understand through interpreting texts the better equipped we are to author them and vice versa.

Mapping a MIE Learning Journey to the Literacy and English Experience and Outcomes for Reading and Writing

Enjoyment and choice for reading and writing – within a motivating and challenging environment, developing an awareness of the relevance of texts in my life.

Experiences and Outcomes

I enjoy exploring and playing with patterns and sounds of language and can use what I learn. LIT 002A/L/W (reading and writing)

I enjoy exploring and choosing stories and other texts to watch, read or listen to and can share my likes and dislikes. LIT 001A/M (reading)

Activities:

- The children engaged with a variety of texts – moving image, fiction books, non fiction, newspapers, letters and their own storyboard and film text.
- The children’s comments were scribed and displayed so they could make links between the spoken and written texts.
- The children were encouraged to comment and express their preferences.
- Alongside the adult-introduced texts a large variety of texts were on offer for free choice. Children brought in their own texts.
- The children experienced and used the repeated patterns of phrases in the text.
- The children linked and shared their knowledge about patterns and sound of language to all texts in reading and writing activities.

Tools for reading – to help me use texts with increasingly complex or unfamiliar ideas, structures and vocabulary within and beyond my place of learning.

Tools for writing – using knowledge of technical aspects to help my writing communicate effectively within and beyond my place of learning

Experiences and Outcomes

I explore sounds, letters and words, discovering how they work together, and I can use what I learn to help me read and write.

LIT 010N/X (reading and writing)

As I play and learn, I enjoy exploring materials for writing and different ways of recording my experiences, feelings, ideas and information. LIT 012Y/AA (writing)

Activities:

- A wide variety of materials were always freely available for children to express their feelings and views through mark making. Experiences were also recorded / represented through drawings, role play, photographs and video. All of these enhancing the children's understanding of authoring narratives.
- Through reading and writing letters, naming texts, art work and using digital media, the children explored, applied and extended their understanding of sounds, letters and words.
- A wide variety of materials were always freely available for the children to express their feelings and views through mark making. Experiences were also recorded / represented through drawings, role play, photographs and video. All of these enhancing the children's understanding of authoring narratives.

Finding and using information when reading and using fiction and non-fiction texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and specialist vocabulary.

Experiences and Outcomes

I use signs, books or other texts to find useful or interesting information and I used this to plan, make choices or learn through things. LIT 011Q

Activities:

- While on location the children used signs and other environmental print to gain directions and information.
- A variety of books and other texts were provided to gain information about the story the children were creating in relation to characters, settings, colour, sounds and story.
- Reference books were used to plan and make masks and other resources.
- The computer was used to provide different images of characters.
- Sewing patterns were explored to gain an understanding of how costumes would be created.
- Through the editing process, the children were gaining information via the editing package and making informed choices.

Understanding, analysing and evaluating – investigating and/or appreciating fiction and non-fiction texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and specialist vocabulary for different purposes.

Experiences and Outcomes

To help me understand stories and other texts, I ask questions and link what I am learning with what I already know. LIT 006G/T

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways. LIT 003A/V

Activities:

- Throughout the entire process the children were using a wide variety of texts and linking them to real life experiences. This led to them broadening their understanding of the use of texts in daily life.
- Seeing themselves in texts such as newspapers and viewing their own film helped them see texts as a medium they could influence.
- The Film Detective framework facilitated the children to explore character, colour, camera, story, setting and sound and how they work together to convey a story. The children were encouraged to share their thoughts and pose questions through role play, exploration of different materials, art work and photographs. This built up vocabulary and understanding.

Organising and using information when writing – considering texts to help create short and extended texts for different purposes.

Experiences and Outcomes

Within real and imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in a way that communicates my message. LIT 007J/AC/AE/AG

Activities:

- Through real life experiences the children broadened their understanding of using writing to effectively convey messages. They collectively and individually wrote, letters, made lists and created invitations.
- The children responded to photographs and the experience and these were scribed and displayed so they developed an understanding of document and record their learning.
- Through both the above activities the children developed their understanding of the link between spoken and written word.
- The final film conveyed a message to a wider audience.
- Through acting out and role play based on the film text the children developed understanding of the ways to convey messages using words, gesture, expression, camera shots and colour.

Creating texts – applying the elements writers use to create short and extended texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and vocabulary

Experiences and Outcomes

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts and I use what I learnt to invent my own, sharing these with others in imaginative ways. LIT 008J/AH

Activities:

- Through role and imaginative play, creating storyboards, artwork, photographs and making their film the children developed their understanding of how to author fictional narratives.
- The Film Detective characters were used by the children to develop their understanding and awareness of how these key elements can influence texts and the messages they send.
- Watching and reflecting about clips they had filmed supported the children to modify or elaborate aspects of their text.

Mapping a MIE Learning Journey to the Literacy and English Experience and Outcomes for Listening and Talking

Enjoyment and choice – within a motivating and challenging environment, developing an awareness of the relevance of texts in my life.

Experiences and Outcomes

I enjoy exploring and choosing stories and other texts to watch, read, listen to and share my likes and dislikes. LIT 001A/M

I enjoy exploring and playing with the patterns and sounds of language and can use what I learn. LIT 002A/L/W

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways. LIT 003A/V

Activities:

- The children enjoyed listening to and watching a variety of moving image texts and were able to talk about their preferences.
- They also made choices about other texts and read / listened to a number of print texts of the original story to discover that versions of the story can differ.
- Children used interactive computer software to experience the story and sequence the events in the Three Little Pigs.
- Children also represented their thoughts through their roleplay based on the texts and a variety of art media.

Tools for listening and talking – to help me when interacting or presenting within and beyond my place of learning

Experiences and Outcomes

As I listen and talk in different situations, I am learning to take turns and am developing my awareness of when to talk and listen. LIT 004B/C

Activities:

- In adult instigated discussions the children, observed used and modelled good listening and talking skills.
- In free play situations the children used their communication skills to plan, share ideas and negotiate and chat.
- While listening to texts and responding to them the children focused on the soundtrack and then hypothesised about what they had heard.
- During the planning and creation of props and problem solving situations the children had to share their views and listen to and respond to those of others.
- During the filming process the children developed an awareness of how these skills are used for dramatic performance.

Finding and using information- when listening to, watching and talking about texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and specialist vocabulary.

Experiences and Outcomes

I listen or watch for useful or interesting information and I use this to make choices or learn new things. LIT 005D

Activities:

- Children listened to information and interacted with a variety of media during the processes of watching texts, planning and making their film.
- Based on the information provided in these sessions they made choices about a wide variety of issues.
- Costumes and props
- Character roles
- Storyline and plot
- Settings and locations for the text
- Who could help us
- Where might we get resources

- Many new skills were being transferred so children had to listen to instructions about cameras, sound recording, editing and creating settings.
- During free play the children acted out the story. The children had to listen to each other and make choices as to roles and as to the direction and outcome of the narrative.

Understanding, analysing and evaluating – investigating and / or appreciating texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and specialist vocabulary for different purposes.

Experiences and Outcomes

To help me understand stories and other texts, I ask questions and link what I am learning with what I already know. LIT 006G/T

Activities:

- The children watched, listened and discussed a number of moving image texts. They used the Film Detective characters to explore character, colour, camera, story, setting and sound. Their responses were scribed by an adult or videoed.
- Through making, watching and editing their own film text the children asked questions and used and extended their current knowledge about texts and how they are constructed.
- The children compared a variety of texts relating to the same traditional story to highlight and discuss differences in the narrative.
- The children linked the filmmaking process to other moving image texts they watched at home.
- The children discussed their own text and linked it to others they had explored.
- During the experience the children reviewed photographs of the process and made comments that were scribed and displayed on the planning wall.

Creating texts – applying the elements others use to create different types of short and extended texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and vocabulary.

Experiences and Outcomes

Within real or imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in a way that communicates my message. LIT 007J/AC/AE/AG

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts and I use what I learn to invent my own, sharing these with others in imaginative ways. LIT 008J/AH

As I listen and take part in conversations and discussions I discover new words and phrases which I use to help me express my ideas, thoughts and feelings.

LIT 009K

Activities:

- During storyboarding and discussion about their film text the children talked about their feelings and ideas.
- During free flow play and adult assisted situations the story was acted out and the children used their voices, expression and gesture to share experiences and feelings.
- After voicing and acting out various scenarios the children decided which of these to use to communicate the message of their text.
- The children did learn new terminology such as tripod, editing and various camera shots. They used these appropriately within relevant activities to express their ideas.
- Language used while exploring and investigating a wide variety of media and emotions expanded the children's understanding and use of descriptive language.



Reading about our film premiere in local newspaper



Composing a letter



Listening and Talking

Exploring Text



Exploring Texts - Introduction



Most young children will have naturally built up some understanding of how moving image texts work through their home lives before they start nursery or school. These assets are often used in early years settings to successfully engage the learner through provision of games, puzzles, books and role play contexts – but how often do we watch and listen to film and moving image texts and discuss them just as we would with a book?

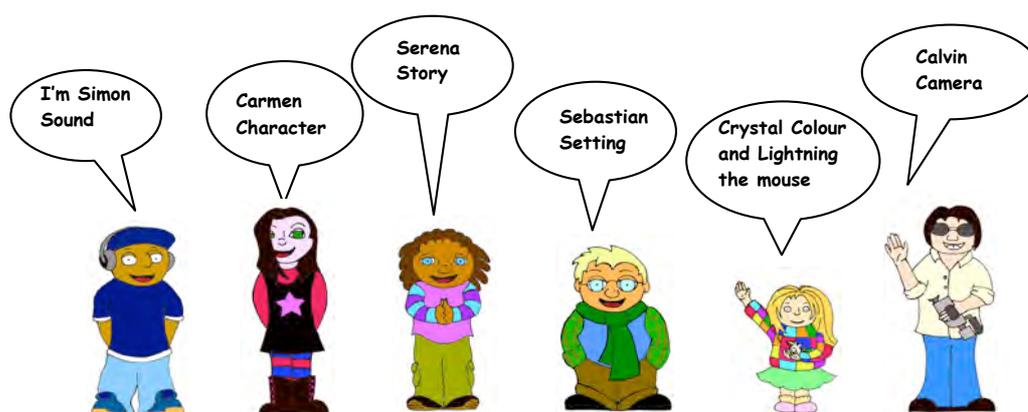
All of us have a 'wealth of experience in different texts, in all different modes that are worth bringing into the classroom, as well as honouring what the children bring'. Bearne (2006) passionately argues the case for 'explicit teaching about how all these different modes of media work' so that young people can understand and use them to convey effective messages. Utilising, sharing and extending the skills that educators and pupils already possess in relation to all texts will provide breadth, balance, progression and relevance to all literacy skills.

Bearne, also challenges practitioners to substantiate the assumptions they may make about the knowledge and skills that children bring to

the classroom stressing the importance of not letting their 'own lack of assurance' about using this medium prevent youngsters from exercising and developing this prowess. It is extremely worthwhile to devote time to research children's viewing interests and habits before deciding which texts best meet their needs. (See Other Resources – R1) In this multi-modal world young children interact with texts that are highly complex and do not necessarily follow a linear structure. "Many children who can read only at a purely literal level with print texts can and do infer at far more sophisticated levels" when watching moving image texts (Look Again, 2003), so educators need to ensure that literacy experiences provide opportunities to develop understanding of different textual structures but more importantly challenge and move forward the learners thinking.

The Film Detectives

Moving image has a grammar of its own using colour, character, camera, story, sound and setting to generate meaning. Scottish Screen have developed the Film Detective characters to assist pupils with their reading of texts. The characters below can be focussed on individually or relationships between them can be explored



The Film Detectives provide a visual, characterised and more personal method of introducing basic techniques of film analysis, which young children can empathise and connect with. Publications such as *Look Again*, *Starting Stories* (both Bfi) provide explanations and useful information about these basic techniques. They are sourced in the bibliography and other resources contains a brief introduction to these techniques. (R2) Resource sheet 3 (R3) provides advice and ideas to facilitate and extend discussions with young children.

All of the schools involved in the case studies below used the Film Detectives roles to assist pupils to read and make texts. The majority of children involved identified with and used the characters to good effect but we did find one or two groups who found it easier just to

work with the headings colour, camera, character, setting, sound and story.

Over time, it is beneficial for children to view a variety of different moving image texts: short films, popular culture, documentary, archive materials, animation, live action, texts that have a clear narrative structure and those of a more abstract nature. These should not be presented in any hierarchy, rather through exploration, analysis and discussions with peers and educators the children will reflect, start drawing conclusions and form their own points of views about what is a quality text.

Index of Case Studies

The following case studies demonstrate the use of a variety of moving image texts to utilize and extend children's decoding skills. Extension experiences that are situated in other key themes are cross-referenced at the conclusion of individual case studies.

- **Animation Texts**
 - Little Pig is Flying
 - Liesji
 - Charlie and Lola
 - Laughing Moon

- **Live Action Texts**
 - Dangle
 - Pirates of the Caribbean

- **Animation and Live Action Texts**
 - I Always Wanted a Dog
 - Teaching Aspects of Film Grammar

- **Non-fiction and Documentary Texts**
 - The News
 - National Library of Scotland - Scottish Screen Archive Materials

Animation Text – Little Pig is Flying (BFI Starting Stories DVD)

This film, although in Swedish is made by the Polish animator Alicja Jarworski. The English subtitles were not used so that the children could visually explore the use of gesture and facial expression to convey meaning. To start the activity we covered the television and



listened to the soundtrack only. Quickly the pupils identified farmyard sounds and established the setting. All were intrigued by and commented on the Swedish dialogue. A number of Polish children attend the school so a discussion sparked off about different languages and people travelling to different counties to live and work.

The film is about a little pig who desperately wants to fly, on her quest to do so she meets other animals who teach her new skills that help her escape from a wolf. But, finally after great persistence she does achieve her ambition to fly.



Predicting what happens next

The children were invited to be like Carmen Character and think about the characters and how they interact with each other. They sat in small discussion groups to watch the film that was stopped after Little Pig had met the first character, a mole who taught her how to dig. Each group was given a puppet of one of the subsequent film characters and asked to discuss what skill this creature might teach Little Pig. After a few minutes each group shared their thinking with the class and we watched the remainder of the film to see if their predictions were correct.

A general discussion followed-on from this where one pupil shared that he had noticed the repetition of phrases in Swedish and that by watching movement and expressive clues he had worked out the Swedish word for flying. The pupils were keen to experiment using body language and to work out a film dialogue in their own language so puppets or a set of character masks were left in each class for them to act out the film narrative, thus extending the experience.

Extending the Experience

Little Pig is keen to learn new things and realise her dreams, so the pupils thought and discussed with a partner what they would like to learn to do. They represented these through drawings and completing the sentence, "I dream about learning to" These were displayed on a wall of ambition in the classroom. Younger children could present these statements to camera.



Sequencing

A set of stills of the settings in the film were given to groups of children to discuss and sequence in the correct order, or they could be placed in another order to explore what might happen if Little Pig met certain characters earlier in the story.

The film was viewed again to explore the relationships between setting, character and story. Sebastian Setting, Carmen Character and Serena Story were used as a framework to analyse this. For example: at the pond Little Pig meets a frog who teaches her how to swim.

In pairs or groups the children were asked to think about whom little pig might meet next and what that character might teach her. Little Pig now met and learnt many new skills from a dog, a Storm Trooper, a giant and a Gruffalo. The younger pupils made puppets of these characters and acted out the new scenarios they created. Other classes planned short animations around these new characters and storylines (p. 142)

Animation Text – Liesje (<https://www.revolver.nl/>)

This short film was viewed by a group of children from Nursery to Primary 3 pupils as part of selection of shorts shown at the Discovery Film Festival. These pupils returned to the text for inspiration when solving a problem in relation to their own film production. It was also used in settings with pupils who had not attended the Discovery Film Festival.

Liesje has been included because it has caused debate regarding the suitability of some texts for young children. It can be viewed at here (<https://www.revolver.nl/> select films, animation and *Liesje*). Watch the film and then read on.

When a class of Primary 1 and 2 pupils viewed the film all eyes were 'glued' to the screen and there was complete silence in the room. At its conclusion the children split up into small groups to share their thoughts before voicing them in a larger class circle situation. During these preliminary discussions some children talked animatedly while others needed thinking time to reflect and gather their thoughts. As the class drew together, the discussion flowed. The quiet thinkers gained confidence as they listened to others and soon everyone was eagerly sharing their opinions. Contributions ranged from environmental issues, right and wrong doing, life and death and taking action against the negative actions of others. The children offered questions such as; "If plants need light to live then do they die at night time?" this sparked-off debate and could have been the impetus for an interesting science project. Some had noticed and explained the patterns of colour and music used to tell the story and how this had evoked differing but strong emotions within themselves. This was real discussion and the pupils sustained it for over an hour, every child contributed, using phrases and sentences to animatedly share their opinions and emotions. Through this process they supported each other to deepen their understanding of the text and the issues it raised for them.



A great deal of the debate during this session addressed citizenship issues. In addition, the film enabled these young children to experience and explore a variety of powerful emotions in a safe and secure environment. Young children must be provided with experiences such as these so they are equipped with attributes that enable them to cope with challenging situations when they arise in real life.

Animation Text – Charlie and Lola (BBC DVD)

The children listened to the book *But excuse ME THAT is my book* by Lauren Child. Next, they watched the animation of the same text to compare the two texts to look for similarities and differences. The children's comments could be recorded on the Film Detective grid (see Resource box FD5) and referred back to as the discussion develops and deepens. Once they had investigated the two texts they were asked which they felt told the story best, and encouraged to explain their decision.

Possible Extension Activities

- Link the title page of the book to the front cover of the DVD case and the title sequence on the DVD. Explore the blurb on the back cover of the book and the DVD cover. What is the same? What is different? Link these to the end of the animation and introduce the concept and word credits by posing the question, "I wonder what that writing is all about?"
- Compare other book texts that have been made into films. There are DVDs of the stage version of *The Gruffalo* and animations of the Hairy Maclary Books. Television series have been created from the *Harry and the Bucketful of Dinosaurs*, *Preston Pig* and *Thomas the Tank Engine*.
- Compare books that have been made about children's television programmes and films, are they different from the ones in bullet point 1. *Bob the Builder*, *Dr Who*, *In the Night Garden*, *Balamory*.
- Choose a book text that all the children are familiar with and talk about how this might translate into an animated or live action text. Which illustrations in the book might benefit from adding in movement or facial expression? What kinds of movement? Invite the children to demonstrate these. What sounds and types of music could they add to help tell the story? The children could act this out and video their performance.

Animation Text – Laughing Moon (Starting Stories, BFI)

This short film is abstract in nature without a clear narrative structure. It is like a filmic poem, with sounds and shapes have been linked to convey an interesting and amusing message. It is great for creative and imaginative thinking.

Start the activity by listening to the soundtrack only and invite the children to identify what they are hearing and discuss or draw what they think is happening. It will be a puzzle to them but there are many obvious sounds on the track: a guitar, chicken, dog, motorbike so all the children should be able to identify some of these. Next watch the film and let the children respond to the text. During a second viewing, pause the DVD and take a closer look at how the shapes have fitted together to make the images. It is interesting in the example below that one child has quickly linked this experience to more abstract thinking when asked to consider story.

Laughing Moon

Simon Sound

- "Guitar" (S)
- "ball bouncing" (A)
- "brum brum"
- "pulling the heavy ball" (R)
- "Chicken noises" (S)
- "Growling" (W)
- "Stomping" (W)
- "Kicking noise" (M)
- "motor bike" (M)
- "Angel music" (S)
- "boing" (R)

Carmen Character

- Shapes, triangles mainly (R)
- "Moon laughing" (A)
- "people" (A)
- "Chicken" (M)
- "Dinosaur" (W)
- "Car" (R)
- "Bird" (S)
- "Guitar player" (S)

Crystal Colour and Lighting

- "Sun in the sky made me feel happy" (R)
- "It was bright" (R)

Serena Story

- "Your imagination" (S)
- "A moon doing different things" (W)
- "Turning into lots of different things" (W)

Sebastian Setting

- "White screen" (A)
- "so you could see the black triangles" (S)
- "There was nothing else to look at so we had to watch the black triangles" (R)

Calvin Camera

Invite the children to think about how the film was made and explore this.

Draw the children's attention to the titles and credits, they are in Japanese.



Extension Activity

Provide a variety of cut-out shapes similar to those on the film. This can be done small scale, or use larger shapes on an area of floor or wall. Encourage the children to manipulate the shapes to create representations and photograph these.

Invite the children to think of appropriate sounds that represent the shape pictures they have created. How might they make these sounds? It might be useful to provide a variety of instruments and other items to experiment with. Make the sounds and record them.

Use Windows Movie Maker, Windows Photo Story or Imovie to edit these together.

You could be really ambitious and animate the shapes moving.

Live Action Text – *Dangle* (Starting Stories, BFI)

Synopsis A man is out walking when he comes upon a lavish red rope hanging out of the sky. After consideration he tugs the rope with great trepidation to see what will happen. There are some interesting aerial shots in this film.

One group of pupils watched the entire film and used the Film Detective grid to record their comments as they discussed the story. The practitioner drew their attention to the emotions of the character before and after pulling the rope, inviting the pupils to share how they might be feeling in this situation. During a discussion about camera shots the film was watched again and paused at several points and the children were invited to comment on where the camera had to be placed to achieve certain shots and why this shot may have been chosen.

Extending the Experience

- In groups, pupils were asked to consider what else might have happened when the rope was pulled? They then worked collaboratively to create a three part storyboard about this (Resource box SB1). A dangling rope could be set up or held by an adult, and children could act out and photograph their story. Focus on what happens and how to convey the emotions the person feels before and after pulling the rope, using body language, expression and words.
- Pupils could be given real or dummy cameras (Other Resources FD 21) to look at different camera angles and shots.



Live Action and Animation Text – *I Always Wanted a Dog*, (It's a Wrap! Moving Image Education 2005)

Synopsis Chloe wants a dog but her dad says no. After some fantastic adventures, will her wish come true?

This film was made by a group of primary 4/7 pupils as part of the Brechin Cluster MIE project in Angus for P6 – S2 pupils. Children really do enjoy watching films made by other children and such texts very naturally open up the possibility to the viewers that they could become filmmakers as well.

Before starting production on their version of the Three Little Pigs a nursery setting used this film and the Film Detectives to introduce the whole concept of moving image education to the children.

After watching the titles, the DVD was paused and the children were invited to suggest where they thought the film was set and provide sound and visual clues to back this up.

The film was watched a number of times and their comments were added to the Film Detective headings during each viewing. Just like books we would recommend watching and discussing texts more than once to provide opportunities for the children to revisit and deepen their thinking.

In this instance the children then used the same framework to analyse and make their own version of the *Three Little Pigs*.

Extending the Experience

Discuss the use of animation for some of the characters by asking, "It's interesting that they didn't use a real actor to be Chloe, I wonder why they did that?"

The film could be used to explore the role of the police in a very positive way and how the community pulled together to find Chloe. Issues of being safe out and about when not accompanied by an adult.

The introductory music plays a major role in placing the setting in Scotland. Many films do this, such as *Geri's Game* (Pixar Short Films Collection, Volume 1) which has a French feel to it. Collect together some recordings of other introductory soundtracks that conjure up specific themes. Use Simon Sound to focus the children to listen, recognise and express their thoughts about music? Other themes might be emotions, popular TV programmes and films, different types of genres, scary, adventure, fairytale, comedy. Use *Crystal Colour* and

Lightning and invite the children to suggest which colours are evoked by the music. If the children are unsure of their colours, or you wish to extend their repertoire of colours, provide a selection of coloured card or materials for this activity.

Live Action and Animation Texts Teaching Aspects of Film

Grammar

The aim of this project was to explore the potential of young children to develop their cineliteracy skills in meaningful contexts, through investigating the relationships between, props, colour, lighting and sound to create a specific setting.

I liked watching the films. I liked the one where the blue butterfly came out. I hadn't seen it before. It was all dark and spooky.

Primary 1 pupil

Session 1 As a class, the pupils revisited a text that they were all very familiar with: *Baboon on the Moon (Starting Stories 1, BFI)* and we focussed on how props have all been carefully planned to play a function in conveying the story. We watched the film and discussed what would happen if certain props were missing. Would the story be able to progress along the same line or would it have to stop or change.

Session 2 The whole class watched the section of the film where Baboon is in his bedroom. We froze the frame (paused the DVD) to view the bedroom in detail, introduced Simon Setting and asked the children to be detectives and look for clues that provide information about Baboon's former life and his preferences. We compiled a long list of these and emphasised that a simple choice of rug or picture on the wall could provide considerable information about the inhabitant of a setting. Next each child was asked to think about and draw a picture of their own bedrooms detailing the items in them that provide clues about the inhabitant. These pictures were then shared and discussed as a class.



Drawing of a child's bedroom

Session 3 Using *Crystal Colour* and *Lightning* and Simon Sound the children were shown a selection of bedrooms clips from a variety of children's films. We used cosy bright bedrooms, poverty stricken ones, and austere dark and spooky ones. Again the children donned the role of Film Detectives and thought about how colour, lighting and sounds have been used to create a specific atmosphere.

The class was then split into small groups and each group was assigned a bedroom type: a mermaid's bedroom, a football fans' bedroom, a witch's bedroom, a Power Ranger's bedroom. They then discussed and planned this setting and recorded their ideas on a planning sheet.

Session 4 The children were provided with a small cardboard box with one side cut-off and a wide variety of resources to choose from to make their settings. Adult support was given along the way to encourage them to follow their original plan. Inevitably, some changes had to be made as they actively put their plans into action but again the educators facilitated the children to discuss these and agree on alternatives.

On completion the settings were then used by the pupils to explore camera and sound to create film montages, information on this can be found in *Making Film Texts (Resource Box PS1)*.



The bedroom of a girl who likes horses

I liked making the collar for the Scooby Doo bedroom. I liked looking at all the different bedrooms. I like the ghost bedroom it's very nice.

Primary one pupil

For further ideas about using live action film texts please see Other Resources - Live Action Texts – *The Pirates of the Caribbean*.

Non-Fiction and Documentary Texts – The News

This topic arose from a class discussion where pupils shared the television programmes that they liked to watch. News and game shows were firm favourites.



A Ghost's Bedroom



Children watching the news

The class watched previously recorded news programmes and discussed the roles in front of camera. Books about making television programmes were provided and they researched roles behind the camera and the equipment required. STV provided a short DVD that showed both these roles and the processes involved from a story breaking to it being part of a news broadcast.

Visual messages are very important in news broadcasting so we explored these further using the following activities:

- A number of title pages for news, weather, sports and factual programmes were shown to the children with the volume muted. The children quickly identified them all but were then

asked to explain the visual clues that sent that message. With relative ease they linked and explained these symbolic representations to the programme subject matter.

- In groups the children were given two example posters of an event to view. One poster was a quality example while the other lacked clarity and contained poor visuals. In this instance the event was a boating holiday on Loch Ness. The visually poor poster was examined first followed by the quality version. Pupils were provided with two Film Detective grids (Resource Box FD 14) to record their thoughts about setting, story and character for each poster. An adult recorded their responses in the grid so that the pupils could concentrate on identifying visual clues to back up their points.

 <p>Where?</p> <p>In the sea The arrows are pointing where the boat is going Loch Ness Scotland Scotland map Scottish flag Dots mark where places are Kitchen on the boat</p> <p>Sebastian Setting</p>	 <p>What?</p> <p>Driving the boat About a boat Looking for something Waiting for the gate to open and go through Went to Loch Ness to go on an adventure to find the Loch Ness monster.</p> <p>Serena Story</p>
 <p>Who?</p> <p>Mrs. Flood</p> <p>Carmen Character</p>	 <p>Think about how the pictures helped share the message.</p> <p>Shown us where they were. Shown us they were travelling in Scotland. Used pictures to see everything that was going on. Doesn't make sense when you only see just little bits of a picture. Pictures are light and have colour. Medium shot in the kitchen tells us that there is a lot of food so it is a long stay on the boat. Long shot tells us that it has been taken on a boat</p> <p>Calvin Camera</p>

- The final box on the grid was of a comparative nature where they were asked to reflect on how the pictures in each poster had helped convey the message. To conclude the activity the groups feedback their findings to the class. The general view was that careful choice of visuals sends a clear message that can be interpreted quickly by the viewer.
- The pupils then split into different news teams and used a variety of visuals to design and make a title page for their news team.

- The pupils were asked to help Calvin Camera and viewed still pictures from news programmes and from newspapers to search for visual clues to identify the story behind the picture. They were also invited to share their views on why certain types of shot were used for certain reports.
- In preparation for filming their news report they viewed news reports and looked at the different types of shot used to reading the news and record interviews.

Non-Fiction and Documentary Texts – Archive Materials

The National Library of Scotland Scottish Screen Archive includes an amazing range and quantity of materials documenting Scotland's heritage over the last century. The archive has an online catalogue (<http://ssa.nls.uk/>) that provides brief written descriptors and some video clips of film material under a variety of headings: working life, family life, entertainment, transport, education, sport and war. The archive does have a dedicated Education and Outreach Officer, Ruth Washbrook who can be contacted by email sseducation@nls.uk

Over the course of the project the archive has sourced and provided a number of short films, clips and to support children's learning in the early years. Whenever we have used archive material it has been met with fascination, generated great interest from the pupils and provoked many questions.

Exploring the more distant past is always a challenge with young children, as concrete resources are hard to source. However, film footage of events in the past can provide just such a medium to aid children to make connections and broaden their understanding. These short films are great for involving families in their children's education as grandparents and parents will remember just when the world was like that!

Furthermore, Scottish Screen are about to embark on a project that will make these resources even more accessible to schools over the next few years.

Here are some examples of how we used archive material



A trip to the Caledonian Railway

In one nursery setting the challenge was to finding an appropriate text to get all the children discussing and decoding film texts. We had tried some of the excellent BFI materials but without success. Trains came up as a topic of interests and the archive provided us with *Farewell to Steam*, a film about the last steam trains to travel in the Aberdeenshire area. One child who had previously contributed very little to our film discussion sessions opted in and contributed fully the conversation. He ably shared his knowledge about trains but more importantly demonstrated that he could use all aspects of film grammar to make sense of the text. He also demonstrated a conversational prowess that had previously not been observed. The scenes of the abandoned stations provoked a deep emotional response from him and several searching questions. After that morning, this child who had generally chosen to withdraw from discussion and avoided speaking to adults took a great leap forward in his confidence and started engaging with others. After viewing the text he searched through books about trains and requested that we visit the local Caledonian Railway to see if we could find the trains in the film. He was clearly worried about them! The trip was arranged and we used the nursery camera to document the experience.



Children engaged with archive footage

- While investigating the Victorian Era with a Primary 1-4 class we watched the clip, *Audley Road School 1904*, (BFI Starting Stories). The Scottish Screen Archive provided a number of still images of camera and projection equipment from that era. The children were able to make not only comparisons about school days, but compare cameras of the past with those of today and the use of camera shots, colour and sound. Later the camera images and those of other Victorian artefacts were placed on a timeline.
- As part of a project relating to news programmes a number of short clips were selected to demonstrate to children how news programmes were presented and filmed in the past.
- Advertising is fascinating, and a topic that is very much in the news today. The archive does have a number of tapes that include advertising from the past; these could be viewed and compared with advertising and merchandising today. It could raise questions such as, *why are products advertised?* Pupils could be presented with a number of equivalent brand and non-

brand items and test them to see if there is any real difference other than packaging.

- Yearly events can be explored through archive material, at harvest time we used film of horse-drawn combine harvesters and harvesting by hand to compare them with what we see in the fields today. The children were intrigued by these images, and one child made connections and shared that her granddad had talked about using horses to pull a plough.

Parents as Partners



“Parents, carers and families are by far the most important influences on children’s lives. Parents who take on a supportive role in their children’s learning make a difference in improving achievement and behaviour. Their support can play a vital role at all stages of education.”

Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2007

The interactions that children have with other people have a significant impact on their learning. Children only spend 15% of their time in school and 85% of the language they will use as an adult is in place by their fifth birthday, Burn (2007). Educators need to link into and augment the learning environment that has been in existence within the home and community long before the young child arrives at nursery or school. Fisher (2008) urges educators to appreciate the strategies that parents adopt to make them successful educators and highlights the following key elements that make up this unique learning environment.

- Most parents love and care about their children and have a genuine interest in their actions, ideas and development, developing strong familial bonds.
- Parents operate in the real world, surrounded by visual, aural and tactile stimuli that fascinate children and cause them to be curious and questioning.
- Usually parents give children time to learn; time to pose meaningful questions and to come up with their own theories and time to experiment and try things out.
- Very often parents are in a one-to-one situation with their child and they can interact more frequently with their child. In the home children are more able to talk about a diverse range of topics.
- Parents usually respond to their child’s learning rather than initiate it. A child will seek answers, help or a play companion and parents can provide what is sought.

Fisher, (2008) *Starting from the Child*

The Digital Beginnings report, 2005, provided evidence that parents of young children are ‘generally very positive about the role of media in their children’s social, emotional and linguistic development’ and that they support this interest through ‘provision of resources and interactions with’ their children. These interactions are ‘generally active and promote play, speaking and listening and reading’. Parents also believed that ‘media education should be included in the school curriculum’ so that children are prepared for ‘the demands of the new technological age’.

Therefore it was imperative that during the project we involved parents and carers by:

- seeking information and parental views about media and their child's interactions with it
- sharing information about the project and its aims
- creating a shared understanding of how we can all (parents, carers, educators and children) use moving image education to support learners

This key theme offers useful guidelines and resources to initiate and sustain a quality dialogue with the most significant adults in young children's lives and a case study of one such initiative.

Parents as Partners – Creating a shared understanding of how we can all (parents, carers, educators and children) use Moving Image Education to support learning.

The following case study provides an example of how staff, parents and children shared their views and collaborated to set up a media bag library for families in the centre. All the resources referred to in the case study can be found in the Resource Box.

The staff placed a bid for funding for library resources with a view to it being set up during the next educational year.

The children and families settled in at the start of the new session, parental interviews provided a great time for staff to share with parents their hopes for this, and other new resources that would be available over the coming year.

Parents were sent an explanatory letter and were invited to complete a questionnaire to provide information about their child's viewing habits and interests. (Resource Box PS4 and PS5) A cross section of the pupils were interviewed about their viewing preferences and their responses recorded on a concept map (PS3). About a third of the parents returned completed questionnaires and this provided information on the learning they believed that television and film experiences provided for their child, the types of media that their children enjoyed watching and if they wished to have more information about using these materials.

Funding was now approved so over the next few months DVDs, books, toys and storage bags were sourced and bought. A list of the resources used in this instance can be found in the Resource Box PS8. Information leaflets on how to use the bags were written (Resource Box PS6) and parents were invited to volunteer to assist in running the library. Copyright issues were researched and it was decided that each parent using the library should sign a contract (Resource Box PS7) agreeing to use the resources with their children as stated for educational purposes only.

To launch the *Media Bag Library* a day of short work shops were provided for parents, carers and practitioners where a Scottish Screen Lead Practitioner demonstrated how these materials can be used to support young children literacy, communication and play skills. Parents responded positively to this input. One commented that it was good to be hearing something positive and supportive about media and television as many parents worry about it.

To date the media bag library has consistently been used by a small but growing number of families.

Here are some useful suggestions for setting up and running a library:

- Always consult parents' views and invite them to be involved. Remember the pressures of modern family life and understand that many parents may genuinely be busy.
- Research the contents of the media bags seeking the views of those that are going to use them – parents and children.
- Try and keep the timescale from planning to opening your library short, otherwise interest may wane.
- Think carefully about how you are going to run the library. Will it be the responsibility of staff, parents or joint?
- Think carefully about where the library will be sited. It must be easily accessible for parents and children – in the entrance hallway, class or on a mobile trolley.
- Think about how the staff will promote the library to families. It is important that you show families that you value these resources and the learning opportunities they provide. If the library is in the class then it is very easy for staff to promote some of the bags by using them with the children at group times, or in the story corner. In some settings it is the early years staff that help the children change and select library materials on a weekly basis. It can be beneficial to even do this initially for short period to establish use of the library.
- Add new titles and resources regularly and share the arrival of these with families.
- Have events throughout the year that promote moving image, for example a new media bag could be sent home on a rota basis to all families.
- Provide notebooks in each media bag so that parents and children can feedback on their use of them.
- If funding is an issue start small with a few bags run on a rota basis so that all families can use them over time.

In Partnership with the Local and Wider Community

Many of the projects involved their local community. Letters were written to seek information, gain permission to film on location, invite people to take part in films and to help resource costumes and props. For *Journey to the Past* the children emailed all educational establishments in Angus and The Angus Folk Museum to assist with costumes and props, this led to the pupils being invited to the Folk Museum to show their film. In *The Magic Staircase* letters were written to ask Santa Claus to provide a cameo role in their film and they collaborated with senior high school music pupils to create their films



soundtrack. In some settings children made links with the wider community. Three of the schools visited The Discovery Film Festival at Dundee Contemporary Arts, and one school contacted STV for information about the news and emailed Noel Edmunds about their *Deal or No Deal* show.

All of the schools invited parents and people from the local community to premieres and open days where their films were viewed. Some of these events were enterprise projects where the children all played a role in planning and organising these.



Parents as Partners – Seeking information, parental views and help

- Once parents are aware of your project, its aims and their role within it, set up a comments box. Provide blank paper speech bubbles and encourage parents to write their views and information about what their child says and does at home in relation to the project. These can be used to augment displays, record keeping and feedback into future planning.

- At the start of a project gain information from parents and their views by sending out short questionnaires. At the conclusion of projects feedback can be sought in the same way. Always invite and provide a contact for parents to discuss any questions or concerns they may have.
- When previewing children's films and work at open days and other events provide comment books and invite and encourage parents and children to use them.
- During the projects encourage the children to involve their parents. While making *Journey to the Past* the children needed help with props and costumes so they wrote a newsletter that went out to all parents. In other schools, children helped staff compose letters asking for help and parents came in to help with artwork, costumes and transport to locations. Parents were invited to contribute to the official evaluation of the project and a number of press articles. At the culmination of a number of projects the children designed invitations, flyers and posters to publicise the premiers of their films. Not only did these provided relevant and rich learning experiences for the children but all resulted in an increased response from parents.



Mrs S. Steel
Head Teacher
Aberlemno Primary School
Aberlemno
Forfar
DD8 3PE

Tel: 01307 830220
Fax: 01307 830342

Dear Parents

We are going to make a Victorian film.

Can we borrow some Victorian clothes

to help us. We need Victorian props

for the classroom setting.

Do you have any of these

props for the film

clothes

Slates

we need black

slate pencils

and white

cane

clothes

an old school desk

Please phone Aberlemno school if you can help.

Thank you. From P1/4

Newsletter to parents



Parents as Partners – Sharing Information About a Project

In most nursery settings planning for weekly or longer term contexts should be prominently displayed for parents and carers. Children, parents and carers are generally met by staff and through informal chat information can be sought and shared.

To ensure that all parents receive information send out initial and regular letters and leaflets about your project. Include your aims, synopses of the short films the children will watch, information about the Film Detectives and how parents can support their child during the project.

Some schools may have their own website where you can post information.

Invite parents to attend an information or open afternoon, day or evening.

Preview the children's films at an event. These events are a celebration of the children's achievements but also present a valuable opportunity to share with parents the learning opportunities that happen during moving image education experiences.

At the completion of making *The Magic Staircase* the school previewed the children's film, inviting parents, friends for the local community, people who had assisted in making the film and staff from the education authority. Once the film was viewed, the children received awards and they gave thank you gifts to those that had helped make the film. Tea was provided for the visitors, after which they could look around other displays about moving image projects that the whole school had been involved in. The pupils manned the displays and chatted to guests about their work.



Play



6:22:28

PLAY

Why is play important?

Play is re-enactment of personal and other narratives enabling individuals to experience and experiment with situations, personae and props in a safe and secure environment. It enables us to 'create and mull over' matters providing 'lots of possible strategies and scenarios in story form before taking action' (Whitehead, 1996). Play offers a forum where children can holistically apply, experiment with and extend their current experiences, skills and knowledge. Anything is possible as we sample and remix experiences and thoughts transporting us to imaginary realms. Bodrova & Leong (2003) highlight the importance of play because it can 'affect children's motivation, facilitate cognitive decentering, advance the development of mental representations and foster the development of deliberate behaviours'. Therefore it is vital to afford time to enable children to wallow in these experiences, establishing sound foundations for future learning.

Why use moving image texts to support play?

The starting point for any learning is the learner; what they already know and believe; what they can do and have experienced to date; what interests and excites them. Social interaction and cultural experiences play important roles as well. Television and film texts play a central role in the play culture of many young children, so acknowledgment and development of such play contexts will foster important social, emotional and communication skills that are vital for life and more formal aspects learning. Furthermore, through investigating the structures of these narratives children are developing their imaginative skills by:

- being different characters
- interacting with other characters
- exploring how these relationships impacts on the storyline and what can happen next.

Recognising and valuing the diversity of texts encountered in the home environment can create meaningful dialogues with parents and opportunities to help them support their child's literacy and social communication skills.

“It created good links with home. The children were going home and talking about the play context. This was evident by the amount of things that the pupils brought into the classroom from home; toys and books, drawings of maps, models. We created a special place to keep these next to the play area. At the parents evening, parents wanted to know more and it gave us common ground for discussion.”

Class Teacher, P2 – play context based on Pirates of the Caribbean

The case studies offered demonstrate how moving image texts can be used to generate and facilitate play experiences with young children. Extension experiences that are situated in other key themes are cross-referenced at the conclusion of individual case studies.

Co-constructed Play Contexts:

Deal or No Deal

Primary One and the Four Puppets

Pirates of the Caribbean

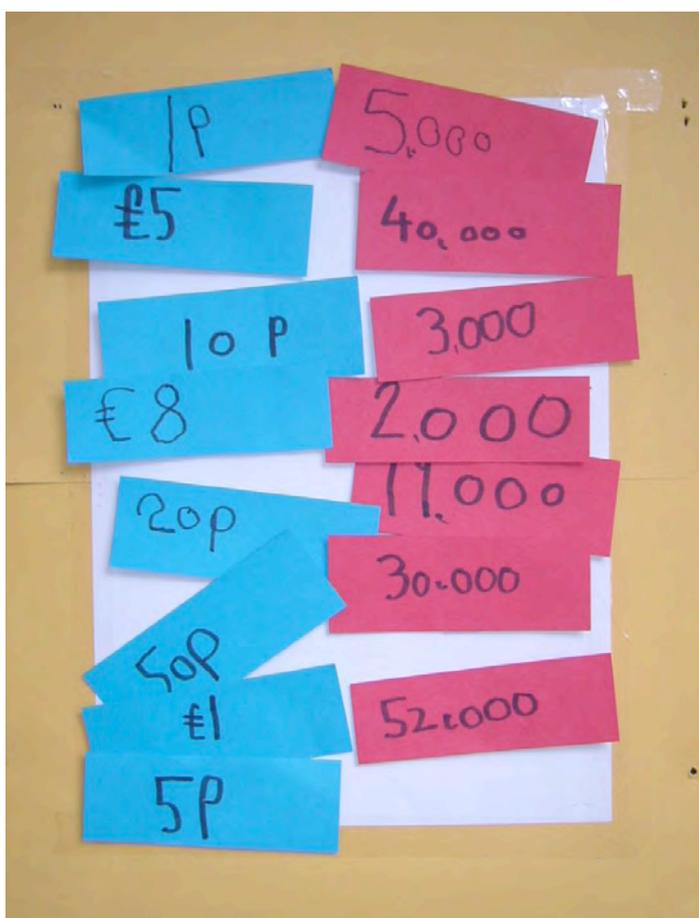
The first three case studies aimed to:

- investigate children’s viewing interests
- select from those interests a popular culture text that was of prime interest to all the children
- support the children to actively engage in planning and creating a play context based on that text

Spontaneous Play

Co-constructed Play Experiences - *Deal or No Deal*

The pupils watched the *Deal or No Deal* game show, looked at books about making television programmes and discussed both the props and roles required to recreate the show. Through their research and discussions they developed a plan of all the props required to play the game and made choices and decisions about how to make these.



Industriously, they collected boxes of the same size, painted them red and created number labels from 1 -15 for their version of the show. Next a discussion about quantities of money took place – what would be the largest and smallest sum of prize money and what should be the amounts in the other boxes? With teacher support they researched and practiced how to write and read these amounts. Once all the props were in place the children rehearsed the show during free-play sessions negotiating and familiarising themselves with the different roles of presenter, contestants and audience. During the game the audience practiced cheering when a small amount of money was revealed and groaning with despair when a top prize was revealed. At the end of the game when the winning amount is revealed the opposite responses are required but the children quickly learned to recognise the colour coding of the cards along with the written amounts of money to respond appropriately.

Extending the Experience

The children did make a replica camera out of boxes which they used to film the show during their pretend play but they were keen to film a real version of their show. Two cameras were set up, one a long shot of the whole studio and the other a close up of the contestant and presenter. Filming was about to start when someone pointed out that

the banker was only heard via the telephone on the real programme. After a great deal of thinking one child suggested that the banker could sit out of shot, write his monetary offer to the contestant on a whiteboard and hold it aloft so the presenter could read it.

Filming started in earnest only to be interrupted by a knock on the door so another child suggested that we make a sign to put on the door. More discussion about the wording of the sign took place, two children wrote the sign and then stuck it on the door.

The next week the children watched both versions of the show and discussed the merits of using a long shot or close up to convey this type of entertainment. Here are some of their comments.

Close-Up

- We can only see the presenter and the phone and one of the contestants
- You can't see what is on the big board with all the money on it
- You can see the presenter and her eyes, lips and her face
- You can't see the audience

Long Shot

- You can see everything, all the people and the board with the numbers
- You can see the audience and the contestants
- Their faces are very small and you can't see the detail

The children then compared their versions of the show with the actual television show and noticed that different kinds of camera shot were used throughout the show. They agreed that for their next film project they would consider using different types of shots.

Co-constructed Play Experiences – Primary One and the Four Puppets

In the next two case studies the educators use a technique similar to *Storyline* (www.storyline-scotland.com) where incidents occur in the classroom to generate learning through role play and the children become instrumental characters within the narrative.

The children talked about and researched their favourite television and film characters and each child made a paper cut out puppet of that character. The educator placed a table on its side to act as a puppet theatre. Next the children considered the settings that their character lived in and drew backdrops on large sheets of paper. These were pinned up behind the puppet theatre and the children acted out storylines using their puppets. To extend the experience the children drew

three part stories about their characters, focussing on what happened at the beginning, middle and end.



Drawing a three part story

The puppet theatre became a very popular play area but soon the children were dissatisfied with its limitations. They voiced their concerns during a class discussion and it quickly became apparent that they wanted a tall theatre that would conceal the puppeteers completely, and curtains for the stage. Suggestions about building materials flowed, ranging from wood and nails to cardboard, paint and felt. A tall cardboard box appeared in the class and the children with support organised themselves into a team of workmen who transformed the box into their desired puppet theatre. One child commented that the paper puppets were getting torn but this problem was quickly resolved when another child suggested that they stick them on to cardboard.

Soon more puppets from home were being brought in by both the children and adults involved.

Next the class teacher adopted the Storyline technique. Two of the puppets disappeared, leaving behind clues relating to their location. The children puzzled over the clues and then decided to make 'Lost' posters and placed them around the school to see if other pupils might provide information about the puppets' whereabouts. One morning a postcard with photographs arrived from the lost puppets and the visual clues offered on these revealed that the puppets were on a desert

island. With great excitement the children decide to plan and create a desert island in their classroom. Eventually, they wrote and sent postcards inviting the puppets to a beach party with ice cream, hopeful that they would return soon. The primary two class who were following a pirate theme were duly invited. On the party day the primary one children were somewhat surprised when the puppets arrived with a gang of primary two pirates who explained that they had rescued them from a desert island and the clutches of the wicked Captain Whitebeard.

During the following term the class revisited and documented the puppets adventure using animation and live action film. See Making Film Texts page 111.

Co-constructed Play Experiences – Pirates of the Caribbean

This class were passionate about *The Pirates of the Caribbean*. The following photographs document how they went about planning, researching and building a pirate ship to play in. Their pirate ship was used on a daily basis for play, and despite there being 30 children in the class it was lovingly cared for and remained there for five months. It mattered to the children, they created it and had ownership of it – they even wanted to take it with them to their primary three class.



During the building project each child decided on a pirate persona and name for themselves. They explored the attributes and actions of the characters in the *Pirates of the Caribbean*, see Case Study – *Pirates of the Caribbean* and this supported their collaborative story making during play.

The educators planted a letter and treasure from the mysterious Capt. Red Beard with a request to keep the treasure hidden safe from the infamous Capt. Whitebeard. The children wrote and exchanged letters with the captain requesting information about Capt. White Beard's appearance so they could look out for him. One morning the children, who by then were totally immersed in the project, arrived to find a broken window. This caused considerable concern and discussion regarding the safety of the treasure. Thankfully it was safe but the children were convinced that the window had been broken by Captain White Beard's parrot intent on stealing the treasure. Over the following months the children collaboratively authored and filmed a live action and animation film text of this pirate tale. See *Creating Your Own Narrative*. The whole project culminated in a pirate party that children funded by running a healthy eating tuck shop for other pupils.

Spontaneous Play

In all the above case studies the children generated the play contexts, and the educator supported them planning and exploring the possibilities for learning. However, it is important that throughout the process and once the play context has been created that the children are given ample opportunities to play spontaneously. During the making of Red Riding Hood the costumes and props were freely available for use and the children developed play scenarios that involved sampling and mixing ideas from other contexts. In this way Little Red Riding Hood would arrive at the shops to buy a treat for granny only to be served by the wolf at the till. Such moments can provide fruitful opportunities for the educator to observe the proceedings to gain information for future learning journeys yet to be mapped.

Making Film Texts



Making Film Texts – Introduction

Why should children make film texts?

The Literacy and English Cover Paper – Curriculum for Excellence (2008), defines literacy for the 21st Century as

“the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.”

The paper clearly includes film when defining the range of texts to be used in Scottish education. It explains that texts are mediums to communicate ‘ideas, experiences, opinions and information’ so using texts involve interpretation and authoring. Moving image texts are an integral part of modern society and as current trends in digital technology develop there will be greater need for all to be able to use and create these. Furthermore filmmaking provides purposeful applications of many elements of paper based and oral literacy skills across the curriculum. Through a synergy of these modern skills and traditional ones, the learner will be equipped with the tools to effectively meet with and influence the demands of modern society.

“Some children became much more vocal, more animated, writing I think improved and became much easier for some children who until that point were very conscious of the fact they were not very good at writing! Didn’t like it! Didn’t want to write!”

Early Intervention Assistant

As educators, the responsibility lies with us to provide experiences and opportunities for learners to use and enjoy a wide variety of texts in contexts that are meaningful to them. The processes of exploring and making all texts are mutually supportive. Creating a truly comprehensive moving image education experience requires application and linkage of all the key elements within the model. Knowledge and skills that are gained through decoding texts will be transferred and broadened while authoring films, utilizing all the other key elements to achieve this. The converse is also true; in fact the process spirals on, progressing and deepening the learners’ mastery.

“The children often referred back to their previous MIE experiences, relating previously watched texts to new ones and their film making experiences to new situations.”

Nursery Teacher



This Key Theme offers a selection of filmmaking case studies covering different types of texts:

Teaching Aspects of Film Grammar – Part 2

Using a Familiar Text – *Little Red Riding Hood*

Elaborating a Familiar Text – *Spike the Greedy Caterpillar*

Creating Your Own Film Narrative – *Parrot Beware*

Creating a Factual Report – *News*

Documenting a Learning Experience – *Primary One and the Four Puppets*

Sending Messages An animated Christmas card
The Mummy Show

Practical ideas from our experiences

Teaching Aspects of Film Grammar – Part 2

Calvin Camera

With their bedroom settings complete the children considered different camera shots. To introduce this concept we used a photograph of a long shot of a person standing on a pavement and then a close up of that same shot revealing that the person was smiling and eating a lolly. The children were invited to compare the shots to identify differences and with support they began to understand that close ups reveal details such as facial expression while long shots provide more information about settings and places characters in them.

Resource Box FD16-19 provides examples and explanations of shot types.

Next the children viewed more images of these shot types and identified which each was, providing reasons for their choice.

In their groups the children planned 4 shots of their bedroom setting, one long shot and 3 close ups of objects in the room. They drew these on a four part storyboard (Resource Box SB2).

Next we introduced the children to the tripod, after a demonstration they practiced setting it up themselves. For this activity a still camera on a tripod was used and the educator explained that placing the camera on the tripod kept it still. The children took turns taking the



shots they had planned of their settings. These were then downloaded into Windows Movie Maker. The group creating a spooky castle experimented with different levels of lighting.

Simon Sound

The children considered and discussed the sounds that would convey the identity of the occupant of the bedroom and linked an appropriate sound effect to each still picture. Next they had to work out how to create those sounds. Once the sounds were recorded they were downloaded into Windows Movie Maker.

The group working with the mermaid's bedroom decided on watery sounds and to use a bucket of water, a bottle and some marbles to record the required sounds. One of the children explains what they did

"When we recorded the sound we were shaking up the bottle of water to make splashing, we had little marbles that we dropped on the floor to make the stone sound. We had a big bucket and we put water in it and splashed with our hands."

This group also sang a mermaid's song and added a neighing noise for their close-up of the sea horse.

An educator supported each group to edit their images and sounds. Choices were made about titles and credits and the children typed these in.

Three classes took part in this activity and at its conclusion we used the whiteboard to let all the classes view the bedrooms everyone had created. This series of planned sessions worked as a good introduction to moving image education and it was apparent in all the classes' second MIE project that they were transferring and using many of the skills they had learnt here.

The children really engaged with this series of practical activities and the miniature scale appealed to many of them.

Using a Familiar Text – Little Red Riding Hood

For an initial film project, it can be beneficial to let the children choose a familiar story to make their own film version of. Their firm grasp of the story events and structure of this will assist them in their first attempts at storyboarding. The chosen text in this nursery was *Little Red Riding Hood*.



Drawing a storyboard

Serena Story was used to focus the children and they started by drawing individual storyboards. They were encouraged to draw what they would see to tell the story. In the first picture we can see granny ill and lying in her bed. The second shows Little Red Riding Hood walking to granny's house. Very quickly we realised that this approach was very time consuming. Furthermore each child was drawing a slightly different version of the story and for filming this needed to be resolved into one story line. This was explained to the children so they chose a selection of these initial drawings to start a storyboard on the

wall. To speed up the remainder of the process we asked the children to act out what they would see and took photographs that were added to the storyboard on the wall. There was a great deal of discussion about how the story would end because the child playing the wolf wanted to be a kind wolf. The children agreed on a solution and the final shot of the film was drawn.

Sebastian Setting came next and the children took walks out into the local environment to decide on settings. They agreed that a local cottage would be the exterior of granny's house and the play hut in the playground would become the interior. The woods around the school and the road leading to the school were also chosen; photographs were taken of all the settings and added to the storyboard wall.



Location scouting

Carmen Character helped the children research and agree on character attributes. A detailed explanation of how these were devised is given in Problem Solving (p. 128).

Through discussion the children decided on props that were required and made a list of these. Some of these were brought from home while others needed to be made. Cardboard boxes appeared and after some

spontaneous play with these the children formulated a plan and turned them into granny's bed.



Crystal Colour helped us decide on a colour scheme for the bed

Before we started filming the children watched other short films and used Calvin Camera to chat about long shots and close ups. We also had sessions where they learned to set up the tripod and secure the camera on it. We explained that the camera was not a toy and that it needed to be handled carefully. Then with support the children were left to explore the potential of the camera. We would recommend a few sessions like this before starting filming. Let the children see the footage they have taken and talk about what they can see. During filming, the children need to understand that the camera generally stays still for each shot and the action takes place in front of it. By comparing this with their exploratory camera work the children will begin to understand that setting up camera shots is a deliberate and controlled act. Soon the costumes and props were all ready and over the next few weeks we filmed sections of the story.

The children had to watch and listen to the weather forecasts as a lot of the film took place outside. We went in the car to granny's house. Rain was never far away that day so we filmed between showers and used an umbrella to keep the camera dry.

With filming completed, we loaded the footage onto the computer and the children used the storyboard to sequence the shots. They tried out and chose a number of transitions between the shots but there had to be a reason for using these. Titles and credits were added and Simon Sound helped the children record voice-overs to tell the story.

The children were extremely pleased with their finished film and over the next few weeks plans were made to preview it with their parents and friends on a big screen at the local media centre.

Elaborating a Familiar Text – Spike the Greedy Caterpillar

In this nursery setting the children had cared for and observed caterpillars as they metamorphosed into butterflies. A number of fiction and non-fiction texts about butterflies had been used to develop the children's understanding, including Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

The educators wanted the children to learn the techniques of creating their own story using a medium other than written and/or drawn texts.



During a class discussion session an educator introduced the idea of making up a nursery caterpillar story. Ideas were volunteered by the children and written down. A large storyboard template was created out of a roll of wallpaper, and next day each child drew their idea on the board and an educator scribed their description of their picture. This was quite a lengthy tale as there were twenty children in the class. The

story was about a caterpillar that ate all manner of interesting things before turning into a butterfly.

After that the class watched an animated film, using models, made by primary six pupils in the same school. What followed was a discussion about how the film was made and the educator explained the principles of animation so the idea of making a film was introduced.

A group of children went to the art and craft area and made the scenery using the storyboard as a guide and an adult made three caterpillars of different sizes. A Digital Blue Moviemaker camera and a laptop were set up in a quiet corner of the nursery. Over the next few weeks the children worked in pairs with adult support to animate sections of the story. Some children quickly picked up the technique and would return often to do more while other stayed for just a short session but they all experienced the process at a pace that suited their individual needs. The class regularly watched and reviewed the film's progress to keep the children's interest. As the children watched the animation they would supply a running commentary of the story so the educators invited the children to narrate a voiceover for the finished animation. One educator edited the film but encouraged the children to observe the processes. The children collaboratively chose the title, which was added along with the credits.

At the project's completion, parents and friends were invited to a special viewing so the children could share their film with them.

Creating Your Own Film Narrative – Parrot Beware

This Primary two class had for a number of months been exploring *Pirates of the Caribbean*, case studies in the Exploring Texts and Play explain how their exploration of the films characters and settings enabled them to create a play context and characters to inhabit it. Using techniques similar to *Storyline* a class narrative evolved from this play and during the summer term this band of thirty pirates authored and made their own film called *Parrot Beware*. This is how they did it.

Through a lengthy class discussion the children put forward their ideas and negotiated a storyline for the film. The educator structured this session by sharing that a story needed a beginning, middle and end, explaining and providing examples of the functions of these in a good narrative. The story involved a parrot growing in size and flying through a broken window. The children wanted to act out the pirate roles but they knew that a real parrot was not feasible so after considerable discussion it was agreed that the parrot sections of the film would be animated.



Animating works best in pairs or small groups so the class was split up into groups of 3 or 4 and a small section of animation was assigned to each group.

When storyboarding, each drawing should represent what is seen in that camera shot to convey the story. To help the children understand this we used the supplementary disc supplied with the *Pirates of the Caribbean*. This disc has sequences of storyboard drawings so we watched a short clip of the film and then the corresponding storyboard pictures encouraging the children to look at positioning of props and characters and the use of arrows to indicate movement.

Next, two of the educators set up a practical demonstration of the parrot walking the plank, stopping the parrot at points on its journey along the plank and inviting the children to describe how they would represent this through drawing.

Each group was given a four part storyboard (Resource Box SB2) and set about collaboratively drawing the shots for their short animation. The class was very industrious, with an excited but purposeful buzz. The educators provided a little support but they were amazed at how quickly these children understood and completed the task.

Over the next few weeks the children found parrot images on the computer and drew other props for their paper cut animations. An educator taught each group how to set up the webcam and props, organised them into teams that took turns operating the stopmotion pro animation software and moving the paper cut objects.

The children rehearsed their live action roles and over the course of a morning set up two cameras and filmed these sections of their film. Once all the animations and live action shots were complete the children realised that they were running out of time and it was agreed that for this project the educator would edit the shots together with an elected group from the class.

The children used Windows Movie Maker and referred to their storyline to drag the clips onto the editing packages timeline in the correct order. A few changes were made at this point; clips were split to improve the narratives flow. They decided that some sound effects were required with one girl providing a very authentic parrot squawk.

The children were delighted with their achievement and held a pirate party for the preview of their film.



Creating a Factual Report – The News

This class had identified the news as a program that interested them. Their investigation of visual messaging can be read in Exploring Texts – Non-fiction and Documentary Texts – The News. This case study includes important background information to this film exemplar.

The teams of reporters identified a school news story to report on:

- School News Team – find out about the nursery children who would join primary one next session
- Sports Team – Interview Mr. Smith about the different sports teams at the school
- Crime Team – Investigate the mysterious disappearance of four puppets from the primary one class

The weather and studio anchor teams watched news programmes and planned a running order, dialogue and roles for their report.



How questions are framed can have an impact on the amounts and kinds of information you receive from interviewees. Educators modelled two fictional interviews for the children to watch, one using closed questions and the other open questions. The children surprised us with how quickly they noticed the differences and one child remarked that fewer open questions had been used but they generated 'loads' more information than the closed ones. The children then practiced questioning and interviewing with each other and educators. Notes

were written and delivered by the children to arrange suitable times to conduct interviews.

Each news team assigned roles as cameramen, interviewers and a prompter. With adult support they set off with tripod, camera and photographs of interview situations to help set up their shots. Next an educator supported them to edit their report and voice-overs were added.

The last teams to film were the weather and anchor team. They used the whiteboard to project images of weather maps and the individual news team's title pages in their report.

The anchor team used their film clips and the other reports to edit the final news broadcast.

After watching the finished product the children were invited to comment on the programme. It became clear that they wanted to further edit a rather lengthy interview and were not happy with the quality of the sound so the interview was cut and the voiceovers redone.

Documenting a Learning Experience – Primary one and the Four Puppets

Prior to their film project this primary one class had developed a play context, using puppets based on their favourite TV programmes. A detailed account of this can be found in Play – Co-constructed Play Experiences – Primary One and the Four Puppets. We would recommend reading this play case study as it generated the following filmmaking response from the children.

It was suggested to the class that they might like to make a film documenting the events that unfolded during the disappearance and eventual return of the four puppets. The idea was met with a very positive response so collaboratively the class orally relayed the events that had happened over the past few weeks. An educator scribed their contributions and supported them with skilful questioning to explain more and sequence the events in the correct order.

Their story was read to them and they were asked to identify the parts of the narrative that involved movements.

- a class of children going for a walk around the school
- letters going by air mail to Madagascar
- the puppets climbing up a ladder to board a pirate ship
- a spinning globe



Discussion sparked off about how we could convey this movement on film and with a bit of reflection about other films they had watched animation was mentioned. The educator explained how animation worked.

The class were split into five groups, four of these groups would plan and make the animations while the fifth group would be responsible for reading parts of the narrative to camera. However, this plan was soon altered and the narrators were invited to animate the title so they could experience animating.

The groups each worked with an educator to draw a four part story board (Resource Box SB2). The educator would ask the children to consider what they would see first in their sequence and think about how they could represent this as a drawing. Bit by bit the children worked their way through the sequence. Three of the groups opted for paper animation while the others used props. Detailed backgrounds and characters were created.

The individual storyboards were then placed from left to right in sequence along the classroom wall with photographs of the narrator in between.

Over the next few weeks each group worked with an educator to animate their section of the film. After rehearsals the narrators were filmed reading their sections of the story to camera. Other children busily photographed the clues and postcards they had written to the puppets to make the visual messages clearer.

All the animations, stills and film clips of the narrators were loaded into Windows Movie Maker on a laptop.

As a class the children took turns to drag the clips on to the timeline in the correct order. We reached the first animation of walking around the school and the children noticed that there was no sound. How could we make this sound? A microphone was plugged in and all the children stood up and walked on the spot. As each animation clip came up we needed more sounds, a van, an aeroplane, and pirates singing, the children enthusiastically provided these. By the end of this session the children had their finished film to watch.

The children shared the events that had transpired for a whole term in their class by inviting their parents and the other class involved in the project to a special premiere event at the local media centre.

The following year when we started a new animation project the children used the props from this film and the animation clips to explain the process of animation to a group of new classmates.



Explaining how to animate

Sending Messages – An Animated Christmas Card

This experience took place one afternoon in the Christmas term. It involved the repurposing of a lovely background that the children had painted for a recently completed film project. That morning each child had used a variety of materials to create a small paper decoration and the class used their prior knowledge of spelling to paint all the letters required to spell Merry Christmas.



The camera was set up on the tripod and connected to a laptop computer. The laptop was positioned so that all the children could see the screen. The camera was positioned so that only the trees on the backdrop were seen in the viewing. A large corridor was left between the camera and the background so the children had room to access the background without disturbing the camera. With chalk we marked a route on the carpet for the children to follow as they each added or moved items on the background.

We started by taking about 20 frames of the blank background. The children counted these and observed the increasing numbers on the counter on the animation viewing pane. One-by-one each child stuck their decoration on a tree on the background while the others viewed this on the computer screen passing comment on the visual layout. Three frames (photographs) were taken by each child after they had added their decoration. We could have used two frames and used this as a practical exercise in counting up in twos. Once all the decorations were in place the children added the written Christmas message letter by letter. The children wanted to add a Christmas song and spoken message so these were recorded. The whole piece was quickly edited together and written onto a CD-R. Over the next week the animated Christmas card was sent to the other classes and staff in the school.

Sending Messages – The Mummy Show

Mother's Day was fast approaching and in the nursery we wanted to investigate different ways of sending messages. We decided to make a film.

After introducing the idea of a Mother's Day film all the children were invited to paint portraits of their mums. As they painted they were encouraged to make considered choices about colours, hairstyles etc. An educator was on hand to supportively talk children through the process but still allowing each child to use their individual style.

Next the children put forward their ideas for a title; there were a number of these so we used a vote to decide.

The concept of dialogue was introduced using a story called "I Like It When..." by Mary Murphy. It involves a baby penguin sharing the things he likes doing with his mum. Over the next few days we photographed the children's painting and printed them out as passport size images. Using a grid of 20 large numbered squares we created a storyboard. Each child stuck the photograph of their portrait in a square of their choice. They were reminded of the Mary Murphy texts and thought about what they liked about their mum and this comment was written next to the picture.

The children filmed in pairs or trios. They used the storyboard to decide on the next shot. We used simple line drawings to help then set up the shots with the camera on the tripod. Each child was filmed holding their picture and saying the statement to camera. They then took a close up of the portrait. Each child reviewed their shot on the camera to decide if they wished to film it again.

An educator downloaded the shots onto the laptop and the children used the storyboard to establish the sequence when dragging clips onto the timeline. With support the title and credits were added but the children made decisions about fonts, colours and letter size. The soundtrack was not clear in places so an educator edited-in written texts of the children's messages about their mums.

Finally, on the Friday before Mothering Sunday we invited all the mums along to see the film. It was quite an emotional moment for all – not a dry eye in the house!

Practical Ideas from Our Experiences

During the project, educators were very much on an experimental learning curve. Through trying ideas out we discovered methods that worked for children in our settings. Here are some of our suggestions to help you get started. Every setting is different so be creative and experiment, what worked for us may not necessarily be right for your setting.

If you are looking for technical advice, consult your school's or local authority ICT tutor or advisor.

An excellent website for good practical advice on filmmaking is

<http://movingimageeducation.org/create>

Storyboarding

- For your first project encourage the children to keep their story ideas manageable. Use a very simple narrative and props and settings within the nursery. Using a known text or elaborating on one is a good starting point. My very first film was an elaborated version of the traditional tale 'The Enormous Turnip'. We used a pumpkin and rather than a family and pets, the nursery children helped pull it up. It was Halloween, and the children were making pumpkin soup for snack so the final shots of the film show this and the children tucking into their soup.
- If there are time constraints for your project, share these with the children and while you are exploring film texts drip-feed in information about the timescales needed to create commercial blockbusters. Most DVDs of these films include extra discs with information on how the film was made. Young children tend to be fascinated by these and they provide a relevant way of developing their understanding and awareness of longer time durations. On the Pixar Short Films DVD the animator John Lasseter explains that creating the five second shot of a price label dangling took five days to make! It's not a case of putting kids off making films but developing their understanding that filmmaking is a planned process that needs to be manageable in the time scale available. We did this when making *Journey to the Past*, read the case study in the introductory level for more information.

- The storyboard is the master plan of the children's narrative and will be referred to and possibly altered throughout the processes of developing characters, setting and props, filming and editing. There are many ways of approaching storyboarding to meet the needs of individual children. It is very much a collaborative process, as the case studies on filmmaking demonstrate.
- Let the children view and discuss storyboards for films they have watched. The BFI's *Starting Stories* contain some of these, and many commercial DVDs now have an extra DVD that may contain storyboard examples. Watch the animated section of our film *Parrot Beware* and use the storyboard examples in the Making Film Texts case study of this experience.
- Storyboards should convey ideas clearly but they do not necessarily have to be beautifully drawn by the children. It should be a dynamic and exciting procedure where many ideas are put in the 'melting pot', discussed and an agreed way forward is reached. Depending on the needs of a setting there are a variety of ways to start storyboarding with young children. It is fine for the children to provide and explain their ideas to an adult who sketches representations of their thinking, annotating these. You do not necessarily need a specially photocopied sheet for a storyboard. In the early days I folded large bits of paper into the required number of squares and these worked perfectly well, or use separate pieces of paper that can be arranged in sequence or bound in a book.
- It can be beneficial to demonstrate the storyboarding process to children, so use props to act out a simple scenario, pausing throughout to invite the children to identify what they are seeing. What can you see now? What will you see next to tell the story? Sketch simple line drawings onto a storyboard to represent their idea. Introduce the children to the use of arrows to represent movement and direction. You can read more about this in the case study – *Parrot Beware*.
- If you wish the children to make these representations then be creative – paper and pencil do not suit all learners. You can use collage materials or invite the children to act out what they want to see, capturing the shots using a stills camera. If they are not keen to act themselves, provide role play toys. It really is just a case of finding what works for your setting. What is crucial is that you do not lose the children's enthusiasm at this point by making storyboarding a laborious task. In a couple of our projects the children could not come up with a conclusion to the story so we got on with planning and filming, returning to this problem later, when it was quickly resolved.

- Although we did not use them, comic strips are good examples of visual story telling and can be helpful in developing a child's understanding of storyboarding.

Camera

We used a variety of cameras over the duration of the project.

- Mini DV cameras – were the most favoured option, and with support young children quickly learn how to handle and use this type of camera. Most cameras of this style have a fold out LCD screen and this is great for teaching. Once it's on the tripod both you and the children can see different shots and discuss them. However, you do need to check compatibility issues. Several of our settings did not have firewire ports on their computer so they could not connect the mini DV camera to the computer.
- Stills cameras – still images can be used on their own or with film clips to create films. We noticed that many of the cameras used in our settings had a video facility so we experimented using this for live action filming. These generally connect to the computer using a USB cable. By the end of the project one class had made their entire film this way. If you choose this option buy one with a good sized LCD screen for teaching purposes.
- A number of hand held cameras have been specially developed for using with young children in educational settings. Personally, I am not a fan of using these cameras for live action filming. The design of these often encourages kids to wander about with it held up to their eye. This focuses children on what is happening in the viewfinder, often oblivious to what is going on around them! This carries safety implications and doesn't teach children good camera practice and care. Often this type of camera has a tiny LCD screen that does not lend itself to collaborative teaching situations. For animation purposes these cameras can work well, as they are fixed down but generally the resolution is not as good as other cameras giving a poorer quality end product. These cameras generally come with simplified editing software but throughout our project the children were taught to use the editing application, Windows Movie Maker. At the project's conclusion several children were almost operating this independently. If you are investing in a new camera seek advice and carefully consider all the options.
- Webcams – These provide an inexpensive way to get children animating. Again they connect to computers via a USB cable. They are relatively inexpensive, have limited resolution but are fine for making short animations.



Tripods

- Invest in a tripod and teach the children how to use it and why. To achieve the best results your camera needs to be steady. I think all the educators involved in the project would now agree that a tripod is crucial. It gives you more control over the situation and confidence in letting the kids use the camera. All children want to experiment when they get a camera on a tripod with zooming and panning so initially provide time for them to do this. Watch back what they have filmed and compare it with some short films and highlight that the camera appears still in the professional films. Gradually explain to your young camera operators that when we set up a shot the camera usually stays still as the action happens in front of the camera. Gently persevere with this, the children do see the benefits and start thinking about different shots and why they want to use them. If the camera does move or come off the tripod it is planned and there is a reason for this. In one of our films the children wanted to give the impression of flying in an aeroplane so they experimented with a hand held camera for this.
- Once you have set up a shot use gaffer tape or chalk to mark the position of the feet of the tripod. If the tripod moves it is easy to position it back into place. If you are animating secure the tripod or camera with gaffer tape so it does not move.
- During the project we often animated on large wall displays or backgrounds that the children had created. Often the camera was on a tripod and attached to a laptop on a table behind it. Leave as much space as you can between the wall display and the camera so that the children can move items on the wall without knocking the camera. Use a chalk trail on the floor to help the children follow a good route around and in front of the camera.

Camera Shots

There are many different types of camera shots so don't get hung up on what exactly constitutes different shot types - there are numerous shades of grey! It's more important that the children understand that the camera is moved back or positioned far away to let the viewer see information about a setting and the characters and props within it. The camera comes in closer to show details of objects, emotions and facial expression. We generally introduced the children to long shots, establishing shot, close-up and two shot, others were mentioned as they arose during filming and when exploring texts. Concentrate on children looking at the LCD screen and thinking about what the viewer needs to see in a particular shot.



Here a number of ideas we used:

- When watching films, freeze the frame and discuss the shot. Where do the children think the camera was positioned? Why might the film maker have chosen that shot? There is a summary of shot types in the Resource Box FD16-19. Introduce their names as you explore texts and explain why they have been used.
- Play the spot the shot game explained in – Teaching Aspects of Film Grammar – Part 2
- Use activity cards similar to FD22 and support groups of children to set up shots and capture them as stills. Once the stills are printed off invite the children to compare them and sort them according to visual similarities. Discuss and explain the similarities, naming the shots if appropriate.
- The above activity can be done as a sorting activity by inviting the children to collect photographs from the internet, newspapers, magazines and comics.
- Avoid zoom and pan shots. It takes years of experience to do this well.

Computers

We would recommend a laptop if you are investing in a computer for film making purposes. They afford flexibility of movement for animating and editing purposes. Consider screen size, we used a 17 inch one which was great for working with groups of children. If you are intending to film often and/or store a lot of clips and films consider buying an external hard drive. Remember to check that it has the right connection for your particular camera. e.g. USB and Firewire. A DVD writer is required if you want to copy your own discs.

Lighting

- Never position the camera facing into direct sunlight as this results in poor quality, and can damage the camera iris. Demonstrate this to the children exploring examples of filming into backlight and away from it.
- Once the children are used to discussing shots using the LCD screen, introduce the ideas of shadows.
- Good overhead lighting is best for filming.
- Avoid using moveable spot lights with young children as these can become very hot over time.

Sound

We tried a number of methods to record sounds. Initially we used the internal microphone in the mini DV camera. In the second year of the project we invested in a mini DV camera with an external microphone



port but had limited success with this. Young children find it hard to operate a boom pole and tended to fidget with cables even when they were being very still. In the end we abandoned this approach and looked at other methods.

- Find a quiet location to film, if this is impossible think about how you position the camera and point it away from loud background noises and towards the action
- Avoid using a great deal of dialogue during filming. Convey the story visually and then record sound effects and / or narrate the story using voiceover
- If the narrative does involve a lot of speech set the camera up as close as possible to the actors
- Avoid filming outside on windy days but if this is impossible cover the camera microphone with a thin strip of foam
- Record voice overs and sound effects using the mini DV camera. Narrators and effects should be positioned close to the microphone. Have a practice run and listen to it just to make sure that the camera is in the best position for recording
- If you are recording voice-overs and sound effect directly onto the computer editing package invest in a good quality microphone. Demonstrate to the children where to position themselves to speak into the microphone. Avoid children holding microphones; place it on a stand or on a table. Again have a practice run before recording.

Filming

- Get to know your camera and how it works before using it with the children
- Charge the camera battery before filming and check the camera is working before starting
- You know your children best, so decide how much of the filming will be done by them. In one setting the children had planned the storyboard, made props and costumes but were not really interested in the camera so it was agreed that the adult would be the cameraman while they acted. This is fine as they can still tell you how they want the shots to look like and develop their camera skills in subsequent projects when they show a greater interest
- Demonstrate and explain to the children that the writing or indicator on the LCD screen turn to red when the camera is recording and green when it is not
- There are a number of ways of calling a shot. For your first film experience with young children you may have to be the director and model the tasks and language used for this role. With the youngest of children the adult settled the children and when it was quiet the cameraman switched the camera on and called

“Action!” and then “Cut!” once the shot was finished. With slightly older children we assigned a director who called the shot in the following way

- *Director to class* – “Standing by for silence on set!”
- *Class to director* – “Standing by!”
- *Director to cameraman* – “Camera on!”
- *Cameraman/director to actors* – “Action!” followed by “Cut!” when the action is complete.

With a number of classes we used the ‘standing by for silence on set’ call to gain their attention during MIE lessons. Because the children have to respond to this call it focuses them into listening and they are well practiced in this when actual filming starts

- Demonstrate to the children that they need to wait for a few seconds once action has been called before they start acting. Some children will be able to count to 5 or 10 in their heads.
- Demonstrate to the director or cameraman that once the action has been filmed they need to wait for a few seconds before calling cut, this helps when editing the clips.
- Animation – most animation software is relatively easy to use but spend time familiarising yourself with software and setting up the camera before using it with the children.

Editing

With carefully worded guidance, young children are perfectly capable of following through the processes of editing. Editing can be laborious processes, so make sure that the children’s editing experiences are enjoyable. Stop when interest wanes or swap roles and let them talk you through the processes and their wishes. You know your children best so gauge their interest and decide how they will be involved in the process but involve them in making choices and decisions. You can speed things up once they have downloaded their film into the editing suite by trimming all the clips, and then let the children drag then down onto the storyboard or timeline in the correct order. Initially in the project we did a great deal of demonstrating and then talked children through the process but by the end of the project we had one or two children who could do basic editing on their own and support their peers.

- All the animation and editing software packages used in the project along with alternatives in the Resource Box – Software Used.
- There are a number of useful websites that provide information and tutorials for animation and editing software in the Resource Box – Useful Websites.
- When deciding on an editing package for young children choose one with a relatively simple interface. If older children in your



school are filmmaking start by investigating the suitability of the editing package they are using.

- If you have a whiteboard in your class, use it for whole class editing. Invite children to help you and demonstrate how the package works.
- If you are using a PC or laptop split your project up into sections and edit with small groups of 4 or 5 children.
- A good way of getting young children involved is to quietly start editing while they are playing and very quickly their curiosity is aroused and they are asking to help.
- Avoid using lots of transitions; explain to the children that transitions should be placed between shots for a reason. Most professional editors only use dissolves or fades. Some of our children's films do include transitions that were carefully thought out, for example, in *A Trip Around the World* the arrow shaped transition represents the direction the train is travelling.

Above all remember that making a film should be an enjoyable experience that children will want to revisit. Learning about film is very much a progression and needs to be moved along at a pace that suits the individual learners. One child who participated throughout our project spent a great deal of his first MIE experience watching from the sidelines, we respected this and little by little he chose to become more involved. By the end of the project that same child was animating independently and tutoring the educator through the editing process.

Problem Solving



Problem Solving – Introduction

In our daily lives we constantly apply skills to solve practical problems, therefore educators must provide opportunities for young people to apply and refine these skills in relevant and purposeful contexts. Problem solving is a holistic process where the learner uses skills, knowledge and attributes across all curricular areas. Problem solving often requires an element of risk, so it is of paramount importance that we create a learning climate where pupils are confident and comfortable to employ lateral and divergent thinking.

Fisher (1990) defines problem solving as applied thinking, so we use our experiences, knowledge, intuition and numerous cognitive skills to unravel a problem and seek answers. Let us consider the types of thinking involved in this process.

Creative thinking almost always involves critical thinking in selecting from alternatives and evaluating outcomes to solutions. Similarly, creative thinking makes an important contribution to critical thinking, for example, in generating reasons and the imaginative exploration of points of view other than ones own.

Problem solving and decision-making will usually involve elements of both creative and critical thinking.

Learning, Thinking and Creativity: A Staff Development Handbook, 2004, LTS & IDES Network

Creativity demands open thinking where numerous possibilities are generated. An environment that fosters children's natural curiosity, exploratory drive, intuition and imagination will nourish creativity. *Ideation fluency* is another important factor, Laevers (2005) defines this as 'the easiness with which associations are made which links distant elements to one another' he associates this disposition with the abilities to 'look at things from a different angle', to be flexible, 'play with reality' and take risks. The role of the educator is pivotal in supporting children to become confident in applying these skills. During the project they fostered a 'could be' ethos where anything might be possible. They explained to the children that there were not really any wrong answers, only ones that might be more suitable once their potential had been considered. All ideas were accepted and valued; the adults modelled this approach by wondering and thinking out loud and encouraged the children to contribute their thoughts.

Critical thinking involves reflection and evaluation of all the possible options resulting in the selection of a preferred way forward. Again, the educators modelled questioning skills and suggested matters to consider to assist the children in this process, but they let the children

make the final decisions. Let them experiment with ideas that they knew were probably not the best solutions; it is only through this process that children can broaden and deepen their understanding of problem solving. Certainly, children need to experience success, but also failures and how they are part of the process of re-examination and investigation to deepen ones understanding and thinking to achieve a successful outcome. Again, adults modelled this processes, inviting and encouraging the children to assist. Through observing others, and personal experience, the children became more accepting and accommodating of the ideas of others and developed self confidence and resilience.

The case studies offered in this key theme provide examples of problem solving in different situations.

- During the making of a film or a play context problems may need to be overcome to achieve the desired goal. Brief examples of these and how they were overcome are provided.
- Certain moving image texts generate puzzles or questions that can be presented as a problem solving task to pupils. A large case study exemplifying one such activity is provided as are suggested texts with similar problem solving activities.

Problem Solving – Film Making Colour and Special Effects – *Journey to the Past*

In this story a group of children travel into the past to visit a Victorian classroom. Early on in the planning process the class decided that they wanted the Victorian images of the film in black and white and for the children to spin quickly back in time.

They recorded this in their storyboard using photographs for the current day shots and black line drawings for the Victorian ones.

How could they achieve these effects? The spinning generated interesting ideas for example the pupils could physically spin themselves in front of the camera while others reflected on the films they had watched and introduced the concept of special effects. This was their first film so the educator explained about the editing process and how special effects could be added. During the editing process the pupils tried out a number of colour effects and added a spinning effect that did not last for as long as they wished, so the adult showed them how to access the editing packages help guide to resolve this problem.



Primary one and two pupils editing

Problem Solving – Film Making Settings, Camera and Sound – *The Magic Staircase*

The children authored an imaginative tale involving a group of children living in an orphanage who travel by aeroplane to a magical kingdom where they dine with royalty, ride on a unicorn, visit Halloween Land and meet Santa Claus. The opening shots of the film are live action with the children discovering a magic staircase while walking in the woods. How they made the staircase is documented in the video exemplar. Considerable discussion ensued about the plane journey, and they decided to use a toy aeroplane. The children had to decide how could they convey to the audience that they were in an aeroplane. First they used small plastic figures but they did not look like themselves. One child suggested placing small portrait drawings in the window which led to another suggesting the use of portrait photographs. Photographs were taken and stuck in, followed by experimentation with camera shots. It was agreed that the camera needed to go in close and pan along the side of the aeroplane to reveal the faces.

The soundtrack posed considerable problems as the children wanted to use music to convey the emotions of the children. First they sought the

help of the older children in the school to source music and sounds from the Garage Band software.

They were not satisfied with the results because of the limited choices available so help from the local high school senior music pupils was sought to create a really emotive sound track that the children are especially pleased with. The younger children were amazed at the talents of the secondary pupils but the converse was true; the senior pupils marvelled at the children's decisive comments and skills using the video camera to record the soundtrack.



The children listened to different types of music and chose pieces that reflected the emotions of their film

Problem Solving – Film Making Characters and Costumes – *Little Red Riding Hood*

The children talked a great deal about how the wolf should look, they scrutinised a number of images of wolves and chose two to develop their costume ideas further. Next, the adult supplied a broad selection of fabric samples and the children chose ones that matched their chosen wolf images.



An adult then bought enough of the fabric and a dressmaking pattern for the suit.

The children enjoyed touching the fabrics and were fascinated by the dress making pattern; the writing and drawings on the pattern had to be investigated and explained by the adult. There were several sizes on the one pattern so how could we decide which one to use? A child suggested that we measured the person who was going to be the wolf and this was duly done. How would we make the fabric into the suit? The children knew it needed to be sewn and fortunately the mother of the child who would portray the wolf had a sewing machine and volunteered to make the costume. Red Riding Hood's costume was made in the same way.



The finished product

Problem Solving – Film Making – Developing a story idea

During the creation of a story line many ideas are brought to the table and some through collaborative discussion are selected for the storyline. Problem solving is part of this process, for example, how do we bring the film to a conclusion or why did that character react in that way? Although young children may have a wonderful story in their mind they often relay bits of the narrative, assuming that listeners have the same information and perspective as they do. The story making process is great for developing children's communication skills to provide more detail, explanations and think about the narrative at a deeper level. Problem solving at this stage is more abstract as the children are dealing with thoughts, emotions and mental pictures of the story. Creating a storyboard helps children focus on the structure and details required to convey the story.

Problem Solving – Creating a Play Experience

Parrot Beware – A more detailed description and photographs of the project are available in Key Theme – Play. In this instance the children wanted to create a large pirate ship in their classroom. They used their existing knowledge and researched books and the internet to identify the parts of the ship. They investigated different materials, shape and position to create a robust 3D boat to withstand 30 children having access to it on a daily basis. General wear and tear did occur so the children devised solutions to repair these and make the ship stronger.

Rocket Rescue – The children needed to create a lunar landscape so they watched the film, observed the moon in the sky and illustrations in books, deciding that it should be white. One child suggested that they could use material so they selected a number of pieces of fabric and carefully covered the carpeted area with them. Another child commented that some of the fabrics might be slippery so a discussion took place where the children assessed the potential risks and decided on a code of conduct so they could move around and play safely in area.

Problem Solving Generated from Viewing Films - Baboon on the Moon

Aims

- To use a film text to develop pupils' language and literacy skills
- To increase pupil's co-operative skills through a problem solving exercise
- To extend and enhance links between the school and nursery for pupils in their pre-school year
- To introduce pupils to formative assessment material, providing clear learning intentions and success criteria.

Introduction



The project, which ran from March – May 2006, involved all primary one and nursery pupils transferring to school that August. The pupils were randomly split into mixed groups of nursery and P1 pupils. Each group received 5 weekly 40 minute sessions.

During the first two sessions the pupils explored the film text and were invited to discuss the main character and arrive at a solution to his unhappy predicament.

The subsequent three sessions involved each group cooperatively creating an action plan for their chosen solution and implementing it. At the conclusion of the five sessions the children reflected on the experience and evaluated it against their action plan.

Resources

- Film text – *Baboon on the Moon*, BFI Starting Stories pack. The story is about Baboon's completely isolated existence on the moon, where his job is to light it up every night. The film is emotionally powerful and finishes with Baboon crying while playing a melancholy tune on his trumpet, as he gazes towards earth.

- A prop box containing a soft toy baboon and a selection of items that can be heard on the sound track.
- A variety of formative assessment materials were used. All sessions started with the pupils focusing in on the learning intention, using WALT a dog whose name is an acronym for WE ARE LEARNING TO with a written learning intention and a line drawn illustration of that intention. Examples of these can be found in the Resource Box folder - WALT.

Read on for more detailed descriptors of each session.

Session 1

Learning intention: *We are learning to listen to sounds and work out what they mean.*

This session is introduced as a listening game. The object of the game is to listen to the soundtrack and guess what they are hearing, some of the items they will hear are in the closed prop box – how many can they identify? The TV is covered and the film is listened to in short extracts, between each of these the children discuss what they have heard and an adult scribes their responses. On conclusion, the list of suggestions is compared with the contents of the prop box. Did they listen well? Have the sounds and objects helped them puzzle out what the film might be about?

The film is then watched, and afterwards the children are invited to comment. All the pupils connected the sad music to Baboon's emotions. This session is closed by sharing the objective of the second lesson.

Session 2

Learning Intention – *We are learning to think and share our ideas with each other*

Once the children have watched the film the learning intention is shared. The children sit in a circle and two questions are posed:

- Why is Baboon sad?
- How might we cheer him up?

Each child is invited to contribute and an adult scribes their responses. The transcript is shared with the children and the most popular solutions for the second question are put to the vote by each group member placing their mark next to their preferred option. The adults vote last so they do not influence the children's choice.

Here are some of the children's responses.



Why is Baboon sad?

- He has no mum and dad
- He's left alone with no family
- He has nobody to play with
- His mum and dad are dead
- He's missing his friends on the other planet
- He's missing his brothers and sisters
- He is left alone with no family
- No toys to play with
- There are no other baboons

The next three sessions involve planning, creating and evaluating.

Learning Intention – *We are learning to think and talk together to work out a plan.*

Learning Intention – *We are learning to work together to carry out our plan.*

What the groups did

Groups 1 and 2 Created rockets to take three friends to the moon to join Baboon. They discussed two quality models and shared their knowledge of rockets to create a list of components to make a good rocket. They split into 3 groups: each group chose a soft toy friend and build the rockets to accommodate them. The educators encouraged and supported them to refer to the list of components during building. They reviewed the final rockets against the component list see if they had achieved the criteria.

Group 3: Incorporated several ideas and planned to hold a party for Baboon where they would eat sweeties and play Pass the Parcel. We split the children into three groups to share the workload and were set the following challenges:

- To write a letter to Baboon telling him about the party, including specific information about date, times and guests attending.
- To create a menu and shopping list for the party, remembering to think about the food and drink a baboon would enjoy. They were given a set of photographs to discuss and make their choices from.
- To choose a prize for and create a parcel for Pass the Parcel. To listen to the CDs provided and choose two music tracks to cheer Baboon up.

The group writing the invitation visited the post office to post their letters, unfortunately we were unable to take the second group



shopping, as we had intended. Once all the challenges had been completed we had a drama session where we pretended to fly to the moon and have our party, when it was time to leave two children decided to remain on the moon so that Baboon could have a holiday on earth.

Group 4: Built a rocket to bring Baboon back to earth. They used their own knowledge and books to create a plan for this. Again the main group was split into sub-groups, but this time each group had responsibility to build a part of the rocket. Finally the rocket was assembled and checked against the plan to see if the criteria had been met.

Group 4's Discussion Plan to Make a Rocket

This transcript of the group's discussion demonstrates just how real the dilemma was to the children, none of them offered single word responses.

"You can get a rocket, go in it, go to the moon, get baboon and go to the other planet." (P1 pupil)

"He might get a rocket and blast onto our planet. To build a rocket pieces might fall down – he might get hurt." (Nursery pupil)

"If we put him on the planet he would be lonely. He could have aliens for friends. He would build a rocket and get a parachute and aliens would come to our nursery and dig in the sand to find the parachute. The parachute would get him down and into a tree. A tractor driver would save him. It would be bigger and bigger and lots of friends will help." (Nursery pupil)

"We might build a rocket and build a planet and put him on it, a planet with lots of people so he could make new friends." (Nursery pupil)

"Maybe he would use a magnet and the moon comes and then he gets a rope and cuts it and then he's on another planet with friends." (P1 pupil)

"He could build a broom and make a spell for it and go to another moon." (Nursery pupil)

The children's plan for building a good rocket

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You could get a wide tube and see if Baboon fits in • We need 4 little tubes for it to land on • It needs to be coloured in – black, white and brown • We need a stand to hold it up • We need fire to come out when it blasts off • We need engines – you put black oil in them. 4 engines? 11 engines? (11 became the agreed number) • Get some red tissue paper for the fire and rip it up and stick it on. • Seat belts so you don't fall out • Wings so it can fly • A pointy bit at the top 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need a seat • A steering wheel • Write some instructions so we know about flying it • We need a door to go in and out of • Lots of windows so he can see out • A front window so he can see where to go • A packed lunch for him to eat and a bed and a toilet (it takes a long time to go to the moon) • Put metal around it to be shiny • A big big mirror • We need lights in case we bump into an alien planet – it will be dark
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Group 5: Climbed up a giant to get Baboon and bring him back to earth. The children discussed and planned how the giant would look and built him to that specification. They could not think of a way to climb to the moon so the adult suggested using animation. Each child was photographed in a climbing pose and these cut outs were used to create the animation using istopmotion. The children were delighted with the end result but quite surprised at how long the process took.

In conclusion:

The children were immediately drawn to the text and connected with it. The listening activity focused them in and they demonstrated high levels of engagement when viewing the film. The text generated rich discussions, where all the children contributed eagerly; in fact, we underestimated our timing and quickly extended sessions to an hour. Responses during these sessions evidenced the children making clear links to their prior knowledge and life experiences. In addition, children who usually opted out of discussion situations volunteered their ideas and were generally offering phrases and sentences. The context provided purposeful creative problem solving situations and many meaningful applications of reading and writing. The formative assessment tools supported the children well, although staff had to scaffold their use. It developed the children's awareness of others, co-

operative skills and understanding of democratic decision making processes.

The children were developing their understanding of props and became more aware of how sounds and pictures can convey meaning and emotions. The experience did engage and excite the children, and at its conclusion pupils were keen to learn more. At the start of the new session staff felt on the whole that the children settled easily into the school environment. When we recommenced our MIE lessons the children avidly talked about *Baboon on the Moon* so we adopted this text but used a different focus to start our next learning journey.

Problems Solving Generated from Short Films – *Charlie and Lola* BBC – “The Most Wonderfulest PICNIC in the Whole Wide World”

During this short film problems are continually solved, for example, planning a picnic and what to do if the rain starts in the middle of your picnic? Part of the solution to the latter is a magical Arabian indoor tent. Watch the film with the children and then set up a phone call or email from Charlie, explaining that he is about to go camping and needs a tent for this expedition. You can decide where Charlie is located – it could be somewhere cold and wet or hot and dry. Charlie asks the children if they can help by designing a tent that will stand up to all kinds of weather. This could make a great science investigation topic relating to materials and their purposes for use and forces when building a tent. It would require some research into different kinds of tents. Charlie who is far away will need updates and reports of their progress. These can be written, emailed or videoed.

Documenting, Reflecting and Evaluating Learning



Documenting Reflecting and Evaluating Learning

“Research has also shown that involving learners actively in the assessment process is an important element of developing metacognition – that is the ability to reflect upon and critically analyse their own thinking and learning.”

Teaching for Effective Learning: How we learn LTS 2007

The entire process of learning involves thinking; we have already examined creative and critical thinking and considered the impact of communications through discussions and deep questioning to support these skills. This Key Element explores how children, educators and parents can apply all these skills and many others in an ongoing process to record, understand and progress learning. Status is often afforded to evaluation or assessments at the end of a learning experience but Gardner’s view is that documentation and assessment ‘can be an intrinsic and magnificent part of learning’ so to be effective and successful learners children need to understand the purpose of tasks and apply these skills on a daily basis.

Documentation makes visible the unfolding story of learning, and with reflection and evaluation we draw conclusions that develop our understanding. For example, consider a young child in a new nursery setting painting a picture of a brown dog. The child observes that paint in the pot is running out. There are options to consider. Use the paint sparingly? Use a different colour? Get more paint or abandon the project? This painting is important so the child opts to use the paint sparingly but a growing sense of anxiety and desperation creeps in as it become obvious that there is not enough paint to finish the job. The child now knows that more brown paint is required but how to get it? Ask an adult? Ask another child? Start looking in cupboards? As he mulls over the options he sees a girl add a little water to her pot and this seems to make more paint! The girl smiles and says, “Water makes it last longer.” The child, nods to the girl, adds a few drops of water to his pot and finished his painting with a sense of deep satisfaction. He beams a smile and shows the picture to the adult who clearly sees a creature with four legs and a tail.

If we solely look at the end product for assessment we might conclude that the child enjoys painting and can produce skilled representation. However, if we had observed the whole situation, taken still or video images and then reflected on these with the child we truly connect with this learner, unraveling a richer picture that offers evidence about their communicative and cognitive skills, emotions, disposition and desires.

The project viewed documentation in this way where children, educators and parents all feed into and add to the process. Reflection is where learners and educators re-visit experiences to consider and evaluate what has occurred, celebrating achievements and more importantly collectively identifying and mapping out new directions and routes for learning. In many settings different methods of documenting were used such as photographs, video and written transcripts of children's voices. The Reggio Emilia approach, suggests that documentation such as this instils in any setting 'a sense of their heritage' but more importantly it 'demonstrates to children the value of their contributions and encourages them to contribute to the processes' (Fisher, 2008).

Documenting – A Learning Journey

By the end of the project all of the settings involved had a stills camera and PC situated in the class to assist children and educator in documenting learning. Some settings had regular access to a video camera and one had a dictaphone. The project did provide opportunities for educators to think about and experience evidence gathering using this media. Settings adopted an approach where organic wall display and or albums developed consisting of photographs of experiences, examples of children's work and annotated comments from pupils, parents and educators. In two settings pupils authored short video montages of trips and video clips of learning in action were kept to reflect upon and share with others.

Case Study – A Blank Wall Waiting to Tell a Story

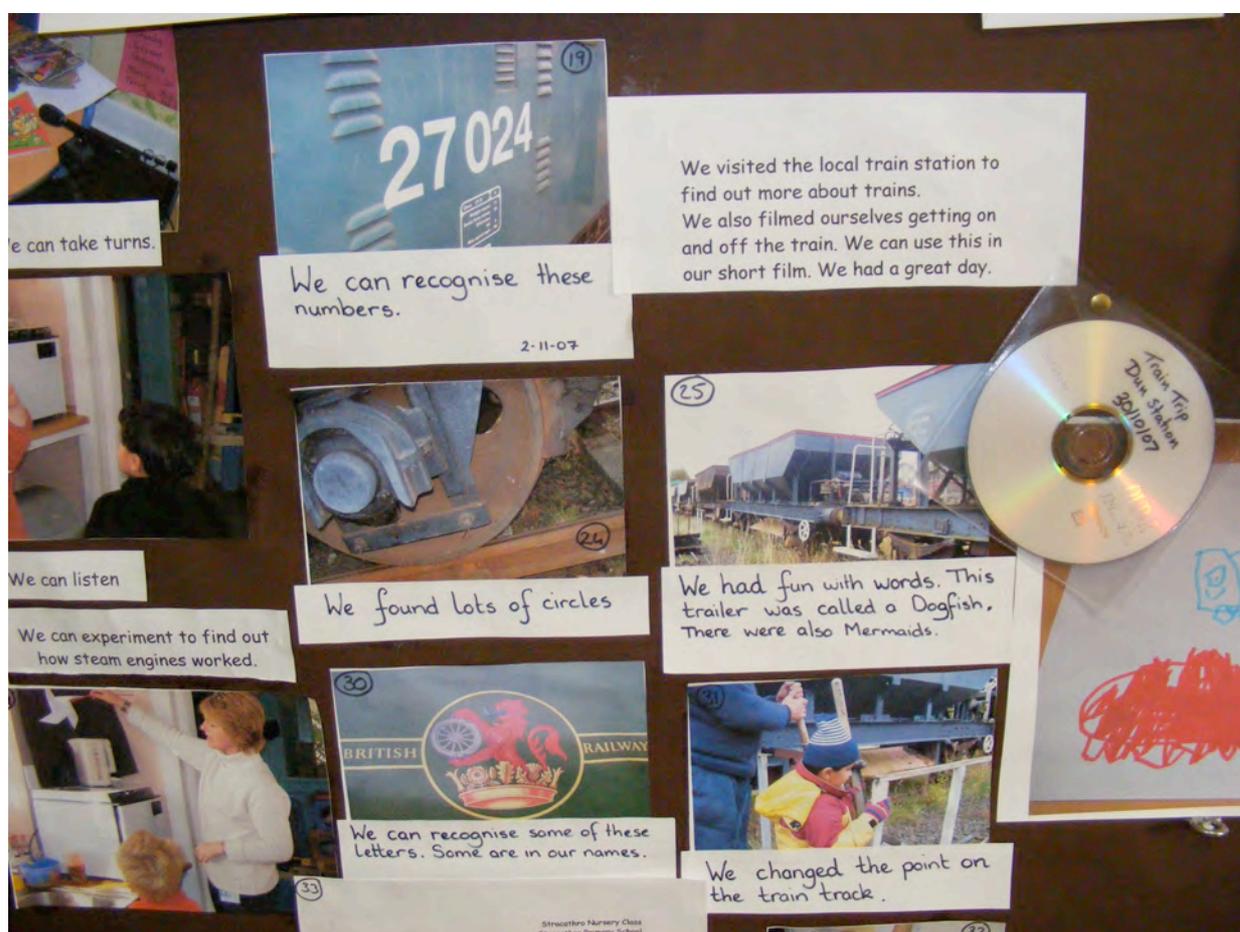
We join a young train enthusiast and another child at the start of their second nursery year, about to embark on their second MIE learning journey. A nursery wall is stripped bare ready for the journey to begin.

Over the first few days the educator, through observations, play and discussions with the children and parents uncovered what the children would like to make their film about. Two themes come to the fore – trains and sea creatures. A visit to the beach is arranged and the camera is taken along to capture the experience. On their return to the nursery the boys edit these photographs into a short film and add a musical accompaniment.

Two wall displays are made; one of fish under the sea and the other of trains in a station. By the time of my first visit a storyline has emerged. The trains are going on a journey. I chat with the children who proudly

show me their beach trip film, the photographs on the wall and their wall displays; explaining to me what they have been up to. After some time they notice my laptop and video camera and the talk turns to the film we made the previous year and I casually suggest that maybe for their new film we could have a go at making the fish on their display move. All this is documented on the wall but is punctuated by excursions to play with autumn leaves and spiders. Learning is intuitive and experiential and can weave interesting paths, but of greatest importance the wall is meaningful to those that author and use it – children, educators, parents, and visitors like myself. As photographs are added to the wall the educator invites and encourages the children to make statements about them and these are added. The educator numbers the photographs to cross-reference the experiences to the learning outcomes of the curriculum guidelines. Parents and visitors are invited to contribute to the wall, but the children and educator are respectful of others, accepting that they may only wish to view for the time being.

Over the course of the project we watch an archive film of steam trains that leads to a request to visit the local Caledonian Railway. The visit is filmed, so back at the nursery they children re-visit the experience on DVD and share it with their parents. The DVD is added to the wall, as is a copy of the thank you letter they write to the railway.



Next concept maps of the children's thinking on superheroes are added and also ones from the educator's perspective mindful of how they can support the boys in their learning journey.

The way forward is co-constructed, plans are researched to transform the seascape to downtown Manhattan and the Green Goblin and Spiderman make an appearance, they talk about their attributes and how they behave. A map of the world appears on the adjacent wall and destinations are researched as the small trains continue on their animated journey. Another short film about drawing trains is viewed and the children choose to use role-play toys and graphic representations to share their knowledge. I am the learner now as they explain about dogfish and mermaids. I wonder why rolling stock would have been given names such as these? Onward our journey goes, soon we have a film and on the wall a vibrant interwoven collage; both mapping the experiences, dispositions, understanding, strategies and thinking processes of these two young men. To the untrained eye it appears a little chaotic but that is what active learning is all about. Closer scrutiny reveals breadth, balance and progression and a deeply meaningful and enjoyable learning experience for those participating in it.

Reflecting and Evaluating – Little Pig is Flying

Two classes of primary one and two pupils were involved in this case study. Exploring Texts – Animation – Little Pig is flying will provide information about the first part of this project where the children explored the above film text. The aim of the second part of the project was to let the children collaboratively manage an active learning experience where they would experience the processes of reflection, evaluation and problem solving to achieve a desired goal.

Each class had been left a set of character puppets or masks from the film so that they could familiarise themselves with the story. Both classes were keen to film their own versions of the story using the props provided. Without any discussion about camera shots, sound or settings we brought the camera and tripod into the classrooms, let the children decide where to set them up and they filmed the first version of their films.

The classes watched their versions of the film and reviewed them using the Film Detective characters, highlighting what they had done well but looking for areas to improve on. In this instance their views were recorded on the Film Detective grid (Resource Box FD5). The Film Detective – *Two Stars and a Wish* cards (FD8 – 13) could be used here, but I would recommend focusing on no more than two characters initially per session until the children are familiar with their purpose.



Once they had decided on action points, a plan was set in place with the children taking responsibility to resource and make props and backgrounds.



Designing scenery

The children were being encouraged to use the class's new still camera to document their learning but the educators noticed that they were experiencing problems setting up shots, so the primary school assistant supported groups of children complete an activity to develop their skills (Resource Box – FD22).

Sound was another issue so they watched adults modeling how to use puppets for a drama and practiced the roles of puppeteer and audience during free play. After our second filming sound was problematic so the educator suggested that they think about the animation they had made the previous year in nursery. We watched part of the animation and one child volunteered, "We put the talking on after we made the film".

Next the children discussed and tried out ideas to decide where the background should be situated and eventually it was taped to the blackboard, a table was set up in front to place props on and the puppeteers sat behind the table. The children worked in groups of 3 to film the shots for their film; two puppeteers and a cameraman. With all the groups they quickly realised that the camera had to move forward so that only the puppets and the background were in shot. Finally, in

the same groups the children recorded voiceovers and edited the film with adult support.

At the end of the project they watched both versions of their film and discussed the processes and decisions they had to make to achieve the quality product they wanted. Although the children were delighted with their film they were already beginning to identify new goals for their next film.

Using Specific Shared Learning Outcomes with Children

Children need to experience a balance of open-ended experiential learning situations and those using specific shared learning objectives. This is discussed further in the case study – *Journey to the Past*. Generally we tended to use the latter when teaching new skills. Often we would introduce an activity and invite the children to suggest which skills might be needed to carry out it out. This approach worked particularly well in settings that had a broad range of abilities and developmental ages, generally older and more able children contributed their views role modelling answers enabling other children to deepen their understanding.

At the beginning of listening and discussion activities WALT (We Are Learning To) illustrations were shared and discussed with the children to focus them into the skills required for that session. At the end of the session they reviewed and discussed these.

During some planning stages quality models were used to draw up a list of requirements to create a good end product. The children were invited and encouraged by the educators to refer to the list and the quality models during the task and at the end of the activity they returned to these to evaluate their final product. Examples of both these formative assessment strategies can be found in Problem Solving Generated from Viewing Films - Baboon on the Moon.

In storyboarding activities some of the children used the Film Detective rubric (FD5) to structure the activity. The rubric can also be used by groups to assess how well they have achieved the task. Have they information on all three elements, story, camera and sound, or do they need to add more information.

Co-operative Learning Groups

The class that made Journey to the Past were used to working in cooperative groups, so for some of our MIE tasks the educator would set the children both an academic and social goal and assign specific roles for group members. At the conclusion of the project she shared:

“Our school has already put many elements of co-operative learning into place. Moving Image Education is an excellent and meaningful vehicle for co-operative learning. The children identified with the project which gave a purpose to working co-operatively.

Final Reflection: Connectivity

“conecione: the realisation, while observing, studying or learning anything, that ‘everything connects to everything else’ “

Buzan 2003 quoting Leonardo Da Vinci

Reflection and analysis of the completed project identified connectivity as a predominant pattern contributing to its success. As this pattern was unravelled the following key aspects of connectivity were identified.

- Connectivity across curricular areas
- Connectivity through curricular areas
- Connectivity with other learners and educators
- Connectivity with traditional and current social cultures
- Connectivity with all skills and knowledge that children bring to their educational communities
- Connectivity with local and wider communities
- Connectivity with children’s real life experiences and values
- Connectivity between reality and imagination
- Connectivity with traditional and innovative pedagogic styles

Individually these can have a powerful impact on the success and effectiveness of learners but if, as in the project, they are interwoven in a balanced and learner sensitive manner the effect becomes cumulative.

Fundamental to the principle of connectivity is the role of the educator, who must carefully plan experiences that foster and facilitate learners to make further connections through exploration of divergent and convergent thinking styles. Valuing and reflecting on all learner responses will give insight into individual learner’s cognitive development, knowledge base and attributes at that particular point in time. Connecting with and acting upon such information will better equip educators to tailor their responses thus empowering the learner to move their thinking on.



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