Year 3 Narrative Unit 1 – Stories with familiar settings

Stories with familiar settings (3 weeks)

This is the first of four narrative units in Year 3. Prior to teaching the unit, whole-class collections of stories with familiar settings could be established to support independent reading for pleasure. Texts could include films, comics, picture books and written texts. One particular text could be chosen as a class novel, so children experience how a narrative builds up over a period of time. This unit can be linked to other curriculum subjects or themes.

Phase 1

Read and compare stories with familiar settings. Engage in investigations and analysis of various settings. Discuss atmosphere and common features and themes.

Phase 2

Reread and analyse, investigate and write sentences through modelled and shared composition.

Phase 3

Investigate and write sentences to describe a setting.

Overview

- Read short stories and serialised longer stories and review the main features of the characters, plot and setting. Discuss views, response and preferences as a class. Compare settings and analyse words and phrases used for description. Teacher demonstrates and then children plan and write a story with description of setting, beginning, middle and end. Open with description of setting to set scene. Clear beginning, middle and end.

1998 Framework objectives covered:

Year 3, Term 1: T1 and T8 compare settings in different stories; express views about a story; T16 begin to organise stories using a series of paragraphs; T11 write descriptions for settings.
(Build on Year 2: settings, narrative, characterisation and dialogue)

Objectives

To ensure effective planning of literacy teachers need to ensure they plan for all elements of literacy effectively across the year ensuring that assessment for learning is used to plan and amend teaching. It is essential that core skills such as phonic strategies, spelling, and handwriting are incorporated into these exemplar units to ensure effective learning.
Most children learn to:

(The following list comprises only the strands, numbered 1 through 12, that are relevant to this particular unit. Where there are relevant Steps in Learning for an objective, a link has been included.)

1. Speaking
   • Sustain conversation, explain or give reasons for their views or choices

2. Listening and responding
   • Follow up others' points and show whether they agree or disagree in whole-class discussion

4. Drama
   • Use some drama strategies to explore stories or issues

7. Understanding and interpreting texts
   • Explore how different texts appeal to readers using varied sentence structures and descriptive language

8. Engaging with and responding to texts
   • Share and compare reasons for reading preferences, extending the range of books read
   • Identify features that writers use to provoke readers' reactions

9. Creating and shaping texts
   • Select and use a range of technical and descriptive vocabulary

11. Sentence structure and punctuation
   • Compose sentences using adjectives, verbs and nouns for precision, clarity and impact

12. Presentation
   • Write with consistency in the size and proportion of letters and spacing within and between words, using the correct formation of handwriting joins
   • Develop accuracy and speed when using keyboard skills to type, edit and re-draft

Prior learning

Check that children can already:
   • Identify the elements of a familiar setting when discussing a story read on paper and on screen.
   • Compose and punctuate a simple sentence.
Teaching sequence phase 1

Note: Children working significantly above or below age-related expectations will need differentiated support, which may include tracking forward or back in terms of learning objectives. EAL learners should be expected to work within the overall expectations for their year group. For further advice see the progression strands and hyperlinks to useful sources of practical support.

Reading comprehension; investigation of settings (4 days)

Teaching content:

• As a whole class, read, share and discuss a variety of different settings from texts.
• Display extracts on an IWB and use IWB tools (highlight, annotate, drag and drop, undo and redo) to compare and discuss settings.
• Use zones of relevance boards with word cards to explore practically the mood and atmosphere of different settings. Ask children, in pairs, to choose the three most appropriate words to describe the setting and, through discussion, to justify their choices. Use a zones of relevance board on an IWB to share responses and extend children's discussions. Return to the text, highlight words and phrases as supporting evidence for these opinions.
• Explore descriptions of the same setting that evoke different atmospheres. Ask children, in pairs and small groups, to use the written text to consider what they might see, hear and how they would feel in this place. Link this to the atmosphere created in the writing and evidence this by finding words and phrases in the text that support this interpretation.
• Compare and contrast the descriptions by considering what makes a setting threatening or friendly, busy or peaceful, etc. Collect ideas and suggestions on an IWB to support with writing.

Learning outcomes:

• Children can express a view clearly as part of a class or group discussion.
• Children can form opinions of a text and use evidence in the text to explain their reasons.

Teaching sequence phase 2

Capturing ideas; writing in role; analysis and investigation of aspects of the text (4 days)

Teaching content:

• Use episodes from DVDs to begin to consider how atmosphere is created in visual texts.
• Develop children's understanding of camera angles by using stills from the DVD. Explore the effect of close-up, mid-shot, high point-of-view shot, etc. and make links to the effect on the reader. Display these on an IWB and annotate with children's ideas of sights, sounds, smells and feelings.
• Ask children to use evidence from the visual text when sharing their opinions. Use the IWB file 'Camera angle' to support exploration of this.
• Watch and re-watch a chosen episode in a DVD. Provide a visual focus, such as lighting or camera angle and use the pause button to discuss and explore how the director uses colour, camera angle, sound and lighting to create an atmosphere.
• Capture still images from the DVD and collect children's ideas using an IWB.
• Through modelled and shared composition, construct sentences incorporating these elements (colour, camera angle, sound and lighting).
• Link this writing to sentence work and use whiteboards to collect and edit ideas.
• Project examples of children’s written sentences onto an IWB. As authors, ask children to consider how they would describe the mood and atmosphere of their writing. Through paired discussion use the IWB tools to select words and phrases used by children to create the atmosphere in their writing. Model this process.

**Learning outcomes:**

• Children can express a view clearly as part of a class or group discussion.
• Children can form opinions of a text and use evidence in the text to explain their reasons.
• Children can use visual elements to write sentences describing settings.

**Teaching sequence phase 3**

**Teacher demonstration; shared, guided and independent writing (6-7 days)**

**Teaching content:**

• Display digital images or stills of a familiar setting or place on an IWB. Discuss the image and collect vocabulary to describe the sights, sounds, smells and feelings a character might experience here.
• With the children in role, explore the setting. Encourage them to think about how they feel exploring the scene; decide on appropriate movements, facial expressions and gestures that demonstrate what they are doing and how they feel while investigating. Ask children to freeze like statues to explore in more detail the emotions seen. Use a digital camera to capture the statues and project onto an IWB for group or class discussion of how effective these were in conveying emotion or atmosphere.
• Return to the IWB file and annotate the visual scenes with ideas and vocabulary from this activity.
• With the children, identify success criteria for the writing about familiar settings in narrative.
• Refer back to notes made at various points during the sequence and, through demonstration and shared composition on an IWB, write the first draft of a short description of a setting.
• Link this work to sentence structure and punctuation.
• Independent writing: children write their own setting. Descriptions could be word processed using laptops or PCs in a computer suite.
• Assess progress against the success criteria through the use of response partners at appropriate intervals. Use an IWB to project and share examples of children’s writing for modelling of editing and improving writing linked to children’s needs.
• When written descriptions are complete, return to the visual images used to support children’s drafting. Demonstrate how to manipulate a photograph to achieve different effects, such as:
  ◦ using a crop tool to close in on part of the image
  ◦ converting the photograph to black and white or sepia to accompany a frightening, threatening description
  ◦ lightening or darkening an image to affect mood
  ◦ softening or increasing the harshness by adjusting the contrast
  ◦ using the filters and effects of a photo editing program.
• Allow children to experiment with these techniques to enhance their descriptions for publishing.
• Completed writing and images might be projected onto an IWB as a slide show to be shared with the class or another given audience.

**Learning outcome:**

• Children can compose and punctuate a series of sentences to describe a familiar setting.
Complete teaching sequence

Note: Children working significantly above or below age–related expectations will need differentiated support, which may include tracking forward or back in terms of learning objectives. EAL learners should be expected to work within the overall expectations for their year group. For further advice see the progression strands and hyperlinks to useful sources of practical support.

Phase 1: Reading comprehension; investigation of settings (4 days)

Teaching content:

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• Explore descriptions of the same setting that evoke different atmospheres. Ask children, in pairs and small groups, to use the written text to consider what they might see, hear and how they would feel in this place. Link this to the atmosphere created in the writing and evidence this by finding words and phrases in the text that support this interpretation.
• Compare and contrast the descriptions by considering what makes a setting threatening or friendly, busy or peaceful, etc. Collect ideas and suggestions on an IWB to support with writing.

Learning outcomes:

• Children can express a view clearly as part of a class or group discussion.
• Children can form opinions of a text and use evidence in the text to explain their reasons.

Phase 2: Capturing ideas; writing in role; analysis and investigation of aspects of the text (4 days)

Teaching content:

• Use episodes from DVDs to begin to consider how atmosphere is created in visual texts.
• Develop children’s understanding of camera angles by using stills from the DVD. Explore the effect of close–up, mid–shot, high point–of–view shot, etc. and make links to the effect on the reader. Display these on an IWB and annotate with children’s ideas of sights, sounds, smells and feelings.
• Ask children to use evidence from the visual text when sharing their opinions. Use the IWB file ‘Camera angle’ to support exploration of this.
• Watch and re–watch a chosen episode in a DVD. Provide a visual focus, such as lighting or camera angle and use the pause button to discuss and explore how the director uses colour, camera angle, sound and lighting to create an atmosphere.
• Capture still images from the DVD and collect children’s ideas using an IWB.
• Through modelled and shared composition, construct sentences incorporating these elements (colour, camera angle, sound and lighting).
• Link this writing to sentence work and use whiteboards to collect and edit ideas.
• Project examples of children’s written sentences onto an IWB. As authors, ask children to consider how they would describe the mood and atmosphere of their writing. Through paired discussion use the IWB tools to select words and phrases used by children to create the atmosphere in their writing. Model this process.
Learning outcomes:

- Children can express a view clearly as part of a class or group discussion.
- Children can form opinions of a text and use evidence in the text to explain their reasons.
- Children can use visual elements to write sentences describing settings.

Phase 3: Teacher demonstration; shared, guided and independent writing (6–7 days)

Teaching content:

- Display digital images or stills of a familiar setting or place on an IWB. Discuss the image and collect vocabulary to describe the sights, sounds, smells and feelings a character might experience here.
- With the children in role, explore the setting. Encourage them to think about how they feel exploring the scene; decide on appropriate movements, facial expressions and gestures that demonstrate what they are doing and how they feel while investigating. Ask children to freeze like statues to explore in more detail the emotions seen. Use a digital camera to capture the statues and project onto an IWB for group or class discussion of how effective these were in conveying emotion or atmosphere.
- Return to the IWB file and annotate the visual scenes with ideas and vocabulary from this activity.
- With the children, identify success criteria for the writing about familiar settings in narrative.
- Refer back to notes made at various points during the sequence and, through demonstration and shared composition on an IWB, write the first draft of a short description of a setting.
- Link this work to sentence structure and punctuation and refer to Grammar for Writing: Year 3 teaching units, unit 6 as necessary.
- Independent writing: children write their own setting. Descriptions could be word processed using laptops or PCs in a computer suite.
- Assess progress against the success criteria through the use of response partners at appropriate intervals. Use an IWB to project and share examples of children’s writing for modelling of editing and improving writing linked to children’s needs.
- When written descriptions are complete, return to the visual images used to support children’s drafting. Demonstrate how to manipulate a photograph to achieve different effects, such as:
  - using a crop tool to close in on part of the image
  - converting the photograph to black and white or sepia to accompany a frightening, threatening description
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- Allow children to experiment with these techniques to enhance their descriptions for publishing.
- Completed writing and images might be projected onto an IWB as a slide show to be shared with the class or another given audience.

Learning outcome:

- Children can compose and punctuate a series of sentences to describe a familiar setting.

Assessment

Assessing Pupils' Progress

In this exemplified unit we have identified the ‘main’ assessment focuses for reading and writing. However, it is important to remember that teachers should interpret and adapt the teaching sequence to meet the needs of particular classes and this may affect the types of evidence which it is desirable and possible to gather.
In order for a judgement to be made against writing assessment focuses 1 and 2 it is important that children are given space and time to develop their own ideas and define their own purposes for writing. Opportunities to plan for this will arise throughout the literacy curriculum as well as through the application of skills across the curriculum.

The suggested outcome for this unit is a short description of a familiar setting using complete sentences. The teaching of this unit should support the collection of evidence against Reading assessment focus 2 (understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to the text), Writing assessment focus 5 (vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect) and Writing assessment focus 6 (write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences).

Evidence against a variety of assessment focuses will be collected at many points during the teaching sequence. Independence and opportunities to make decisions are integral to children’s development in reading and writing, and it will be important to collect evidence of achievement against the assessment focuses from occasions where children can demonstrate some independence and choice away from direct teaching.

Suggestions for the collection of assessment information against a range of assessment focuses are found below.

### Opportunities for assessment

The following are examples selected from the teaching content for this unit of work that will support planning for effective assessment as an integrated part of the teaching and learning process. Evidence gathered during this ongoing work will contribute to the periodic assessment of pupils’ progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Example of teaching content and assessment opportunities</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Approach to assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children can form opinions of a text and use evidence in the text to explain their reasons.</td>
<td>During a guided reading session the group consider the text that they have just finished reading. The teacher presents the group with a series of statements about the text, e.g. <em>the main character is selfish and inconsiderate, the ending was successful because it ended happily for all of the characters</em>. The children are asked to work with a partner to consider whether they agree or disagree with one of the statements and why. Their thoughts are shared and discussed. The teacher encourages pairs to return to the text to support their opinions and gather evidence to explain their reasons. The children then continue by choosing other statements and consider whether they agree or disagree with them, returning to aspects of the narrative to support their reasons.</td>
<td>Teacher observation and discussion. Oral responses.</td>
<td>Teacher questioning. Teacher observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can use visual elements to write sentences describing settings.</td>
<td>The class explore elements of film in preparation for writing. They watch and re–watch an extract from a DVD. Firstly the children focus on colour, working in pairs to note how colour is used while the teacher plays and pauses the extract at chosen points. Ideas are shared and noted on the interactive whiteboard. This is repeated with a focus on sound and then lighting. The children are given different still images from the scene and they focus on camera angles. The children annotate the images in answer to given questions, e.g. <em>Where do you think the camera is? Why is the camera positioned in this way? What can you tell about the time, place or setting?</em> Ideas are shared and displayed as part of the working wall. Through modelled and shared writing the film elements are used to construct a short written description of the setting. The teacher demonstrates how to turn the visual and auditory aspects identified by the children into sentences. Children work in pairs, discussing word choices, formulating sentences and evaluating sentences.</td>
<td>Written notes (annotated images, supported composition). Written work. Teacher observation. Oral responses.</td>
<td>Teacher questioning. Teacher observation and oral feedback.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Example of teaching content and assessment opportunities**

During guided writing the group is supported by the teacher to focus on the writing target: *use interesting vocabulary, varying the use of verbs for impact and keeping the tense consistent*. Before the session the teacher has selected sentences from the children’s work and these are projected for the group to see. They work together, discussing how the language could be adapted and changed with a focus on the use of more adventurous verbs. They change the sentences and explore the impact of these changes.

Following this the children work independently on identified sentences in their own writing. At the end of the session the teacher summarises the work and examples of redrafted sentences are shared.

**Evidence**

- Drafted sentences and final written settings.
- Oral responses.

**Approach to assessment**

- Marking and feedback (oral and written).

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**Key aspects of learning**

For further information, see the booklet *Progression in key aspects of learning* (Ref: 0524-2004) from *Learning and teaching in the primary years: Professional development resources* (Ref: 0518-2004G).

**Reasoning**

Children will ask questions about the reasons for events in stories, returning to the text for evidence and applying their wider knowledge and experience.

**Information processing**

Children will identify relevant information from different texts on paper and on screen and will use these to support their own writing.

**Evaluation**

Children will discuss success criteria for their written work, give feedback to others and judge the effectiveness of their own descriptions.

**Empathy**

Writing and listening to stories based on first-hand experience will help children to understand what others might be thinking or feeling in a particular situation.

**Social skills**

When working collaboratively, children will listen to and respect other people’s ideas. They will undertake a variety of roles in group contexts.
Communication

Children will develop their ability to discuss as they work collaboratively in paired, group and whole-class contexts. They will communicate outcomes orally, in writing and through ICT if appropriate.