Year 3 Narrative Unit 3 – Adventure and mystery

Adventure and mystery (4 weeks)

This is the third in a block of four narrative units in Year 3. It builds on children’s experience and knowledge from the previous two units. The unit can be linked to other curriculum subjects and themes.

Phase 1

Read a range of short adventure stories and begin reading a mystery story (to run throughout the unit). Investigate plot structure and identify typical themes, settings and characters. Explore a moral dilemma faced by a particular character using discussion and drama. Children then express and justify their judgments and demonstrate empathy for the character.

Phase 2

Analyse language use and connectives to signal time, place or sequence. Explore different types of sentence and the effect of varying sentence length. Recount an incident from the story in a different way, for example in a conversation between two characters or in a letter.

Phase 3

Plan and write an extended adventure story divided into chapters or paragraphs. Identify a problem, events and resolution and use typical characters and settings. Include elements from reading, such as description, action sequences, dialogue. Check finished work and present finished stories to the class, for example as a book.

Overview

- Read and analyse examples of the genre, to include a longer, serialised story. At intervals during reading, discuss characters’ feelings, behaviour, etc. Recount a particular incident from a story in different ways, for example as a letter (using first or third person consistently). Plan and write a longer story with logical sequence of events, conflict and resolution.

1998 Framework objectives covered:

Year 3, Term 2: T1, analyse the language used to open stories and create atmosphere.

Year 3, Term 3: T1, T3 and T5 identify first and third person; discuss characters' feelings, behaviour, relationships with reference to the text; retell and compare stories orally; T12 write a first person account, using first/third person consistently; T22 experiment with recounting the same event in a variety of ways, e.g. story, letter, news report; T10 and T13 plan by plotting a sequence of episodes: logical sequence of events with conflict/climax and resolution; write more extended stories set out in chapters or paragraphs.
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.)

3. Group discussion and interaction
   • Use the language of possibility to investigate and reflect on feelings, behaviour or relationships

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

7. Understanding and interpreting texts
   • Infer characters’ feelings in fiction and consequences in logical explanations
   • 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
   • Empathise with characters and debate moral dilemmas portrayed in texts
   • Identify features that writers use to provoke readers’ reactions

9. Creating and shaping texts
   • Make decisions about form and purpose; identify success criteria and use them to evaluate their own writing
   • Use beginning, middle and end to write narratives in which events are sequenced logically and conflicts resolved
   • Select and use a range of technical and descriptive vocabulary

10. Text structure and organisation
    • Signal sequence, place and time to give coherence
    • Group related material into paragraphs

11. Sentence structure and punctuation
    • Show relationships of time, reason and cause, through subordination and connectives
    • Compose sentences using adjectives, verbs and nouns for precision, clarity and impact
    • Clarify meaning through the use of exclamation marks and speech marks
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.

Prior learning

Check that children can already:

- Demonstrate understanding of the features of particular types of text by talking about similarities and differences in characters, settings and events.
- Write a complete story with: sequence of events in paragraphs for the opening, problem, resolution, ending; descriptions of new characters or settings; complete sentences in third person and past tense; examples of patterned story language and dialogue with speech marks.
- Express an opinion and explain a point of view, for example, by using evidence from the text.

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 (6 days)

Teaching content:

- Select several examples of short adventure stories to read aloud as children follow. Provide adventures for children to read independently or in groups at an appropriate reading level. Encourage children to express and explain their personal response to the stories and link this to their choices for independent reading.
- Investigate the structure of adventure stories and identify common themes. Ask children to identify the most exciting moment in a story and plot this at the top of a mountain shape. Then plot the other key events. Compare the structure with other adventures and note similarities, for example an exciting incident to start the story and introduce the problem; fast pace with plenty of build-ups to keep up the excitement. Identify themes such as looking for something, correcting a wrong, chasing something.
- Look at the way the action moves through different settings. Note the way that settings often start somewhere safe and familiar, move to somewhere unfamiliar or scary and return to safety at the end. Collect examples of language used to create effects.
- Identify typical characters in adventures, for example, a few main heroes or heroines versus an evil character. Encourage children to empathise with characters: for example, ask them to imagine themselves in a particular situation - would they behave in the same way? Discuss a moral dilemma faced by one of the characters.
- Explore the character's thoughts, feelings and actions using hot seating and role-play. Make and justify judgements about their actions.
- Read a longer mystery story as a serial story running through the unit. Involve children in noting the main events at the end of each reading session and plot the shape of the story. Involve children in making predictions at various key points, encouraging them to look out for clues in the text.
- Look at particular characters and consider what is revealed about them and what may be hidden. Relate this to the plot and consider facts they might not want other characters to know about.
- Talk about the way a longer story is likely to repeat the problem-events-resolution pattern several times. Note the author's techniques for holding the reader's interest, for example, cliff-hangers.
Learning outcomes:

• Children can identify key features of adventure stories.
• Children can explain reasons why a character has behaved in a particular way.
• Children can identify how the author engages the reader and maintains interest.

Teaching sequence phase 2

Analysis and writing (5 days)

Teaching content:

• Continue reading the serial story and review adventures read so far. Note the way that language is used to set scenes, build tension and create suspense. Look at the way that paragraphs are opened and review the use of connectives to signal time, place and sequence. Collect examples of words and phrases that do this in an exciting or dramatic way, for example, ‘a moment later...’ (see also Grammar for Writing: Year 3 teaching units, unit 18).
• Look closely at an extract from one story and explore different types of sentence. Highlight simple, compound and complex sentences in different colours and talk about their effects, for example a short sentence for dramatic effect: They were lost. Children experiment with writing a paragraph to describe an action sequence using sentences of different length (see also Grammar for Writing: Year 3 teaching units, unit 17).
• After completing the serial story, compare mysteries and adventures. Note similarities and differences: for example, plots are about solving a problem or defeating evil, but in a mystery key facts remain hidden until the end and the reader needs to look for clues.
• Select an incident from one of the stories and challenge children to recount it in different ways. Work in pairs as two characters from the story and act out a conversation in role, where one asks questions about the event and the other answers based on their own experience. Demonstrate how to write a letter in role as a different character, giving a first-person account of events. Ask children to take on a different role and compose their own letters.

Learning outcome:

• Children can recount an incident from a story maintaining a first-person viewpoint.

Teaching sequence phase 3

Writing (9 days)

Teaching content:

• Make a set of cards with typical adventure settings, characters (heroes and baddies) and ideas for plots. Children work in groups of three. They have a card each and work out a story using the three ideas. Cards are then picked again to mix and match a new story idea. Take feedback and make notes of best ideas for adventure stories.
• Introduce the independent writing task: children will plan and write their own extended adventure stories organised into paragraphs or chapters. The audience will be other children in the class and finished stories will be available as books or on screen for others to read. Children talk in pairs to develop their story ideas from the mix and match activity. Children then plan independently, for example by plotting the main events on a mountain shape with a problem, a series of exciting events leading to the climax and a resolution.
• Discuss expectations and agree success criteria for the finished stories: an adventure story with a problem and resolution; paragraphs and/or chapters with connectives to signal time, sequence or place; description of typical setting and characters; written dialogue that moves the plot on.
• Children write independently over several days. They follow their story plans, rehearse sentences orally, reread and check as they are writing. Work with guided writing groups to review writing and offer support as appropriate.
• Focus on specific teaching points with the whole class at intervals and encourage children to use these points in their own writing.
• Focus on composing dialogue. Remind children about previous work on dialogue and build on this. Identify the reporting clause and demonstrate how to insert it in the middle of speeches. Experiment with ways to add necessary detail to the reporting clause, for example about the setting, to describe the character or to move the plot on.
• Remind children about features they have seen in adventure stories that make the story exciting and engage the reader's interest, for example descriptions to evoke atmosphere, action sequences, dialogue. Look at ways to use these ideas in their own writing.
• Children read finished stories to a partner, check them using the success criteria and make changes where necessary. They make decisions about the best way to present their work on paper or on screen.

**Learning outcomes:**

• Children can plan an extended narrative using the key features of the text-type.
• Children can write an extended adventure story with logically sequenced events and a resolution.

**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 (6 days)**

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• Look at the way the action moves through different settings. Note the way that settings often start somewhere safe and familiar, move to somewhere unfamiliar or scary and return to safety at the end. Collect examples of language used to create effects.
• Identify typical characters in adventures, for example, a few main heroes or heroines versus an evil character. Encourage children to empathise with characters: for example, ask them to imagine themselves in a particular situation – would they behave in the same way? Discuss a moral dilemma faced by one of the characters.
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• Look at particular characters and consider what is revealed about them and what may be hidden. Relate this to the plot and consider facts they might not want other characters to know about.
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• Children can explain reasons why a character has behaved in a particular way.
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Teaching content:

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Phase 3: Writing (9 days)

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• Focus on specific teaching points with the whole class at intervals and encourage children to use these points in their own writing.
• Focus on composing dialogue. Remind children about previous work on dialogue and build on this. Identify the reporting clause and demonstrate how to insert it in the middle of speeches. Experiment with ways to add necessary detail to the reporting clause, for example about the setting, to describe the character or to move the plot on (see also Grammar for Writing: Year 3 teaching units, unit 16).
• Remind children about features they have seen in adventure stories that make the story exciting and engage the reader's interest, for example descriptions to evoke atmosphere, action sequences, dialogue. Look at ways to use these ideas in their own writing.
• Children read finished stories to a partner, check them using the success criteria and make changes where necessary. They make decisions about the best way to present their work on paper or on screen.

Learning outcomes:

• Children can plan an extended narrative using the key features of the text–type.
• Children can write an extended adventure story with logically sequenced events and a resolution.

Assessment

Assessing pupils' progress

In this exemplified unit we have identified the main assessment focuses (AFs) 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 choice of AFs against which you wish to gather a range of evidence.

In order for a judgement to be made against writing AFs 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 longer adventure or mystery story with a logical sequence of events, conflict and resolution. The teaching of this unit should support the collection of evidence against reading AF2 (understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to the text), writing AF3 (organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events), writing AF5 (vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect).

Evidence against a variety of AFs 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. Therefore, as well as using assessment opportunities within the structure of the unit (as exemplified below) it will also be important to collect evidence of achievement against the AFs from occasions where children can demonstrate independence and choice.

Suggestions for the collection of assessment information against a range of AFs 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 children's progress.
### Learning outcomes

<table>
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<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Example of teaching content and assessment opportunities</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Approach to assessment</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Children can explain reasons why a character has behaved in a particular way.</strong></td>
<td>A key point for a character is explored through drama. The class explores what the character is thinking when the incident takes place, creating and sharing thought bubbles to track the variety of thoughts running through the character’s mind. These are displayed on the working wall. To find out more about the character’s behaviour and motives, children work in pairs using the tracked thoughts to compose questions that will enable them to probe further. With the teacher or a child in role, the class interviews the character. Character responses noted by the teacher are used to underpin discussion work, for example <strong>Was this action appropriate/justified? How was the character feeling at this point in the story? What events led to this action/behaviour?</strong> Children use their knowledge of the character to write in the first person (e.g. an agony aunt letter) describing what they have done, why, and how they feel about it.</td>
<td>Written notes (sticky notes, thought bubbles) Written work Teacher observation Oral responses Digital photographs</td>
<td>Teacher questioning Teacher observation Marking and feedback (oral and written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children can write an extended adventure story with logically sequenced events and a resolution.</strong></td>
<td>Children are in the process of writing their adventure story. During a guided writing session children are guided by the teacher to improve the structure of sentences in their openings. Children work in pairs to improve one sentence from a child’s work and these improvements are shared and discussed. Before the session the teacher has identified specific sentences in each child’s work to be re–drafted and improved. Following the shared example, children work independently to improve their identified sentences. These changes are added to the draft stories. At the end of the session the teacher sums up the group’s work and shares examples. Clear links are made to the success criteria for the extended story.</td>
<td>Drafted sentences and final written narrative Oral responses</td>
<td>Marking and feedback (oral and written) Use of writing conferences: analysing – marking and assessing writing with children</td>
</tr>
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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).

#### Empathy

By taking part in role-play activities, children will be able to identify more closely with fictional characters and will be helped to understand their feelings and actions.

#### Creative thinking

Children will use creative thinking to extend and consider alternatives to typical elements of an adventure story and create a new story of their own.
Social skills

When working collaboratively, children will listen to and respect other people's ideas. They will take on different roles in a group.

Communication

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