Year 6 literacy: Additional text-based units

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You can use these units to help support your planning, teaching and assessment of the Primary Framework for literacy. The units make direct reference to specific texts and go beyond exemplified units by providing more detailed support.

Unit 1: Street Child by Berlie Doherty

You can use this unit summary, suggested timing and prior learning to support your planning and teaching of the Primary Framework across this unit.

Additional text-based units make direct reference to specific texts and go beyond exemplified units by providing more detailed support.
Suggested timing

Three weeks

Prior learning

Check that children can already:

- make notes based on evidence in texts
- infer meaning from a text and offer support for their opinion
- make comments in class or group discussions showing an awareness of the author's viewpoint.

Learning objectives

Edit Selection

There are no Learning objectives for the selections you have made. Please edit your selections.

Teaching sequence

You can use the teaching and learning outcomes in each phase to support your unit planning and help you plan for the children's learning across the unit.

The teaching sequences model good practice. You will need to tailor and develop this unit to match the needs of your pupils and the curriculum of your school.

Phase 1: Settings, themes and characters

Suggested timing

Around five days

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Teaching

• Read the preface of *Street Child* by Berlie Doherty to the children. Ask them to think about what this tells them about the character Jim. ‘Who do we think this is?’ ‘When and where do we think story is taking place?’ Ensure the children have access to the text. Model finding inferential evidence. Scribe the children’s ideas on a flipchart or interactive whiteboard (IWB) or into the first page of a class reading journal.

• Working in mixed-ability groups and, using an image depicting Victorian Britain, ask the children to discuss the images and make notes about what they see and what it might have been like to have lived in this era. Ask each group to report back to the class.

• Read Chapter 1. Ask the children what they know about the family from this chapter. Re-read the last section from ‘But the pie has grown cold...’ and ask the children to visualise the scene as you read it. Discuss what Jim could hear and how they think he might have been feeling. Working with a partner, ask the children to capture their visualisation as a drawing and to annotate the drawing highlighting key events and Jim’s feelings. Encourage the use of the text to support responses and ideas.

• Read Chapter 2. Discuss whether Mr Spink is right or wrong to ask the family to leave. Working in groups of five, ask the children to choose a scene from this chapter to portray using freeze-framing (see [Role-play and drama](#) for details about freeze framing). The group will need to think of a caption for their freeze-frame to summarise events for the rest of the class. As a class share the freeze-frames. Discuss the choices made when creating the freeze-frame and discuss what the family could do to escape their situation. Record ideas using sticky notes to add to the class reading journal.

• Read Chapter 3. Discuss the reasons why Jim’s mother left his sisters at the big house. Working collaboratively, ask the children to imagine that they are Emily and Lizzie and role-play an imaginary conversation between the two girls. Focus on their feelings at being left and any thoughts they may have about the mother and brother they have left behind. Use modelled, shared and supported composition techniques to support the children in writing a note in role as one of the sisters, to their mum explaining their feelings, thoughts and fears.

• Read Chapter 4 before the next session. Give each child a copy of the first three pages of Chapter 3 from ‘Jim and his mother walked for most of that day...’ until ‘The boy pushed his cart out and slammed the door shut.’ Explain that the children will be performing their own radio play of this section of the text later in the session. Use an enlarged version of the text to demonstrate how to alter the text into a script. Using sections of dialogue or narration, ask the children to work collaboratively to develop their own scripts. Rehearse the reading and discuss improvements that could be
made to both the scripts and the performance before reading through the script again.
• Before the next session, read Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Learning outcomes

• Children can express opinions about the dilemmas and choices faced by a character, making reference to the text, wider reading and experience.
• Children can use references to text, wider reading and experience to support opinions expressed when working in role as a character from the narrative.

Phase 2: Using evidence and retrieving information

Suggested timing

Around four days

Teaching

• As a class, discuss Jim's life in the workhouse. Record suggestions and use shared reading to support the children to find evidence from across a text to support ideas and retrieve helpful information.
• Provide small groups of children with an illustration depicting life in a workhouse. Ask the children to discuss what they can see in the image and how it makes them feel. Ask the children to re-interpret the information gained from the images to make their own drawing of Jim in the workhouse. Display and discuss the finished drawings, focusing on what Jim would have been missing about his life before entering the workhouse. Use sticky notes to record ideas about what Jim would be missing about his previous life. Add the sticky notes into the class reading journal.
• Read aloud Chapter 8. As a class, discuss arguments for and against Jim remaining in the workhouse. Use the drama technique 'conscience alley', with one child in role as Jim, to expand the children's understanding of the dilemma faced by the main character. Key ideas from the session could be recorded in the class reading journal.
• Re-read the last paragraph of Chapter 8 asking the children to visualise the scene as you read. Draw out words or phrases used by the author that helped them to picture the events. Highlight these on
an enlarged text. Talk with them about how these word choices help us imagine how Jim is feeling. Ask the children to turn to a partner and think of other words and phrases which indicate key events and Jim's feelings. Note suggestions on a flipchart. Model how the words collected can be used to create a 'list poem' which summarises the scene, for example:

- escape
- invisible
- gliding
- weak and panting
- darting
- hiding
- breath bursting.

- Explore ways to improve the order of the words and phrases listed. Working collaboratively, ask the children to write their own poem to capture their interpretation of the scene. Read on to Chapter 11 before the next session.
- Read Chapters 10 and 11. Talk with the children about Rosie's story. What might have happened after the night Jim's mother arrived? Is Rosie telling the truth about what happened to Emily and Lizzie? Explain that the children are going to explore Rosie's character in depth by writing a secret diary entry as Rosie.
- Discuss with the class how 'hot-seating' Rosie can be used to gather ideas to support them to write in role. Model thinking and composing questions that they might want to ask Rosie. Hot-seat one child in role as Rosie. Ask individuals to pose questions in order to gain a better understanding of events from Rosie's point of view. Use shared and guided writing to write a diary entry in role as Rosie, describing what happened to her after Jim's family arrived at the 'Big House', why she lost her job, what happened to Jim's sisters and how she feels about seeing Jim again.

**Learning outcomes**

- Children can retrieve specific information in the text to support their opinions.
- Children can infer characters' feelings based on the historical context of the narrative.
Phase 3: Writing in role

Suggested timing

Around seven days

Teaching

• Read the extract from Chapter 12 which starts 'One of them was a red haired pokey sort of boy...’ and ends 'I'll talk to him today. I'll find out what he's called that's what.' Ask the children to re-read this section in pairs and highlight information they find about the character Shrimps. Ask the children to re-interpret the information as a drawing of Shrimps, noting what they have found out about him so far around the edge of their sketch. Extend the discussion by asking the children to think about and note what Shrimps' feels about his mother and his wish for a brother. Ensure inferential and deductive evidence from the text is used to support opinions.

• Read Chapters 13, 14 and 15 before the next session. Talk with the class about what it was like for Jim on board The Lily. Working in pairs, ask the children to freeze-frame a scene from this chapter. Ask pairs to voice their thoughts in role. At the end of the session the children should discuss and then record in a 'thought bubble' the key thought of the character. Compare and contrast the findings from each group.

• Read on to Chapter 20 before the next session. Discuss and list the main locations that Jim has been to during the story. Demonstrate how a character's journey through a book can be depicted by drawing a map. Ask the children to make their own story maps to show Jim's journey from his room in the overcrowded house he shared with his mother and sisters, to the circus.

• Before the next session, read on to Chapter 26. Ask the children to work in pairs, with one in role as Jim and one as Barney, as Jim tells his story. Using the story maps as a support, discuss how Barney might feel hearing Jim's story. Working in groups of five or six, ask the children to freeze-frame the scene on the rooftops when Barney sees the street boys for the first time. Ask the children to voice their thoughts in role as Barney and make a note of these to refer to in the next session.

• Begin the session by reading the end of the story. Discuss what Barney feels about hearing Jim's story and his reaction to seeing the street children, referring to the drama and storytelling in the last session. Ask them to write a diary entry in role as Doctor Barnardo, containing a comprehensive recount of Jim's story and his plans for the future.
• Read the author’s note and show the children information about Doctor Barnardo and his work. Give the children copies of information from the following website page, or encyclopaedias and information books and ask them to work with a partner to make a poster advertising Doctor Barnardo’s homes for destitute boys: ‘No destitute child ever turned away’.

Learning outcome

Children can transfer key aspects of the narrative and inferred feelings or opinions into a chronological recount when writing in role.

Related Links

• Historical fiction
• Primary Victorian Britain links

File Attachments

• Streetchild images: Workhouse images (pdf 927 KB)

Assessment

You can use these suggested strategies to assess learning across this unit. You will find assessment focuses and examples of opportunities for assessment that link to the unit learning outcomes.

Evidence against a variety of assessment focuses could be collected at many points during the teaching sequences. It is important for you to collect evidence of achievement against the assessment focuses from occasions where children can demonstrate some independence and choice away from direct teaching. This is especially useful when making a judgement against writing assessment focuses 1 and 2.

The main assessment focuses for reading and writing are identified in this unit, but you can interpret and adapt the teaching sequence to meet the needs of your class. This may affect the types of evidence which it is desirable and possible to gather.
Assessment

This unit will demonstrate evidence of achievement against:

- reading assessment focus 2 – understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text
- reading assessment focus 5 – explain and comment on writers’ uses of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level
- writing assessment focus 7 – select appropriate and effective vocabulary.

It is important that you remember to link this work with the learning children do during discrete spelling sessions and encourage them to apply their knowledge when reading and writing.

Opportunities for assessment

The following are examples selected from the teaching sequence for this exemplified unit of work that will support planning for effective assessment as an integrated part of the teaching and learning process.

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<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Example of teaching and assessment opportunities</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Approach to assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children are able to discuss the author’s use of language, for example, to describe characters and settings.</td>
<td>In groups of three or four the children study an illustration of a scene in a workhouse. Ask the children to talk in their groups about what they can see in the image. Using different colour pens to code, the children annotate the picture with words describing what they see and how the picture makes them feel. Each group’s vocabulary is shared and placed in a class reading journal. The children then make their own annotated drawing of Jim in the workhouse and include ‘thought bubbles’ to illustrate.</td>
<td>Annotation Discussion Drawing</td>
<td>Teacher observation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning outcomes</td>
<td>Example of teaching and assessment opportunities</td>
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<td>how he is feeling and what he might be missing about his previous life, outside the workhouse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In shared reading re-read the last paragraph of Chapter 8 which begins 'Jim crept forward...' and ask the children to close their eyes and visualise the scene. In pairs, the children consider which words or phrases helped them picture what was happening. Using an enlarged version of the text displayed on a flipchart or an interactive whiteboard, highlight the words and phrases as the children identify them. Discuss with the children how these word choices helped them imagine how Jim was feeling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children are able to search text closely to refer to the text when explaining ideas.</td>
<td>In shared writing, discuss with the class all the places that Jim has been to during the story. Scribe a list of these locations and then begins to demonstrate how a character's journey through a book can be depicted with a map of the story. The children continue the activity independently making their own story maps to show Jim's journey from his room in the overcrowded house he shared with his mother and sisters, to the circus. Work with some groups in guided reading, supporting children to refer to the text and retrieve information by identifying the main locations for events.</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Observation</td>
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<td>Story maps</td>
<td>Marking drawings and writing</td>
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Unit 2: Sensational! by Roger McGough

You can use this unit summary, suggested timing and prior learning to support your planning and teaching of the Primary Framework across this unit.

Additional text-based units make direct reference to specific texts and go beyond exemplified units by providing more detailed support.

Suggested timing

Two weeks

Prior learning

Check that children can already:

• understand how a theme is presented to a reader in a poem
• comment on authors' and poets' choices of language to gain a particular effect on a reader
• make notes based on evidence gained from a text
• create texts where words and images are combined to create meaning.

Related Links

• Structured poems

Learning objectives

Edit Selection

There are no Learning objectives for the selections you have made. Please edit your selections.
Teaching sequence

You can use the teaching and learning outcomes in each phase to support your unit planning and help you plan for the children's learning across the unit.

The teaching sequences model good practice. You will need to tailor and develop this unit to match the needs of your pupils and the curriculum of your school.

Phase 1: Reading, capturing ideas, note taking and writing poetry

Suggested timing

Teaching

• Explain to the children that you will be sharing a range of poems from one collection over several days and that they will be listening to, reading, talking about, performing, writing and presenting poems and choosing their favourites. As part of the unit children can keep their own 'poetry journal'.
• Read aloud 'The Magic of the Brain' without disclosing the title or displaying the text. Re-read the poem asking the children to visualise the poem as you read. Working with a talk partner ask the children to discuss their initial responses to the poem. Record any feedback from the discussion.
• Ask the children to describe any pictures they saw in their mind's eye. Re-read the poem again, this time displaying the text. Ask the children to identify any words or phrases they think are particularly striking. Record two or three points in the class reading journal. Using copies of the poem, ask the children to work in pairs to note words or phrases that they identify as striking in their own poetry journals. Conclude the session by discussing and sharing possible alternative titles for the poem.
• Re-read the poem with the class ensuring the children have access to a copy. Explain how the poem's structure is going to be unpacked to support their own writing. Ask the children to identify patterns in the poem, highlighting any that they spot. They may notice that:
  ◦ the first and last line of each verse is similar
  ◦ the poet not only describes the object but also how it makes her feel.
• Highlight the first and last lines of each verse and explain to the class that they are going to write their own verses, using a similar pattern. Create a spider diagram on a flipchart or interactive whiteboard based on one of the senses using the following suggested headings: 'Such a...', 'Things I have chosen to describe', 'What it is like' and 'How it makes me feel'.
• Working with the whole class, fill in the spider diagram focusing on one sense. Ask the children to decide which sense and sensation they wish to write about and work with a partner to complete a spider diagram of their own ideas.
• Using modelled and shared writing, write a verse for a class poem building on the opening and closing lines from the original poem, for example, 'Such a sight I saw'. Use the ideas from the spider diagrams to take suggestions from the class. Conclude the verse with 'Such a sight I saw'. Allow the children time to work individually in their poetry journals to write a first draft of their own verse.
• Using two or three examples written by the children, discuss with the class strengths in the writing and explore how the work could be improved. Use response partners to support further re-drafting and editing. Once completed, publish using the recording facility found in presentation software programmes or create a class anthology.

Learning outcomes

• Children can reflect on the poem through both discussion and their own notes taking.
• Children can reflect on their own writing, edit and improve it based on individual challenges they have set themselves as writers.

Phase 2: Familiarisation, reading and performing poems

Suggested timing

Around two days

Teaching

• Display poems 'Ears Hear' (Lucia M., and James L. Humes Jr) and 'Louder than a clap of thunder' (Jack Prelutsky) side by side. Read the poems to the class. Discuss with the children what the poems tell us about sounds. Introduce the class to two ways of performing the poems. To perform 'Ears Hear', divide the class into
three groups, with each group reading one verse and the whole class reading the last line. For 'Louder than a clap of thunder' divide the class into eight groups, with group 1 reading the first line and adding a new group with each successive line (second line: groups 1 and 2, third line: groups 1, 2, and 3, fourth line: groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 and so on). Repeat this with the second verse. Ask the children to start each verse quietly and increase the volume.

- Ask for additional ideas to perform the poems, for example, using different numbers of people or varying the volume to enhance the meaning. Divide the class into groups of four. Ask the children to prepare their own performance of 'Ears Hear' or 'Louder than a clap of thunder', utilising ways of performing the poem to reflect the meaning. Perform the poem to the class. Performances by different groups can be recorded using a digital video camera or webcam. The video can be included in the presentation software anthology.
- Ask children to reflect on the two poems in groups of four. Ask them to discuss which poem they think works well and why they think this is. Children may refer to the rhythm, the poets' use of rhyme and humour. Record some points of the discussion in the class poetry journal as a model and then ask the children to record their thoughts in their poetry journals.
- The children could also be asked to write their own verse in the style of 'Ears Hear' at home or during sessions where they have opportunities to direct their own learning.

Learning outcome

Children can interpret poems using actions, sound effects, musical patterns, images and dramatic interpretation.

Phase 3: Capturing ideas, responding to images and writing poetry

Suggested timing

Around five days

Teaching

- Introduce 'Preludes' by T.S. Eliot through displaying an image that evokes the atmosphere of the poem. In talk partners, children discuss what they can see and record their responses on sticky notes displayed around the image. Extend the discussion by asking
what the image tells the children about the place, time and season. Ask children to imagine what smells might be associated with the images. Record responses.

• Before reading 'Preludes' explain that the poem can be interpreted as a picture painted in words. Read and re-read the poem with the class. Ask the children to discuss and make notes in their poetry journals of any words or phrases that they particularly like, what they know about the place, time and season and to speculate about the ‘story’ behind the poem.

• Using the notes made in their journals, ask the children to find or create an image to illustrate all or part of the poem to form a display around the text of the poem.

• Display 'Vegan Delight' by Benjamin Zephaniah and 'An Everything Pizza' by Linda J. Knaus. Read 'Vegan Delight'. Ask the children what they like about the poem and note their responses in the class poetry journal. Ask the children if they can explain the word 'vegan' and also what they know about any of the foods mentioned in the poem. Further discussion can explore why the children think that the poem is titled 'Vegan Delight' and what they think we can deduce about the poet from the poem.

• Using a displayed copy of 'Vegan Delight', ask children why they think the poem was good for performance – they might suggest the rhythm, the short lines or the rhymes. A simple performance of the poem could be practised by the children reading one line each around the class. Establish a clapped beat and practise reading the poem several times. The poem 'An Everything Pizza' by Linda J. Knaus can be used in a similar way.

• Explore how the poet has created the poem. Ask them to work with a partner to underline the rhymes in the poem – some of these are full rhymes, for example, 'curd' and 'word'; others are half rhymes such as 'nan' and 'uttapam'. Using shared writing begin to create a class poem. Decide what kind of food they are going to create the poem about, for example, fruit and vegetables, their favourite foods, healthy foods, unhealthy foods, etc. It may be useful to consult a rhyming dictionary. Children work individually to write a first draft of their own poem.

• Choose two or three examples of verses written by the children. Discuss with the class what they like about the verse, for example, the use of particular words or phrases or rhymes. Explore how the work can be improved. Working with response partners, children discuss ways of improving their poems. Children re-draft and edit poems as appropriate.

• Children could publish poetry using presentation software or class anthology.

Learning outcomes

• Children can explore the poet's perspective from what is written and from what is implied.
• Children can comment on how the poet uses language for effect.
• Children can combine selected appropriate images to amplify the underlying meaning of the words in their own poetry.

Related Links

• [Structured poems](#)

Assessment

You can use these suggested strategies to assess learning across this unit. You will find assessment focuses and examples of opportunities for assessment that link to the unit learning outcomes.

Evidence against a variety of assessment focuses could be collected at many points during the teaching sequences. It is important for you to collect evidence of achievement against the assessment focuses from occasions where children can demonstrate some independence and choice away from direct teaching. This is especially useful when making a judgement against writing assessment focuses 1 and 2.

The main assessment focuses for reading and writing are identified in this unit, but you can interpret and adapt the teaching sequence to meet the needs of your class. This may affect the types of evidence which it is desirable and possible to gather.

Assessment

This unit will demonstrate evidence of achievement against:

• reading assessment focus 3 – deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts
• reading assessment focus 4 – identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level
• reading assessment focus 5 – explain and comment on writers’ uses of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level
• writing assessment focus 7 – select appropriate and effective vocabulary.
It is important that you remember to link this work with the learning children do during discrete spelling sessions and encourage them to apply their knowledge when reading and writing.

**Opportunities for assessment**

The following are examples selected from the teaching sequence for this exemplified unit of work that will support planning for effective assessment as an integrated part of the teaching and learning process.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children can discuss ways in which poets use language to make meanings, with particular reference to rhyme, rhythm, word choices.</td>
<td>Over several days, during shared reading with the children, respond to poems from the 'Sensational!' anthology by performing, reading aloud and presenting poems as a class and in small groups. Discuss with the children themes and techniques used by poets. The children create their own poetry journals in which to record their reflections on describing, for example, how different poets use language for effect.</td>
<td>Children's oral presentation, Teacher observation</td>
<td>Teacher observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can discuss effects of particular languages choices.</td>
<td>Share only the title of a poem, for example, 'The Magic of the Brain' and then ask the children to write down what they think the poem will be about. On large sheets the children record words that they believe might be included in the poem. Reveal the poem to the children and read it with them. The children share their thoughts on the choice of language and techniques used by the poet with talk partners. Ask whether they can think of an alternative title. Children work in pairs and then groups of four, to compare their titles and then review as a class.</td>
<td>Teacher observation, Discussion</td>
<td>Teacher observation, Peer-assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children can comment on how poems are structured and patterned.</td>
<td>The children re-read the poem. Ask if they notice any patterns in the poem. The children then work in pairs with a copy of the poem, re-reading it and highlighting any patterns, for example, repetition (the first and last line of each verse is similar within each verse and throughout the poem). In shared writing children take one of the senses, for example, smell and then use an agreed framework to structure their poems, this might identify what the object is, what it is like and how it makes them feel. Their ideas are recorded in a 'spidergram' format in individual poetry journals. Take the structure of a verse from a poem previously studied and model a new verse using vocabulary and phrases from a spidergram plan. Then encourage the children to work individually in their poetry journals to write a first draft of their verse in a similar way. Some children could work in a small group with additional support from an adult on individual verses or a shared verse.</td>
<td>Children's writing</td>
<td>Marking writing</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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