

Emma Parsons: Session Report

Module Two: Developing (Planning: The Scheme of Work)

Session 4: KS3 scheme of work: *Manifold Manor*

Following on from the previous session on devising schemes of work, we set about creating our own scheme of work based on Philip Gross's *Manifold Manor*. We were divided into three groups in order to tackle Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening separately. The aim was to prioritise whichever area we had been given by identifying the appropriate National Literacy objectives and the activities that could be included in a scheme of work. The introduction of the National Literacy Framework has meant that specific objectives are being met rather than touched on. (Key Stage 3 National Strategy, p19)

As a whole class we began by looking at some specific poems. 'Trespassers will...' offers both structural and rhythmical interest. The pupils for example, could be asked to differentiate between the subjective and objective statements. It was also suggested that other literary texts could be incorporated into the unit in order to offer the pupils a comparison of approaches to big houses. From this point pupils can go on to look at particular features that are frequently associated with 'spooky' houses; for example, mood and atmosphere. This could also constitute the foundation for a larger piece of class work, which could result in the completion of either a first chapter or a short story. Another idea involved the use of the front cover of Gross's book. Pupils would be asked to annotate the picture and from here be able to identify themes and adjectives. This could also contribute to the writing of their own stories.

Looking briefly at 'The Twenty-Sixers', we decided this poem would provide an excellent lesson on alliteration. For example, 'An Angel Arguing with an Ancient Ape [...] The Youth who Yawns but Yearns to Yell out Yes!' Pupils could be asked to produce a similar piece of work using the letters of the alphabet. Not only would this reinforce their knowledge and understanding of techniques used in poetry but would provide them with a framework in which they can create their own piece of poetry – something that pupils often shy away from. This then lead to a discussion of advertising, which could be linked to work on media. We often find alliteration in advertising, and it is this that makes it memorable: 'made to make your mouth water'. As in the Anglo-Saxon poetry discussed, there are four stresses; the first three are alliteration and the fourth is not. It was also pointed out here that in alliteration it is not always the first letter, but the stress.

'Jack's Elementary Riddles' reveals a poem based around the four elements; fire, water, air and earth. It was suggested that by starting with riddles the pupils could then be introduced to metaphors.

As was mentioned with 'The Twenty-Sixers', it was agreed that 'What to Call a Jackdaw' would work well with pupils who think that they cannot write poetry. The use of metaphor, sound and rhythm means that it reads aloud well, and hopefully, pupils would be able to produce their own poem using this format. Here, there was another link to Anglo-Saxon poetry. This type of poem is known as a Kenning: to describe one thing in terms of another

(Cuddon, J.A., p474). Kenning is a noun but can also be a riddle. For example, instead of using the word sea, the Anglo-Saxons would say 'whale road'. For a whale, the road would be the sea. So it is two words that have been used together to create another one. We would probably spend several lessons on these ideas and pupils would have fun using this technique; for their own poetry they could take something archaic such as an animal or vehicle.

With 'The Ballad of Bill Beale' we have moved onto something quite different. It tells a story but leaves out the boring and irrelevant aspects. Having discussed this poem we decided that the focus would be on form and creativity. In 'The Oubliette' (a dungeon for prisoners who often ended up forgotten!) we would look at the theme rather than the word choice. Finally, we looked at 'Spirit of the Place'. This is a very descriptive poem but has no adjectives. One suggestion was that the pupils could be asked to produce either a poem or a piece of prose that did not contain any adjectives. This task will still reinforce their understanding of adjectives despite them being missed out completely!

Manifold Manor has given us a wide selection of poems from which we are able to address many issues, as well as cover objectives from both word and sentence level before moving onto whole text level. At this point we moved into our groups to produce an outline or our own scheme of work. Philip Rush emphasises the three main areas that needed to be taken into consideration:

The learning aims (National Curriculum)
Objectives (small, achievable)
Outcomes (evidence)

When writing a scheme of work it is essential that we are clear about the objectives and what it is we want the pupils to learn. In terms of the learning outcomes, we need evidence that proves that the pupils have learnt it; this could take the form of a presentation. Working with *Manifold Manor* as our resource and the framework we were able to think about a scheme of work that cover four to five weeks but with the focus on individual lessons. It was pointed out here that without the resource or the objectives it is impossible to create a scheme of work.

To conclude this session, rather than discuss each group's work we talked about how helpful this session was in providing us with the groundwork to write our own schemes of work in the future. The group who focused on Speaking and Listening found that they were able to produce a whole scheme of work that was interesting, and that they were able to take these ideas back to school with them. One of the comments made by the group looking at the Reading objectives was that it was difficult knowing how to get started. They found that the pooling of ideas was extremely helpful. Indeed, in my experience I have found that that the English Department gets together on a regular basis to discuss current schemes of work, and this allows them to share ideas and check that everyone is on track. This group also said that they started with the resource and from here went on to look at the objectives. Philip

reinforced this by claiming that you must start with the resource before you can move on. The group who focused on Writing picked up on the fact that editing is also a key factor, as it can be easy to go too wide. On the other hand, it is also difficult to predict how much work can be covered. This group also took into consideration the notion of ‘all pupils must, most pupils should, and some pupils could’. It is important at this stage to identify the benchmarks, or the important tasks, which all pupils will do. This of course leads to differentiation.

References;

Cuddon, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (Penguin Group, London, 1992)

Key Stage 3 National Strategy, framework for teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9