

National Literacy and KS3 Strategies.

Session Two: The National Literacy Strategy in Key Stages 2 and 3

Introduction

The National Curriculum sets out the full and statutory learning entitlement to all pupils of compulsory school age (up to age sixteen). The structure of the curriculum highlights four key stages. Key stage 1 and 2 are the primary years. Key stage 3 is school years 7,8 and 9. Key stage 4 occurs in years 10 and 11. At the end of each key stage the pupils are assessed and attainment levels given.

The exam syllabus' fits the National Curriculum and therefore the curriculum is embodied into the different syllabuses. In 1997 the government introduced the *National Literacy strategy* for primary education. This set out clear ambitious targets for attainment at age 11.

KS2

The government introduced a literacy hour into the classroom. This was the first time that government had been explicit in telling teachers how to teach. It was the government first lesson plan. The literacy hour should begin with a 15-minute starter activity, which is different from the lesson but can be interrelated. The aim of the starter is to address the grammar or spelling issues of the class. This activity should be whole class based with class input. The second fifteen minutes should again be whole class input looking at a reading or writing activity. Next should follow a twenty-minute group session or independent work. At this stage the teacher will focus on one group, which will obviously be rotated daily. Differentiation will also be evident within this section of the lesson. The final ten minutes should be a plenary whereby all groups questioned. This is where the teacher can check that all groups have achieved something. Good practice would be to use questions like, tell us what you have learnt this lesson? or what have you done in this session?

KS3

The *Key Stage 3 strategy* was designed and developed to build upon the success of the primary school work. The national pilot began in September 2000. The aim was to use effective teaching of literacy skills, raise expectations of all pupils and to provide a fast yet effective catch up support for those who need it. Ideally English lessons should follow the same format as the literacy hour. KS3 promotes teaching that is informed by clear, challenging objectives. These have been designed to illustrate progression.

The *framework for teaching English* sets out the objectives for teaching. English teaching must hold the objectives at the heart of the lesson. Lessons need to be planned with the objectives first and the activities second. The objectives are very

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precise. These objectives should be spelt out to the class. This can be achieved by highlighting the aim on the whiteboard. Obviously not all aims of a lesson are will be English objectives, yet they can still be an aim. For example aim, to get the genders to work together.

Section 1 of the framework highlights the rationale. Secondly it highlights expected word level, sentence level and text level. Word level looks at spellings and vocabulary. Sentence level investigates grammar and construction. Text level looks at reading, writing and speaking.

Section 2 breaks down the objectives into each year group. It is from these that lesson objectives are set.

Section 3 illustrates how planning should be achieved. The framework sets out that planning should involve a lesson plan but also a short-term plan of how the lessons are following a theme or linking together.

Section 4 sets out guidelines for inclusion, this includes pupils with SEN

The framework also has got a list of spellings and confusions. These could be used as lesson fillers when the class have finished earlier than anticipated.

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