

ABOUT THE UNIT

Three programmes to inspire children to write creatively! The first programme is a whistle-stop tour of songs and poems; the second plays out fictional and factual versions of the mysterious goings-on in an ancient castle; the third is an hilarious comedy with Da from *Give My Head Peace*.

BROADCAST DATES

Programmes are broadcast on Radio Ulster, medium wave, every Tuesday morning from 11.20 - 11.40 am.

Programme	Title	Broadcast Date
8	Writing for Poetry, Songs and Ballads	9 November 2004
9	Writing for Fiction and Non-Fiction	16 November 2004
10	Da Learns the Queen's English	23 November 2004

PROGRAMME 8 – WRITING FOR POETRY, SONGS AND BALLADS**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the programme pupils should be able to

- define what a poem or poetry is
- model their own writing on that of a poet or a songwriter
- listen to and reflect on poetry read aloud
- construct some new words of their own and use them in their writing
- read a poem out loud

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

This programme takes a musical approach to poetry. Presented by two young, dynamic presenters, Martin and Hannah, the programme is full of a wide range of poems and provides children with inspiration to have a go at being poets themselves.

Martin and Hannah have great fun listening to classic poems like 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll, nonsense poems from Roger McGough and Michael Rosen and poems of a more serious style from Benjamin Zephaniah and Don Marquis.

Throughout the programme we hear lots of songs and learn that songs are just like poems – they can tell a story, like the ballad of the first railway in Tyrone, or make us feel better, like 'Reach' by S Club 7.

A stimulating and musical programme that both inspires and teaches some of the tricks of poetry and song writing.

Key words used during programme:

Poem, poetry, song, ballad, nonsense poems, verse, feelings

RESOURCES/REFERENCES:

Funky Chickens by Benjamin Zephaniah, Puffin Books (1997), ISBN 0-140-37945-2
Jabberwocky and Other Poems by Lewis Carroll, Dover Publications (2001), ISBN 0-48641-582-1
In the Classroom by Roger McGough, Jonathan Cape (1976)
 'The Tomcat' by Don Marquis is taken from:
The Poolbeg Book of Children's Verse edited by Sean McMahon, Poolbeg Press (1996), ISBN 1-853-71080-6
Don't Put Mustard in the Custard by Michael Rosen and Quentin Blake, Scholastic Children's Books (1996), ISBN 0-590-54236-2
Selected Poetry of Ogden Nash, Black Dog and Leventhal Publishing (1995), ISBN 1-88482-230-4
Candy is Dandy: The Best of Ogden Nash, Carlton Books (1994), ISBN 0-23398-892-0
 'Dinosaur' by Gabriel Fitzmaurice is taken from:
The Poolbeg Book of Irish Poetry for Children collected by Shaun Traynor, Poolbeg Press (1997), ISBN 1-85371-726-6

Music:

'Trew and Moy' about the first railway in Co. Tyrone is taken from:
Pathways – New Songs of Ulster published by Elm Grove Music (2001), co-produced by the Pathways Arts Project & Pirates for Peace

USEFUL WEBSITES:

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/ahlberg.htm> (for teachers and children) Good links from this site all about Allan Ahlberg.

www.benjaminzephaniah.com/kidz.html A web site that tells you all about Benjamin Zephaniah.

www.poetryclass.net A teachers' site which 'takes the fear out of teaching poetry'. Good advice on assessing children's poetry.

www.poetryteachers.com/poetclass/poetclass.html An easy-to-use teachers' site with lots of advice and fun activities.

www.bbc.co.uk/arts/poetry/wordplay/index.shtml An interactive site for children to write poetry in a structured way. Good for the younger child or a child needing some assistance.

www.bbc.co.uk/education/listenandwrite/home.htm An interactive site for KS2 children – write poetry in the style of a rap or listen to poems.

www.rhymezone.com A site for children to use when writing poetry. They can type in a word to find rhymes, synonyms, definitions and more.

www.poetry4kids.com A poet's own web site with lots of tips on how to write poetry.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - Before the Programme

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
WHOLE CLASS			
Discussion	What is poetry? Have a discussion with the class and try to work out a definition of what they believe poetry to be. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they think of the names of any poets? • Do they have a favourite poem? • Do they know any poems off by heart? • Do all poems have something in common? 		English Engage in talking and listening.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - After the Programme

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
INDIVIDUAL/GROUPS			
Song writing	Be a songwriter Songs are just like poems. Listen to some songs, old and new. Children can choose one that they like and write another verse for it. Songs from the programme could be used – ‘Hakuna Matata’, ‘Reach’, ‘Octopus’s Garden’ .		English – writing Modeling writing. Opportunity to engage with a range of texts, inc. poems and songs.
Research and appreciation	In-depth study of a poet Research the work of Michael Rosen or Roger McGough, who both write hilarious poems.		English – reading Opportunity to engage with a range of texts.
Writing skills	Nonsense poetry Copy some of the tricks used in poetry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make up words of your own by combining two words e.g. beautimazing = beautiful and amazing • Alliteration – crazy cats, dastardly dinosaur etc. • Put words in the wrong order as in ‘Say Please’ by Michael Rosen 	Worksheet 1 Tricks of the trade	English – reading Discussing features of language and noting how words are constructed.
Poetry writing	Write a poem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in the style of a poem such as ‘Say Please’ by Michael Rosen. • Listen to the two cat poems again – ‘The Tom Cat’ and ‘Danny Lives On’ – Now write your own poem about a cat. • Listen to the section of the programme again around the song ‘I’d like to be, under the sea, in an octopus’s garden...’. Now write a ‘what if...’ poem ie. What if I lived under the sea? 	Worksheet 2 Feline feelings	English – writing Expressive use of language to convey thoughts, feelings and imaginings. Experiment with rhyme, rhythm and verse structure. Modeling writing.

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
INDIVIDUAL/GROUPS			
Performance	<p>Have a poetry recital To finish off the work on poetry the class could be split into groups, each group choosing a poem to recite or perform for the rest of the class. This may be a poem they've written themselves or a favourite they've read.</p> <p>The poem could be acted out or background music could be used to create atmosphere. This was done when the poem 'Pretty Boy Floyd' by Woodie Guthrie was read.</p> <p>Perhaps there might be sound effects as in 'The Tom Cat' by Don Marquis.</p>		<p>English – talking and listening Reading a text out loud.</p> <p>Improvising a scene based on literature.</p> <p>Appreciation of poetry.</p>
WHOLE CLASS			
Listening and discussion	<p>After working on some of the written activities, listen to the programme again. Join in with the songs or poems that you may know better by now.</p> <p>Has the children's opinion of what poetry is changed?</p>		<p>English – talking and listening Listening to media presentations and discussing them with the teacher.</p> <p>Music Singing along.</p>

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PROGRAMME 9 – WRITING FOR FICTION AND NON-FICTION**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the programme pupils should be able to

- understand the meaning of fiction and non-fiction
- sequence a passage relating to the story
- understand how they can improve their story writing through the effective use of adjectives
- identify incidences of fact and fiction within a story

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

This is a fun, creative way of learning about the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Rich sound effects, dialogue and narration paint a picture of Dunturk Castle, a haunted place – or is it? Listeners hear two interpretations of the adventures that unfold: Jim responds to everything he hears by inventing fiction; Pam, his older sister, reports the facts.

The story starts with Jim who is sick in bed; Dad reads him a letter from his sister Pam who is holidaying with their mother in Co. Down. In her letter, Pam tells Jim of her exciting visit to Dunturk Castle, a castle with a single 70-foot tower and a drawbridge situated on a rocky cliff with the Irish Sea crashing all around. (Note: this is a fictional castle, so don't start planning your school trip!) Jim and Dad are engrossed in the tale of Pam and Mum's guided tour.

Pam's voice and a rich mix of sound effects paint the picture of Dunturk Castle. Brad, the resident tour guide, tells the visitors about its history and the famous chieftain Red Hugh O'Hanlon whose portrait hangs in the banqueting hall. Brad warns Pam and Mum not to wander off in case they go missing – like an American tourist who vanished without trace. Pam is intrigued and hopes to solve the mystery during her visit.

Brad, Pam and Mum walk around the castle dungeons, the banqueting hall and library. Mysterious incidents in each location inspire Jim, who has a very vivid imagination, to interrupt Dad's reading of the letter and add his own colourful interpretation of the events. Jim's explanations are humorous and imaginative but far-fetched. His father constantly reminds him to stick to the facts, and to consider Pam's precise choice of words. Jim soon realises that there is usually a simple explanation for the unfolding events.

By the end of the programme and at the conclusion of the tour, the mystery of the missing American tourist is solved. But Pam mentions that she will visit a haunted castle in Co. Armagh next, and you are left wondering, like Jim, when the next post is due.

Key words used during programme:

Drawbridge, fiction, non-fiction, enchanted place, spiral, clan, Vikings, Normans, chieftain, armour, dungeons, airless, portrait, banqueting hall, warriors, banshee, emigrate.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/revisewise/english/writing/index.shtml

Colourful activities on writing fiction and non-fiction (for example, directions or letters), as well as tips and tests.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - Before the Programme

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
WHOLE CLASS			
Sorting books into fiction and non-fiction	Place a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books mixed together on the table. Discuss with the children how the books could be grouped (fiction and non-fiction). Discuss what the term fiction means as opposed to non-fiction. What do you find at the back of a fiction book? Which books do the children prefer to read, fiction or non-fiction? Get the children to sort the books into groups of fiction and non-fiction.		English Opportunity to engage with a range of texts. Expressing views and observing the conventions of discussion.
Listen to the programme	If using a tape, you can stop it after one of the sound effects sequences. Ask the children what they think happened. What images were they seeing in their heads when they heard the sounds?		English – listening. Pupils should have the opportunities to engage with a wide range of texts, including audio.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - After the Programme – choose from these activities.

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
WHOLE CLASS			
Reflection and discussion	Recap the events of the story with the children, paying particular attention to the sequence of events: crossing the drawbridge, entering the castle into the circular hall, down the steps to the dungeon, next to the banqueting hall, then on to the library, the secret passageway, out into the sea cave and finally to the thatched cottage. Did the children enjoy the story? What was their favourite part? If they were to act in this programme which character would they like to be?	Worksheet 1 What happens next?	English Understanding the structure of texts, thinking about character.
Discussion	Discuss how Jim’s character is portrayed in the programme. What sort of a child is he? Imaginative, creative, expressive, someone who exaggerates... Do they know anyone like that? Using Worksheet 2, discuss the various incidents that occurred. Decide which ones actually happened and which Jim invented.	Worksheet 2 Fact or fiction?	English – reading. Thinking about character. Distinguishing between factual and fictional writing.

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
INDIVIDUAL/GROUPS			
<p>Designing a poster.</p>	<p>Collect a selection of posters and leaflets which advertise tours around castles, famous buildings, cities, and so on. Discuss their layout and content with the children.</p> <p>Get the children to design their own poster advertising tours around Dunturk Castle. Remind them to include its location, some of the castle's history, the opening hours during peak and off-peak seasons, the fact that there is a guided tour, the times of the tour and what the tour includes. Get them to come up with an eye-catching slogan.</p> <p>Alternatively the children could design their own Dunturk Castle Family Board Game based on the incidents that happen in the castle.</p> <p>Each game would be based on the simple notion of Snakes and Ladders and there would be appropriate rewards and punishments, for example 'You chose the wrong doorway in the circular hallway. Miss a turn.'</p>		<p>English – reading and writing Engaging with a range of texts including non-fiction materials, for examples brochures, information leaflets etc.</p> <p>Art Representing information texts in a range of visual forms.</p>
<p>Writing</p>	<p>Discuss with the children Pam's use of adjectives.</p> <p>How did she describe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the dungeons (damp and airless); • the cliff (rocky); • the clouds (seven, grey, black); • the torches (blazing); • the doors (12, identical, wooden)? <p>Help the children discover how adjectives help to make the story more visual and make it come to life.</p> <p>Using Worksheet 3 help the children identify the adjectives.</p>	<p>Worksheet 3 Exciting Adjectives</p>	<p>English – writing Awareness of adjectives in descriptive writing.</p> <p>Grammar identifying adjectives.</p>

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PROGRAMME 10 – DA LEARNS THE QUEEN'S ENGLISH**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the programme pupils should be able to

- understand the term 'vernacular'
- understand the term 'colloquial'
- understand the term 'Standard English'
- understand when it is appropriate to use one or the other mode

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Northern Ireland Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage Two stipulate that pupils should 'understand a wide range of colloquial expressions'. This pacy comedy all about misunderstandings and miscommunication will achieve that and more!

Da from BBC NI's *Give My Head Peace* receives a visit from Caroline, an Education Welfare Officer. Caroline explains that she has taken on a special project: Simon and Cheryl, two primary-school children, want to teach Da how to communicate. Of course Da is not convinced that he needs any help – in fact, he thinks can teach these kids a trick or two! But when he meets Simon and Cheryl he uses American slang in an effort to be cool and talk 'the way kids do'. They find this embarrassing and ask him to speak normally.

Throughout the programme, Simon, Cheryl and Caroline strive to teach Da the difference between colloquial language, standard English and the vernacular, in a variety of situations. Da quickly discovers that you can't read the news as if you were talking to your friends, that formal language doesn't work in an informal situation, and that giving directions to tourists in the Belfast vernacular only leaves them more confused.

Da feels disheartened because he can't communicate properly, but just as he is about to give up trying, he thinks of his cousin Barbara, a lawyer. She's the perfect example of all three ways of speaking – when she's around him and her family, she uses the Belfast vernacular; with her clients she uses colloquial terms; and with other lawyers she employs standard English. And Da triumphantly introduces the children to a fourth type of language: gobbledygook – as heard in some courtrooms.

Key words used during programme:

Vernacular, colloquial, standard English, informal, gobbledygook, jargon, education welfare officer, barrister, plaintiff

RESOURCES/REFERENCES:

You Don't Say edited by William O'Kane, published by Irish World Publications (www.heritagewld.com/index2.htm)

John Pepper's Ulster-English Dictionary published by Appletree Press (1981), ISBN 0-86281-188-6 www.appletree.ie

Catch Yerself On! by John Pepper published by Blackstaff Press (1980), ISBN 0-85640-237-0 www.blackstaffpress.com/shop/enter.html

USEFUL WEBSITES:

www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/gmhp/dictionary/dictionarylist.shtml (for teachers and children) *Give My Head Peace's* tongue-in-cheek compilation of vernacular terms.

www.linenhall.com/Projects/Languages_of_Ulster/languages_of_ulster.html (for teachers) The Linenhall Library has run the Languages of Ulster project since 1990.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - Before the Programme

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
WHOLE CLASS			
Debate	Have a discussion about our use of language in this area. Is any one way of speaking better than another? Does our way of speaking ever make it difficult for us to be understood? Have we local words strangers might not know?		English Development of awareness of pupils use of language as a communication skill.
Literacy	Write down the terms 'standard English', 'colloquial' and 'vernacular' on the blackboard so the children can refer to them during the programme.		English Vocabulary.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - After the Programme

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
WHOLE CLASS			
Discussion	Have a discussion about the different modes of language demonstrated in the programme; ensure that each concept is understood. Brainstorm with the class for examples of each. Ask for 'translation' from one way of speaking to another.	Worksheet 1 Listen, discuss and write	English Talking and listening.

Activity	Tasks	Worksheets	Relevance to NI Curriculum
WHOLE CLASS			
Discussion and writing	<p>Discuss the idea of appropriate use of language for a variety of audiences and situations. Give examples.</p> <p>Explore accent and idiom as a barrier to social communication.</p> <p>Explore accent and speech as social class indicators. Is one mode of language 'better' than another?</p>	Worksheet 2 Watch what you say	English Discussion skills. Awareness of language modes. Appropriate use of language.
INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS			
Research: interviewing family and friends	<p>Ask the children to interview a person who speaks in the vernacular and uses colloquial expressions, for example a grandparent, using a notebook or tape recorder.</p> <p>They can create a dictionary of colloquial or vernacular phrases from their area using a wordprocessing package.</p>		English Gathering information. IT Writing and saving documents.
Writing and performance	<p>In pairs or groups write a short sketch of Da speaking to a person using the wrong mode of language.</p> <p>Dramatise your written piece for the class.</p>		English Creative writing. Experiment with direct speech. Drama performance.