

Literacy

Personalised reading and writing will usually be confined to singular and often used words, core vocabulary. These single words are used through whole word recognition. There will be some social sight vocabulary that applies to all pupils as well as some very personalised and motivating words which are pupil specific.

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>When this scheme uses the term 'words' it is referring to the appropriate symbolic communication method for the individual which may be objects, signs, symbols, pictures or words. Some symbols that are iconic (the drawings look like the object) are easier to use to support the reading but more abstract words have more abstract pictures that are unrelated. It is important to bear this in mind. A word in itself is a symbol and some pupils learn sight word by recalling the shape of the whole word rather than the letters within it.</p>		
<p>To understand that a favoured object can be symbolised in some form.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use phases 1 and 2 in PECS. It is not required that pupils move further in the PECS phases to be effective symbol users. • Build a 'favourite words' book that is entirely personalised. • E-books made in PowerPoint or Clicker allow a greater level of accessibility for some learners, and offer opportunity for generalisation. Initially, any and every word, symbol and/or photograph that is of special interest can be included. It is not important that we only use symbols, or only words, or only photographs. So the book may include photographs of Mum, Dad, pets, favourite pop star, special friends; symbols for favourite foods and toys; the MacDonald's M logo as well as any other logos or favourite TV programmes. Using the word alongside the photo or symbol helps build familiarity. • When the book/AAC device starts to build up, say more than 30 symbols, words, photos, it can be sectioned and organised. This will increase single 'words' possibly related to topics. Staff need to remember the words that learners have in their books. Spend time discussing with the learner and memorising. • Refer back to the individual learner's word book whenever these words come up in ordinary conversation. Encourage learners to check the words and share them with others. Remember that reading and writing is about communication, and we must always ground words, symbols and photos into the actual practise. Model, Model, Model. Discuss 'happy accidents' and encourage 'babbling' to allow pupils to explore their chosen form of communication. • Search for key words on google, or look for a favourite band on You Tube, with staff following the pupil's lead and discussing with them. Use of core words and core boards. • Make an artistic creation such as a collage out of the learner's favourite 'words'. • Organise a key ring (which is attached to the learner) of key (learner motivating) symbols • Organise generic symbol key rings which staff can wear or core boards. • Use of core vocabulary lists. – descriptive teaching. 	<p>Books made up specifically for pupils e.g. colours, friends, animals, transport – whichever is motivating</p> <p>PECS UK website</p> <p>AAC Language Lab</p> <p>Liberator Website</p>
<p>To make choices from identified favourite objects/activities.</p>		
<p>To recognise and respond to key signs, symbols and words.</p>		

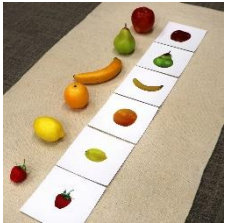


Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
To recognise functional words in different contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise their own name in print, for example, indicating where to hang up your coat. • Recognise names of others in the class/family to choose who to say hello to next in circle time. The word and the photograph can be used together. • Set up a 'Good Morning' session which sees a photograph of the Learners houses, a photograph of the school and a photograph of the learner with their name. Moving the photo and name from home to school give learners a graphic chance to see who is in and who is still at home. • Words that they may need functionally. So for example, for the pupil who enjoys cookery. Focus on some core vocabulary rather than just nouns e.g. 'put fruit in basket' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - plan a menu; make choices with staff or group; - create the shopping list; communicating ingredients to others; - go to the supermarket; identify the aisles needed; - search for specified food items; be able to ask for items that you can't find; - look up recipes and videos as an example on the internet, by typing key words into the computer. • Learn to read a menu and communicate their choices to others to order food and drink by for example, recognising the pictures on a McDonalds Menu. • Other examples un-food related. E.g. train station – different platforms, types of trains etc, or other motivating activates e.g. dolls, small world play etc. 	Developing social sight vocabulary
To be able to identify signs and symbols in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social sight words and symbols in the community such as where to pay, entrance, exit, push or pull, toilet etc. • Recognising safe places to cross roads so that learners practice 'reading' the signs and signals. • 'Reading' key landmarks when travelling to a regular destination. • Pupils learn to recognise and communicate to others where to go using shop signage such as, McDonalds to eat but Boots for medicine. • Being able to identify preferred brands and products such as their own deodorant by 'reading' the various labels. • Being able to 'read' the layouts of familiar supermarkets to indicate where to get bread, tinned products, fruit and vegetables etc. • Being able to read the numbers on regularly used buses etc. 	



Early phonics skills are an integral part of the reading process and work alongside a whole word reading approach.

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>The phase one letters and sounds programme contains lots of opportunities to develop those early listening skills as a precursor to starting a more formal approach to phonics.</p>		
<p>To develop listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening walks in the local environment. • Discovering how different things sound by banging drumsticks against different materials to hear the sounds they make. • Sound discrimination activities. • Sound lotto. • Have a set of listening boxes with different contents. Can you find two that sound the same? • Listening to different instruments and the different types of sounds. Can you guess the instrument I'm playing? • Animal sounds and familiar sounds around the home and street. 	<p>Phase One Letter and Sounds</p> <p>More Letters and Sounds</p> <p>Whats behind the door?</p>
<p>To develop an awareness of sounds and rhythms.</p> <p>To experience and appreciate rhythm and rhyme.</p> <p>To develop an awareness of rhythm and rhyme in speech.</p>	<p>This will go in order of firstly hearing the rhyme, then recognising it and then finally be able to produce the rhyme. Use of visuals and objects is a great way to support this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to repeated rhythms and rhymes, familiar nursery rhymes, tongue twisters and word play. • Enjoy rhyming books which feature familiar and repetitive language strings and patterns. • Listening to the beat of rhythms and using percussion, clapping, knee tapping and foot stamping to feel the rhythm of the text. • Create books with favourite class rhymes with objects of reference and visuals to allow pupils to share rhymes together. • Rhyming games – rhyming bingo, making rhyming soup, finding rhyming pairs. • Creating alternative rhymes for the ending of familiar poems. • Introducing onset and rime if appropriate. 	
<p>To develop an understanding of alliteration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I spy games. • Tongue Twisters • Making collections of objects that start with the same sound. • Using a match plus one technique to repeat back phrases to the learner... 'pig' yes 'pink pig' to add description to their observations. • Sorting groups of objects that begin with the same sound. • Making silly soup with objects that all begin with the same letter. • Sound tubs are also really good for this with the little objects in. 	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
To distinguish between the differences in vocal sounds, including oral blending and segmenting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at mouth movements. Watching the shape of the mouth in the mirror and making it do different things – blowing, stretching it and making different vocal noises. • Looking at different types of sounds – loud and soft. • Sound lotto – discriminating between different sounds but also guess who's voice it is? • Adult modelling breaking down the sounds in words – its time to put on your coat – c-oat. Begin to start the listening process. • Clapping syllables of words and patterns in words. • Begin to start talking about the letters and sounds at the start of words. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">At this point once Learners have developed their listening skills they can begin to be introduced to letter names and their sounds. This works alongside a whole word reading approach to provide some strategies to support the reading process.</p>		
<p>To identify a phoneme.</p> <p>To learn to say a discrete phoneme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to teach letter sounds using the RWI Speed sounds set One. • Ensure that pure sounds are used and encourage pupils to do the same if they can. • Word play putting 2 sounds together to make nonsense words – CV and then VC words e.g. in, on, at etc. • Teach the letter sounds in the order in which they are designed to be learnt and once enough sounds have been learnt you can begin to create simple VC and then cvc words. 	<p>Pure Sounds</p> <p>Letters and Sounds 1 and 2</p> <p>Resources for phase two</p> <p>Phase Two Games</p>
<p>To orally segment a vc word.</p> <p>To orally segment a cvc word.</p> <p>To orally blend a vc word.</p> <p>To orally blend a cvc word.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use alongside simple texts. • Sounds sorting games. • Identifying words and objects beginning with the letter being learnt. • Looking at the sound buttons in words. • Practicing orally segmenting and blending with adults modelling good practice. • Using concrete resources such as magnetic letters to practice the actual manipulation of letters. • Make use of resources if needed e.g. slinky to segment and then blend, switches, phonics pages on communication aids etc. 	

Building on social sight vocabulary and phonics skills are some matching and sentence building tasks that can be broken down to support the whole word reading process.

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Match object to object.</p> <p>Match object to picture.</p>	<p>Matching objects and pictures is the very beginning of literacy skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a copybox type system where pupils have a box of matching objects the same as the adult. Matching objects to objects. Matching objects to photos. Matching objects to symbols. 	
<p>To be able to match simple pictures.</p>	<p>Matching pictures is essential in developing visual discrimination and begins to build those early reading skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners need to be provided with opportunities to be able to match pictures in a range of contexts. These can be motivating pictures for the Learner such as characters from their favourite cartoon or trains etc. Pictures could also be linked to the topic in the classroom or specific learning related to the EHCP. 	
<p>To match words or symbols.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners continue to practice their visual discrimination skills using words and symbols. Prompts can be used as colours to begin with and then these can be faded out if the pupil needs smaller steps. Again a focus on motivating words of high interest, family names or words from topics can be used as a tool for this. 	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>To match words to symbols and pictures.</p>	<p>Learners can identify matching symbols with their corresponding picture for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol to photograph • Symbol to picture • Word to photograph • Word to picture 	
<p>To use matching strategies to build up sentence reading skills.</p>	<p>Once the Learner is able to match words they can begin to work on building sentences. Some examples of this could be:</p> 	

Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand its meaning and to integrate it with what the Learner already knows.

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Blank's Levels of Questioning is based on the work completed by Blank, Rose and Berlin. The model is comprised of four levels that support the development of the Learners understanding of language and sets of questions which go from the concrete (level 1) to the abstract (level 4).</p>		
<p>Blank Level One</p> <p>To point to an object.</p> <p>To find a matching object.</p> <p>To name an object.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Blank Level One Matching Perception</u></p> <p>When the student is at the earliest stage he best responds to things in the immediate environment. Use short questions and statements that only require response to key items and events including matching, identifying and naming</p> <hr/> <p>Some examples of Blank Level One Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's this? • Find me another one like this? • Where's the...? • Show me what you heard? • What did you see? 	
<p>Blank Level Two</p> <p>To answer who, what and where questions.</p> <p>To describe an object by function.</p> <p>To find an object by attribute or description.</p> <p>To explain what is happening in a picture.</p> <p>To identify differences.</p> <p>To finish a sentence involving an object.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Blank Level Two Selective Analysis of Perception</u></p> <p>The Learner is still required to match language on to their immediate perceptions but they must focus more selectively on the material. The learner is encouraged to focus on objects and situations in more detail and introduced to concepts that are both abstract and concrete.</p> <hr/> <p>Some examples of Blank Level Two Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is happening? • What things did we see? • Who did...? • Where was...? • What did he do? • You cut with a ...? • What colour is this? • What do we eat with? • What do we use a straw for? • Tell me two things that are brown and small? • How are the spoon and the knife different? • Tell me something that is a pet? 	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Blank Level Three</p> <p>To summarise events.</p> <p>To make predictions.</p> <p>To retell a story.</p> <p>To complete a sequencing activity.</p> <p>To deduce a character's emotions.</p> <p>To define a word.</p> <p>To identify similarities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Blank Level Three Reordering Perception</u></p> <p>At this level the Learner can use language to restructure and reorder their perceptions and experiences. The Learner needs to focus on the context in which the objects or events occur, describe a sequence of events and generalise about a set of objects.</p> <hr/> <p>Some examples of Blank Level Three Questions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me how to plant a bulb. • Which one goes with this? • What will happen after this? • How might ... feel? • Do ...and then do ... • Tell me something that is not an animal. • Tell me the story. • What happened when? • What is a ...? 	
<p>Blank Level Four</p> <p>Give reasons as to why something cannot be done.</p> <p>Justify a prediction.</p> <p>Justify a decision.</p> <p>Solve a problem.</p> <p>Predict changes.</p> <p>Identify why an event happened.</p> <p>Infer characters feelings and decisions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Blank Level Four Reasoning and Perception</u></p> <p>This level required the Learner to solve complex and abstract verbal problems. The Learner must problem-solve at a higher level of abstraction. They must go beyond the concrete and talk about logical relationships between objects and events. Demands at this level include prediction about events, explanations and logical solutions.</p> <hr/> <p>Some examples of Blank Level Four Questions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where will Jon go if its wet playtime? • What will happen if we put this water in the freezer? • What might they do? • How will she get to the doctors? • Why is money made of metal? • Why is this called a motorbike? • What made the cheese melt? • What would you do? • What do we need to bake a cake? • Why can't we go out in the rain? • How can you tell this is a new football? 	

Writing skills in this unit takes into account traditional pencil and paper but also can include technology like using Clicker and AAC devices to build up words and sentences. Learners will also need many opportunities to develop their fine motor skills throughout the day to support this.

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
To develop gross motor skills and coordination.	<p>The gross motor skills involved in handwriting mainly refer to postural control. Efficient control of the larger muscle groups in the neck, shoulder and trunk is necessary to maintain stability in order for the fingers and hands to move to complete the handwriting task.</p> <p>Follow any advice from an OT or physio for specific children that might be covered by an integrated therapy plan. Daily practice of gross motor skills if needed.</p> <p>Gross motor activities that will improve postural control and muscle strength in the proximal muscles are beneficial when it comes to developing handwriting skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanging activities – practice monkey bars, chins ups, pull ups or swing from the tree limbs to increase the muscle strength in the shoulder girdle muscles. • Climbing activities – climb the ladders and ropes on the playground. • Pushing and pulling activities – pull a heavy wagon or push a child on a swing. These pushing and pulling motions help the shoulder learn to coactivate to produce the right amount of force and stability. • Weight bearing activities through the arms – animal walks, wheelbarrow walking, crawling, planks, and wall push ups all help to increase muscle strength and improve coactivation of the shoulder and postural muscles. • Yoga Poses – provide muscle strengthening and postural control • Large art projects – hang some paper on a wall or use an easel. Children can reach up, left and right while painting. Using water and a brush to 'paint' outside. Using an easel for painting and writing. • Write dance • Working on crossing the midline/bimanual movement etc. 	1st Move
To develop fine motor skills.	<p>Fine motor skills are achieved when Learners use their smaller muscles, like in the hands, fingers, and wrists. Learners use their fine motor skills when writing and mastery of these skills requires precision and coordination.</p> <p>Follow any advice from an OT or physio for specific children that might be covered by an integrated therapy plan. Daily practice of fine motor skills if needed. Some examples of these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a spray bottle to water plants • Practice grabbing and holding small items with tweezers or tongs • Using a paper punch • Threading 	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
To develop in hand manipulation skills.	<p>In-Hand Manipulation skills refers to the ability move and position objects within one hand without the assistance of the other hand such as twirling a pencil within the fingers and turning a coin from heads to tails.</p> <p>Daily practice of these skills as required. Some examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place coins in a Piggy Bank starting with several coins in the palm. • Twist open or closed lids on small bottles or tubes held within the palm of the hand • Practice buttoning, zipping and snapping snaps. • Turn dice within the fingertips to see different sides. • Work on supination skills 	<p>In Hand Manipulation</p> <p>Manipulation</p> <p>Supination Skills</p>
To develop proprioception skills.	<p>This affects pencil grasp since a Learner that needs a higher amount of proprioceptive input may not recognise how much pressure to place through their pencil. Children who demonstrate proprioceptive issues may benefit from heavy work activities in the classroom.</p> <p>Following any advice from the Occupational Therapist and integrated therapy plans if in place. Some activities to support this may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand fidget toy and squeeze toys • Wall push-ups • Chair push-ups • Carry books with both hands, hugging the books to their chest • Use of pencil grips and different types of pencil. – use of weighted pencils 	
To establish a hand dominance.	<p>Some people are good at using both hands but it is much better for a Learner to develop strength and dexterity in one. This will help to develop accuracy and speed with fine motor tasks, particularly handwriting.</p> <p>Offer the Learner plenty of every day opportunities to participate in developing their hand skills. When working on establishing dominance, encourage daily activities that require continued use of one hand without direction as to which hand to use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scribbling on the chalkboard or drawing on mural paper that is on an easel or taped to the wall or floor • Hammering wood that is clamped to a surface • Pounding a large ball or clay with one hand until it is flat • Swinging a ball on a string above head • Throwing small balls or beanbags with one hand. 	<p>Hand Dominance</p>
<p>Uses a writing tool to make marks on paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled scribble • Vertical strokes • Horizontal strokes • Circular strokes 	<p>These activities and practice work alongside the fine and gross motor skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to make marks in a variety of different ways not only on paper but on different surfaces and substances. • Use of the Write Dance programme which encourages Learners to make marks on paper, using both hands and starting on a larger scale and then moving to a more smaller scale. 	<p>Handwriting Development</p>

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
To draw a simple picture.	<p>The picture first approach works on the principle that the Learner will learn to draw before they learn to write. Drawing will develop motor control and dexterity which will support the emergence of handwriting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a Learner can draw a representative image and assign meaning to it, they can move onto writing practice, initially naming or labelling their drawing and then adding more context to the drawing such as sentences. • A simple overview of the Picture-first approach: • Learner or adult chooses a stimulus to draw, initially something highly motivating. • Learner observes the adult recreating the picture talking about the shapes in their drawing. • The learner recreates the picture themselves on their own paper, assigning meaning to it. • Over time this can be extended to adding labels to the drawing when the Learner is ready. 	Please be mindful that drawing a picture is really hard for some with ASD who can write.
To represent one's name in a consistent way.	<p>Using backward chaining to build up the letters in the name so that the Learner begins to write the last letter of the name first. This ensures that the Learner is able to see their whole name in its entirety while they are learning.</p> <p>Provide opportunities to practice the letters of the name using the senses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing the name on a chalkboard and using cotton buds to wipe it off. • Using wipe boards. • Tracing over tactile letters of the name. <p>For those who struggle to write, a simple stamp with the learner's name can be used.</p> <p>Use of Qwerty keyboard or other appropriate AAC to print a name. Start with first letter in name.</p>	
To write the letters of the alphabet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing with the letters in the Learners name is a great way to start as it is meaningful to them. This could be said of other important words to them. • Writing can work alongside their reading and phonics skills so learning the sound and making the letter at the same time. 	
To write simple words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation and meaning are important considerations at this stage when beginning to write words. • Initially the learner may need to learn to write words that are meaningful for them – family names or favourite characters from a TV show. • Simple words can be worked alongside words and sounds in phonics that they are reading. 	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
To write a simple sentence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Again motivation and meaning are important at this stage as Learners need concrete experiences from which to begin writing from.• News writing.• Retelling simple stories.	

Narratives are the telling by learners of both factual and fictional stories. They are not scripted but are derived from memory and repetitive practice. They are usually quite short and describe events or relate interests, jokes, stories etc. Narratives are the way we all communicate about our lives. They are the essential glue of social humanity.

- This whole section on narratives is based on the work of Keith Park Nicola Grove.
- It may be that we think of narratives as being long, fictional works, like novels or tales, but for those with severe learning difficulties, narratives are simply a *spoken account of connected events*. This may take the form of a fictional story, and it is often easier to teach the skills required by introducing learners to this form of narrative to start with, but much more importantly, the narrative skills taught here, will allow learners to tell others of the important things that have happened in their lives. For those with severe communication difficulties this will often be very difficult and without a significant amount of time being spent on the process, sometimes impossible. This makes teaching the art and skill of narrative very important.
- A story has a beginning, a middle and an end; it has purpose and meaning to both the teller and the listener; it teaches us to listen carefully; it teaches us about structure, and about the natural rhythms and flow of language; it teaches us about emotions – fear, excitement, anxiety, heartbreak, happiness, love - in a safe and secure setting, not only other people's (the characters' in the story line), but also our own.
- Most importantly however, our ability to tell stories directly both effects and affects our understanding of our own humanity.
- As an example, think of something that you have experienced over the last 12 months or so that has meant a lot to you. What have you done with this information? Most likely, you have not kept it to yourself, unless it was *the most terrible secret in the world!* Most likely you have told someone, because that's what we do, it's part of what makes us human. Sharing our lives with others in this way allows us to relive the happy and exciting and thrilling, and gain enjoyment from the interest of others. It allows us to receive a sympathetic ear when bad things have happened and the repeated re-telling to lots of different people may allow us to make sense of the event over time. Apart from the cathartic benefits, the very act of relating the narrative can bring the event into proportion.
- Being able to tell our own stories marks us out as special, individual and unique. I have done this, I have value, I am important, I am me. Sharing the sad or pathetic or frightening experiences of our lives allows us to evoke others' sympathy and empathy, put our problems into perspective, receive back comfort of someone else's similar experience so that we know we're not alone. I am me, but I'm also with others who love me and care enough about me to listen and share in my problems as well as my joys.

Key principles of the first stages of teaching narrative:

- Keep the story short. This makes it easier to remember. Retell in different ways e.g. spoken, with symbols, signed, with objects etc.
- Make it exiting, dynamic and/or funny. This makes it memorable.
- Use lots of repetition. This makes it memorable. Maintaining audience interest might mean telling the story to LOTS of different people. This means going outside of your classroom and engaging with as many people as you can. Everyone in the school must be primed that 'Jack has a new story to tell.'
- Don't worry too much about the story being exactly right in the re-telling and never read stories when teaching narratives; always tell them from memory. This means that the initial staff story-teller must rehearse the story so that they are as familiar with it as they might be if telling a story about their own weekend. Use of colourful semantics to support – accept even if it isn't an accurate retelling of events.
- Tell the story with affect – use lots of voice changes, exaggerated expression, pregnant pauses, signing, gesture. This helps bring interest and motivation.
 - Have a clear idea of the beginning, middle and end of the story. This gives form and order and meaning.
 - Have a clear idea of the high point(s) of the story and tell these with considerable emphasis.
 - It is probably best to use fictional stories in the early stages. They are easier to make really exciting and dynamic.

Some examples of first stage stories.

Story Number 1 – The Robber!

One day, I was walking home from school. It was cold and dark and rainy. SUDDENLY, I heard FOOTSTEPS. I looked behind me.....but there was no-one there. I carried on walking home. It was cold and dark and rainy. I heard FOOTSTEPS AGAIN. I LOOKED BEHIND ME.....but there no-one there. I carried on walking home. Then the footsteps got LOUDER and LOUDER and a BIG MAN was standing over me shouting 'GIVE ME YOUR MONEY!' I gave him all the money I had and he ran off down the road and I never saw him or my money again.

Story Number 2 – SNOT!

Last week I had a TERRIBLE cold. I was sneezing all of the time. AAAAACCCHHHOOOOOOO. I went downstairs to have breakfast but I felt a sneeze coming on. AAAAACCCHHHOOOOOOO. Oh no! White gloopy snot all in my brothers cornflakes. I felt another sneeze coming on. AAAAACCCHHHOOOOOOO. Oh no! Green bits all on my Mum's new dress. My dad was very cross and started telling me off but I felt another sneeze coming on. AAAAACCCHHHOOOOOOO. Oh no! White and green snot all in my dad's hair. It was running down his face and everything! Here, said Mum, use a tissue! AAAAACCCHHHOOOOOOO. That is the end of my story!

Story Number 3 – The Witch!

Last night, I saw a strange house I'd never seen before. I thought I heard someone calling me. 'Come in, come in'. The door was open and I went in. It was dark and smelly. There was another door and I heard the voice again 'Come in, come in'. The door was open and I went in. It was dark and smelly. 'COME IN, COME IN' and then I saw an old lady, with long black hair and red eyes and fingers like claws. I was so frightened. She reached out her claws to grab me. 'GOT YOU' and she held onto me REALLY TIGHTLY. I pulled and pulled and pulled away and ran and ran and ran all the way home and I'm not going back there EVER again.

An example of a first stage mini-drama

Story Number 4 – The Spider in the Sandwich.

One day Jack and Sarah are sitting together. Sarah decides to make a sandwich. Jack wants a sandwich too. 'Make me a sandwich Sarah' 'No, you're so lazy, make your own.' Suddenly there's a knocking sound as Jack pretends someone is at the door. 'Go and answer the door Sarah, it must be one of your mates' – and as Sarah answers the door, Jack takes a bite from the sandwich!!

'Who ate my sandwich!!'

'Not me!'

Things settle down and Jack says 'Make me a sandwich Sarah' 'No, you're so lazy, make your own.' Suddenly there's another knocking sound as Jack pretends someone is at the door again. 'Go and answer the door Sarah, it must be one of your mates again' – and as Sarah answers the door, Jack takes another bite from the sandwich!!

'Who ate my sandwich!!'

'Not me! It must have been mice!!'

Sarah says 'I'm going to make a fresh sandwich and it's just going to be for me' but secretly puts a spider in the sandwich!!!When the knock on the door comes again, Jack takes a bite! 'OH NO....THAT'S DISGUSTING!!!!' The end.

Mini-dramas, like The Spider in the Sandwich, can be acted out by two staff members working together in the first instance and then with learners taking one of the roles (see Stages One and Two below). These are not really narratives as such but can be very helpful in teaching sequential memory. Again, for mini-dramas like this keep them short, memorable, repetitive, and most of all, dramatic!

Staff roles in teaching narrative

- Staff will tell the story first, starting with a conspiratorial exclamation like 'Listen! I have a story to tell you!' or 'I have something to tell you. Shhhh!!'
- Always tell the stories in the round with chairs but no desks. You may have a special story-teller's chair to highlight the importance of the story-teller.
- Always start with the beginning, 'Once upon a time.....' 'One day.....' or 'Last night/week/year.....' or 'A Long time ago.....'
- Break the story up into little lines in the way of 'call and response' and have staff primed to repeat the key phrases. Keep story short and simple. Retell in different ways e.g. spoken, with symbols, signed, with objects etc.

Story-teller: One day,

Responder(s): One day!

Story-teller: I was walking home from school.

Responder(s): Walking home from school!

Story-teller: It was cold and dark and rainy.

Responder(s): Cold and dark and rainy!

Story-teller: SUDDENLY, I heard FOOTSTEPS!

Responder(s): FOOTSTEPS!!

Story-teller: I looked behind me.....

Responder(s): mime a worried look

Story-teller: But there was no-one there!

Responder(s): No-one there!

Short dramatic pause

Story-teller: I carried on walking home.

Responder(s): Walking home.

Story-teller: It was cold and dark and rainy.

Responder(s): Cold and dark and rainy!

Story-teller: SUDDENLY, I heard FOOTSTEPS again!

Responder(s): FOOTSTEPS!!

Story-teller: I looked behind me.....!!

Responder(s): mime a worried look

Story-teller: But there was no-one there!

Responder(s): No-one there!

Another short dramatic pause just to ratchet up the tension

Story-teller: I carried on walking home.

Responder(s): Walking home.

Story-teller: Then the footsteps got LOUDER and LOUDER and a BIG MAN was standing over me shouting 'GIVE ME YOUR MONEY!'

Responder(s): Give me your money??!!

Story-teller: I gave him all my money and he ran off down the road and I never saw him again.

Responder(s): mime appropriate looks of shock and horror!

Story-teller: That is the end of my story.

Responder(s): The END! PHEW!!

The purpose of this approach is four fold:

1. Breaking the story up into little bite-sized chunks helps to build sequential memory and doesn't overload the learner. Nicola Grove uses a 'next' sign along with the words '*and then*' to remind the learner that there is more to come if they've forgotten the next bit, before prompting with the actual line.
2. Using the audience as responders takes the pressure off the learner that they are on their own. THIS IS NOT A TEST OF MEMORY.
3. Communication is a two way process and including the audience right from the beginning re-enforces this. Story-telling AND responding allows staff to model BOTH the telling and the 'active' listening. It is the equivalent to the responses we might make when someone is telling us a story of something that has happened to them. We don't just sit back and listen quietly and passively as we might to a read story or something on the television; we nod, concur, give facial expressions to note that we hear and understand, make sympathetic noises, laugh, clap, lightly touch the teller on the arm etc. Being read to can be a passive activity; being communicated with has to be active.
4. Responding to the story allows staff to accentuate affect and a visual interpretation of language. You will note in the call and response version of *The Robber* that there are a lot of exclamation marks after the Responder(s) lines, even for the opening line of 'One day'!!! The purpose of the Narrative section of Communication is not just to make story-tellers of our learners, but to make them active listeners. We also want them to be the best story-tellers and the best listeners that they can be.

-Continue to put emphasis on core word vocabulary.

To be the best story-tellers that they can be, learners have to:

1. Have a means to tell the stories. We don't wish to rule out any means, but telling *dramatic* stories by symbol becomes very difficult because of the pace and natural absence of dramatic affect. The best options are therefore through language and sign. Language can also mean using a VOCA (voice output communication aid) for those who have very limited language or lack the confidence to extend themselves, with a 'Step-by-Step' switch being an excellent vehicle. Whatever the means used, the stories have to be SHORT, otherwise they become too difficult to remember.
2. Have a motivation to tell the story. The stories therefore have to be exciting, funny, terrifying, sad but above all DRAMATIC and FUN.
3. Have a mate to tell the story to. And mates are best when they help the learner but only as much as the learner needs. Mates have to accept that learners will make mistakes, go off on tangents, make up new bits and forget old bits. All of this is OK because it is more important that the learner owns the story than they are faithful to the original. This is a story not a book reading, and with all stories, storytellers may well change things from the last time. This really is OK.

The stages set out below are there for advice and guidance and are not rigid. Some learners may spend a long time in some or all of the stages while others may speed through them quite quickly. Remember that the end goal is to tell factual stores of events that have happened to the learner and if a learner wants and is able to move quickly on to Stage Six, they should be allowed to do so.

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Stage One: To follow the sequence of a short fictional narrative story.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather all learners in a circle with chairs but no desks. 2. You might begin with simple instructions such as 'Looking!' and 'Listening!' to make sure that all learners are focussed. 3. Tell the story. Do not read it. You can use props, especially with young learners, learners working at the earliest developmental levels and learners who struggle with spoken communication, but make sure they are few and immediately to hand. This is not a sensory story; this is about teaching the art of narration. Imagine that this story has actually just happened and you're telling your best friend. Supporting staff must model listening and attention skills and anticipation – all staff in the room involved. 4. Supporting staff must also model and participate in response to the story – as in call and response – with actions, gesture, language and sign. 5. At this stage there is no expectation that all learners will join in. Listening and attention is enough. <p>Sequencing can be aided by having separate sessions of story-boarding, where the story is deliberately turned into a mini-drama and acted out with learners taking on the roles. This can be filmed and stills taken for the story-boarding exercise. Try and make the planning a collaborative journey so that the whole group is trying to remember what happens first, what next etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence 2 pictures/sequence 3 pictures/sequence 4 pictures. 	
<p>Stage Two: For the learner to retell the story as best as they can.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once you have told the story for the first time, ask if any learners now want to tell that story themselves. 2. If there are no volunteers, staff can volunteer. 3. Total accuracy is not essential, as long as the learner can get some understanding of sequence and progression. 4. Do not expect learners to start at the beginning because they probably won't. They'll probably start at one of the exciting bits like the footsteps. Gently remind the learner of the beginning..... 'One day' or 'Last night' followed by a prompt pause before asking 'And then...?' It is really important that they get into the habit of starting at the beginning every single time they tell a story. 5. Gently support the learner to remember as many key parts of the story as they can, making sure that the sequence is right. 6. Remember that staff will be responders to the learner telling the story as well. This is not a test. We are encouraging learners to tell a really exciting story and we must treat it as though this is the very first time we've have heard it. 7. Remember to make sure the learner finishes with 'The end' and a finished sign. <p>Make objects available so pupils can act out retelling the story independently/with peers during unstructured times.</p>	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Stage Three:</p> <p>To retell the story with fewer prompts and increasing accuracy.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the follow up sessions learners practice telling the story (in the story-tellers chair if you're using one). There may need to be an initial 'reminder' telling by staff, but this should be phased out as soon as possible in order to maintain the freshness of the story. 2. Staff must continue to support the story-teller as though it's the first time they've heard the story. Don't drop the responders' tension and excitement and remember that staff are likely to get bored well before the learners do. 3. Make a pictorial story board with learners acting out the parts of leaving school on a cold, wet day; looking behind them with frightened expression; being stood over by someone very big and menacing; the robber running away. 4. Practice reading the story board as a whole class group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Pie Corbett's talk for writing approach. 	<p>There can be as many sessions as your learners want in order to establish increasing accuracy. As long as motivation is maintained you can continue with the same story. If interests wanes...move on to a new one. We might expect a single story to be told and re-fold over at least half a term given one session a week.</p>
<p>Stage Four:</p> <p>To retell the story with sufficient accuracy to be understandable to a new listener.</p>	<p>When learners are confident enough, make an arrangement with another class (classes) to tell your story to them. Learners may be too anxious to do so. Retelling may need to be 1:1 with a known adult</p> <p>Initially this might well be the whole story-telling class joining in, but as learners refine their individual story-telling skills, class teams should be looking to support individual learners in telling stories to one new listener or a group of new listeners.</p>	
<p>Stage Five:</p> <p>To retell more than one story with sufficient accuracy.</p>	<p>This is very much about building an individual learners confidence in their ability to engage an audience.</p> <p>The level of support needed will very much depend on the learners' abilities and confidence.</p>	

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Stage Six:</p> <p>To be involved with working through a factual story related to the learner's own actual experience.</p>	<p>Whilst we suggest that learners become familiar with the art of story-telling using fictional stories to begin with before moving on to factual, there is no hard and fast rule about this. The key is motivation; do learners want to tell a story about something that has happened to them? If so, do it!</p> <p>Nicola Grove suggests building in a routine for a story-telling session (Grove, 2013: p66/67). This could be a whole morning or afternoon, or perhaps a shorter session.</p> <p>Divide into groups of 3 or 4 to share news.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group selects a spokesperson who has to go last, listen to the others, summarise it briefly and report back to the whole group. Clearly this will be a role for a member of staff to begin with, but more able learners can take on this role with support. • In the round, the group selects the 'news of the day' and plans out the session there and then using pictures and symbols. • The planning meeting is followed by a warm-up game. This can be one of Keith Park's 'call and response' games such as A Pound of Jelly Babies. • Once the group are warmed up the story of the day is shared, initially told by staff, but encouraging pupils to take it on. • The group might discuss the story or work on individual story telling skills, like expression or diction or switch pressing. • If the group flags or interest wanes, fit in another game. • Wind up with the plenary with all students getting a chance to hear how both staff and their peers think they've done in the session and what they might work on for next week. <p>Some other points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this point, ownership of a story is quite important and personal pronouns should be used if it is <i>your</i> story. So Tom can recite '<i>Last week I was out in the park when....</i>' whereas Jon, when re-telling the same story, should say '<i>Last week Tom was out in the park when....</i>'. Staff to be mindful of language they use and always refer to themselves as I and celebrate when pupil has done so in different contexts. • It is not essential that the story is entirely true and staff should not check the accuracy or vet the contents of the story unless it is clearly (i) insulting (ii) defamatory (iii) likely to get the story-teller into very serious trouble. We are trying to encourage story-telling, not accurate reportage; this is about effective communication, not veracity. • Continue to keep focus on core word vocabulary throughout and support moving between pages on communication devices to sentence build. • Start with sentence strings of 2,3 words before expecting accurate sentences e.g. '<u>go park</u>' the '<u>I go park</u>' - do not put too much of a focus on using the past tense. 	<p>A Pound of Jelly Babies (Colin McNaughton)</p> <p>A pound of jelly babies! Just for me! Slobber, chomp, slurp, gulp, Tee hee hee!</p> <p>A pound of jelly babies! Went too quick! Slobber, chomp, slurp, gulp, I feel sick!</p> <p>A pound of jelly babies! Oh dear me! Slobber! Chomp! Slurp! Gulp! <i>Wuurrggh!</i> (This is the sound of being sick but not sure how it is spelled!)</p>

Learning Intentions	Teaching ideas and activities	Notes
<p>Stage Seven:</p> <p>To tell a factual story with sufficient accuracy.</p>	<p>This is essentially a repeat of Stages Three and/or Four but with factual rather than fictional stories.</p> <p>It should be noted that factual stories particularly are prone to embellishment and change from week to week or even from telling to telling. We do this all the time as we refine and extend (or contract) the stories we tell each other and is a mark of the confidence story-tellers have in their own ability.</p>	
<p>Stage Eight:</p> <p>To tell a factual story with sufficient accuracy to an unfamiliar school based story telling partner.</p>	<p>As with fictional stories, practice makes perfect and learners need to be given lots of opportunities to tell their stories to people who are not part of the story-telling group. All staff (including the office, kitchen, premises staff) therefore need to be trained in 'active listening skills' and to practice these daily. Learners may need to tell their story 50 or 60 times to be confident in it and that means lots of listeners and lots of time.</p>	
<p>Stage Nine:</p> <p>To tell a factual story with sufficient accuracy to an unfamiliar non school-based storytelling partner.</p>	<p>As with fictional stories, generalising the art and skill of story-telling is a key element of learning, and though it is recognised that not all learners will get to this stage, this must be the goal for all.</p> <p>As with telling the story to an unfamiliar school-based partner, it is probably best to prime the listener beforehand. This is particularly important with listeners who might not be familiar with the pace, time, and active listening skills needed when talking to a person with severe learning difficulties.</p>	