Building Community through Diverse Learning Curriculum in the Primary Classroom
The Context

What are the implications of increased technology use in the Primary classroom?

- Reduced oral language and vocabulary development
- Negative effect on oral and written communication skills
- Reduced social interaction – peer to peer and peer to adult
- Social cues and understandings less developed
- Poor social skills in the playground and wider society
- Conflict resolution skills and resilience are less developed
Outcomes and Approaches

Thinking beyond the keyboard and using pedagogical practices that promote cooperation, instills in boys an awareness of the importance of being with others.

There is always a time a place in education for quiet, independent and reflective work, but there is also a time for sharing strengths and working with peers.

Implementing a variety pedagogical approaches helps build students of intellectual character, developing the whole child and teaching life skills along the way.
Addressing the Issue

Technology is a tool, not a replacement for good teaching

Research:
- Highlights the benefits of handwriting and brain development
- Demonstrates comprehension benefits when reading a book vs on a screen
- Explains the negative social and oral language impact of overuse of technology
There are many, very simple things a teacher can do to ensure students are using metacognition and interacting with others positively.

These ideas include:

• Use a physical dictionary or thesaurus
• Read from both actual books as well as online texts
• Employ reciprocal teaching strategies to facilitate discussion
• Debate, express POV, use Hot Seat activities and character interviews
• Play a language game – eg: pass the marker – Let’s Play!!!
The Hook!

Every lesson you teach should start with a ‘hook’ or ‘provocation’.
This might be:

- A picture book or visual text to promote discussion and thought
- A piece of music to inspire ideas or imagination
- Artworks that elicit opinions and ideas
- A dish of food to view, share or even cook
- Character interviews / teacher role play

Using this strategy engages the learner and facilitates shared ideas and discussion before the lesson even begins!
Everyone loves a bit of competition – boys especially.

Using a game show format within your classroom promotes discussion, teamwork and often laughter too.

Game shows could include:

• Classroom Feud
• Taboo
• Jeopardy
• Wheel of Fortune....
Classroom Ideas in Action
Welcome to the Book Cafe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Find any WOW words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book 2</td>
<td>Find similes or metaphors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 3</td>
<td>Find compound words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book 4</td>
<td>Find 3 syllable words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Which book would you like to keep reading? What makes you say that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just the Facts!</td>
<td>List as many facts as you can from the book</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking Routines

Don’t be afraid to get out the butcher’s paper and markers!

Allowing collaborative conversation is key to building community.

Use routines such as:
- Step Inside
- See Think Wonder
- I used to Think, Now I Think
- Picture Reveal/Zoom In

Project Zero: Harvard
Picture Reveal

Complete this task whole class or in small groups to elicit discussion.
What is Visual Literacy?

- Visual Literacy concerns how meaning is made in still and moving image texts.
- Visual Literacy can be based upon:
  - Images within books
  - Poster
  - Advertisements
  - Billboards
  - Still images
  - Art
  - Short clips/animations (See Lit Shed and Pixar)

When planning VL tasks for students it is important to know your focus. Does it link with your correct reading strategy? Is it being used for character studies or perspective such as a “Step Inside” etc.

Be sure the image / clip you choose is accessible and has elements not above their thinking/ moral reasoning.

Do You See What I See?

- What do you observe/see in this picture?
- What do you think is happening and why?
- What does this remind you of/what connections can you make?
- What can you infer from looking at this image?
- What is the purpose of this image?
The Power of a Picture Book

Before Reading:

What is the title of the text?
Who is the author?
Who is the illustrator?
By looking at the cover, do you think this is fiction or non-fiction? What makes you say that?
What do you think this story will be about? What makes you say that? (Do a picture walk through book first)
What problem/s do you think might occur in this story? What makes you say that?
How do you think the story might end? What makes you say that?
How have the illustrations been done? eg: painting, photos...

During Reading:

Who is telling the story?
Who is/are the main characters?
Why are the characters important to this story?
Where does the story take place so far? (What is the setting)?
What type of writing was used to start the story? eg: dialogue, action, character description?
What are some words in the text that match the pictures?
What is the main idea of the story so far?
As we read, can you make any connections to yourself so far?
Let’s look at this paragraph (choose one). What is the main idea of this paragraph?
What does this paragraph/page remind you of?
When the character said ___________ what did they really mean?
How did the character feel when _____________?
How are you alike/different from the main character so far?

After Reading:

Could the character in this story exist in real life? What makes you say that?
In story order, what are the main events in the text?
What was the problem/conflict in the story and how was it resolved?
What was the author’s purpose in writing this text?
Was there a message in the story and if so, what was it?
Do you think ______________ was a good title for this setting? What makes you say that?
Suggest another title for this story. Why did you choose that title?
What was the main idea of the story?
What was the turning point of the story?
Where your predictions about the story right? What was different or the same?
How does what you know about this genre help you understand the story?
Have you read another text with similar characters/settings/ending? Explain.
Making Predictions

• Where does the tunnel lead?
• What is the source of the light?
• Do you think the rabbit will go through?
• Has it been through before?
• How did it find out about the tunnel?
• Would you go through it? (Decide)
• Write the rest of the story. (Communicate)
Making an Inference

• How are the owls related?

• Which owl is about to take its first flight? How do you know?

• How does the young owl feel about flying? (Judge)

• What might it be thinking? Add a thought bubble to the picture. (Evaluate)

• Is the older owl worried? What makes you say that?

• What advice might the older owl give to the younger one? Write some ideas.
Peer Proofing and Buddy Briefing

• Buddy up! Use coloured highlighters to proof work.

• Take a text written by your buddy and with a specific focus or set of criteria, edit each other’s work for punctuation, vocabulary, openers etc.

• Return each other’s work and discuss suggestions.
ALEX'S NEW IPHONE

Alex got an iPhone for Christmas. He was waiting for it all year. When he got it he liked playing with all the features. All his friends thought it was cool. His friend Jimmy said, what app will you download first?
Alex said, Chat GPT so it can do my homework.
That knight, Alex decided to do his homework on the app. It was good. He got his work done in 10 minutes. There were no errors. He had lots of free time to play video games now. Next he made dinner, then he went to the bathroom and started to play Minecraft. This was his favourite game. He facetime his friends while he played. The big iPhone screen helped him see what his friends were doing.
The next day, he went to the park to film himself skateboarding. He did awesome tricks and flipped over lots. His parents thought it was a great gift as it kept him super busy all day and night.
The end.
Across the Key Learning Areas

Collaborative practice and building community extends beyond the English classroom.

It encompasses all learning areas and activities outside the classroom. Some ideas include:

Maths
- Play bowling to add, subtract, explore fractions
- Use card games, dominoes … to explore numbers and problem solve

Science
- Conduct simple experiments that incorporate cooperation and collaborative discussions.
- Become the scientist and present findings and explain science understandings
- As a team, build models and 3D representations of topics of study

Humanities
- Role play characters and event from history to promote cooperation
- Brainstorm, Think Pair Share Discuss understandings and research
Let’s Play Jeopardy
Thank you

These are a snapshot of ideas for you to build community and social skills within your classroom and across the school.

Provide PD for your staff.

As educators, one of our many goals is to develop young men who can interact with confidence in any situation and feel inspired to share their thinking with others.

Teaching boys that it is okay to have a point of view, respect the opinions of others and understand we all view the world with a different lens and that is fine, is what we aim to achieve.