

Case study: Persistence of Vision (POV)

Integrating animation activities within the literacy curriculum over an extended period

Persistence of Vision (POV) was a project jointly funded by the *Film: 21st Century Literacy* education strategy, and involved a consortium comprising Creativity Culture Education, three local authorities in Devon, Norfolk and Worcestershire, and was led by Media Education Association (MEA). All the teachers who participated in the pilot received CPD. It explored the ways in which primary schoolchildren learn by:

- Repeated experiences of critical viewing and creative activity
- Making connections between animation and poetry

Attainment

- The project showed benefits to the teaching and learning of poetry at Key Stage 2, with animation providing a rhythmic, time constrained and image focused activity. Children were able to infer and make meaning in different forms (written, oral and filmic)
- POV provided opportunities for children of all abilities to succeed in the different tasks involved in animation production
- One of the animators proposed key areas of skill that children need to develop such as animating an object, characterising a person or thing, and developing meaning through colour, shapes, music and sounds
- In some cases teachers felt that animation work seemed to increase some children's vocabulary

Students' behaviour

- Teachers noted that the children's perseverance was 'amazing' and that they were prepared to work and rework specific scenes or shots in a way that does not happen when they work in other media
- There was evidence of the children doing considerable follow-up work at home, some of them producing animations as a way of presenting homework
- There was evidence of positive classroom interaction within some of the groups as a result of the concentration, problem solving and team work required for animation

"I like sharing because you can put your ideas out – everybody can work off your ideas – and it lights a fuse and becomes a great big flame."

Year 5 child, Worcestershire

Teachers' pedagogic practice

- All the teachers participated in the pilot received CPD
- Embedding animation activities within the Literacy curriculum over an extended period enabled both teachers and learners to see film as an integrated part of children's learning, not as a specialism
- There was evidence that children's ideas for the animation came from the wider learning context

“A girl wanted to add the sound of rain to show that a character was upset; some children decided to include a clock to show the passage of time; another student observed that *‘this would be a good poem to animate.’*”

Student



We Love Poetry in Animation ©Gail West

- Repeated engagement in critical and creative activity with animated film would lead to substantial gains in children’s attainment, compared to what they might achieve through ‘one-off’ projects

“I can’t imagine teaching poetry without animation next year.”

Year 1 Teacher, Devon

Long-term legacy

- All the films made by children in the project in one Local Authority have been posted on the channel, www.vimeo.com/channels/100818, together with commentaries by some of the children and by their teachers. More details can be found at <http://themea.org/pov/volume-3-issue-2/persistence-of-vision/>
- The basic principle of POV – recurrent opportunities for learning – is a simple one and can be transferred to any age or setting
- One of the leading teachers on the project was leaving the school. She was determined to introduce it in the next school and, to help ensure its long-term influence on the school she was leaving, had bought them all a webcam and some software from her own money

Summary of the benefits of using film in education

- Children learned to concentrate, and enjoyed problem solving and team work
- Animation provided children with opportunities to infer and make meaning in written and oral forms
- Increasing language and communications skills
- Developing different creative skills
- The principle of the project is transferable to other age groups and settings

Facts and figures

- The project involved 295 children and 18 teachers in 11 schools
- The project involved 4 local authority literacy advisors and 4 animators
- £10,000 from Creativity Culture and Education
- £6,000 from each LA (some of this in kind)
- £20,000 from *Film: 21st Century Literacy*