

You Can... Plan lessons that encourage creativity

Planning lessons can sometimes feel like a rather mundane part of the job (until you get the lesson in front of the class, it is hard to bring it to life in your mind). It is the skill of the teacher to plan lessons that encourage and develop creativity, while at the same time covering the relevant curriculum areas.

Thinking points

- The more varied the tasks you use, the more creative your children's responses will tend to be. You will also appeal to children's different learning styles, particularly those who like to take 'hands-on' approaches to their work.
- Even the 'driest' topic can be spiced up by using different approaches; for instance, something as simple as using the children themselves for counting and sorting tasks in maths.
- Another great approach is to incorporate tasks from one area of the curriculum into lessons in another. For instance, you might create a piece of music out of materials that you are studying in science. This kind of cross-disciplinary approach is great for inspiring creative ideas.

Tips, ideas and activities

- When planning a lesson or a scheme of work, keep to hand a copy of the photocopiable sheet on page 57 ('Different kinds of tasks'). You might:
 - use the photocopiable sheet to help you incorporate a good variety of approaches; for instance, setting yourself a target of five different tasks in each lesson;
 - give a copy to other members of staff at your school, to encourage them to use a range of tasks as well;
 - explore how you can use an approach from one area (for example, sculpture in art) to teach a different subject (such as sculpting onomatopoeic words to demonstrate their qualities in English).
- Find ways of incorporating 'hands-on' activities – these offer a great way of reinforcing learning and ensuring that it is memorable. They appeal especially to children who like to learn in a kinaesthetic way. You might:
 - bring in objects for the children to handle, perhaps as part of a scenario set up in class;
 - add textures and lift-up flaps to displays and encourage the children to interact with them;
 - incorporate food into those lessons which are not traditionally associated with cooking (for instance, in a geography lesson, spread butter onto bread to demonstrate population expansion).
- Sometimes, the most creative lessons are those where you have done little formal planning. You might enter the room with an interesting resource, or a challenging question, and allow the children to direct the course of the learning.
- Children respond well to formats that they have seen on television. Consider how you can adapt popular programmes to make a basis for teaching and learning. Quiz shows work particularly well.