



**City and County of Swansea
Dinas a Sir Abertawe**

Education Directorate/Cyfarwyddiaeth Addysg

Developing a wider literacy- The links between books and film



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Education Effectiveness Service/Gwasanaeth Effeithiolrwydd Addysg

“Television and video are among the first cultural experiences of most children in the 21st. century. At an early age, they learn to make sense of the flickering images on the screen ... by the time they are three years old, most children have learned another language in addition to their mother tongue: they have learned the codes and conventions through which moving image tells story... It make sense for schools to capitalise on this knowledge and enthusiasm.”

“Look Again” bfi education

Short films are both inspiring and challenging for children, but at the same time have a familiarity that builds on existing knowledge. This means that when film is used in the context of literacy teaching, children are ready to talk with more confidence and to actively engage in writing tasks. Using film can bring a new interpretation to shared reading to include the reading of media texts and can become a further stimulus for writing.

Developing a wider literacy – some links between books and films

In developing these notes, we realised again the close links between film and text. These notes are intended to support you making links between written texts and films. Many more ideas can be found in

“Look Again”	Foundation phase, KS 1 and 2
“Starting Stories”	Foundation phase and KS 1
“Story Shorts”	KS 2

Character

The characters we meet in both books and film are revealed to us through

- What they look like
- How they behave in different situations
- How they interact with other characters
- How they speak and what they say

An additional clue in films is the sound and/ or music associated with them.

Camera

In a film the camera acts as the eyes of the narrator. This corresponds to the narrator in a narrative text, and can be compared with the Viewpoint strand in the reading comprehension continuum. Different kinds of shots are used for different purposes e.g. a close up shot is used to show detail, a long shot is often used at the beginning of the film or a scene to set the scene. Children will need the vocabulary to discuss this effectively.

Structure

Like narratives, films have a structure, and while usually linear, the basic plot can be experimented with, like flashbacks in stories.

Setting

The choice of setting identifies mood or situation quickly, both in film and text. It can help us to understand the actions and emotions of the characters.

Sound

Although at first it would seem sound is a feature only to do with film, if you think of the “Soundscape” strategy that was exemplified during the reading comprehension training, this can also be a significant feature of written text and can add to the appreciation of setting, and characterisation. In terms of reading film, the sounds can enhance understanding and involvement in the story.

Colour

The choice of colour affects how the film looks and helps to tell the story. It can contribute to the mood, the passing of time, or the contrasts in the film.

Developing questioning

Using films to stimulate talk can create opportunities for enhancing children’s capacities to communicate. The following questions and grids can give children guidelines with which to consider film and text.

Questions to ask about **setting** through shared reading,
using texts / images



- Where does the action take place?
- Why do you think that it is set here?
- How is the setting created? Think about colour/props etc.
- Does the setting change? What happens to the story?
- How does the setting affect the characters behaviour?
- Could the story take place in another setting - if so, how would it change?
- Do you think the setting is successful in creating mood?

Questions to ask about **character** through shared reading,
using texts / images



- Is there a main character? What are they like? What do they look like? Do you like them? Why?
- How does the main character react to other characters?
- Can you tell how the characters are feeling and what they are thinking? How? What clues do we have?
- How do the characters speak? What do they say? How do they say it? How does this change how we feel about them?
- Which is the most interesting character? Why?
- Who is telling the story? What do they want us to feel like?

Questions to ask about the **structure** of story
through shared reading of a text/image



- What happens in the story? Can you identify the five points?
- What do you think are the most important points?
- Would the story change if the events were moved around?
- How does time move in the story?
- What might happen next?
- Is the structure similar to another story that you know? How?

Questions to ask about **sound and colour** through shared reading of a text/image

Sound in film

Sound in text

How many different sounds can you hear?

Study the text and find verbs and adverbs that suggest sound.

When does the sound change? What effect does this have?

When actions change / sounds change, what effect on mood does this have?

Are there any moments of silence? What impact does this have?

Are there parts of the story when there is very little action?

Questions to ask about **colour** through shared
reading of an image or text

- What colours can you see?
- When do colours change and why?
- What do the colours tell you about the time of day?
- What are the main colours? Why do you think that these were made?
- Do colours change as the settings change?
- What would the impact of black and white be?

As a form of questioning, grids can be less hierarchical than straightforward questions and can provide a less closed environment in which to develop children's responses.

The story

The structure	The people
Places	Time

The sound

Sounds within the story (Specific things happening)	Sounds outside the story (The music or soundtrack)	Silence
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Viewing

Patterns	Similarities
Surprises	Puzzles

Text

Find example of text type; immerse children in the text type to familiarise them with its features.

Explore features of the text type so children become aware of its purpose, structure and language features at word, sentence and text level. e.g.

Prediction, paired talk, group work, use of questioning, role play, interviews, story mountain, hot seating, freeze frame, conscience alley, shared writing etc.

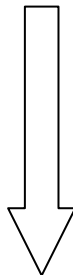
Support the writing with appropriate levels of scaffolding. Support the reading with appropriate levels of scaffolding.

Produce a piece of independent writing/ read a text with understanding and enjoyment.

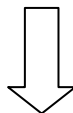
Model



Shared



Guided



Independent

Film

Choose a film or film extract.

Explore the features of the film. e.g. Prediction, paired talk, group work, use of questioning, story mountain etc.

Support the viewing of the film with appropriate levels of scaffolding e.g. use of questioning, grids.

Be able to 'read' the moving image with perception and enjoyment.

Use appropriate technology to create their own 'film' animation, etc.