# Developing a
# *Culturally Inclusive*
# Curriculum

by Jane Bednall, Sharon Fell and Niv Culora

TWO hands to plant the seed.

# UKLA
The United Kingdom Literacy Association

# Developing a *Culturally Inclusive* Curriculum

## *Materials for professional development* [1]

### Section 1: Positive relationships

If work on equalities is to have positive outcomes, teachers need to feel that they are confident about their views and trusted as professionals to play an active role in forming the curriculum, rather than simply covering national requirements. All too often, the teacher's voice is silenced and although there has been some attention to 'student voice' [2], this is by no means a regular feature of teaching and learning. One of the cornerstones of creating a culturally diverse curriculum is to see parents', families' and children's rights in positive relationship to each other rather than in opposition. This means forging genuinely balanced partnerships between homes, communities and schools (Cremin *et al.*, 2015). It is not necessarily an easy task but much can be achieved when teachers feel that they can listen to the families of pupils in the school and adapt practices that draw on both home and school funds of knowledge (Moll *et al.*, 1992). In preparation for such partnerships, teachers may want to develop their own professional knowledge about some of the key issues underlying a culturally inclusive curriculum.

These materials are designed for Subject Leaders to support professional development. Although they extend to cross curricular activities, it is likely that the English Subject Leader will be responsible for the work.

The materials include activities for sessions with colleagues as well as suggestions for planning and for classroom work and aim to:

- develop an understanding of how the culturally relevant curriculum is beneficial to all pupils

- suggest ways of building on the language and cultural assets pupils bring from their home and community experience (Moll *et al.*, 1992; Cremin *et al.*, 2015) to strengthen learning

- explore how the curriculum can reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of society: even in communities which seem to be similar, there are always differences; and in communities which seem to be different, there are always similarities; making links with parents, carers and communities will contribute to valuing diversity

- encourage the use of a broad range of texts and texts types that across a year of teaching will represent all aspects of pupils' cultures, faiths, sexuality, diverse families etc. so that they will recognise themselves in the texts, learn empathetically about each other and will feel safe to bring their own stories into the classroom

- suggest ways of adapting planning, teaching and learning to be inclusive for pupils who are learning English as an additional language or pupils from Minority Ethnic groups

- explore how a culturally diverse approach to teaching can raise achievement.

In developing a culturally inclusive curriculum, nobody is expected to be the expert. Teachers, trainees, pupils and communities can draw on one another's experience and expertise and create a curriculum that represents everyone's stories, rather than just the story of the dominant few. By opening up thinking and moving away from a Eurocentric curriculum, teachers can explore intercultural perspectives with pupils, developing young people's active interest in the world and their relationships to it.

Much of this work can be carried out with trainee teachers as well as experienced practitioners and some activities can be directly transferred to the classroom.

There are seven sessions, each of which is designed to last between an hour and a quarter and an hour and a half. As Subject Leader you may want to spend a full professional development day to start off developing a culturally inclusive curriculum or you may find it fits your plans better to have a series of after school sessions. The Activities in each section can be adapted to suit the time available. It is worth remembering that much of the discussion is about opinions and experiences so there may be lively debates!

### Session One **Perceptions of culture**

- Finding out about ourselves and each other
- Culture and identity
- 'The British' a poem by Benjamin Zephaniah
- Discussion

### Session Two **Issues of language**

- Exploring the language we use
- 'Half Caste' a poem by John Agard

### Session Three **Key concepts in cultural inclusion**

- Approaching sensitive issues
- Key concepts: Consequences Activity

### Session Four **Creating a culturally inclusive and safe learning environment**

- A walk around school
- Developing pupils' sense of identity

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## Session Five **Multiple identities**

- West Meets East
- 'Presents from My Aunts in Pakistan' a poem by Moniza Alvi

## Session Six **Criteria for developing a culturally inclusive curriculum**

- Planning a culturally inclusive unit of work
- Four processes to make the curriculum more inclusive

## Session Seven **How does it look in the classroom?**

- Reading beyond the literal
- Future planning

There are additional materials in the Appendixes which you may want to use as the basis for further sessions:

**Appendix 1** Examples of classroom projects

**Appendix 2** Working with parents in the early years

**Appendix 3** Useful websites, recommended reading and a list of bookshops which offer culturally diverse books for children

Many of the group outcomes can be collated to contribute towards an emerging policy about developing a culturally inclusive curriculum. Before each session there is a list of the materials you will need to prepare and at the end of each session there are photocopiable materials for use in the session.

Before the first session, ask colleagues to read Section 1.1 below, because this will be a touchstone for much of the later work.

### Notes

1. These materials draw on work carried out by the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Teams in the London boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Enfield and published by MantraLingua. We are very grateful for their permission to use extracts from their publication *Developing a Culturally Inclusive Curriculum* (2008). London: MantraLingua.

2. See, for example, http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/

## *1.1 Why is it important to develop a culturally inclusive curriculum?*

*The curriculum that is taught in schools needs to incorporate each individual child's background, to give them self-worth and for them to have pride in who they are. … It is our different backgrounds that separate us and by bringing children together in the classroom, we lay the foundations for a better future for all children in the country. By taking up the challenge, we as adults have the responsibility to ensure that we don't fail our children by denying them the right to gain in all aspects of learning. This is what education is all about.*
Doreen Lawrence (cited in DCIC, 2008: 15)

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The National Curriculum for England (2014) has a brief statement on pupils who are learning English as an additional language:

> The ability of pupils for whom English is an additional language to take part in the national curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects. (National Curriculum, 2014, Section 4.6)

And Ofsted's Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) inspection guidance points out that the cultural development of pupils is shown by their:

> • understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain. (Ofsted School Inspection Handbook, 2016, para 139)

Ofsted also stress the importance of pupils having:

> interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities. (*ibid.*)

In terms of school management, Ofsted require that in making judgements, inspectors will consider:

> how well leaders and governors promote all forms of equality and foster greater understanding of and respect for people of all faiths (and those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics), through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community. (Ofsted School Inspection Handbook, 2016, para 141)

These requirements for support, tolerance and understanding are welcome, but there is more to developing a culturally inclusive approach than simply meeting the requirements of the national curriculum or Ofsted. Developing a culturally inclusive approach means:

**Developing a strong sense of personal identity and self-esteem:** this can be fostered by creating opportunities for children (and adults) to talk about and explore their cultural identities. Teachers can plan more effectively when they have knowledge of pupils' different cultures and communities.

**Creating positive conditions for learning:** learning will thrive in an inclusive, safe, classroom and school environment where pupils feel valued and able to take risks in their learning and in exploration of sensitive issues.

**Supporting effective communication:** it is important to plan reading, spoken language and writing activities and approaches to enable pupils to develop skills in recognising and challenging prejudice, stereotyping and racist issues. This will be supported by identifying the language skills pupils need in order to express their opinions in spoken language and writing, prompted by questioning designed to challenge and move thinking forward.

**Transforming the curriculum:** in all subject areas it is possible to develop activities and tasks which relate to the criteria for a culturally inclusive curriculum (see Session 6), to integrate them into planning and have cross-cultural links to reinforce key learning objectives.

It also means helping young people develop a critical, analytical approach to any texts that they see, read or hear.

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# Session One - *Perceptions of culture*

It is always worth finding out about pupils' cultural and language experience before embarking on any programme of work, but it is equally important to explore the cultural and language experience of the adults in the school. All of this experience – young people's and adults' - offers rich possibilities for teaching and learning. It is very easy to make assumptions about people's language and cultural heritage, but there is no substitute for actually finding out by sharing experiences with colleagues.

You will need to prepare Activity Sheets 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 before the session.

You will also need to download and print off enough copies for the group of the poem 'The British' by Benjamin Zephaniah from **http://benjaminzephaniah.com/rhymin/the-british-serves-60-million/**

## Activity 1.1  **Finding out about ourselves and each other**

The aim of this short Activity is to open up awareness of some of the issues about cultural diversity - to allow colleagues to find out more about each other's similarities and differences and begin discussions about living in a diverse society. Look together at Figure 1.1 – the completed diagram. Give all members of the group Activity Sheet 1.1 (See end of Session for blank sheet). Ask colleagues to circulate amongst each other and find someone who has had experience of the different aspects on the sheet. The aim is to fill in a different name for each box.

Once the sheets are filled in, for a few minutes ask for feedback about the answers to the questions, for example, which famous British Black people were mentioned (were they mostly entertainers or athletes or did people remember, for example, Margaret Ebunoluwa (Maggie) Aderin-Pocock the British astronomer, or Chris Ofili, the Turner Prize artist)? And what is the range of countries outside Europe that people have visited? Who now works the furthest from where they were born and who the nearest? How do people feel about that? Invite the group to jot down any ideas/discussion points that arise for them from this Activity so that these can be revisited before the end of the session.

*Figure 1.1  Find someone who…*

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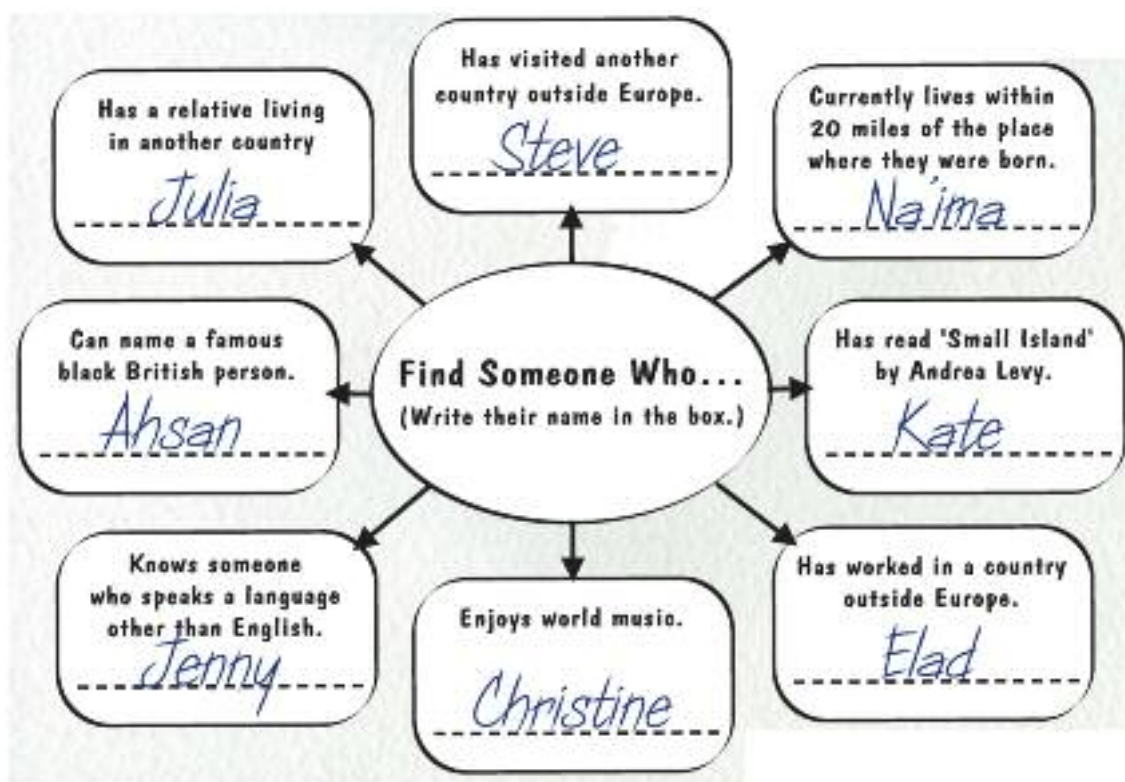
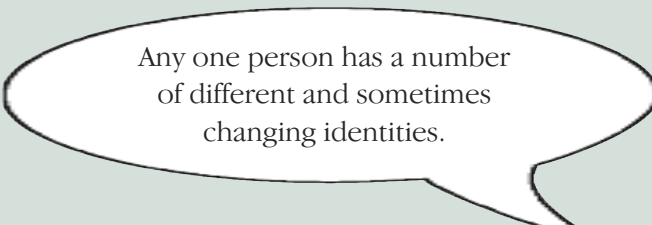## Activity 1.2 **Culture and identity**

This Activity is designed to:

• explore the definition of culture and its relationship with personal identity

• consider the point that everyone has a culture which is often very complex

• challenge assumptions and stereotypes made about people's cultures.

Culture must be viewed broadly. Culture is many things. It includes language, values and customs. Culture can be thought of in concrete terms such as items and objects, clothing, food, music and dance. Culture is also experienced by how people live out their lives as well as what they believe and what values are important to them. These include family roles, childbearing patterns, communication styles, holidays and festivals.

People's goals in life and their belief about human nature and humanity are invisible, but ever-present aspects of culture.
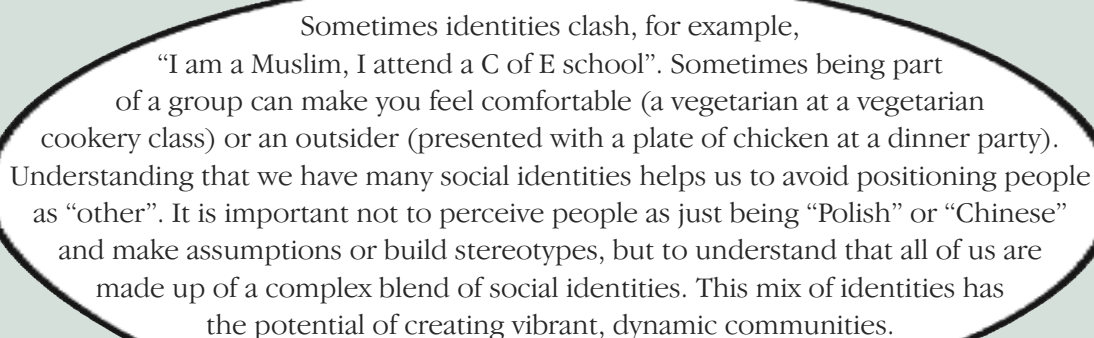
Culture is not something only celebrated by ethnic minority groups. Anybody who holds affiliation to a particular group, political, social, personal or linguistic is part of that culture.
(From *ESL in the Mainstream for Early Learners*, cited in DCIC, 2008:19)

Any one person has a number of different and sometimes changing identities.

(Janks, 1993, cited in DCIC, 2008:19)

Sometimes identities clash, for example, "I am a Muslim, I attend a C of E school". Sometimes being part of a group can make you feel comfortable (a vegetarian at a vegetarian cookery class) or an outsider (presented with a plate of chicken at a dinner party). Understanding that we have many social identities helps us to avoid positioning people as "other". It is important not to perceive people as just being "Polish" or "Chinese" and make assumptions or build stereotypes, but to understand that all of us are made up of a complex blend of social identities. This mix of identities has the potential of creating vibrant, dynamic communities.

(Adapted from Dr Priscilla Clarke, Australian early years practitioner and author, cited in cited in DCIC, 2008:19)

*Figure 1.2 Culture and identity*

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Ask members of the group to read the definition of culture and the quotations about identity on Activity sheet 1.2 and to discuss in pairs or threes how these relate to their own views of culture and identity. Show them the completed spider diagram sheet My culture and identity in Figure 1.3 and ask them to complete Activity sheet 1.3 in a couple of minutes. (See end of session for Activity sheet 1.3 blank spider diagram.)
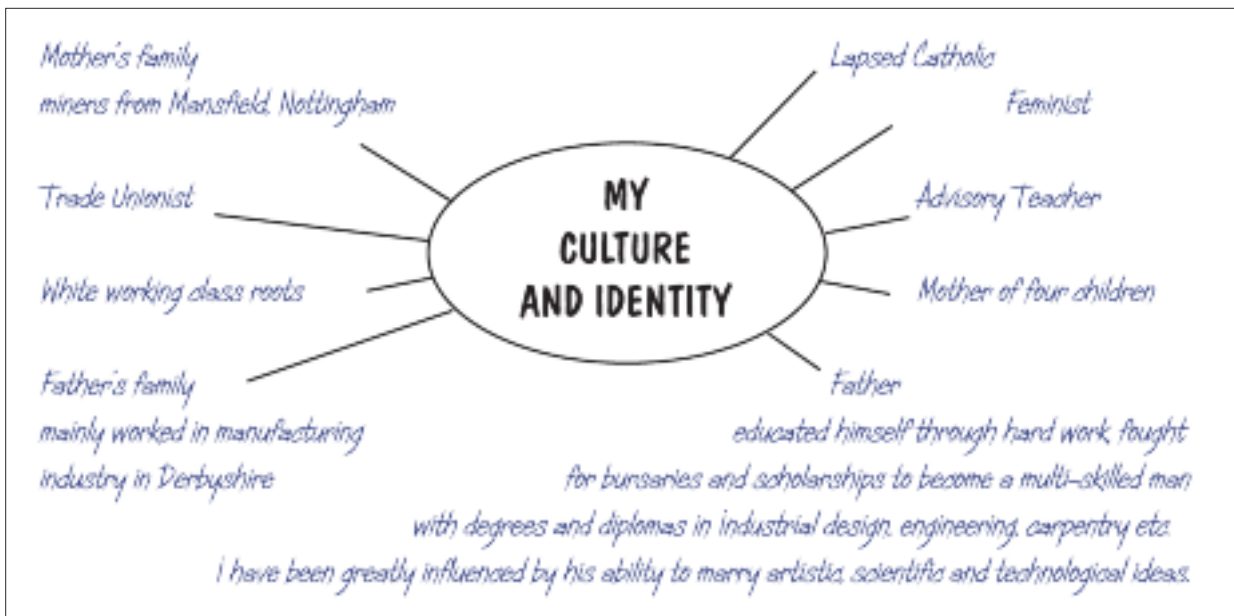


*Figure 1.3 My culture and identity.*

When the group have completed their own diagrams, ask them to work in pairs/groups of three to share their culture and identity summaries. What significant similarities or differences have they found? For example, there may be people whose parents come from different social backgrounds but who share the same ideals and political views, or people from different religious backgrounds who share the same perceptions of how their parents contributed to their identity.

### Activity 1.3  'The British' a poem by Benjamin Zephaniah

This Activity can also be used in the classroom.

Ask the group to read the Benjamin Zephaniah poem to each other in pairs/threes and discuss their first impressions. Then individually, ask them to select an abstract noun, for example, *respect* or *fairness* and to spend a few minutes using the writing frame shown in Figure 1.4 (Activity sheet 1.4) to compose their own poems. Their own poems might be used as models for carrying out this activity with their own classes. Equally, they might want to use the frame and children's example.

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The_____

Take some_____and_____

And let them_____

Then_____them with_____


Add the _____to some

_____and let them_____

As they_____and _____

Allow the _____to _____

_____them together with_____

Allow time to _____

*Figure 1.4 Writing frame and example based on Zephaniah's poem*

**Joy**

*Serves the world's 20 billion!*

*Ingredients*

Unlimited amounts of _

* Love
* Respect
* Harmony
* Kindness

Take some love and respect.
Let them blend and get to know each other.
Then gently mix them with 900 gallons of joy.
Add the happiness and friendship to some
Fun and let them care for each other.
As they make friends and tolerate each other
Allow the harmony to spread all over the world.
Unite them together with kindness.
Allow the mixture to simmer.
Garnish with love, freedom and harmony.
Finally...
Serve with a pint of harmony brandy and chocolate love
Cake.

Warning: Too much harmony brandy makes you drunk
And too much chocolate love cake makes you fat.

Note: Best served chilled.

By: Zahra and Deepu, Year 5
Upton Cross Primary School, Newham

## Discussion

End this session by allocating a short time for people to raise any issues that have arisen for them after any of the Activities in this session. Alternatively, invite members of the group to write down any questions they have and give them to you for consideration at the beginning of the next session. This allows for any misconceptions or concerns to be dealt with tactfully.

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has a relative living in another country

_____

has visited another country outside Europe

_____

can name a famous black British person

_____

currently lives within 20 miles of the place where they were born

_____

**Find someone who...**

(Write their name in the box)

knows someone who speaks a language other than English

_____

has read *Small Island* by Andrea Levy

_____

enjoys world music

_____

has worked in a country outside Europe

_____

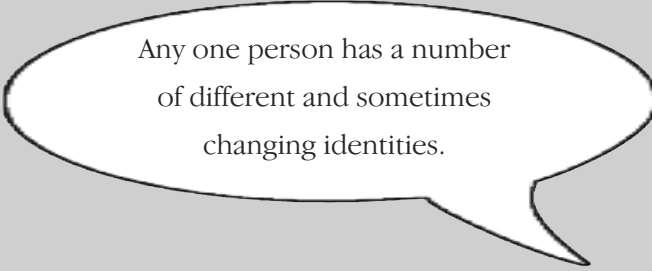Culture must be viewed broadly. Culture is many things. It includes language, values and customs. Culture can be thought of in concrete terms such as items and objects, clothing, food, music and dance. Culture is also experienced by how people live out their lives as well as what they believe and what values are important to them. These include family roles, childbearing patterns, communication styles, holidays and festivals.

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Sometimes identities clash, for example, "I am a Muslim, I attend a C of E school". Sometimes being part of a group can make you feel comfortable (a vegetarian at a vegetarian cookery class) or an outsider (presented with a plate of chicken at a dinner party). Understanding that we have many social identities helps us to avoid positioning people as "other". It is important not to perceive people as just being "Polish" or "Chinese" and make assumptions or build stereotypes, but to understand that all of us are made up of a complex blend of social identities. This mix of identities has the potential of creating vibrant, dynamic communities.

(Adapted from Dr Priscilla Clarke, Australian early years practitioner and author, cited in cited in DCIC, 2008:19)

**My Culture and Identity**

*Writing frame for recipe poem (based on Zephaniah's 'The British')*

Title _____

Take some _____ and _____

And let them _____

Then _____ them with _____

Add the _____ to some _____

_____ and let them _____

As they _____ and _____

Allow the _____ to _____

_____ them together with _____

Allow time to _____

## Session Two - *Issues of language*

You will need copies of Figure 2.1 or a visualiser or digital board so that you can share the Figure.

Cut out the strips of definitions in Activity sheet 2.1 and stick each of them in the centre of a piece of A4 paper so that they can be annotated. You will be asking people to choose their own strips so you will need enough of each for all members of the group.

You will also need blu-tack to attach the completed sheets to the wall for the group to browse.

Download the Youtube video **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTt4GAjPh58** where John Agard performs his poem 'Half Caste'. You could also provide printed versions from *Half Caste and Other Poems* by John Agard (Hodder Children's Books, 2005).

Prepare copies of Activity sheet 3.1 How can we best approach sensitive issues? for the group to read before the next session.

Begin the session by addressing any written questions you were given.

### Activity 2.1  **Exploring the language we use**

This Activity is designed to support members of the group in being open about their understanding of terminology so that they feel able to ask why some terms may not be seen as positive. It is emphatically not about policing each other's language for signs of 'political in/correctness'.

Begin the Activity by asking people to jot down their own ideas of what 'political correctness' means (include yourself in this jotting). Does it just mean lip service to certain publicly accepted norms? Does it mean not being honest about issues because of a fear of offending? It may not be possible to reach consensus about what the term means to everyone but at least some of the misconceptions might be cleared out of the way by an open discussion. As the term now has some negative – and conflicting - connotations, it might be best to agree not to use it!

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| tolerate | value | respect |
| --- | --- | --- |
| cultural inclusion | cultural relevance | cultural awareness |
| equality | diversity | cohesion |
| ethnicity | nationality | race |
| cultures | customs | beliefs |
| prejudice | discrimination | racism |
| Caribbean heritage | Afro-Caribbean | African Caribbean |
| Asian | Muslim | Indian |
| mixed race | dual heritage | half-caste |
| Gypsy | Traveller | Roma |
| EAL | ESL | bi-lingual |
| refugee | asylum seeker | immigrant |
| ethnic minority | minority ethnic | EMA |
| black British | black Caribbean | black African |
| third world | developing world | underdeveloped countries |



*Figure 2.1 Different terminology*

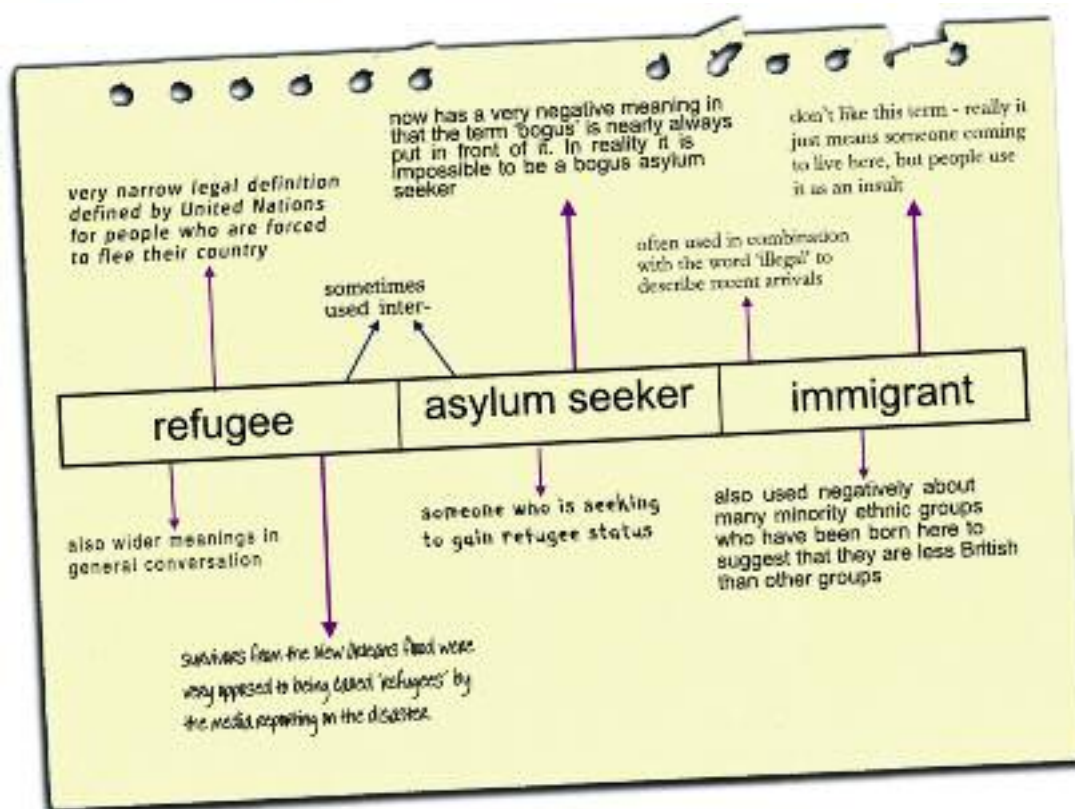Ask the group to look at the terms in Figure 2.1 and discuss the annotated example. Pairs then choose 3 strips of definitions which are most relevant to them and annotate them as in the example. They should consider:

Do they all mean the same?
Does it matter which term is used?
Which seems preferable – why?
Are they any that are unacceptable – why?

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Put the annotated examples on the wall (all examples of the same terminology together) and ask the group to browse and consider what they have taken from this Activity. It may be that some people are relieved that they are using terminology which is largely culturally courteous, or that some now feel that they will change their use of certain terms.

### Activity 2.3 'Half Caste' Poem by John Agard

End the Activity by viewing the website performance of John Agard's poem 'Half Caste' and sharing the information:

John Agard came to England from Guyana in 1977. Like many Caribbeans, he is himself of dual heritage – his mother is Portuguese but born in Guyana and his father is black. One of the things he enjoys about living in England is the wide range of people he meets: 'The diversity of cultures is very exciting'. However, one of the things he doesn't like is the view of racial origins which is implied in the expression 'half-caste', still used by many people to describe people of dual heritage. The term is now considered rude and insulting.

You may want to allow some time for reflective comments or just leave the poem to do its own work.

*Note:* In preparation for Session 3, ask colleagues to read Activity sheet 3.1 and to note one or two issues that they have felt concern about, or that still concern them, so that you can start the session with an anonymous list of concerns about approaching sensitive issues. You may, of course, include your own in the list.

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **tolerate** | value | **respect** |
| **cultural inclusion** | cultural relevance | **cultural awareness** |
| **equality** | diversity | **cohesion** |
| **ethnicity** | nationality | **race** |
| **cultures** | customs | **beliefs** |
| **prejudice** | discrimination | **racism** |
| **Caribbean heritage** | Afro-Caribbean | **African Caribbean** |
| **Asian** | Muslim | **Indian** |
| **mixed race** | dual heritage | **half-caste** |
| **Gypsy** | Traveller | **Roma** |
| **EAL** | ESL | **bi-lingual** |
| **refugee** | asylum seeker | **immigrant** |
| **ethnic minority** | minority ethnic | **EMA** |
| **black British** | black Caribbean | **black African** |
| **third world** | developing world | **underdeveloped countries** |

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Activity Sheet 2.1  Different terminology

# Session Three - *Key concepts in cultural inclusion*

You will need to bring the responses to Activity sheet 3.1 (concerns about sensitive issues) and Activity sheets 3.2 and 3.3.

## Activity 3.1  Approaching sensitive issues

Show the list of concerns about sensitive issues to the group.  Ask colleagues to work in pairs or threes to discuss one or two of the issues identified. Try to ensure that all the issues on the list will be given some consideration. The aim is to formulate possible strategies/approaches to help deal with the concerns. Ask colleagues to make a note of these so that you can collate a document which identifies sensitive issues and suggests ways forward.

> This can form part of the school policy for developing a culturally inclusive curriculum.

## Activity 3.2  Key concepts: Consequences Activity

Key concepts:

- Diversity within diversity
- Multiple identities
- Dominant culture
- Global perspectives
- Dynamic culture
- Eurocentricity

These concepts are complex and challenging and may be familiar to some colleagues but not to others or may be terms that are taken for granted and not discussed with others. The aim of this activity is to share understanding of the meanings of the terms with discussion taking place in a non-threatening way so that everyone can contribute to the learning process. Working in groups may produce a variety of definitions ranging from the concrete to the metaphorical but the most important outcome is that the definitions have been created by the group rather than been taken as given.

There should be six groups if possible. If not, then three groups start off two of the consequence sheets. Give each group a copy of one of the 'consequences' sheets (Activity sheet 3.2) with one of the six key concepts written at the bottom of the page. Ask them to spend just two minutes coming up with ideas about the concept and noting them at the top of the page.

Each group then folds the paper over so that what they have written cannot be seen, and passes the sheet to the next group. (2 minutes each turn.)

Each paper is passed round six times so that everyone has a chance to contribute and eventually ends up with the group that started it. The group opens up the definition they began with, discusses the ideas listed and puts together a definition of the concept.

Each group reads out their key concept and the definition they arrived at. (It would be useful to collate these for group members to keep.)

You may want to share with them Figure 3.1 which has examples of other teachers' definitions.

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**DOMINANT CULTURE**

- The culture that has the majority of people in it.
- Those who have power by virtue of more resources than anyone else.
- The majority culture.
- Culture reflected by the norms and values of the country.
- 'Culture of the masses.'
- Way of life and set of values which underpins or imposes itself on the wider society.
- The way of life and set of values of the majority culture who impose their power.

**DYNAMIC CULTURE**

- A culture that is constantly changing, moving and developing in relation to external factors eg politics, immigration and the latest trends.
- People's ways of life are constantly evolving and are influenced by others.
- Cultures that are changing from within and from outside influences.
- Flexible/changing/exciting
- An exciting, rich and varied community.

**GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES**

- Awareness and understanding of different countries and cultures and their needs.
- Awareness of world issues, desire to understand different viewpoints.
- Looking at the impact of an action on the 'world' rather than a particular country/economy.
- How the world sees the British rather than the British see the world!
- Thinking about things from the point of view of different countries and cultures.

*Figure 3.1 Examples of teachers' discussions of key concepts*

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# "How can we best approach sensitive issues?"

We have found that through developing the curriculum to include identity, experience and cultural perspectives we inevitably raise issues which can be seen as controversial or sensitive (for example Race and Racism, War and Refugees). Many teachers have expressed their nervousness about handling such issues in the classroom.

> **This fear appears to arise from several roots:**

▶ Some teachers fear that they do not have sufficient knowledge of the subject to answer questions raised by pupils, and are afraid of giving 'wrong' information and so offending pupils, families or other staff. This uncertainty seems to be exacerbated for overseas trained teachers who can feel unsure of what knowledge is expected of and shared by British trained teachers.

▶ Some teachers with little experience of working in multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-faith schools fear that they know too little about the communities represented in their classes, and so are afraid of offending pupils, families or other staff through their innocent ignorance.

▶ If our curriculum is culturally relevant to our pupils and reflects and includes their experiences and those of their communities, it will inevitably also reflect the conflicts and contradictions that exist in the wider society and so cannot help but be political. There is much confusion about whether and how far teachers can, or should, be impartial, and some teachers fear getting into trouble for expressing their opinions in case they are seen to be 'indoctrinating' their pupils. Some teachers fear that they may not be able to manage the conflicts of belief and opinion that could arise between pupils, and indeed between adults, in the classroom.

▶ Including pupils' identities and culture raises strong feelings which some teachers fear they may find difficult to manage in the classroom, for example that children could be distressed by others' disagreement with their family's view of an issue, or by painful experiences being evoked. Some teachers also fear that by opening up an issue they may have to deal with attitudes and beliefs which they also find hard to accept.

▶ Some teachers are uncertain about what they are 'allowed' to change in the curriculum; they may not be sure whether they agree with teaching anything other than a prescribed syllabus. They may be worried about how changes in the curriculum fit in with other schemes of work across the school and may feel that the children miss out on something crucial through doing this instead.

> **There are several approaches we have found useful in helping to address these fears:**

▶ The opportunity to share practice with other schools, and to hear how others have dealt with such issues has been valuable. The more times we have taught the same units of work, the more experience we have been able to build up to help us to predict what may arise for pupils, and so are able to plan for it.

▶ Partnership teaching has been helpful in building teachers' confidence and providing alternative views and opinions as well as enabling the modelling of how to discuss such issues. In our project this has been partnerships between advisory staff and class teachers but also with EMA staff and teaching assistants.

- Much research and background reading to increase teacher knowledge of issues involved.

- Our collaborative exploratory questioning approach has set an ethos which encourages the expression and acceptance of different opinions rather than an expectation of 'right' answers, and encourages children to formulate their own questions.

- Involving parents through homework which encourages discussion with their children has enabled them to have their say, and for pupils to bring this into the classroom, so increasing the range of views heard.

- Some schools have planned for extra circle-time-type activities to enable children to raise and revisit issues which are important or troublesome for them, and give them an opportunity to have some control over the agenda.

- Establishing ground rules for classroom discussion and debate so that everyone has an opportunity to be heard, no-one makes fun of others' comments, etc.

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For specific advice on handling sensitive issues in the classroom we have found these 'Helpful hints' from Save the Children's website resources 'Eye to Eye' very clear and concise:

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## Helpful hints

- Find out what your pupils already know — talk with your pupils about what connections they have with communities in other places. These may not be Palestinian connections, but they will serve to illustrate the fact that none of us live in isolation.
- Be prepared for strong feelings and let pupils express their emotions in an appropriate way. Allow plenty of time for 'debriefing', especially after role-plays.
- Explain that you want pupils to explore issues, not find the 'right' or 'wrong' answer.
- Make it safe to question.
- Pupils should feel that it is safe to explore issues from a range of perspectives. If you find that prejudices and stereotypes are being expressed, correct misinformation without making pupils feel guilty about their opinions.
- Don't pretend to have all the answers.
- You may be required to take on a variety of roles in order to draw out discussion. If you feel it is appropriate to express your personal opinion, state that it is just that — not an absolute fact or truth.
- Be aware of your own values — think in advance about your own position and what your 'bottom line' is. If you need to, express it calmly and positively.
- Remember that you do not have to pretend that there are easy answers, but reassure pupils that different individuals and groups are working to find solutions.
- Focus on the importance of finding solutions — if children focus constructively on what they might do about a problem, they will gain a sense of themselves as active, empowered citizens who can do something to bring about change.

Further guidance:
www.insted.co.uk
www.citized.info

**diversity within diversity**

Developing a
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Curriculum

Activity Sheet 3.2  Consequences

**multiple identities**

Developing a
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Curriculum

Activity Sheet 3.2  Consequences

**dominant culture**

Developing a
*Culturally Inclusive*
Curriculum

Activity Sheet 3.2  Consequences

global perspectives

Developing a
*Culturally Inclusive*
Curriculum

Activity Sheet 3.2  Consequences

**dynamic culture**

Developing a
*Culturally Inclusive*
Curriculum

Activity Sheet 3.2  Consequences

**Eurocentricity**

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Curriculum

Activity Sheet 3.2  Consequences

## Diversity within diversity

Does the curriculum counteract over-simplified, stereotypical views, by teaching that within every cultural tradition, there is a diversity of viewpoints, lifestyles and beliefs?

For example, does it show that there are many differences within Muslim culture and experience?

## Multiple Identities

Does the curriculum teach that most people have a range of affiliations, loyalties and sense of belonging?

For example, does it illustrate that everyone, and maybe especially pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, assumes different roles and behaviour patterns within particular settings and readily switch between them?

## Eurocentricity

Does the curriculum teach that all learning and human achievement was centred in Europe? Or does it teach that human achievements are dependent upon the prior learning/achievement of others?

For example, does history teaching recognise that the maths and science commonly attributed to the Greeks was developed from the black civilisations of Kush and Kemet (the ancient Egyptian dynasties)? And similarly, does it recognise that scientific knowledge commonly attributed to Renaissance discovery was actually an evolutionary development of earlier Islamic thinking? Does the curriculum teach that every culture interprets its history and learning through certain grand narratives and that these, in turn, contribute to the identities of individuals?

## Dominant Culture

Does the curriculum enable pupils to question some of the dominant 'myths' that have arisen from the imperialist history and science in the West, e.g. to question this imperialism we could explore 'How Black people won the wild west'? Does the curriculum give status to the experiences and achievement of people from all backgrounds and cultures in terms that pupils value?

For example, is the point of comparison just with the dominant 'Anglo' culture or does the curriculum also acknowledge black, Muslim and other perspectives equally?

## Global Perspectives

Does the curriculum teach that, with regard to every event, there is a variety of perceptions, interpretations and perspectives? Does the curriculum reflect a cross-cultural perspective? For example that Zambia had far greater numbers of refugees (in 2008) than Britain in relation to the countries' populations.

## Dynamic Culture

Does the curriculum teach that societies and the cultures within them are constantly changing and developing? Does it teach that there is not a fixed, static view or perspective for a cultural group in any time or place?

(Adapted from the *CREAM Report*, Peter Chilvers, 2004, cited in DCIC, 2008: 29)

Give group members copies of Activity sheet 3.3 which raises some useful questions about each of the key concepts.

**Notes:** If colleagues have very different or conflicting definitions of the key concepts, it may be worth discussing them again at the end of the series of sessions to see if there is greater consensus.

The consequences activity could be used with older pupils to help them consider some of the key concepts.

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# Session Four - *Creating a culturally inclusive and safe learning environment*

This session involves a walk around the school when the pupils have left. You will need to provide copies of:

Activity sheet 4.1 A Walk Around my School
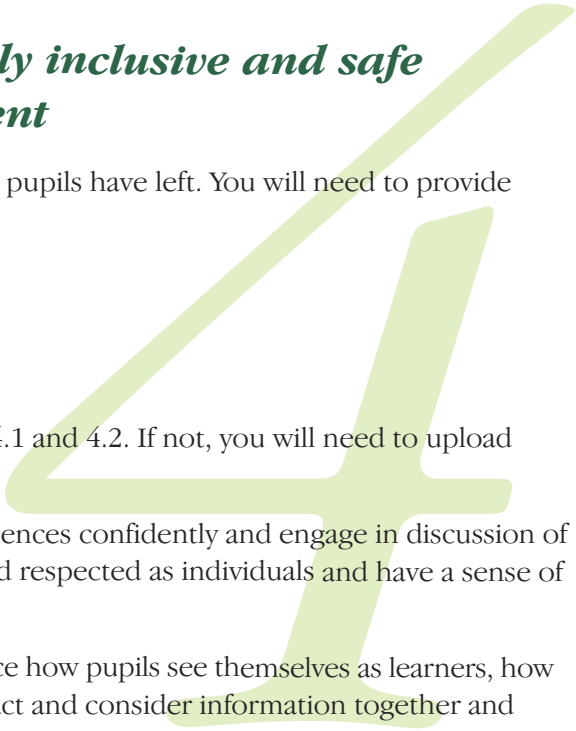Figure 4.1
Activity sheet 4.2 My Story in a Box
Activity sheet 4.3 All About Me

If you have a visualiser you will be able to share Figures 4.1 and 4.2. If not, you will need to upload them to the digital board.

If learners are to share their cultural and linguistic experiences confidently and engage in discussion of sensitive issues, they need to feel safe, settled, valued and respected as individuals and have a sense of belonging to the class and the school.

The organisation of the learning environment will influence how pupils see themselves as learners, how they share and build on what they know, how they interact and consider information together and how they demonstrate understanding.

Introduce the session by giving colleagues a copy of Figure 4.1. Allow about 10 minutes for them to read the questions and highlight the parts that they feel they already provide. Any points that they have not highlighted suggest areas for development that colleagues can consider in their planning.

> ▸ Do I know the ethnic background and cultural histories of my pupils?
> ▸ Do I know what languages my pupils can speak, write and understand?
> ▸ Do I value the home language, culture, life experiences and intellect of my pupils?
> ▸ Do I plan opportunities for pupils to share their cultural and linguistic experiences and knowledge?
> ▸ Does my classroom management ensure the confident involvement of all pupils?
> ▸ Do I plan for a variety of teaching approaches and learning experiences to meet pupils' diverse learning styles?
> ▸ Do I provide enough time for pupils to explore and reflect on their learning?
> ▸ Does my questioning enable the pupils to move on in their learning?
> ▸ Does my planning take account of pupils' language and curricular needs?
> ▸ Are the pupils' languages, cultures, life-styles and religions reflected in resources and displays?
> ▸ Do I carefully select pictures, texts, props and artefacts that
>    - pupils can relate to?
>    - encourage pupils to share cultural and linguistic experiences?
>    - promote discussions with their peers?
>    - challenge stereotypes?
>    - have a real purpose for learning (are not tokenistic)?
> ▸ Are my interactions with pupils effective in promoting learning and engaging them as active partners in their learning?
> ▸ Do I plan for the involvement of parents and other members of the communities?
>
> *Adapted from Leas Publication 'Making Progress'* .

*Figure 4.1 Providing an inclusive and safe environment (DCIC p. 36)*

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## Activity 4.1  A walk around school

This activity is designed to find evidence of how the school represents different identities and community languages in the school and the wider community.

Pupils could also do this survey in small groups. Ask them to imagine they have arrived in school from another planet. What can they find out about the school and its pupils from walking around it?

Give colleagues copies of Activity sheet 4.1 *A walk around my school* and ask them to spend about 20 minutes making notes about how the school reflects the identities and languages of the pupils and the wider community. Figure 4.2 shows a completed example.

### A Walk Around My School

| LOCATION | What's already in place? | What could be put in place? |
|---|---|---|
| ENTRANCE | Welcome booklets in different languages | Check that languages are updated |
| DINING HALL | Illustrated menus. Food from different cultures. Respect for the food preparation methods of different cultures | Parents consulted about recipes |
| CLASSROOMS | Negotiated class rules displayed and translated. Dual language books. | Displays that fairly represent people and lifestyles from different cultures |
| LIBRARY | Ethnic minority authors highlighted in displays | |
| ICT ROOM | | Different scripts available on keyboards |
| PLAYGROUND | Welcome mural | Teach children games from different cultures. A community notice board |
| OFFICES | Clear notices with translated information | Employ more staff representative of different communities |
| CORRIDORS | Photographs of activities in the classrooms reflect pupil and adult diversity | |
| TOILETS | | Pictorial and translated notices e.g. "Please wash your hands" |

*Figure 4.2 Examples of a walk round my school (DCIC p. 3)*

Bring the ideas back and share the notes in small groups. Identify the possible things that could be put in place and prepare a realistic timetable for implementation, noting who will be responsible for which action.

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## Activity 4.2  Developing pupils' sense of identity

If pupils are to feel safe and have a sense of belonging to the class and the school, they need to have opportunities to engage in discussions about themselves and their identities. Several benefits come from doing this. It:

- shows the pupils that they are individually valued
- highlights similarities as well as difference
- creates opportunities to involve parents
- provides teachers with information about the pupils.

Some schools plan an 'identity week' at the beginning of the academic year which gives pupils an opportunity to explore their personal identity, but also what it means to belong to the school community. Different identity activities are planned for each year group then combined to make whole school displays, for example:

- **Identity boxes:** children work in groups of four. Each child decorates one side of a box with pictures, texts and small objects that are important to them and which reflect who they are. Inside the box the group makes something, for example, a poem, a song or a handout, that reflects their identity as pupils of the school.

- **Identity tiles:** pupils create individual hessian (or other fabric) tiles reflecting their identity. This is then made into a class tapestry.

Share these ideas with the group as an example of possible identity activities. Ask the group to add any other ideas they have already carried out or that they might like to try.
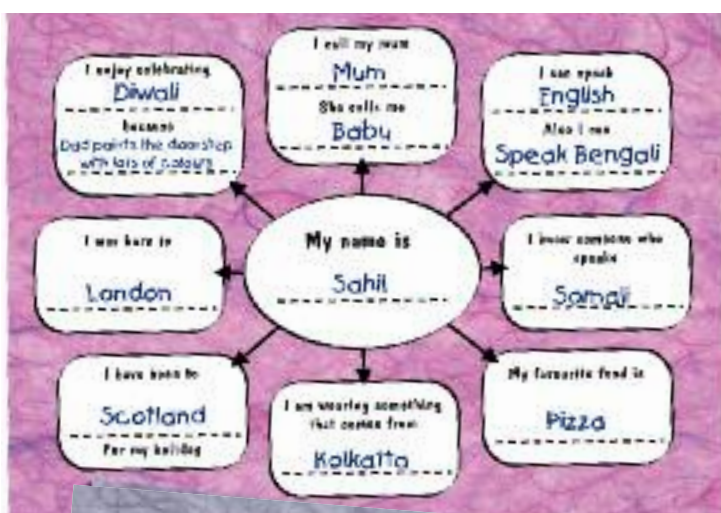


This activity is designed for pupils as a way of helping colleagues get to know more about their classes, but is also a good activity for teachers. Give each member of the group copies of Activity sheet 4. 2 My Story in a Box. Ask them to spend about 5-7 minutes filling it in before sharing it with a colleague. Were there any surprises?

*Figure 4.3 All About Me and My Story in a Box (DCIC page 39)*

Show the group the completed examples in Figure 4.3 and give them blank Activity sheets 4.2 and 4.3 to use with their classes. In preparation for the next session ask them to jot down a couple of points that were 'eye openers' from their pupils' responses to the All About Me and My Story in a Box activities.

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| A Walk around My School | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Location | What's already in place? | What could be put in place? |
| Entrance | | |
| Dining Hall | | |
| Classrooms | | |
| Library | | |
| ICT Room | | |
| Playground | | |
| Offices | | |
| Corridors | | |
| Toilets | | |

I enjoy
celebrating

_____

because

_____

I call
my Mum

_____

She calls me

_____

I was
born in

_____

I can
speak

_____

I can also

_____

**My name is**

I have
been to

_____

on holiday

I know someone
who speaks

_____

I am wearing
something that
comes from

_____

My favourite
food is

_____

The best country
I have visited or
would like to visit is

_____

My special
person

_____

My best
celebration

_____

**My story
in a box**

My favourite
place

_____

My best
memory

_____

My special
object

_____

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Activity Sheet 4.3

# Session Five - *Multiple identities*

Provide each member of the group with a copy of the image West meets East (Figure 5.1) with a blank margin for annotations. (Page 48 has a full size version).

You will also need to prepare to show the dramatised performance and discussion by Moniza Alvi about her poem 'Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan' **http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00wrlzw**

You may want to put Moniza Alvi's comment about 'other cultures' on the digital board to share with the group.

Pupils (and adults) are part of many groups and different identities. In planning the curriculum it is important to recognise this to avoid stereotyping. These activities can be used with pupils but are equally useful for teachers to explore multiple identities.

## Activity 5.1  West Meets East

Ask the group, in pairs or threes, to look at the image in Figure 5.1 and consider the following questions, annotating the picture with their comments, questions and any issues it raises for them:

• What does the image indicate about people's identity?
• What is the significance of the words around the edge, the pattern, the small pictures in the border?



*Figure 5.1  West Meets East*

*© Loraine Leeson 1992. Photo-mural produced with pupils and teacher from Central Foundation School, LB Tower Hamlets.*

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A class of Bangladeshi British girls visually explored their own identities, then through group work created an expression of their experience of living in two cultures. The central part of the image shows hands, decorated as for a marriage, joining material from the two cultures through a sewing machine. The border, constructed in textiles by the pupils, contains a combination of western and eastern images and words in Bengali and English.

You could also ask the following supplementary questions, particularly with younger pupils or those who are not familiar with this kind of activity:

• Who do you think the person is?
• Where are they from?
• What are they doing?
• Where was the photo taken?
• What is the significance of the colours chosen?

There are, of course, no 'right' answers. Bring the annotations back to the whole group for discussion and comparison of points raised in the discussion.

### Activity 5.2 'Presents from MyAunts in Pakistan a poem by Moniza Alvi

Show the group the video of Moniza Alvi's poem 'Presents from My Aunts in Pakistan' and her discussion of how she came to write it. Watch it again, asking colleagues to make notes about the identity issues that are raised by the poet. In twos or threes, ask them to compare and discuss their ideas, then bring the group together to talk about the issues raised. Once again it is important to remember that there are no 'right' answers.

Compare the messages from the video images and the poem. Ask group members to spend just 5 minutes speed writing about any times they might have experienced the pull of two (or more) cultures, for example, home and university; being in the UK and experiencing life in another country.

You may have noticed that the video was made as part of a series about poetry from 'other cultures'. Moniza Alvi comments:

Recently I heard that one of my poems is to be included in a forthcoming GCSE examination anthology under the sections 'Poems from Other Cultures' and Traditions'. This at once made me feel like an inhabitant of a distant corner of an empire. Surely the heading should be an inclusive 'Literature from Our Cultures'. It is excellent that school students are now studying a range of poetry, but it is important that they don't receive messages that would reinforce a sense of their own lives being 'other' and marginalised.

(from Moniza Alvi *The Least International Shop in the World*, (2006) Bloodaxe Books cited in DCID, 2008:41)

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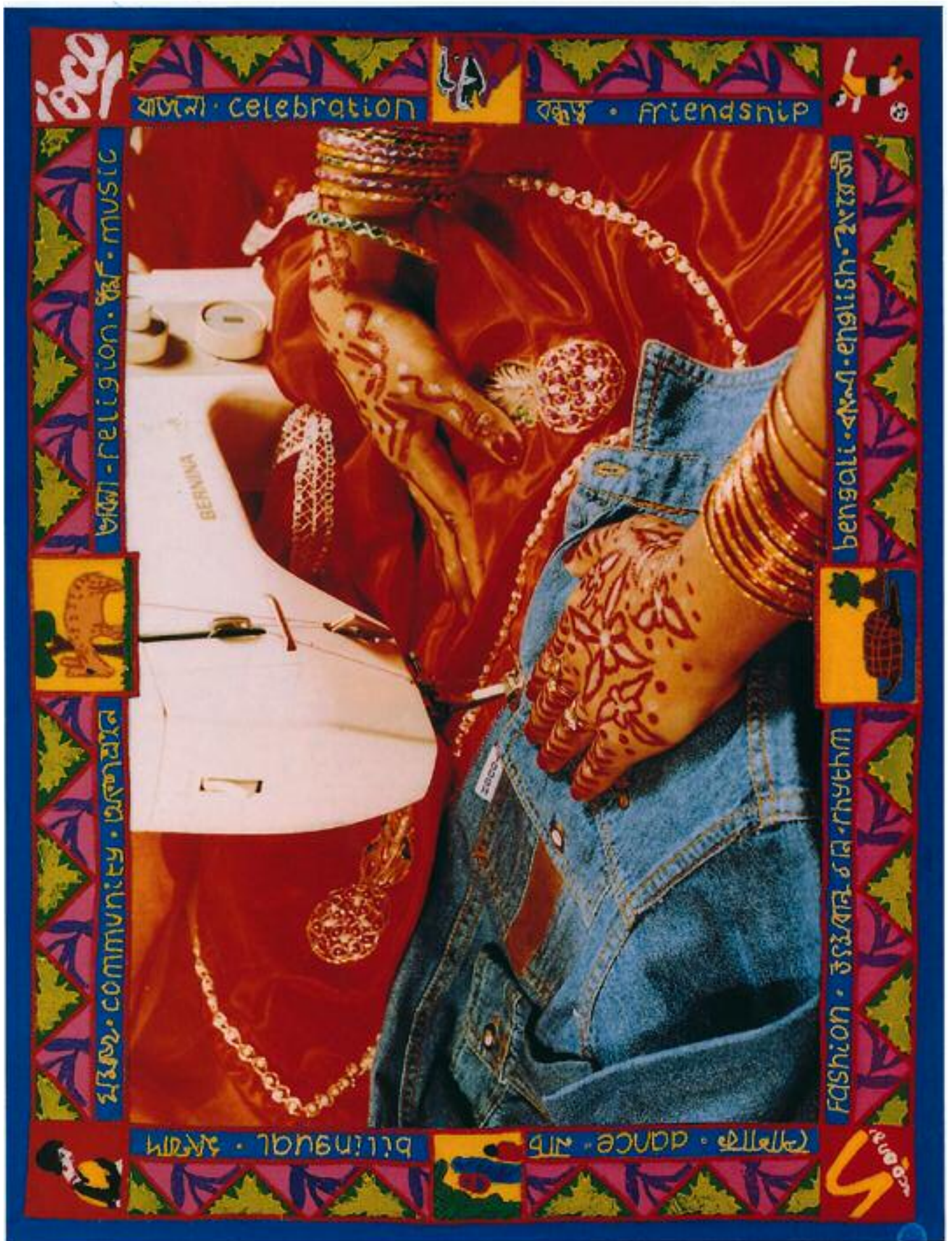
# Session Six - *Planning for a culturally inclusive curriculum*

For this session you will need to show the group Figure 6.1 Criteria for developing a culturally inclusive curriculum.

You will also need copies of:
Figure 6.2 Examples of planning for a culturally inclusive unit of work.
Figure 6.3 Visual Literacy
Figure 6.4 Critical Literacy

You will need to upload the image of Katep (sometimes referred to as Kaitep) and Hetepheres from **http://www.bmimages.com/results.asp?image=00035326001&stockindexonline.com=1** (for Activity 6.2 do not yet reveal the information under the 'more information' button)
You will also need copies of:
Figure 6.5 text from the British Museum
Figure 6.6 extract from 'Egypt Revisited' by Van Sertima
Figure 6.7 text about the artist Rita Keegan
Figure 6.8 Rita Keegan's parents
Figure 6.9 Language functions
Figure 6.10 Planning Access Key for Ethnic Minority Learners

This session explores the criteria for developing a culturally inclusive curriculum.

## Activity 6.1  Planning a culturally inclusive unit of work

This Activity is probably best done in year groups. If the school is one form entry it will be an individual activity. If there are year teams they should work together.



Show the group Figure 6.1 Planning a culturally inclusive unit of work. Ask them to consider:

- What aspects of the criteria they already include in their practice.
- Examples of good practice.
- Which of the criteria they feel they would like to develop more fully.

Give the group copies of Figure 6.2 *Examples of planning for a culturally inclusive unit of work* as a prompt to future planning. Ask them to identify one idea they might use in their next Unit planning. Activity 6.2 should help in fleshing out ideas.

*Figure 6.1 Criteria for developing a culturally inclusive curriculum*

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**Reflect the ethnic and linguistic composition of the class and/or the community and/ or society:** *for example, in a project on 'Journeys' , make local journeys and take photographs of mosques, gurdwaras, synagogues, churches and other places of worship familiar to the children as well as the local shops run by different members of the community that the children have visited with family members.*

**Reflect languages, knowledge and skills from a diversity of cultures in all parts of the curriculum:** *for example, in a Year 1 science project, canvassing parents and the communities of a school to describe the nutritional and medicinal uses of plants from all over the world.*

**Put teaching into a global context:** *for example, in a Geography topic on Rivers, study water use across the world, not just British rivers.*

**Encourage involvement of pupils' experience:** *for example, in topics on Journeys or Settlements, ask children to share their experience of travelling , including Refugee and Travellers' experience.*

**Ensure that the skills, experiences and expertise of parents, families and members of the local communities are included:** *for example, inviting local scientists, authors, musicians and artists in to run workshops in school.*

**Stand as part of the curriculum and not as a separate 'exotic' and unusual section or add on:** *for example, when studying the earth, sun and moon, look at the work of Al -Biruni (the Muslim scholar) and Benjamin Banneker (the African American naturalist).*

**Reflect positive images of various groups:** *for example, in history, study the contribution made by Somali seamen in the 19th and 20th centuries.*

**Allow examination and discussion of the dominant culture in society rather than considering it as the 'norm' against which all cultures are judged:** *for example, in Geography through Oxfam websites, research sustainability and environmental projects in Latin America, countries in Africa and rather than assuming that the so- called 'developed 'countries are the key movers in conservation projects.*

**Raise awareness of different cultures and challenge prejudice and stereotypes:** *for example, looking at the contribution made to British communities by refugees: 18 Nobel peace prizes, mainly in science and medicine, held by refugees in this country.*

**Treat all cultures as dynamic:** *for example, comparing children's assumptions about life in modern Cairo with case studies of children's lives in Cairo.*

**Highlight shared values across cultures and celebrate difference:** *for example, drawing on family, community and personal knowledge to compare similarities and differences between Jamaica and England.*

*Figure 6.2 Examples of planning for a culturally inclusive unit of work*

## Activity 6.2  **Four processes to make the curriculum more inclusive**

• Culturally inclusive criteria informing choice of content (Figure 6.1)
• Visual literacy (Figure 6.3)
• Critical literacy (Figure 6.4)
• Questioning evidence

All these processes are interlinked. Look through Figures 6.3 and 6.4 and respond to any questions or comments made by the group.

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- ▶ Visual Literacy is a key process in developing a culturally inclusive curriculum. We all live in an image-rich environment, yet many adults lack confidence in reading visual images. This can be linked to lack of confidence in art teaching.

- ▶ Yet 'learning to read' visual imagery is key to investigating evidence in history, geography and science and enjoying and understanding the world we live in.

- ▶ We need to be aware that different interpretations can be made of visual texts as well as written texts.

- ▶ Beginning with a visual text facilitates access for all pupils equally (apart from those with a visual impairment).

- ▶ Using visual texts is vital in multicultural classrooms as it is more inclusive and accessible for bilingual pupils.

- ▶ Visual images can have immediate impact.

- ▶ It is extremely important that we choose visual images that naturally trigger questions which challenge children's thinking and that can be read at many levels.

- ▶ There is an obvious link to the process of critical literacy when we are interpreting visual texts. We need to understand the motives / messages conveyed by the illustrator.

- ▶ We need to facilitate the development of pupils' ability to read the 'layers' of meaning in a visual text.

- ▶ We also need to facilitate the development pupils' ability to 'read' the complexity of texts that 'play' with differences between the written and visual narratives.

- ▶ When we think of the complex messages that are presented visually in adverts and the media, it is important that pupils can read visual images and not be 'unnecessarily' persuaded by them.

- ▶ Visual literacy is not just about 'reading' images; when children are asked to use drawing or sketching to express or explain their thinking they are also using visual literacy skills. Pupils develop their language through thinking. Drawing can enable pupils to express their ideas when they may not be able to write them. Even children who are experienced writers can sometimes express their ideas more clearly or appropriately through pictures.

*Figure 6.3 Visual literacy (from DCID, 2008: 58)*

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► Critical Literacy is a key process in developing a culturally inclusive curriculum.

► Our model of critical literacy is closest to the views of the Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire, who sees it as a tool for social change, and builds on the work of Chris Searle in giving pupils a voice.

► In order to develop a culturally inclusive curriculum, we need to enable teachers to be aware of how a eurocentric perspective in a curriculum can create barriers to learning. It only presents the views of the dominant few and many pupils' lives do not connect with these stories. In order to challenge this perspective, we need to question every text we encounter.

► We need to be aware that different interpretations can be made of visual texts as well as written texts.

► Critical literacy challenges the idea that the 'voice' of history or any text book is neutral. Critical literacy asks the question 'Who is saying this?' and 'Whose viewpoint is this?' It is more than merely a critique of the content of a particular text. Not all cultures are seen as having equal status – it is important to question whose culture the curriculum is reflecting and supporting, and what messages it gives.

► Teachers need to be aware of hidden messages that can be conveyed, for example through choices of text, quality of publishing, the order that information is presented in (e.g. a glossy publication in English will have greater status than a hand-written translation in another language).

► We need to develop critical literacy in ourselves and our pupils, to practise inquiry-based learning so that our pupils comfortably question sources in science, history and geography and know how to look carefully at evidence.

► A crucial viewpoint which is often neglected is that of the pupil, yet opinions can only really be tested and validated against one's own experience. This makes it vital that pupils' own voice and experience are at the heart of developing critical literacy skills. We need to acknowledge that pupils are experts in certain subjects and give them opportunities to share this expertise, develop their own questions, and be empowered as agents of change in the world.

► In order to give pupils this voice, we really need to listen to what they have to say and have extended dialogues with them. This means validating their life experiences and stories, building their self-esteem by valuing their opinions and treating their ideas with an adult respect.

*Figure 6.4 Critical literacy (from DCID, 2008:59)*

Colleagues have already considered culturally inclusive criteria. This activity is designed to explore visual literacy and critical literacy through an activity about questioning evidence. This is a cumulative activity, working with four different kinds of evidence.

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Ask the group to work in pairs or threes to look at the photograph of the sculpture of Katep and Hetepheres and discuss:

a) what they see
b) how that relates to their own experience

and to note key words/ideas for feedback.

Reveal the information from The British Museum site (under the 'more information' button) about Katep and Hetepheres and show them Figure 6.5. Ask the group to discuss how this information changes or affects the original discussion and to note any key words/ideas for feedback (find this on http://www.bmimages.com/results.asp?image=00035326001&stockindexonline.com=1).

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**KATEP AND HETEPHERES**

Probably from Giza, in Egypt 5th - 6th dynasty, about 2300 BC Painted limestone.

This sculpture was made for inside an Egyptian tomb. It shows a husband and wife seated side by side. The man is a high official named Katep and his wife is Hetepheres.

In Egyptian sculpture, a woman is usually shown smaller than her husband. It is not unusual in Egyptian art for men and women to be shown with different-coloured skin.

This may originally be because women were expected to do most of their own work indoors, while men worked outdoors in the sun.

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*Figure 6.5 Information about Katep and Hetepheres from The British Museum (cited in DCID, 2008: 62)*

Ask the group to read the text from 'Egypt Revisited' by Van Sertima (Figure 6.6), to discuss how this additional information changes or affects the initial discussion and to note key words/ideas for feedback.

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James Brunson, in his study of the symbolic use of black and red and yellow in Egyptian paintings of humans, clears up some of the confusions which led to the myth of the Egyptians being a "red race". Red is generally used in the portrayal of Egyptian men on wall and papyrus paintings but this is used in a symbolic context. Red ochre, an oxide of iron, was mixed with a vegetable gum binder to create this colour. It was extracted from iron ore called hematite. When Africans entered Europe during the Aurignacian phase of that continent (circa 40,000 B.C.) they initiated burial rituals in which the dead were sprinkled or painted with red ochre. Brunson cites Soviet historians to show that the Africans carried this habit even into the East where Neolithic painting indicates the use of red ochre on the men (as a symbol of vitality) and yellow ochre on the women (as a symbol of fertility).

Brunson's brief note on the use of red and yellow symbolism in art is followed by a detailed discussion of the use of black as the colour of divinity. Black also used to depict the non-Egyptian Black (like Nubian) who, though ethnically related, does not always fall under the same artistic canon. This has led to great confusion, whereas, as Brunson points out, the red ochre artistic convention was simply a symbol of male vitality, transmitted from African antiquity to painters of the Egyptian males. Black, however, is used for both the Nubian and the Egyptian when other races are in the same painting and literal distinction between skin colour of the diverse grouping need to be drawn. This is best demonstrated by Diop in his reference to the painting in the tomb of Ramses 111 (1200 B.C.) when the Egyptian is painted in his natural Black hue as is the Nubian to distinguish them from the pale-hued Indo European and the Semite.

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*Figure 6.6 extract from Egypt Revisited by Van Sertima (cited in DCID, 2008: 62)*

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Ask the group to read the text about the artist Rita Keegan (Figure 6.7 and the image of her parents Figure 6.8) and to discuss how this information adds to their original thinking, making any relevant notes.

Artist Rita Keegan was born in New York City where she came to love the Metropolitan Museum of Art, especially its Egyptian collections. She moved to London in 1979. In 1994, she took part in the exhibition Time Machine at the British Museum, which placed the works of twelve modern artists among the ancient Egyptian works that had prompted them:

*"It was only natural when I moved to London that I would start to investigate and explore the British Museum. I had visited the museum many times, when in the spring of 1989 I went to sketch some of the goddess sculptures for a project I was working on, I came across a statue of a seated couple who bore a striking resemblance to my mother and father. It was the Old Kingdom painted limestone pair-statue of Kaitep and Hetepheres.*

*So when I started thinking of what I wanted to create for this exhibition. I felt I wanted to explore how the collection affected me on several levels: first on a spiritual one, the effect of living in a polytheistic society with many important female deities; then on the personal level, examining family likeness and the different ways to interpret an ancient or personal history…"*

*Figure 6.7 Information about Rita Keegan  (cited in DCID, 2008: 63)*
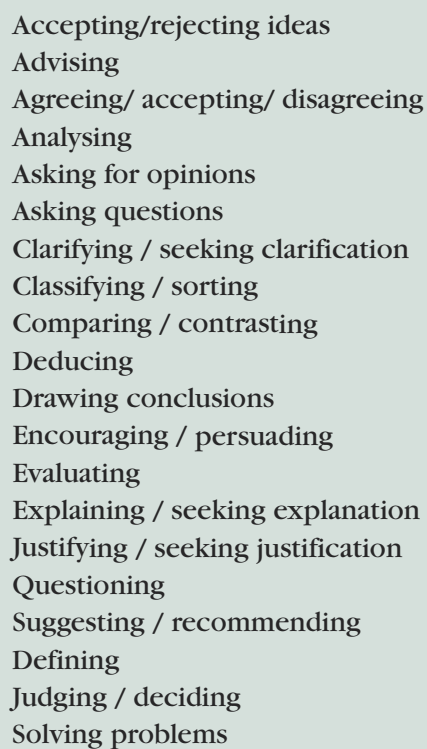


*Figure 6.8  Rita Keegan's parents (with gratitude for the kind permission of the artist to include this image. DCIC, 2008:63)*

Bring the group together to discuss how their perceptions changed about the visual text as different written texts were read in relation to it.

The four-part Katep and Hetepheres activity can be used with pupils. Put the image on to the middle of a sheet of A3 paper so that a small group can annotate it and build vocabulary. Those who are learning English as an additional language need to establish what they see first and build a vocabulary to describe it. They can make a word bank around the picture. Once they have established this word bank in mixed ability pairs, they have a language to ask questions about the text.

Finally, give out the list of language functions (Figure 6.9) and ask colleagues to identify which of these they used in their discussions:

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Accepting/rejecting ideas
Advising
Agreeing/ accepting/ disagreeing
Analysing
Asking for opinions
Asking questions
Clarifying / seeking clarification
Classifying / sorting
Comparing / contrasting
Deducing
Drawing conclusions
Encouraging / persuading
Evaluating
Explaining / seeking explanation
Justifying / seeking justification
Questioning
Suggesting / recommending
Defining
Judging / deciding
Solving problems

*Figure 6.9 Language functions (adapted from Pauline Gibbons (1993) Learning to Learn in a Second Language. Heinemann)*

Explain that it is important to identify specific language demands and opportunities of each activity, particularly for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Learning can then be adequately scaffolded to allow all children to access the task and ensure that pupils can develop the ability to read beyond the literal. It is, of course, also important for bilingual pupils to develop literal understanding as this is the foundation stone for more inferential thinking. Considering language functions in planning:

- helps pupils to contextualise and make sense of the theme being discussed
- develops language skills and moves pupils towards more inferential thinking
- encourages pupils to question and challenge
- opens up space for pupils' own voices.

End the session by asking the group to plan to include a visual/critical enquiry in classroom work during the next week or so. In their planning they should identify which language functions they will specifically aim to develop. Arrange a time to come together to discuss the outcomes. This will be the basis for planning a longer, culturally inclusive cross-curricular unit of work to be arranged at a time to suit colleagues. Give out Figure 6.10 Planning Access Key for Ethnic Minority Learners to support planning.

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In order for all pupils to reach a common outcome the following strategies need to be embedded in planning:

1. High quality, culturally relevant materials
2. Peer support through mixed ability grouping
3. Collaborative learning in pairs/groups (e.g. talk partners, investigative tasks)
4. Speaking and listening integral to activity
5. Vocabulary/word/phrase banks developed with pupils
6. Teacher/peer modelling of task and outcome
7. Repetitive process and/or language
8. Opportunities to use first language/home language
9. Visual support
10. Real objects, props, puppets etc
11. Graphic organiser (e.g. tables and bar charts)
12. Scaffolding for reading tasks
13. Scaffolding for writing tasks (e.g. writing frames)
14. Drama and role play
15. Interactive, multilingual displays
16. Clearly identified roles for adults
17. Opportunity for all pupils to have a voice
18. Opportunity for all pupils to show understanding and learning
19. Parental involvement
20. Homework that is supportive of the classroom curriculum

*Figure 6.10 Planning Access Key for Ethnic Minority Learners (DCIC, 2008:77)*

Appendix 1 has some suggestions for activities and plans for longer units of work.

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# Session Seven - *How does it look in the classroom?*

For this session you will need:

- copies of *The Red Tree* by Shaun Tan (enough for one between two/three) or a visualiser or interactive board where you can share the book with the whole group.
- either sticky notes or copies of A3 paper with photocopies of double page spreads from the book.
- Copies of Figure 6.9 Language functions
- Copies of Figure 7.1 the short account of children's responses to a double page spread in *The Red Tree*.
- You may also wish to provide them with copies of the article 'The Tsunami Project' by Sukhwinder Bhoday and Jane Bednall from *English 4-11* (Spring 2017) published by The English Association and UKLA. This is a detailed case study of planning and carrying out a culturally inclusive cross curricular project.

## Activity 7.1  Reading beyond the literal

This session can be replicated with children. However, the aim with a group of colleagues is to support understanding the relationship between words and images and to recognise the power of visual (and other multimodal) texts to help children read beyond the literal. A key issue when working with children who are at different stages of fluency in learning English is to offer challenging texts which can stimulate them to read between the lines and deeply into images. While it is important for them to learn the literal meanings of words and to get to grips with the grammatical structures of English, it is equally important to build on their conceptual skills. Inexperience in speaking English does not mean a lack of intellectual ability and striving to express ideas is a good way to develop language and thought. Another essential skill is to read critically (or analytically) so that children do not accept at face value texts that deserve to be questioned.

A multimodal text combines elements of different modes:

- moving and still images: photographic, drawn, painted, computer-generated, film
- written text including font type, graphics and layout
- spoken words, sound effects, music and silence
- gesture, movement, posture, facial expression.

Examples of multimodal texts:

A picturebook combines words and still images but also some gesture, posture and facial expression.

A film combines moving images with spoken words, sound effects, music, silence,  gesture, movement, posture and facial expression.

A performance of a play includes spoken words, gesture, movement, posture, and facial expression and sometimes sound effects or music.

Read *The Red Tree* through (quite quickly) with the group, spending just a few minutes on their initial responses to the text as a whole. Ask them to work in pairs/ threes choosing one double page spread to annotate. It is useful if more than one group respond to the same image. Ask them to consider:

- the layout of the page: what do the images suggest? If there are words, how do they relate to the image?
- What mood has the author created?
- What questions would you want to ask the author?

After they have spent about 15 minutes discussing and annotating, ask for feedback. It will be interesting if more than one group responded to the same image. Compare the responses: if there are different views, that shows very clearly that every reader brings a personal (and culturally inflected) response to any text.

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Have their views about the message of the book altered as they have looked carefully at a double page spread and heard other people's views?

It may be that the group have noticed the red leaf which appears on every double page spread as a motif denoting hope. Read through the book again, noticing the detail of the red leaf (which becomes the red flower in the final double page spread). Does this alter their initial view of the text?

Ask the group what they have come to understand from this activity about reading beyond the literal. They might say something like:

• that there is no one 'right' answer when reading multimodal texts
• open questions which simply ask for response can yield significant insights
• it is worth annotating and looking carefully to read deeply into an image.

In this session, the group has worked with at least three of the four processes involved in a culturally inclusive curriculum: visual literacy, critical literacy and questioning evidence.

Remind colleagues of Figure 6.9 Language functions and ask them to identify any that they used themselves when reading, annotating and discussing the text. It is likely that children will also make use of a range of language functions when carrying out the same activity.

You may also want to share the following short account with them.

A year 5 class annotated the double page spread that is largely red, composed with newspaper text, aeroplanes and high rise buildings with the girl on a ladder and the words 'Without sense or reason'.

Muhammad and Parthik noted:

*It's bloody and angry.*
*People are at war.*
*Faces shouting and screaming.*
*Aeroplanes for fighting and bombing places.*
*The colour of blood.*
*Words that don't make sense.*
*A train sign to save women's and children's lives and keep them out of town.*
*War between two countries, maybe China and England.*
*It seems like children are separated from mothers, people shouting and screaming.*
*Why are the machines laughing?*

They focused on the girl in the image:

*The facial expression shows that she's sad and the body language is like that she's the only person on earth. She doesn't have a mouth to speak.*

And summarised:

*The story does match with the picture. There's no sense and nobody listening to her.*

Other members of the class commented on the same double page spread:

Rashida: *Every time you look back on it you see new words. You may think that all of the words are here* (pointing to the centre of the page where the text is) *but there are words here* (pointing to the collage at the bottom of the page) *like 'your friends are the dullest dogs' and because they stand out the most a person might think that they're the most important but every single word here* (indicating the whole page with collage of different words and languages) *is important as well.*

Parvik: (pointing to edges of the spread) *There are words outside... it looks like a paper cut out... all the odd shapes... One picture I don't really get is this picture* (pointing to a part of the picture

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left hand side). *It looks like a bin with faces in it… it's inside another bin… no, I think it's a tower and that has got eyes… but I don't really know why they're laughing. I think they're laughing because the girl's sad…*

Tania: *D'you know the girl, she's climbing on a ladder and when she opens the door she goes into nowhere and she just dies. There's these buildings – they're evil and they hate her and they're roaring and growling at her and the planes are bombarding her… the monsters and stuff – they might be teasing her and there's this face, it's like a building and it's saying 'Your friends are the dullest dogs I know'.*

*Figure 7.1 Children's responses to The Red Tree*

As the comments from the children show, this kind of activity can be very fruitful in probing the possible meanings in a complex multimodal text. It allows for personal responses which draw on experience of other texts - and experience of life.

> Multimodal texts show how people feel – how people feel inside
>
> Parthik

> A multimodal text is when you look at something and you look at the similarities and differences between the words and the pictures.
>
> Muhammad

> … with pictures you can really feel the emotion - and with words you can - but with pictures you can actually see the people's faces. You connect with the picture and put yourself in that person's shoes and how would you feel if you were that girl? Connect with the picture and look at the emotion under the picture… how it's explaining it…
>
> Rashida



Any complex picturebook will challenge young readers to read beyond the literal and take a critical view. Chosen carefully, texts allow them to bring their own cultural experience to the analysis and interpretation of the text.

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Other books which work well:

*The Arrival* by Shaun Tan. This is a long story with no words which is about moving from one home to find another. By no means an easy read but with massive scope for interpretation.

*Flotsam* by David Wiesner. When beachcombing a boy finds a camera… Plenty of opportunity for personal recollections – and photographing the local area for 'found objects'.

*Mirror* by Jeannie Baker. Two stories about two boys, one who lives in Australia and one who lives in Morocco, are designed to be read simultaneously – one from the left, the other from the right. The mirroring of the two stories show how lives can reflect each other and have connections even if at first it does not seem so.

Appendix 3 has a list of websites of publishers who specialise in texts which reflect cultural diversity.

Ask the group to plan to include a multimodal text in a forthcoming teaching sequence (it might be in English planning or in any other subject) and to use the same approach as they used in their discussions. Ask them to identify the language functions that they would want to develop in the work. This should help them build towards planning their longer culturally inclusive cross-curricular unit of work.

Make a time to come together and share their insights from this activity.

## Future planning

Arrange time to meet again as a group of colleagues to share the outcomes of the culturally inclusive cross-curricular teaching units.

You will need to meet with individual colleagues to support their planning and to discuss any issues during the process of the unit of work. Making teaching more open can make some colleagues feel a little insecure until they see the benefits of the work.

In evaluating the teaching units, consider the impact the work has had on

- professional confidence
- the motivation/ confidence of individual pupils
- attainment generally.

Build on these insights when supporting colleagues in developing their work so that it becomes automatically culturally inclusive.

# References

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Gibbons, P. (1993) *Learning to Learn in a Second Language*. London: Heinemann.

Moll, L. C., Gonzalez, N., Amanti, C. And Neff, D. (1992) Funds of Knowledge for teaching: A quantitative approach to connect households and classrooms, in *Theory Into Practice*, 31 (2) pp. 132-141.

Van Sertima, I. (1989) *Egypt Revisited*. New Jersey; Transaction Publishers.

## Children's Books

Jeannie Baker (2010) *Mirror*. Walker Books. ISBN 9781406309140

Shaun Tan (2012) *The Red Tree*. Sydney, Aus.: Lothian Children's Books. ISBN 9780734411372 (See also *The Red Tree* on YouTube)

Shaun Tan (2007) *The Arrival*. Hodder Children's Books. ISBN 9780340969939

David Wiesner (2012) *Flotsam*. Andersen Press. ISBN 9781849394499

# Appendix 1 - *Suggestions for Classroom Activities*

1. A useful whole class technique to support developing enquiry-based learning is to ask pupils to suggest all the questions they would like to ask about a topic. These can then be researched alongside the teacher's questions such as 'Were the Ancient Egyptians black?' As the work develops, the questions can be revisited so that those that have been answered can be crossed out and the ones remaining can form the basis for further research. See Figure A1.1 an example of questions generated by a Year 4 class in Park Primary School in the London Borough of Newham. When children pose questions it is important not to censor them too much. Answering their own questions is part of the process of pupils contextualising their knowledge and understanding.



"WHAT I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS"

What were their clothes made from?
Was their world like our class with a mix of races?
Did they go to school?
Why did they wear head-dresses? Did birds wear headdresses?
What was the name of the pharaoh that looked like a cat?
Did they have money and what did it look like?
How many pyramids were made?
How much stone was used to make a pyramid?
Where did they get the idea to make a pyramid?
What did the Ancient Egyptians write with?
Did they have horses?
What colour was their skin?
Did they paint their skin?
Did they have electricity?
Did they have shops?
What were their enemies' names?
Where did they hunt for food?
Why did they use symbols instead of words?
Were the houses terraced or detached?
What did they drink out of?
Did they wash? Did they use soap?
Did they use perfume?
Who was Rameses 3rd?
Did they have toilets?
What do the written symbols mean?
Did they paint their toes?
Did they believe in Father Christmas?
What were houses made from?

*Figure A1.1 What I want to know about the Ancient Egyptians (CDIC, 2008: 71)*

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2. The lives of significant men, women and children (Key stages 1 and 2)
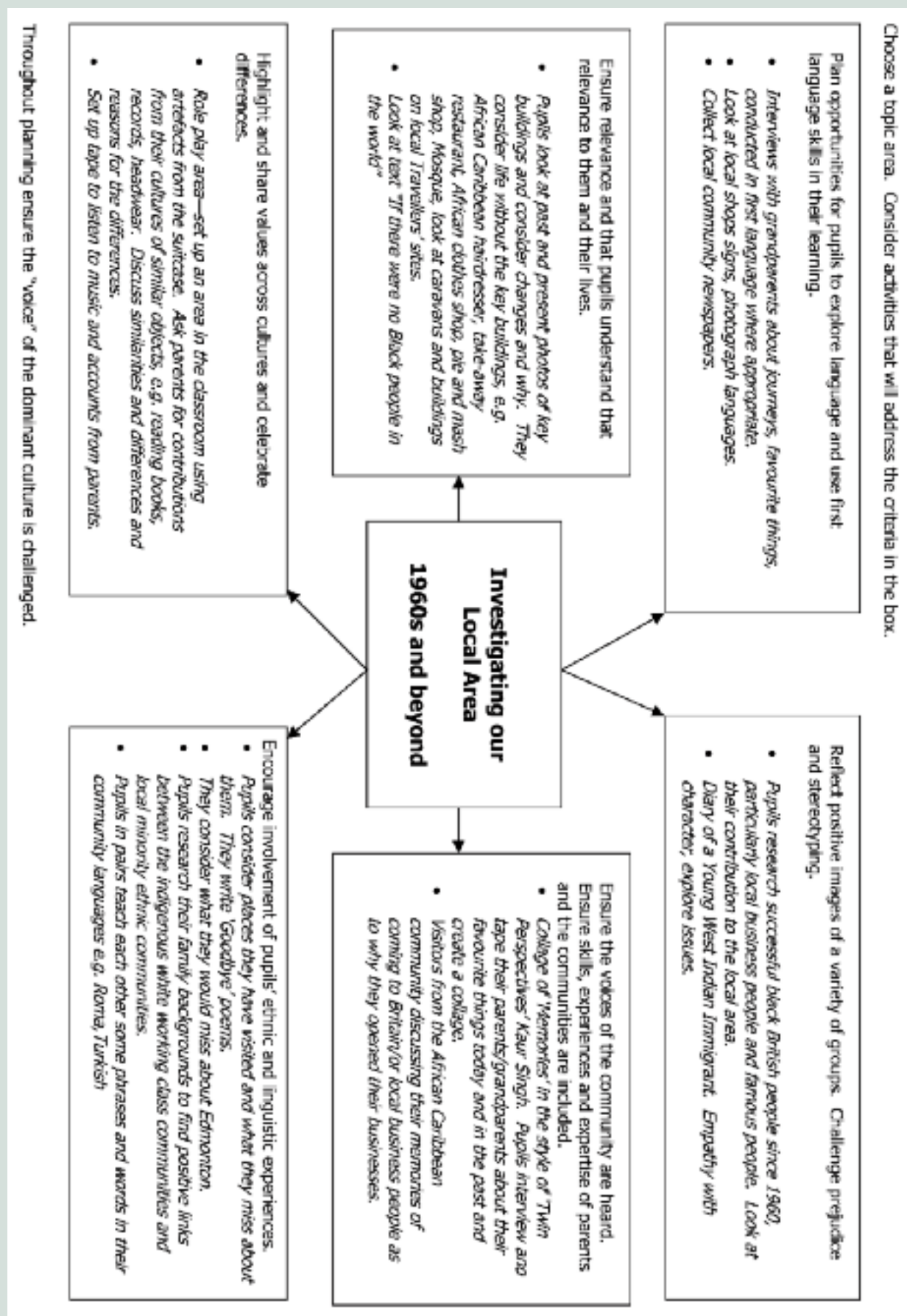   Examples of integrating questions into planning.

| Learning intention/Key questions: | Place events in chronological order (KS1)<br>To ask and answer questions about the past (KS1)<br>Recognise why people did things, why events happened (KS1)<br>Characteristic features of the period and society including beliefs, attitudes and experiences of men, women and children in the past (KS2) |
|---|---|
| Culturally inclusive learning intention: | Pupils understand that excellence is not restricted to the achievements of people from dominant cultures, but that people of all cultures today and past achieve excellence<br>Pupils recognise, discuss and challenge racism, prejudice, injustice and unfairness. |

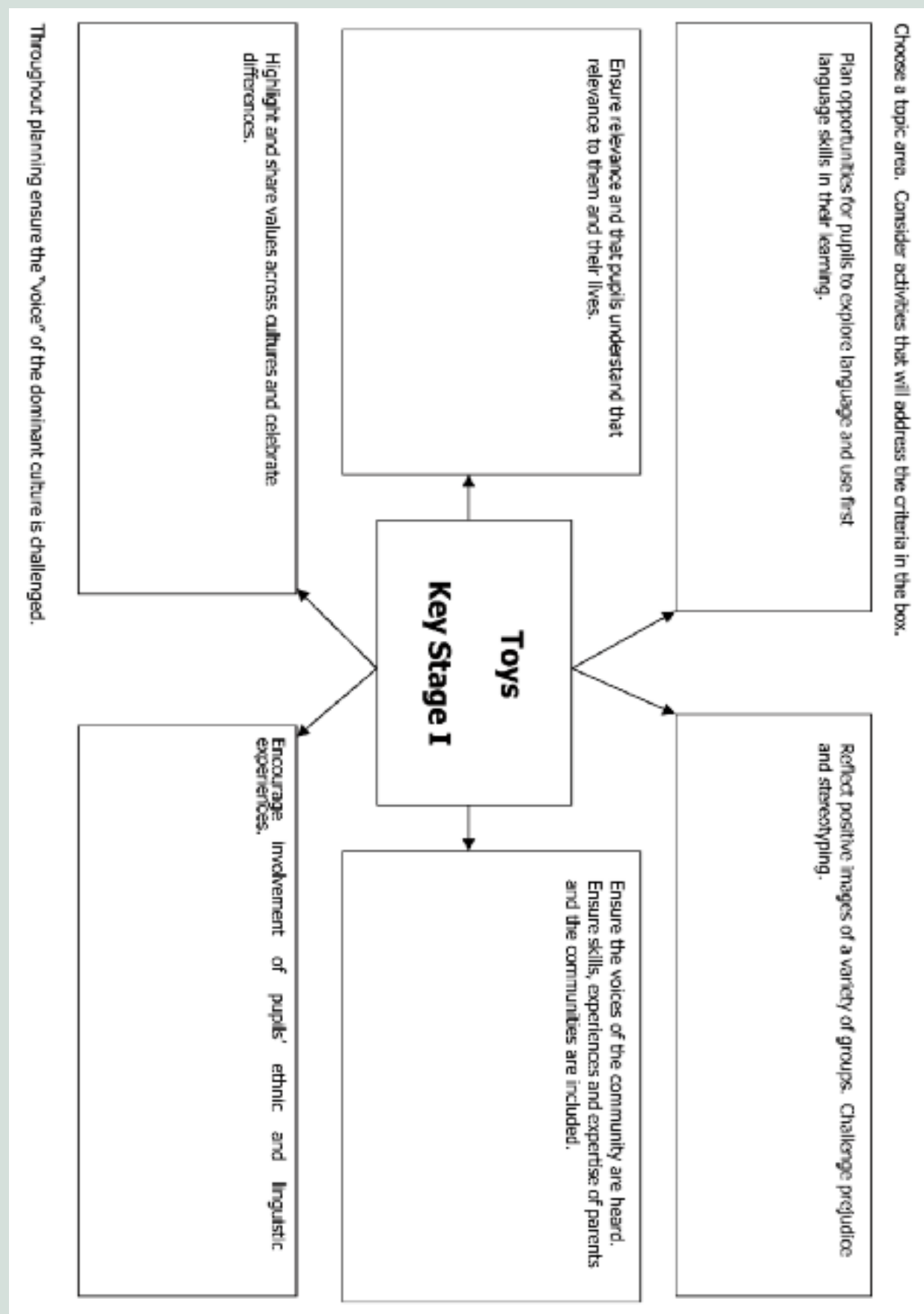| Session | Issues | Activities and Cross Curricular links | Key questions to move thinking on |
|---|---|---|---|
| What was happening in the world and in Britain in Victorian times? | Key events taking place in the world at the time of FN and MS that had direct relevance to their lives (Crimea). Links between the Caribbean and Britain – Colonies.<br>Role of women. | Comparison between Britain and Caribbean e.g. dress, buildings. Role of women. | What do you think were the attitudes and beliefs of the British?<br>Were women equal to men?<br>Were any other groups discriminated against? |
| Who was Mary Seacole and what is her story?<br>Who was Florence Nightingale and what is her story? | Their life stories | Jig saw grouping.<br>**Expert groups tasks:**<br>One group finding out about MS.<br>One group finding out about FN. | Why do you think MS and FN became interested in medicine?<br>How did events at the time influence Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale's decision to become a nurse? |
| What were two positive events in their lives and what were two negative experiences in their lives? | Difference in attitude towards the two women. Racism. | **Expert groups task:**<br>Find two positive events and two negative experiences in their lives.<br>**Home groups tasks:**<br>Did MS and FN experience the same attitudes during their lives? | Why did MS face those negative experiences?<br>Were her experiences a consequence of the time she was living in?<br>Why? |
| What was Mary Seacole like?<br>What conclusions can you draw about her character? | Key words to describe MS's character | Develop a vocabulary bank.<br>Role play events to illustrate characteristics. | What qualities do you think are needed to be a nurse today and why? |
| How has Mary Seacole influenced the lives of future generations of women? | Discuss the growth of nursing in the Caribbean. Links between the Caribbean and Britain. Movement of people from the Caribbean and Britain and consequences. | Visual literacy. Video clip of the 60s recruitment from the Caribbean. Picture of Caribbean nurses in WW2. Ziggy Alexander and commemoration photo. | Do people today still face the negative experiences Mary Seacole did?<br>Why is she only today recognised as an important historical figure? |

*(CDIC, 2008: 72)*

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# 3. Investigating our local area (Key stages 1 and 2)
Consider activities that will address the criteria in each box of the diagram.

Choose a topic area. Consider activities that will address the criteria in the box.

Plan opportunities for pupils to explore language and use first language skills in their learning.
- Interviews with grandparents about journeys, favourite things, conducted in first language where appropriate.
- Look at local shops signs, photograph languages.
- Collect local community newspapers.

Ensure relevance and that pupils understand that relevance to them and their lives.
- Pupils look at past and present photos of key buildings and consider changes and why. They consider life without the key buildings, e.g. African Caribbean hairdresser, take-away restaurant, African clothes shop, pie and mash shop, Mosque, look at caravans and buildings on local Travellers' sites.
- Look at text "If there were no Black people in the world"

Highlight and share values across cultures and celebrate differences.
- Role play area—set up an area in the classroom using artefacts from the suitcase. Ask parents for contributions from their cultures of similar objects, e.g. reading books, records, headwear. Discuss similarities and differences and reasons for the differences.
- Set up tape to listen to music and accounts from parents.

Throughout planning ensure the "voice" of the dominant culture is challenged.

**Investigating our Local Area 1960s and beyond**

Reflect positive images of a variety of groups. Challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Pupils research successful black British people since 1960, particularly local business people and famous people. Look at their contribution to the local area.
- Diary of a Young West Indian Immigrant. Empathy with character; explore issues.

Ensure the voices of the community are heard. Ensure skills, experiences and expertise of parents and the communities are included.
- Collage of "Memories" in the style of "Twin Perspectives' Kaur Singh. Pupils interview and tape their parents/grandparents about their favourite things today and in the past and create a collage.
- Visitors from the African Caribbean community discussing their memories of coming to Britain/or local business people as to why they opened their businesses.

Encourage involvement of pupils' ethnic and linguistic experiences.
- Pupils consider places they have visited and what they miss about them. They write 'Goodbye' poems.
- They consider what they would miss about Edmonton.
- Pupils research their family backgrounds to find positive links between the indigenous white working class communities and local minority ethnic communities.
- Pupils in pairs teach each other some phrases and words in their community languages e.g. Roma, Turkish

4. Toys (Key stage 1)
   Consider activities that will address the criteria in each box of the diagram.

Choose a topic area. Consider activities that will address the criteria in the box.

Plan opportunities for pupils to explore language and use first language skills in their learning.

Ensure relevance and that pupils understand that relevance to them and their lives.

Highlight and share values across cultures and celebrate differences.

Throughout planning ensure the "voice" of the dominant culture is challenged.

**Toys**

**Key Stage I**

Reflect positive images of a variety of groups. Challenge prejudice and stereotyping.

Ensure the voices of the community are heard. Ensure skills, experiences and expertise of parents and the communities are included.

Encourage involvement of pupils' ethnic and linguistic experiences.

*(CDIC, 2008: 72)*

# Appendix 2 - *Working with Parents*

## Working with parents in the nursery *Sharon Fell*

### Context

The Ronald Openshaw Nursery Education Centre (RONEC) is situated in the north eastern corner of the London borough of Newham. Most families live in rented accommodation, many in short term lettings. It has been on its present site for over twenty years and has developed enormously to cater for changing needs and demands. It is a three class setting for 3-5 year olds (approximately 120 places) and has extended day care provision for 2-4 year olds. It has provision for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and has welcomed exchange staff visits from Holland and Russia to share exemplary practice and expertise. A variety of services are offered to support parents e.g. parent, carer and toddler sessions and ESOL and ICT classes. The setting is culturally and linguistically diverse - the largest groups being Black African, Bangladeshi and Other White backgrounds (i.e. Eastern European and Travellers). Around 75% of children speak, or have access to, a language other than English. About half of all children are at the early stage of acquiring English when they start nursery. Approximately 36 languages are spoken by families. (This information was correct in 2005.)

> **The school engages parents and carers exceptionally well, which contributes greatly to outstanding community cohesion.** Ofsted, January 2011

At the time of this project I was Ethnic Minority Achievement advisory teacher for the London borough of Newham, working within the setting with EMA/Traveller team colleagues Nighat Yasmin and Anthea Wormington, EMA nursery nurse Meena Bhambra, parents and children to:

- encourage parents (especially from vulnerable/isolated) ethnic groups to share their experiences and wealth of expertise to broaden, enrich and make more relevant the learning experiences of their children and to make them feel welcomed and able to participate within the setting
- highlight the importance of language and communication (in home language) at home
- develop approaches to pre-literacy activities at home by sharing ideas for practical activities.

Three short case studies show different approaches to achieving these aims.

### Case study one  **Distant Lands - Travelling Voices**

For some years the Nursery Education Centre has carried out projects involving parents. In the autumn term of 2005 the Newham Ethnic Minority Achievement team were involved in a parental involvement project with Bangladeshi mothers, aiming to draw this particular community into the parent-based activities run in the setting. The project was very well received and parents asked for more, similar projects. In addition, for many years the staff at the setting have organised an annual summer carnival involving children, parents and the local community. The carnival theme for 2006 was Moving On - a Traveller's Tale. It celebrated stories about why people and animals have to travel to unfamiliar territory at certain times in their lives. Various projects were set up by the nursery to work on this theme, for example, the local Traveller community who were relocating to a different site, produced a film which was a lasting legacy to their residing in the area. These experiences suggested the potential for the project Distant Lands - Travelling Voices about how we all came to be living in Stratford, Newham.

I was invited to work with Meena Bhambra (EMA nursery nurse) and the parents' group, continuing to focus particularly on Bangaladeshi mothers. Meena already ran and organised many parent sessions and activities. We arranged a six session programme to:

- tell and record a personal story about coming to Newham

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- visit a local place of interest - to raise confidence and encourage independent visits with family members
- design and produce a banner for the carnival.

During the sessions parents looked at examples of similar projects and photographs (primarily short, personal recounts from the website: www.movinghere.org.uk ) and shared their stories of how and why they had travelled/moved to Newham. They then wrote their story, sometimes in home language, and these were typed up for publishing (Figure 1.1). They brought in photographs from home to illustrate their work and designed and made a front cover for their story (Figure 1.2). To support this work they visited the Museum of Immigration and Diversity in Princelet Street, Spitalfields, East London then they designed and made a banner for the carnival illustrating their stories. Finally they made a group book as a record of their work.

> ### *Sweet Dreams* by Ferdous Ara
>
> *My name is Ferdous Ara Pasha. I am a Bangladeshi woman. I completed my education from Dhaka University. I got my graduation 2 masters in chemistry. Then I was married to Mr. Anwar Pasha who got his education from Dundee College of Textile Manchester UK, then returned to homeland and worked there.*
>
> *He told me many stories, events sweet memories about this country. He wanted to visit this country along with me again, but unfortunately he expired leaving me alone in his early age when my three children, two daughters and one son was too small. Now his dreams come true. I am happy now my elder daughter got graduation and masters in Architect and my son is going to be a Tele communication engineer.*
>
> *Again my another dream is that I am now in U.K. I came on 21st May 2006. I visited Manchester. I stayed there two days. In London I also visited Museum, History Museum, library, and this and that, many places but alone without my husband, but I have two sweet sweet grandsons with me. Thanks to Almighty for all.*
>
> *It's wonderful to see your park specially which are very beautiful and well maintained. Other places are also nice, they should be as because it is a rich country you have money, education, knowledge. Another thing I am happy to see that you people are very nice and co-ordinating. The Muslims also do well here.*

*Above; Figure 1.1 Ferdous Ara's story 'Sweet Dreams'*



*Left; Figure 1.2 Cover of personal story*

The stories told were moving, enlightening and positive. I doubt if we would have learnt so much about each other without this focus. As well as mothers, an aunt and grandmother also came to some of the sessions and Sham, a member of staff, was also eager to become involved with the project and wrote her story to go in the book. Seven stories were produced, showing a wide variety of experiences and how we all happened to be in Stratford. Some contributors were long term residents, one mother's husband was on a work contract and would be returning to Bangladesh the following year, another had come to meet her future husband and to marry, and a proud grandmother was on an extended visit to see her daughter and family.

The story writing and publishing allowed some mothers to develop new skills in a non- threatening environment, for example, not everybody had used a computer before. The trip to the Museum was a success and showed us how different groups of people had moved to East London, for a variety of

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reasons, in search of a better life, adding ingredients and experiences to this culturally vibrant and diverse hotpot - or jellied eels, dhal, rice and peas, moussaka… the suitable alternatives are endless!

Most parents were not able to come to every session. This was sometimes due to the timings of the session - Friday is not a convenient day for Muslim women, something that needed to be recognised and noted for the future. We had been aware of this but were unable to reschedule dates. Nevertheless they felt comfortable to drop in when they had time, and yet still everything came together - the banner and book were made and we went on the trip (Figure 1.3). Everybody gained something from the project and everyone was proud of what they had achieved.

*Figure 1.3 Parents with the banner they designed and made with their children*

## Case study two  **Multimodal project: weather and climate change**

The setting was keen to link a project with their current topic and the carnival theme for 2010 which was 'Weather and Climate Change'. The aims of the project were to:

- develop speaking and listening, encouraging use of topic based vocabulary using photographs and real objects
- create weather-themed multimodal texts with children using digital photographs and a variety of props
- develop children's ICT skills and computer based mark making
- make a book of the photos to share with setting and parents.

Meena Bhambra, the nursery nurse from the Ethnic Minority Achievement team, was also involved in the organisation of the groupings and other activities. A room with an interactive whiteboard was made available with props and a laptop computer (Figure 1.4). On the first day the children worked in groups of two or three. They looked at and talked about a whiteboard slideshow of photographs in different weather conditions from around the world. They then chose one they wanted to work with.  The children dressed themselves or a teddy, or both, using props that we had provided then took pictures of each other (Figure 1.5).

*Above: Figure 1.4 Table of props*

*Left: Figure 1.5  Dressing for the photographs*

We encouraged the children to talk about what they were doing, the choices they were making and why. Before the next session I loaded the children's chosen weather photographs on to the computer ready for use in a PowerPoint™ programme the following day. The photographs of themselves were also printed off so that children could remember what they had been doing, how they were dressed and to choose which one they wished to stick on their weather picture.

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The next day, working in the same groups, the children added comments to their photographs in speech bubbles and banners. Many tried mark making in the speech bubbles using Word Art to choose how they wanted to write their name. Twins Siana and Rositsa were helped by their grandmother who was attending ESOL classes. They talked to her about the pictures in Bulgarian and she translated some words into Bulgarian for me. Their grandmother enjoyed seeing the activity and working with the girls. This again was an activity that all children were able to participate in, including children who were naturally quiet, and children with special or physical needs.

Twenty three children were involved in the project. Meena knew which children who would work comfortably together and grouped the children accordingly. Many benefited from seeing good peer modelling of language. It gave children the opportunity to make choices about what picture/type of weather/props they wanted to use. They were able to discuss and give reasons for their choices. They could talk about what familiar to them, for example, recognising the photographs of the outside environment of the setting, remembering building a snowman in the snow or visiting the seaside. Children were encouraged to stay in the role play area looking at photographs but were able to ask when they wished to return to class. However, many remained focused for the whole period they were in the room, on average thirty minutes.

These activities provided a very good context for observations and assessment, particularly in speaking and listening, the children's knowledge about weather and their use of appropriate vocabulary. It gave Meena and other support staff an opportunity to observe children and pass on observations to key workers. The children enjoyed looking at photographs of themselves on the computer and talking about the photos. Many enjoyed mark-making and exploring the keyboard and it was an activity that interested both boys and girls. All children involved were able to participate at their own level, for example, some observing others or participating without speaking unless prompted while others took a lead role. Some children liked dressing up the teddies, others enjoyed dressing up themselves and some enjoyed doing both. Children with special needs/health issues were able to participate, contribute to and enjoy the activity.

The finished book was shared with parents and placed in the reception area of the setting, and copies of the children's finished work were put in their special work books (Figures 1.6 and 1.7).



*Figure 1.6  Finished books*

*Figure 1.7 Collage of the children's pictures*

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## Case study three  **Re-vamping the toy library**

The setting had identified a link between the rise in children's levels of attainment and parents attending ESOL classes. The parent, carer and toddler group was also proving increasingly popular with certain groups of parents and with a large increase in the number of children from Eastern Europe but Traveller families still remained a little on the periphery of the setting, it was felt another project was needed.

Meena had been running a successful toy library for a long time, but keeping tabs on different packs and mending and replacing lost or broken items was - and is - incredibly time consuming. She wanted to make even better use of the existing toy library: sorting, replenishing, mending, adding new activities and cataloguing and re-labelling items, making it more attractive to parents, easier to run and therefore more accessible. She wanted to encourage continued parental involvement in children's work, targeting particular groups, for example Traveller families. She also knew that working with parents was a good way to model and demonstrate activities, games and strategies which encouraged speaking, listening and cognitive development.

The programme of sessions included a trip to the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood to link with the theme of toys and festivals because past evaluations showed that many parents enjoyed trips (Figure 1.8). During the first sessions in the setting we played simple lotto, matching and dice games with parents and their children. Through these informal activities it soon became apparent that board and card games like snap were very popular with the Traveller families - both with adults and children. They were used to playing such games and liked learning new ones.
We then moved on to making games to add to the toy library (Figure 1.9). These games could be taken home and played. After this parents sorted the toy packs and took photographs of the contents to laminate and attach to bags so that it was easy to see what the bags contained. After four sessions the library was completed and parents were keen to borrow the games they'd been playing.

The trip to the Museum of Childhood proved very popular. At least ten mothers came with their children and we were able to take some extended day children as well.  The museum reflects many different cultures and one mum was excited to see a rickshaw like those back home. At our next session the children chose photos of the outing to stick in their special books. Mums sorted through the photos as well and chose some to take home - memories of a happy day.



*Right; Figure 1.8 The trip to the Museum of Childhood*

*Below; Figure 1.9 Making the games*

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Two weeks later I revisited the setting to join the parent/carer toddler group. As requested by the parents, Meena and her colleague Kate were organising a cooking morning - making pizza. As usual, younger siblings were made welcome. Food is the universal topic.  We all know something about it and it makes a wonderful talking point. During the morning I lost count of the different methods and ingredients used to make pizza. Everyone was slightly different, but all ideas were listened to and valued. The conversation digressed to hummus, and aubergine dip recipes were exchanged. Eventually the finished product was tried, tested, consumed and judged (Figure 1.10). Suggestions were put forward on how to improve next time.



*Figure 1.10 Making pizza*

## Conclusion

The parental links continue to be strong and well supported, so on reflection how successful is the setting in having an inclusive approach to literacy? And if so what makes them successful, bearing in mind that many of the children are in a pre-reading stage? Home language and literacy is valued and encouraged. The ethos of the setting encourages everyone to feel valued and able to be themselves. This was evident in case study one where the wonderful use of language by the parents - poetic, sharing personal feelings and experiences - illustrated their trust in sharing their stories. The response from parents is always very positive, with many wishing to attend sessions and wanting to do activities with their children. They found working with their children interesting and enlightening. It enabled them not only to interact with them in an activity but also to observe how their child interacted with other adults and peers. But perhaps the most important aspects were that staff and parents could work together, learning from each other and listening to each other, broadening everybody's knowledge and understanding.

## Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks to staff, parents and children at The Ronald Openshaw Nursery Education Centre who have been such an inspiration and fun to work with.

> ### Reflections
>
> • How do you encourage parents to work alongside their children in your setting/classroom?
> • What is the impact of this kind of work on the children's achievements?
> • How do you draw on and value home language and literacy in your setting/classroom?

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## Making storysacks  *Sharon Fell*

Oliver Thomas Nursery and Children's Centre (OT) already had a library of dual language books for parents to share with their children, and also topic based story/activity sacks to help parents of older nursery children with the transition from nursery to school.

Gurdeep, the EMA nursery nurse, had been very impressed with the toy library operating at Ronald Openshaw Nursery Education Centre and wanted to set up something similar at OT, but take it a step further - not just lending toys but adding activities and giving parents ideas of how to use and interact themselves. The Oliver Thomas story sack project actually led to the revamping of Ronald Openshaw's toy library and some of the parent sessions there focused on developing the provision of toys and activities.

Our main aim was to show parents how their children could learn through play, story and games, and to help parents gain confidence in such things. The headteacher was very keen on the idea and gave a budget of £200 to start the project. We ordered drawstring "shoebags" to be the storysacks, quality texts and dual language books/CDs.  We bought props from pound shops and things from home. We also used things that were surplus to requirement in the setting. The nursery held a bring and buy sale once a year to raise funds for the setting and we acquired things from this (anything we could lay our hands on basically.)

I designed a poster of Gurdeep asking parents for any old games, toys etc.
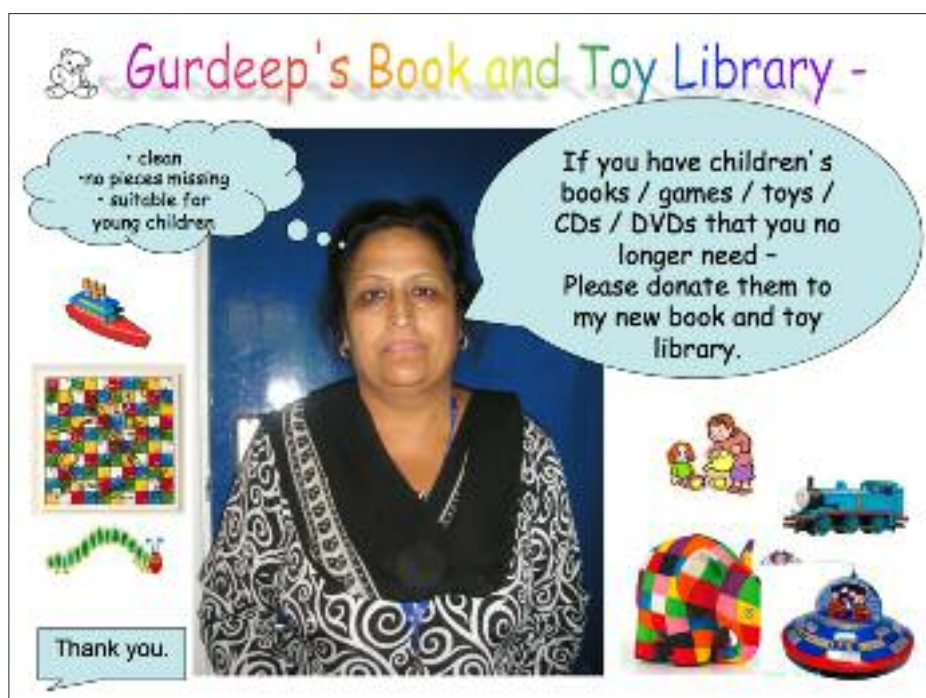


Organisation:

1. We sorted out what was going in each sack.

2. We took photos of the contents which we laminated and put one copy of this, as a label tag on each bag.

3. A simple instruction card was laminated and added to each bag to give parents ideas on how to use the story sacks.

4. We had an index/catalogue box with a numbered card for each story sack. the card had a copy of the photo of the story sack contents. Parents could peruse through the cards to look for a suitable story sack and the card acted as a kind of record as one could see if the storysack was available or who had it out on loan.

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5. We held sessions for parents so they could look at the story sacks, an opportunity to emphasise the importance of parent interaction and that the purpose of the storysacks was adult and family participation. Also about taking care of the contents as to continue to keep replacing or taking photos of contents was so time consuming.

6. Masters of all contents photos, instruction cards, games instructions and games sheets were kept in a folder.

7. We had started with the idea of making about 25 story sacks but ended up making over 40. This continued to over 74 when parents started requesting different stories/activities, especially if one sack proved popular and they wanted more in the same vein.

Although very popular, convincing parents that they needed to participate in activities was sometimes difficult. Some parents lacked confidence in reading stories hence the use of dual language advertisements and encouraging parents to look at the illustrations and make up their own stories.

## Variations on the theme

We tried to cater for as wide an audience as possible with different interest learning preferences so not every sack contained books, some were based on favourite television characters/shows, for example *In the Night Garden* and *Bob the Builder*.

We also used children's annuals and songs and nursery rhyme CDs.

Activities in sacks included:



- puzzles
- dominoes
- track games
- pairs
- lottos
- matching
- counting rhymes
- nursery rhymes
- playdoh/shape cutters
- dressing up
- props to re tell/make up stories
- cooking recipes
- small construction
- small world play
- card games
- listening to stories - books and ads
- singing songs
- fuzzy felt boards.

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# Examples of storysack contents and activities



*Meg's Eggs* by Helen Nicoll, ill. Jan Pienkowski



*Bob the Builder* by Dianne Redmond / Parragon books



*My Mother's Sari* by Sandhya Rao

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# Examples of storysack contents and activities *continued*



*Brown Bear Brown Bear what do you see?* Bill Martin

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle





*The Fish Who Could Wish* John Bush and Korky Paul

*Monkey Where Are You?* David Martin and Scott Nash

# Appendix 3 - Useful websites

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/primary-schools-education-resources
There is a wealth of resources designed to help teachers explore issues of human rights with their classes, including many ideas about using children's books as starting points.

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/resource-pack-first-steps
This resource is designed to support teachers to introduce human rights to children aged 3-5. It's the perfect starting point to engage children in discussion and raise awareness of their own rights in a fun and interactive way. There are five themed lesson plans each focusing on relevant articles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

http://www.ceres.education.ed.ac.uk/ includes up to date research about race education.

http://www.insted.co.uk/insted.html
The Inservice Training and Educational Development offers useful downloads for running professional development about equality and inclusion.

http://www.irr.org.uk/resources/
The Institute of Race Relations has a range of free downloadable educational resources about Black history and Race Relations. They also offer a weekly news service about up-to-date issues:

http://www.irr.org.uk/search/?q=weekly+news

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/search?q=eal
The National Literacy Trust has many resources to support English as an Additional Language teaching. See also accounts of work with community languages:

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/search?q=community+languages

http://www.naldic.org.uk/
National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC) is the national subject association for English as an additional language.

www.racearchive.org.uk
Ahmed Iqbal Ullah was killed by a fellow-pupil in the playground of a Manchester school in 1986, aged thirteen years. AIUET is named in his memory and works out of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre in Manchester Central Library. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust helps people of all ages and backgrounds learn about Britain's ethnic minority communities.

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/currentPublications/teaching-resources.html
Runnymede provides a broad range of teaching resources,  including those created for Bangla Stories, Belonging and Young, Muslim and Citizen projects.

http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Equity_and_Inclusion_for_All_in_Education.pdf
offers a useful overview of issues about cultural diversity

https://www.sgsts.org.uk
The purpose of this website is to support school staff and other professionals in meeting the needs of Black and minority ethnic, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People. There are links to different local projects.

The Refugee Council and the Children's Society offer support to children who are suffering adversity:
http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/
http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/

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# Recommended reading

Coles, M.I. (2008) *Every Muslim child matters*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Olusoga, D. (2016) *Black and British: a Forgotten History*. London: MacMillan

Richardson, R. (2004) *Equality Stories: Recognition, Respect and Raising Achievement*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Richardson, R. (2010) Holding Together: Equalities, Difference and Cohesion: Guidance for School Improvement Planning. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.


# Bookshops which offer culturally diverse books for children

The Willesden Bookshop http://www.willesdenbookshop.co.uk/
a truly massive range of books

Tiny Owl Publishing  http://tinyowl.co.uk/
a bookshop which began by publishing stories by Iranian children's authors in English and which has now diversified to publishing from worldwide sources.

Mantra Publishing http://www.mantralingua.com
a wide range of books including dual language books in many languages.

Milet http://www.milet.com
books and multimedia resources for children and adults, including translations of books into English.

The Guardian newspaper publishes reviews of culturally diverse children's books;
https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2014/oct/13/50-best-culturally-diverse-childrens-books
(Accessed 23rd January, 2017)

Lantana Publishing https://www.lantanapublishing.com/
an independent publishing house providing  outstanding writing from around the world, particularly keen on cross cultural collaborations,

Neem Tree Press http://neemtreepress.com/
a new publishing house producing books that aim to change and broaden perspectives.

Pushkin Press http://www.pushkinpress.com/books/pushkin-childrens-books/
specialises in publishing children's (and adult) literature from around the world in translation.

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