

Martins Wood Primary School teach reading with *i-read*!

Martins Wood Primary School is a two-form entry primary school on the outskirts of Stevenage, Hertfordshire. Martins Wood was the first primary school in Hertfordshire to be awarded the Naacemark for excellence in ICT. They have Cambridge-Hitachi interactive whiteboards in all of their Foundation, KS1 and KS2 classrooms. Teachers are very confident in using the interactive whiteboard to support teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum. Here's an insight into the effectiveness of *i-read* in their classroom...



There is a strong speaking and listening focus to the lesson.


Allison Yearsley is about to start an hour of literacy with her mixed-ability year 3 class. The session objective is to revise the structure of a recount letter and respond to the letter by taking on the role of the character. There is a strong speaking and listening focus to the lesson. The children are encouraged to discuss their ideas with Allison and the other children, then helped to develop speaking and listening skills through play and drama.

Allison starts by reading the letter from Cinderella to Buttons. She stops at key points to click on the pop-up questions and uses these as a prompt for discussion: "What does Cinderella mean when she says I work myself to the bone all day long?" Hands shoot up and the children eagerly respond "wears herself out", "tries her hardest", "doesn't want to do any more work, but she has to".



Pop-up questions offer prompts for discussion

Allison then asks the children how they thought Cinderella felt when she didn't get any help: "frustrated", "dreadful", "lonely", "upset", "annoyed" comes a stream of replies from the carpet. "How does she feel about not going to the ball?" Allison probes: "sad", "disappointed", "miserable", "furious", "cross", "jealous" – the air is bursting with synonyms.



Session 8

Objectives: to revise the structure of a recount letter; to respond to a letter by taking on the role of a character.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the purpose of the letter?
- 2 What does Cinderella mean when she says *I work myself to the bone all day long*?
- 3 Do the sisters help?
- 4 Cinderella says that the sisters are the *FFTS*. What does she mean? Why is the word in capital letters?
- 5 Who are the *outty dhums*?
- 6 What sort of words and phrases tell you that Cinderella is writing to a friend?

ENHANCEMENT

Click on the word *Cinderella* (page 9) to see her face changing expression. How do the children think she feels in each picture? Why might she be feeling this way?



Demonstration reading

- Read the letter from Cinderella to Buttons.
- **Demonstration activity** Re-read the first half of the letter. Discuss how you can tell that Cinderella is writing to a friend. Comment on the way the text is presented as well as some of the words used (e.g. the *FFTS*).
- Demonstrate – by underlining connectives at the beginning of each paragraph – that the reader can tell Cinderella is recounting the events that happened in order.
- Model speaking in role as Cinderella to describe her feelings at different points.

Shared reading

- **Shared activity** Re-read the second part of the letter.
- The children work in pairs and take on the role of Cinderella at various points.
- Share some of the talk.
- The children should spot other time connectives. Go back to the main e-text and click the focus highlight button to show the time connectives.

Guided/Independent activities

- **Consolidation**  Children re-read the letter from Cinderella. Ask the children to work in pairs as Cinderella and her friend. They should talk about what has been happening and how Cinderella feels.
- **Extension**  Children read the letter from the court correspondent to the newspaper. Ask them to imagine that the newspaper had a reporter waiting as people left the Summer Ball. Children work in pairs as interviewer and guest. Put prompts on the notepad to guide the talk (e.g. 'How/What did you feel/think when...?', 'What did you do after...?').
- **Follow-up** The children could write in a thought bubble the main feelings of either Cinderella or a person who was at the Summer Ball.

Plenary

- Feed back on good examples of speaking and listening – especially examples of children making careful use of the text of the letters.
- **Challenge/Homework** The children pretend they are one of the ugly sisters and write about how they felt when they got home from the Summer Ball.

© Cambridge-Hitachi 2005 Year 3 Term 3 Non-fiction: Letters

The teacher's notes identify the session objective and offer ideas for whole-class and guided reading.



Hands up to answer questions

In the demonstration activity Allison focuses on certain aspects of the text. She starts with the example where Cinders is recounting events: "Last month, my father..." Allison asks the children what the focus of the text is. There are a few blank faces, a few contemplative faces and one very animated face next to a hand waving wildly in the air. "Time connectives" says the little boy – and there are small noises of appreciation from his classmates. Teacher and children go back and forth through the text to highlight the other time connectives.

Now the children have been through the content of the letter, they are able to have a go at speaking in role as Cinders to describe how she feels at different points. The children feel confident to do this and both boys and girls are enthusiastic to get to the front of the class, although one boy is adamant that he's "not speaking in a girl's voice", which raises a laugh from the other children.



The focus highlight shows time connectives.



After the shared activity, the children move on to independent work.

After the shared activity children move on to the independent work. Children work in pairs as Cinders and Buttons to talk about what has been happening and how Cinders feels. The non-fiction anthology text is used as an aide memoire. Suddenly the classroom is alive as 15 Cinders voice their disapproval about not being invited to the ball.

As the children perform their role play during the plenary, it's clear how this session on recounts has helped them to understand the chain of events and to respond to the characters' feelings – with feeling!

Year 3 Pupil:

'It helps you learn what words mean.'

Allison (Year 3 teacher) says of the non-fiction literacy lesson:

'The letter writing unit is imaginative and because there are so many different characters it really helps to bring the subject to life. The children have learnt to write letters really well. The children get so excited by i-read and love to come to the board to interact with the text.'