

PLANNING FOR MANTLE OF THE EXPERT: A GUIDE

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Introduction

Planning for Mantle of the Expert is one of the great pleasures of using the approach; it is akin to story-making and something you get better at the more you do it. This guide has been written to help you with the process. It is an accumulation of many years of experimentation and trial in the classroom. But it is neither a list of commandments written in stone to be slavishly followed, nor an infallible recipe that will guarantee success every time. So, feel free to adapt, ignore, and refine as you find necessary.

Along with advice, this guide comes with a planning template and a series of tools and resources, all of which you will find on the [Mantle of the Expert website](#). When one of these tools is first mentioned [it will include a hyperlink](#) to take you straight to the appropriate document. The template includes all the stages of the planning process and is available to download as a Word document.

| Planning for Mantle of the Expert | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stage 1 Foundations 4 | 1. Theme | 3. Things that make the theme interesting | 4. Inquiry questions |
| | 2. Overview of the Student's Learning | | |
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| | 3. Purpose (inside the fiction) | | |

Although this guide is written in a linear fashion, there is no need to go through each of the steps in sequence. Start wherever inspiration takes you – sometimes you might find you start with a team in mind, other times it might be with a key inquiry question, or a narrative idea, or a location. Whatever the starting point, work out from there and fill in the boxes as you go in whichever order works best for you. Just remember to keep the students' learning in mind. That's the most important element, and there's little point in planning a context for the classroom if it doesn't meet the needs of your students. Also, remember Mantle of the Expert was never designed to teach all the curriculum, all the time, so only look to fit in those parts that fit coherently into the context. You can teach the rest separately.

One last thing: take your inspiration wherever you find it. Books, films, works of art, music, TV shows, whatever stimulates your imagination. Story-making is at the heart of the approach and has been used by human beings for thousands of years to make sense of the world around them.

STAGE 1: FOUNDATIONS

1 The theme

Choosing a theme is likely to be the most straightforward step in the process of planning your Mantle of the Expert context. It might be the next topic on your school's curriculum map – the Vikings; the Great Fire of London; magnets and materials – or it might be a theme you choose for yourself.

Whichever of those your theme is, the fictional context you plan will create links and overlaps between different knowledge domains – history, science, maths, geography – and generate activities for acquiring and developing skills – writing, reading, questioning, calculating – across the curriculum.

2 An overview of students' learning

During this step you will make a list of the kinds of learning you want your students to develop while using this unit of study. Remember, it's an overview so there is no need to go into too much detail, but be precise. If they are studying 'Castles', for example, then make a list of what exactly you want them to learn:

- To develop a chronological understanding of history during the medieval period.
- To understand the role of castles in medieval society.
- To develop knowledge about castles – purpose, design, architecture, role in society, defences, trade, etc.
- To develop knowledge about the people who lived and worked in castles – their roles, their routines, features of their lives.

You might want to also include skills and aspects of learning from other areas of the curriculum:

- To represent the castle as a line drawing and a painting.
- To write about the history of the castle as a guide to visitors.
- To map the castle, labelling the different parts and including measurements and scale.
- To conduct experiments on the materials and methods used to build the castle.

How much detail you go into is up to you. You might work in a school with a thick curriculum document outlining every aspect of children's learning from one term to the next, or you might work in a school with an outline but little more. Whichever, being clear about the learning you want the children to develop is a key part of the planning process, and while Mantle of the Expert encourages a degree of flexibility, it is not an approach without clear and precise learning outcomes in mind from the beginning.

3 Things that make the theme interesting

There are few things in teaching more dispiriting than embarking on a unit of study that seems boring from the start, so it is a good idea before going much further to think of what might be interesting about this theme, both for the students and for you. Sometimes it is easy: castles are great, with their dungeons, towers, battles, siege engines, etc. Other times, not so much. For example, magnets and materials doesn't, on the face of it, sound that interesting. So, you might want to wait before filling in this box and come back to it after you have finished stage 2 (creating the context). Often, once the narrative, team, client, and commission are in place, this box becomes a lot easier to fill in. Take a look at 'The Disappearing Island' on the website to see what we mean.

4 Inquiry questions

Mantle of the Expert is a dramatic-inquiry approach to learning. This means it combines aspects of drama-for-learning (the creation of a fictional story; taking on different roles; the use of tension) with inquiry questions which operate as investigative pathways for curriculum study.

Let's look at 'The Ruined Castle' as an example. This list of inquiry questions was generated from the overview of the students' learning, created in step 2:

- Why were castles built?
- How were they designed?
- What effect did a castle have on the local community?
- Who lived in castles?
- How was life organised inside a castle?
- How did armies attack a castle?
- How did the people inside the castle protect themselves?

In addition, there are questions that come from the creation of the expert team in step 6:

- How do historians investigate the history of castles?
- What can we tell about life in medieval times from studying castles?
- In what ways can history be told?

| TYPES OF INQUIRY QUESTION | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| Social <i>of or relating to society or its organization</i> | Cultural <i>of or relating to the ideas, customs, and social behavior of a society.</i> | Political <i>of or relating to the government or the public affairs of a country</i> | Historical <i>of or concerning history; concerning past events</i> | Environmental <i>relating to the natural world and the impact of human activity on its condition.</i> |
| Critical <i>expressing or involving an analysis of the merits and faults of the subject.</i> | Ethical <i>of or relating to moral principles</i> | Philosophical <i>relating to the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality & existence</i> | Spiritual <i>of, relating to, or affecting the human spirit or soul</i> | Transformational <i>relating to or involving transformation or transformations.</i> |

Resource: [inquiry questions](#) with examples.

STAGE 2: CONTEXT

This stage of the planning is about creating an imaginary context for investigating the inquiry questions and for developing the curriculum outcomes planned previously. Remember, there's no need to go through each step in the order presented. Instead, consider them as pieces of a self-made jigsaw which you can assemble in any order.

5 The narrative

Probably the best way to visualise this step is as a summary for a storyline, involving five elements of narrative – characters, location, events, time, and tension. Like this one from 'The Disappearing Island':

A geological team are working in the mid-Atlantic when they discover a strange anomaly: an island close to their position has suddenly disappeared from live satellite images. In place of the island is a strange blur that the cameras on the satellite cannot penetrate. Along with the blur, the satellite's equipment is picking up a surge in the island's magnetic field. The team are instructed to visit the island to discover what is happening, and they are told to maintain utmost secrecy – the last thing the world needs right now is another crisis!

Or this one from 'The Ruined Castle':

The owner [character] of a ruined castle [location] calls in a restoration team [characters] to restore the building [events] and make it safe for visitors [tension]. The team set to work [events], first making it safe to work in and then to repair and restore it. As they work, they discover signs of the people who once occupied it and these take them back into the past [time], where they discover more about the history of the castle and the people who lived there.

Some tips on creating a narrative

- Don't make it too complicated: it needs to be something the students can easily remember and understand.
- Make sure it is coherent: that is, it makes sense in the imaginary world it is set in. If that world is one of fairy tales, then make sure the narrative conforms to the dynamics of that world or it will quickly fall apart.
- Avoid silly names and in-jokes: the students will take their lead from you, and if you are not taking it seriously, then neither will they.
- Remember to check the narrative creates a context that will provide activities to meet the requirements of the curriculum: a narrative that doesn't match the students' learning is of little use.
- Always include tension: a story without tension is a boring story which you and the students will quickly grow tired of. It doesn't have to be a disaster or a melodrama (these have value, but only for a short while). The more interesting, sustainable, tensions are about the human condition and the situations humans find themselves in. Take a look at the ['tension list'](#) for more ideas.

6 The expert team

As Mantle of the Expert uses drama, the students can take on the role of any character you can imagine within the imaginary world – human, animal, even inanimate objects (the parts of a castle, for example) – but the main role for the students is that of the expert team.

Being an expert team means the students have power and responsibilities within the fiction. They can make decisions, choose from alternatives, and have a voice in discussions, but if things go wrong, they will be the ones who will have to pick up the pieces. This is the ‘mantle’ of being an expert.

So it is important at the planning stage to think carefully about the powers, responsibilities, and values the expert team will have inside the imaginary world and which will be taken on by the students when they adopt the team’s mantle.

For example, a castle restoration team will have:

Powers – to go into a dangerous building, to make the building safe and decide what needs to be done, to repair the castle for visitors.

Responsibilities – to keep themselves and their colleagues safe, to restore the castle faithfully, to investigate the history of the castle, to open the castle to visitors, to explain to visitors about the castle’s history.

Values – the team believe in conserving the past, in finding out about the past, in protecting it, and in communicating to people in a way they will understand.

Some tips on creating an expert team

- Think of the team as adults: inside the imaginary world they are not children, they are competent, experienced adults, with a history of success.
- Give them a proper name; don’t choose anything silly. Generic names are good: the Castle Restoration Team, Fairy Tale Problem Solvers, Animal Rescuers.
- Give them a proper place of work (this might be negotiated with the students): they are not operating out of Class 5, Brown Meadow School.
- You don’t need to decide everything: leave some space for the students’ ideas.

Resource: [list of expert teams](#)

7 The client

The client's role in Mantle of the Expert is to give the students an audience for their work and a direction inside the fiction. In effect, the client is the teacher's agent, since the client is created and controlled by the teacher and is at the service of the curriculum the teacher is planning to develop.

Clients can come in a number of forms, but their most important characteristic is their level of authority in relation to the expert team:

High A high-authority client will instruct the team on what to do next and make demands on their time and their activities. They are not, however, the team's boss and will respect their expertise and will listen to reason. Example: the Secret Service department that instructs the team of scientists to investigate the disappearing island.

Middle A middle-level client is one who has an amount of power and authority equal to that of the team within the fiction. They can be colleagues, organisations or people working in the same field, or other teams of equal status. A middle-level client is often asking for support, a second opinion, or for expert knowledge. Example: the owner of the ruined castle is a client who relies very much on the knowledge and expert skills of the restoration team.

Low A low-authority client is one in need of the team's help and assistance: often people or organisations in trouble, who require rescuing or expert knowledge to solve a problem. Example: an injured climber, stuck on a mountain, who calls a mountain rescue team.

Some tips on creating the client

- If the client is an organisation, create a character for the team to liaise with, someone who will give them directions and ask them to work on activities.
- Give the client a backstory (it doesn't have to be long) to make the character more interesting and believable for the students.
- Give the client a personality and a set of values. For example, the client might be someone who is impatient and needs updating regularly, or someone who has exacting standards, or someone who is open to persuasion – each will provide a different kind of challenge to the students.
- Decide how the client is going to communicate with the team, as this will generate activities and opportunities for learning. For example, if you want the students to develop their speaking and listening skills, create plenty of situations where the team and the client meet.
- Plan in advance the client's motivations and reasons for contacting the team. This will have implications for the development of the commission and the curriculum that comes out of it.

Resource: list of possible clients.

8 The commission

The commission is the job to be done for the client. It is planned by the teacher and generates activities that can be used to create opportunities for learning and curriculum development. The key thing is to make sure the commission meets the needs of the students' learning as planned in step 2, since anything else will miss the point.

Commissions can come in different forms and require different levels of demands. Some might take a short while to complete, while others will take a lot longer.

Here is the commission for the castle restoration team:

1. To make an assessment of the castle and make it a safe space to work in.
2. To restore the castle – not to rebuild it, but to make the castle somewhere for people to visit and learn about its history.
3. To investigate the history of the castle – the people who built it, the people who lived there, events (good and bad).
4. To make the history of the castle accessible to visitors and to give them a background to the history of castles and their place in medieval history.

Commissions can be communicated to teams either directly via a meeting (face to face, Zoom, video message, telephone call) or indirectly via text (a commission letter, an email, a note). Choose the method that best generates the kind of learning you want to develop.

Some tips on creating the commission

- Don't forget to include some tension – time, resources, dangerous environments, etc – to capture and hold the students' interest.
- Be clear about the outcomes and products the client wants the team to produce and why these things need to be done. Everything in the commission needs to have a meaning and a purpose, since no one enjoys doing things just for the sake of it.
- Make sure the commission is achievable given the time and resources available. There is no point in setting the team up to fail, which would only frustrate you and the students.
- Try to have an end point in mind: that is, how and when the commission will finish and what will happen as a final event. Try not to be too ambitious!
- It's generally not a good idea to start a context with a commission letter. Wait until the students are invested, then they will be ready to read a letter containing a list of jobs to do.

Resource: [list of possible commissions](#).

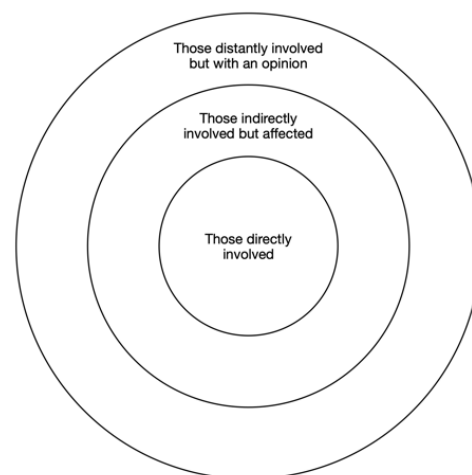
9 Other points of view

This step of the planning process is about making a list of other characters the students might encounter while exploring the context. Drama creates opportunities for students to encounter people, step into their shoes, and explore the context from their point of view.

Think in terms of spheres of involvement: the closer someone is to the centre, the more their time and resources will be affected by events and the actions of the expert team.

Here is a list created for 'The Ruined Castle':

- The owner of the castle.
- The family and ancestors of the owner.
- Local people.
- Inspectors – buildings, heritage, etc.
- Local media.
- People who lived and worked in the castle.



The last characters on the list are people who lived in the past. Drama provides opportunities to explore a context from multiple time frames.

Some tips on creating other points of view

- Other points of view can add tension to a context, but try to avoid aggressively antagonistic opposition: confrontation is a shallow experience and often involves little in the way of learning.
- Similarly, avoid two-dimensional characters with evil intent who the students will identify as baddies. Much more interesting (and productive for learning) are characters who have a different point of view, but are open to reason.
- You might like to explore anthropomorphic points of view. That is, animals, inanimate objects, deities, and so on, and their attitude to the team's work. What, for example, might the walls of the castle make of the team's efforts to repair them?

STAGE 3: ACTIVITIES AND CURRICULUM LINKS

This stage of the planning is about looking at the fictional context and adding detail to the ways it can be used to create opportunities for studying and developing the curriculum. How much detail you add is up to you: you might find a simple list is as much as you need at this stage, or you might want to go into greater depth, marking out clearly in advance what you want the students to learn and what areas of the curriculum you want them to explore in advance. The choice is yours, but leave space for the students' ideas and for activities and events to emerge out of the story. It is never possible to anticipate everything that will happen, and Mantle of the Expert is an approach that encourages students to make a contribution.

10 Team tasks and classroom activities

This step is about looking at the context and making a list of (a) the kinds of tasks that will come out of its development, and (b) how these tasks will create opportunities for classroom activities. For example:

| Context: The Ruined Castle | | |
|---|--|---|
| Commission | Team tasks | Classroom activities |
| To make an assessment of the castle and make it a safe space to work in. | The team look about the castle, assessing what needs to be done to make the castle safe. | Discussion, looking at a plan of a castle with names for the different parts, imagining walking round the ruin, drawing parts of the castle that need repairing, labelling those parts. |
| To investigate the history of the castle – the people who built it, the people who lived there. | The team begin to investigate the history of the castle, looking at the building itself and researching the historical record. | The students watch a short documentary about castles; they read and make notes from books and information sheets; using drama, they begin to create events from the castle's history. |
| To make the history of the castle accessible to visitors and to give them a background to the history of castles and their place in medieval history. | The team write a guide for visitors to the castle, giving them a background to the history and purpose of castles. | With the support of the teacher, the students select information from their study of castles and create a guide incorporating writing and drawings. |

As you can imagine, this list could grow very long very quickly, so be selective and identify those tasks and activities that will best develop the areas of the curriculum identified in step 2. The important thing to emphasise is how the team's tasks in the fiction give meaning and purpose to the learning activities the students do in the world of the classroom.

Resource: To help in this process take a look at the [generic tasks grid](#).

Some tips on creating team tasks and classroom activities

- Scope out a list of essential and possible areas of development and keep an eye on the curriculum – you might find making a mind map will help.
- Be creative when thinking of the team’s tasks. The essential ones will be the ones related to the commission, but there will be many others (routines and suchlike) which, if the team were real, they would need to do regularly: maintaining equipment, paying rent on their office, keeping buildings locked and secure, and so on. Take a look at the generic tasks grid.
- Don’t be too literal. Some tasks might not be what a real team in your context would do, but do them anyway if they make sense in the imaginary world you have created with the students. The last thing you want to do is make your mantle boring. But remember to keep it coherent: the context has to make sense.

11 Curriculum links

Of all the steps this is probably the most straightforward, since it’s a simple matter of mapping the classroom activities created in step 10 onto the learning areas listed in your curriculum. For example:

| Context: <i>The Ruined Castle</i> | |
|---|--|
| Classroom activities | Curriculum links |
| Discussion, looking at a plan of a castle with names for the different parts, imagining walking round the ruin, drawing parts of the castle that need repairing, labelling those parts. | Speaking and listening History – naming the parts of a castle Reading for information Thinking imaginatively Drawing and labelling |

Your school will have its own methods for mapping the curriculum and recording the students’ learning, so fit them in as appropriate. Those learning areas that don’t fit in will need to be taught and recorded separately.

12 Literacy links

As the context develops it will generate many opportunities for writing which you will want to link to your class literacy objectives. The main benefit in using Mantle of the Expert is the meaning the context will give to the students’ work by providing an audience for their text and a purpose behind their writing.

Broadly speaking, there are four purposes of writing:

- Writing to entertain – stories, descriptions, poetry, scripts.

- Writing to inform – reports, letters, instructions, notes, explanations, biographies, newspaper articles, lists, guides, leaflets.
- Writing to persuade – advertising, letters, speeches, posters, campaigns.
- Writing to discuss – balanced arguments, reviews, opinions, essays.

When it comes to planning, these purposes fit within the context in terms of the reason for writing, the audience, and the form:

| Context: <i>The Ruined Castle</i> | | |
|---|---|---|
| Reason for writing | Audience | Form |
| Equipment list to ensure the team have everything they need | The restoration team, new members of the team | A single page with labelled drawings |
| A brief report on the progress of the restoration project | The owner of the castle | A single sheet of paper, typed, with bullet points, introduction and conclusion |
| Guide to the exploring the castle | Visitors | A four-page leaflet with a map, photographs, and information text |
| Stories and myths from the history of the castle | To be sold in the gift shop to visitors | Chapters in a book, written for children, with coloured illustrations |

The idea is for students to understand that writing communicates ideas and thoughts, and to appreciate that for this to work it is important their writing is understandable to the person/people reading it. That is, that it's spelt correctly, written legibly, and conveys meaning.

Some tips on creating literacy links

- Always ensure the writing inside the fiction has a purpose. If you have an objective in your literacy curriculum that doesn't fit the context, then teach it discretely, don't try to crowbar it in.
- Look at the situation inside the imaginary world and consider what kind of writing would naturally happen. For example, a team working on a ruined castle would naturally put up signs warning people of danger ("WARNING: UNSTABLE WALLS") and the owner of the castle would naturally want updates on the team's progress ("Can you please let me know how things are going? An email will do.")
- If the writing the students are doing is important, then how it is presented will make a difference. Remember, in *Mantle of the Expert* the teacher can stop the fiction at any time to give students the support and information they need.

Resource: [the author cycle](#) is something you might find helpful.

STAGE 4: START

This stage is about taking the planning from the previous stages and creating a series of events and activities that will introduce your class to the context and make it something they want to spend their time doing. There is a lot of detail and a lengthy example – called ‘Scott of the Antarctic’ – illustrating the process, but fundamentally it involves the use of a range of strategies which you can learn and develop through practice. The strategies are listed in [‘the seven strategies’](#) resource and will be referred to throughout the example.

13 A sequence of steps into the fiction

The main thing to bear in mind is how the sequence will work for your students. Age will matter, as will prior knowledge, so give these some thought at the beginning.

If you are introducing a context the students are likely to know a lot about already (animals, parks, or dinosaurs, for example) then you won’t need to include a step telling them about those things. On the other hand, if the topic is an entirely new one, then you will need to give careful thought to how it will be introduced.

One method – by far the easiest but not necessarily the most engaging – is to do a couple of topic-type lessons before your sequence starts. This is known as front-loading.

Another way is to integrate the introduction into the fiction as one of the mantle steps. For example, as a briefing to the team using the narrator’s voice – “The Titanic was a ship built to amaze the world...” – together with images and film clips. This way the students will have enough background knowledge to get started.

The next thing to consider is the context’s internal coherence. Internal coherence is how the story is constructed to make sense within the fictional world. If, for example, the fiction includes living dinosaurs, then it is important to think about how they managed to survive unnoticed for millions of years – perhaps on an island wrapped in a strange mist (King Kong style) or through the use of a time portal ([Prehistoric Park](#)). The point is, the story doesn’t have to be real, but it does need to make sense inside the world it operates in.

This also applies to the facts of the context. If the curriculum is about dinosaurs and other living things, then, apart from the story contrivance of dinosaurs being alive, everything else has to be the same as the real world. Otherwise the children will end up learning nonsense.

As the steps develop, keep an eye on the elements of Mantle of the Expert, each of which should be in place by the end of the opening sequence:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team | <input type="checkbox"/> One or more responsibilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Client | <input type="checkbox"/> A relationship with the client |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> One or more activities establishing the team |

Similarly, with the five elements of story:

Characters Location Events Time Tension

It doesn't matter which order these elements are introduced in.

Take a look at the 'the seven strategies', whose purpose is to give you a range of ideas on how to start and which direction to take the sequence in.

Imagine, for example, that you are planning to introduce a class of six-year-olds to the 'Dinosaur Island' context:

- Strategy 1: reading a book or watching a film about a dinosaur island.
- Strategy 2: reading the start of a story that has the team landing on the island by parachute.
- Strategy 3: an adult-in-role (not the teacher) as a shipwreck survivor with an incredible story.
- Strategy 4: the same, but the role represented by the teacher, showing the class a damaged map of an island (made in advance by the teacher) surrounded by mist.
- Strategy 5: the same, but the map is made by the teacher in front of the students and with their help – "What else would we expect to find on the island?"
- Strategy 6: using a picture of a dinosaur made by one or more of the children.
- Strategy 7: asking the children to take on the role of people in the story – "if we were the crew of a ship sailing into a fog on a dark night ..."

Any of these strategies would work (some maybe better than others), so a teacher's choice is based on factors including the interests of the class, the knowledge they have of the subject matter, and the teacher's own confidence in using the strategies. There is no right way, no prescribed order, just experimentation and practice.

Once a teacher becomes familiar with the strategies, they can start combining them and threading them together into a series of steps. This is known as sequencing.

An example: Scott of the Antarctic

Below is an example of how to use the strategies to create a sequence that will introduce students to a Mantle of the Expert context and bring them into the fiction.

Step 1 [*Strategy 2 – partial narrative: photograph.*] Show the class the following photograph of Captain Scott writing in his diary and ask what they notice – the logbooks on the shelves, the family photos, the balaclavas, etc ...



2 [*Strategy 2 – partial narrative: text, using a narrator's voice.*] "This is Captain Scott, the year is 1911. Scott and his team are in the Antarctic waiting for the weather to improve, so they can start their expedition to the pole. It's been a hard winter..." And so on.

3 [*Setting up strategy 4 – teacher in role.*] "If you could talk to Scott, what questions would you like to ask him?" (The children can't talk directly to Scott yet, because they are not in his world).

4 [*Strategy 4 – teacher in role.*] "If I sit on this chair, I could represent Scott, just for a little while, and you could hear what he's thinking. Shall we have a go at that? Listen and see if he answers any of your questions."

5 [*Strategy 4 – teacher in role; combined with strategy 2 – partial narrative: text, using the voice of the role.*] Teacher sits on a chair next to a table, picks up an imaginary pen and begins to write as Scott in the photo. As the teacher writes she voices the words: "12th December 1911, weather still bad. Last night the wind blew so hard I thought our cabin would collapse...". She continues in this way, trying to incorporate answers to some of the children's questions, but doesn't force it. Coherence is important. Once she's finished she comes out of role and stands up: "So, what did you get? Did he answer of any of your questions?"

6 [*Strategy 7 – interacting with the students, representing one or more points of view.*] "He mentioned a team – I guess he must have thought long and hard about the qualities of a team going on such a dangerous expedition. What sort of qualities do you think they must have had?" Brave, strong, etc ...

The teacher continues, "Could you stand just for a moment as someone going with Scott to the Antarctic as one of his team. Let's see how they look – here's one who has a look of determination; here's one who would stand by you in a fix ...". And so on.

The children are now in the same world as Scott and can converse with him inside the story. The teacher speaks as Scott: "Team, the weather has been worse than we expected, the delays longer than we hoped, but soon we will be setting off on the last stage of our adventure, the walk to the South Pole. I know many of you are eager to get going, but I can't emphasise enough the dangers we face – blasting winds, sub-zero temperatures and snowstorms. Safety must always be our first priority. I'm going to ask you once again to check your equipment, get everything ready. Nothing must be left behind. We leave tomorrow."

7 [*Strategy 6 – students create images and resources.*] The students, in role as the team, set to work on their first task: drawing and labelling their equipment for the journey. Later they will write letters home on the eve of the expedition, and they will keep a logbook like the one Scott keeps.

Some tips on creating a starting sequence

- Treat it like starting a story. What is going to grab the students' imagination? Who are the characters? What is happening? What are the tensions?
- Think carefully about the step where the students enter the fiction. What is their role? What tasks are they going to be asked to do? What are their powers and responsibilities?
- Take inspiration from films, TV shows, and novels. The writers and directors have often had to solve the same problems.
- Don't lose heart the first time you try if things don't work as well as you hoped. Learning how to plan and teach a sequence is among the most difficult aspects of the approach and takes time and practice to do well.

STAGE 5: CONTINUING

Once the context is planned and introduced to the class, the next stage is to create a series of activities and events that will develop the fiction and make meaningful links to the curriculum. Some of these activities and events will be ones the teacher has anticipated in advance, while others will emerge out of the work happening in the classroom. How much detail and how far ahead you plan these activities and events is up to you.

14 Events

Events are what is happening inside the fiction and follow the elements of story-making: characters, location, events, time, and tension.

Imagine an event happening in 'The Ruined Castle' context. The team have finished exploring the ruin, they have put up signs warning people of dangers, and they have begun working on making the environment safe to work in. Everything is going to plan, when suddenly one of the team uncovers a hidden staircase disappearing into the ground. The staircase is narrow, with broken steps, and does not seem to be on any of the team's maps of the castle.

This is an event. It might be something invented by the teacher, or it might be an idea created by a student, which the teacher has chosen to use.

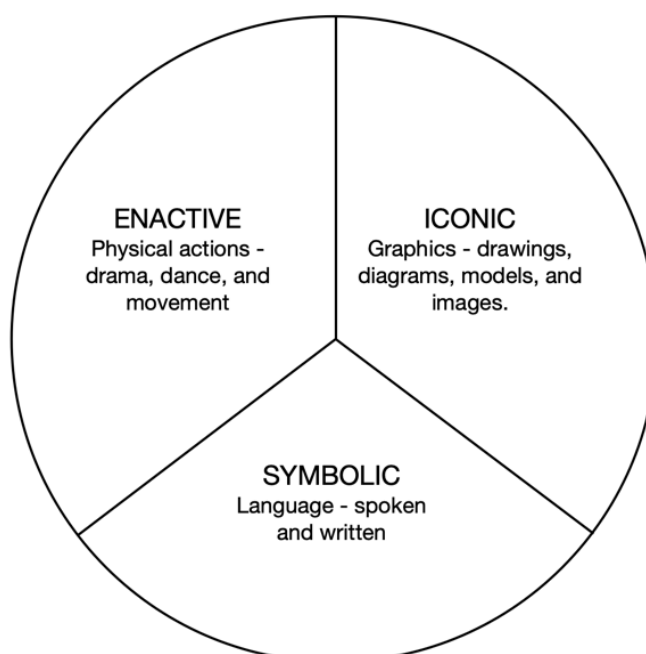
15 Activities: language, drawing, enacting

Activities come in three broad categories: iconic, symbolic, and enactive.

Iconic activities involve making images: drawings, graphics, maps, symbols, paintings, models, etc.

Symbolic activities involve using words (spoken and written): dialogue, questioning, explanations, letters, reports, notes, signs, etc.

Enactive activities involve physical actions conveying ideas: drama, dance, play, etc.



There is a subcategory for music, which is both symbolic and enactive. Often activities involve the combination of two categories, and sometimes three.

The teacher next plans what activities the students are going to do as a consequence of the events happening in the fiction. Something like:

- The teacher (in role as a member of the team) shows the class (in role as the restorers) a map of the castle (iconic). She tells them (symbolic) about the discovery of the staircase and asks for advice on how to proceed (symbolic). There follows a discussion.
- The team decide to explore the staircase, so the teacher asks the students to stand and to prepare for the expedition. They represent the team putting on their equipment (enactive) – work overalls, hard hats, utility belts, etc. As they work, the team leader (the teacher) reminds everyone to go slowly, to look out for each other, and at the first sign of danger to stop and use the walkie-talkies.
- The teacher now asks the students to return to their desks, where she has laid out in advance a sheet of paper and a pencil for each of them to use. She says to them, “I’m going to narrate what happens to the team. As I talk can you draw anything you think will be of interest to the team, anything they will want to remember afterwards. These drawings will be the photographs taken by the team during their expedition.” (Iconic).
- She now relays a narrative she has prepared in advance, stopping at times to give the students time to draw: “The team turn on their torches and head down into the darkness, going slowly and being careful where they stand. At the bottom of the steps is a low passageway strewn with rocks and broken stones. Cobwebs hang from the ceiling. Unperturbed, the team carry on, sweeping the cobwebs to one side. At the end of the passageway is a doorway with a heavy metal door hanging from broken hinges. They squeeze past the door into a room full of objects of various kinds: there is a heavy stone table, scratched and marked through use, a steel box with a closed lid, and, on the walls, three rusty chains each hanging from a metal ring.” And so on.
- In the last activity, the team (the students) write in their project journal (symbolic), about the day’s events – the journey down the stairs and the exploration of the room and its objects.

16 Purpose

This step is about the purpose of the activities *inside* the fiction. That is, why the team are engaged in these activities, and what these activities are doing to further their work.

The purposes of the restoration team’s activities are:

- To look at the situation and discuss how to proceed.
- To plan ahead and prepare for the expedition.
- To photograph what they find.
- To keep a journal of their activities, because it is important to maintain an accurate record of events and discoveries.

17 Learning (curriculum)

The final step is to link the activities of step 15 to the students' learning outcomes and curriculum content.

For example:

- Speaking and listening – discussing an event and thinking together about how to go forward.
- Looking at a map and discussing the implications of the discovery.
- Planning ahead and thinking of possible dangers and ways to keep safe.
- Listening carefully and drawing important details.
- Remembering events and putting them into a chronological report.

The four steps will come together and look something like this:

| | 14. Events | 15. Activities – Language/drawing/enacting | 16. Purpose (inside the fiction) | 17. Learning (Curriculum) |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Stage 5 Continuing | The Team have finished exploring the ruin, they have put up signs warning people of dangers, and have begun working on making the environment safe to work in. Everything is going to plan when suddenly one of the Team uncovers a hidden staircase disappearing into the ground. The staircase is narrow, with broken steps, and does not seem to be on any of the Team's maps of the castle. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The teacher (in role as a member of the Team) shows the class (in role as the restorers) a map of the castle (iconic). She tells them (symbolic) about the discovery of the staircase and asks for advice on how to proceed (symbolic). There follows a discussion. ▪ The Team decide to explore the staircase, so the teacher asks the students to stand and to prepare for the expedition. They represent the Team putting on their equipment – work overalls, hard hats, utility belts, etc – (enactive), as they work the team leader (the teacher) reminds everyone to go slowly, look out for each other, and at the first sign of danger to stop and use the walkie-talkies. ▪ The teacher now asks the students to return to their desks, where she has laid out in advance a sheet of paper and a pencil for each of them to use. She says to them, "I'm going to narrate what happens to the Team, as I talk can you draw anything you think will be of interest to the team, anything they will want to remember afterwards. These drawings will be the photographs taken by the team during their expedition." (iconic). ▪ She now relays a narrative she has prepared in advance, stopping at times to give the students time to draw, "The team turn on their torches and head down into the darkness, going slowly and being careful where they stand. At the bottom of the steps is a low passageway strewn with rocks and broken stones, cobwebs hang from the ceiling. Unperturbed, the team carry on – sweeping the cobwebs to one side. At the end of the passageway is a doorway with a heavy metal door hanging from broken hinges. They squeeze past the door into a room full of objects of various kinds: there is a heavy stone table, scratched and marked through use, a steel box with a closed lid, and on the walls, three rusty chains each hanging from a metal ring." And so on. ▪ In the last activity, the Team (the students) write in their project journal (symbolic), about the day's events - the journey down the stairs and the exploration of the room and its objects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To look at the situation and discuss how to proceed. ▪ To plan ahead and prepare for the expedition. ▪ To photograph what they find. ▪ To keep a journal of their activities because it is important to maintain an accurate record of events and discoveries. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speaking and listening – discussing an event and thinking together about how to go forward. ▪ Looking at a map and discussing the implications of the discovery. ▪ Planning ahead and thinking of possible dangers and ways to keep safe. ▪ Listening carefully and drawing important details. ▪ Remembering events and putting them into a chronological report. |

Some tips on planning continuing activities

- Think about this as an ongoing story. What's happening for the team, what might happen next, where is this story going?
- Don't forget the importance of tension. Use the tension List to help you.
- Events can be of all kinds. Take a look at the generic tasks grid for ideas.
- Keep a close eye on the curriculum. An event is only worth doing if it develops the students' learning.
- Allow space for emergent events: as the context develops, all kinds of unexpected things might happen to the team.
- Try to incorporate the students' ideas. Mantle of the Expert is a collaborative approach, so if the students come up with an idea that meets the aims of the curriculum, go with it – it will generate a sense of ownership.