

World Book Day: developing ideas for global learning through stories

Introduction

The **Global Learning Programme (GLP)** has produced this set of resources to support schools wishing to develop global learning through stories. Stories bring places, settings, issues and experiences to life, and provide a supporting framework in which learners can explore, record, explain, comprehend and envisage the changing world around them as they develop their understanding.

Learning objectives

This resource is targeted at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, with some additional reading suggestions for EYFS. It will particularly support teachers in developing:

- pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world and some of its pressing issues
- pupils' knowledge and understanding of global themes including development, interdependence and sustainability
- pupils' enquiry, critical thinking and discussion skills
- opportunities for pupils to consider their own and others' values.

Resources and guidance from the Geographical Association

Resources for Key Stages 1 and 2 include:

- **suggested books to support global learning** – a small selection of popular and well-known story books are used to illustrate some of the key global learning ideas for the classroom
- **a PowerPoint® presentation** with some supporting prompts and images of pupils' work related to Jeannie Baker's books
- **activities ideas and guidance** with a particular focus on Jeannie Baker's books.

General ideas

The following questions will all prompt thinking to support children's growing knowledge about the wider world and encourage them to think more critically about what they read.

- Can you tell where a story is set just by looking at the cover?
- What clues are there in a book's cover?
- Are there similarities and/or differences with any place you know?
- Is it a real or imaginary setting? How do you know?
- Is the story set in a rural or urban setting? Can you find three pieces of evidence?
- Can you locate the setting, if real? If imaginary, can you suggest and locate a likely place using a globe?

- Is the story set in a rural or urban setting? What can you find out about a contrasting locality in the same country?
- Does a book paint an accurate picture of its setting? How do you know?
- What are the key issues or themes that a book deals with?
- Does the book offer a balanced view? Explain why/why not.
- Does the book give a positive or a negative impression of the people and places in the story?
- How do people feel and act in a story? Can you explain why?
- Do people in your class feel differently about a book? Does this matter?

You can find more questions to help you investigate ideas associated with global learning [here](#).

Activity 1: Change and development

Three well-known Jeannie Baker books help young children to think about changes in the everyday environment, and offer a way to think about more complex concepts of development and sustainability:

- *Where the Forest Meets the Sea*, Walker Books, 1987
- *Window*, Walker Books, 2002
- *Belonging*, Walker Books, 2004.

The picture formats of the books make them very accessible.

In *Belonging* and *Window*, the changes are seen by a child, then an adult over a lifetime. *Window* shows the creep of urban development, while *Belonging* describes the regeneration of an inner city area.

In *Where the Forest Meets the Sea*, a young boy explores the mysteries of a coastal rainforest in Queensland. The book hints at how development might impact on this pristine landscape in the future, and poses many questions about change and our relationship with the environment.

Quick activities

In all three books, the concept of environments changing over time prompts us to observe our surroundings closely and examine actively how and why change is happening. While the starting point might be to observe and recognise change in our localities, the continuation is to consider some answers to the following key questions:

- What is changing/has changed/might change and why?
- Can you identify which of the changes are positive and which are negative?
- What is it to do with me (how do I fit in)?
- What possible futures might there be and who decides?

- What changes would I like to see (and how can I plan for them)?

Belonging essentially shows how a community can create its own environment for the better.

Discuss what the term 'development' means and whether it is always for the better or worse and why. Use old maps and photographs to identify development that has taken place in your local area and how this has improved or damaged the area.

Discuss what makes places special and how we come to know our locality. Use personal experiences to develop empathy in thinking about other people and their localities, and how they might feel about where they live.

Use the view from a class window – each class has a unique perspective on the outside world – to discuss which features are changing/have changed and whether this is for the better or not. Imagine how you might change a particular space and think critically about how feasible, effective and sustainable this might be. What do you need to take into account before making decisions and taking actions? Who uses the spaces you are changing and who benefits? Real-life problems and actions offer exciting opportunities for role-play, purposeful talk and persuasive writing.

Use views through classroom windows and pupil-led evaluations to design features for the school grounds, and plan how this can be done. Examples include growing beds, multicultural gardens, sustainable shelters, seating and wildlife areas.

Create portable 'windows' (card view finders) to explore the school grounds or local area, locating various views: best, worst, most exciting, dullest, most likely to change, etc. and explaining why. Does everyone feel the same?

Make links with the local allotment association, ask a DIY superstore to donate plants and/or tools, or approach smaller local businesses.

Link action plans with Eco-Schools frameworks.

Through fieldwork, support pupils to make a series of drawings of special places, views and types of land-use in the locality. Create stained-glass window panels on Perspex® with glass paints and insert these panels around the school in existing window space. Use local expertise – perhaps parents/governors/local businesses could be involved?

Exchange views through your 'window' with partner schools in other areas. You could make books showing sequential steps as you improve an area within the school or locality and share these too.

Homework

Ask pupils to photograph a view through a window at home. At school, add images to a local OS map, either paper or electronic.



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Activity 2: Critical thinking about character and community

Roald Dahl's book *The Twits*¹ tells the tale of the obnoxious Mr and Mrs Twit and how horrible they were to animals before these creatures took their revenge. It is a great book to start a conversation about character, how we treat others and how we would like to be treated.

- How would you feel if you were another person or possibly an animal being mistreated by the Twits?
- How would you feel if you lived next door to Mr and Mrs Twit? Would you think they were good neighbours?
- Why are good neighbours important and how do lots of new neighbours grow into a community? Make a list of attributes needed to be a good neighbour.

Activity 3: Other lives, other places

Many fiction books offer opportunities for young children to think about different places at a local scale.

***Handa's Hen*, Eileen Browne, Walker Books, 2003**

Handa's hen has gone missing and she sets out to find it in her immediate locality, encountering different animals and environmental features along the way – the story is a counting journey. Handa and her friend Akeyo find a different number of unexpected animals in each subsequent location they search, which offers opportunities for counting and number recognition. They start looking for one black hen and then find two 'fluttery butterflies' then three 'stripey mice' and so on until they find the hen with ten chicks.

Enquiry starting points could include some of the general questions suggested above and also questions such as:

- Where is this place, and what is it like?
- What time of year/season is it?
- How is it similar to, and different from, where we live?
- What does Handa have that we don't? (Some children may say freedom to roam for example.)
- Imagine that there is a drought and there is neither water nor any green vegetation. How different would the story be?

When children are familiar with the book, you might:

- decorate a 'play corner' and make simple props to re-enact the walks in both stories. Hot seat the main characters after their 'journeys' and ask them how they feel.
- explore the possible sounds encountered on the walk, create a soundtrack for the book

¹ *The Twits*, Roald Dahl, Puffin Books, 2013

- write a version of the story for your school grounds using the story of *Handa's Hen* as a template, and create a route, imagining what creatures you might find along the way, e.g. one snail, two robins, etc. Create a sound-scape for your school, how different is it for the one made to accompany the book?
- use different media such as paint, collage, junk modelling, etc. to recreate the animals and landscapes apparent from viewing and reading *Handa's Hen*. Make a large 2D or 3D imaginary map or plan of Handa's route.

***Mia's Story*, Michael Foreman, Walker Books, 2006**

Mia's Story tells the journey of a girl who travels high up in the Andes Mountains looking for her dog before returning to her village. In doing so she finds some flowers that help to transform her family's way of life. This is another useful book to explore other places and lives and make comparisons. It also introduces the idea of quality of life, and how we can be active in improving and sustaining environments.

Making comparisons

Create your own local walk to help make comparisons, then draw a map of Mia or Handa's journey and of yours and the things you see on the way. Structured outdoor experiences are crucial scaffolds for language, enabling children to develop vocabulary and sequencing skills. For example, a 'Journey Stick' activity (see link in section below) helps to signpost a sequence of experiences and can be an excellent prop for a verbal re-tell, or to help write stories and draw storyboards.

- What do you think we'll see/hear/smell, etc.?
- Who will be there?
- What can we do there?
- What might other people be doing?
- What dangers might there be – how can we stay safe?
- What if you could fly, how might your journey map be different?

Vital close observation of your own locality is crucial in helping to describe and explain distant environments as it provides a framework of expectation. Not many children may walk to school these days in the UK, but what about in the country where you have a linked school? Share experiences of everyday walks and discuss how and why they may or may not be similar.

A well-planned walk can awaken and develop keen observation skills in pupils, build on their natural curiosity about environments and develop confidence in everyday contexts as they learn to make sense of the world around them through first-hand experience.

Compile an 'emotion map' of the school grounds or a particular route within it and discuss how this can help you to think about which areas you like and which ones you want to change.

- Which areas felt safe?
- Which ones felt frightening?
- Where would you learn best?
- Where would you be most distracted?
- Did everyone feel the same? If not, why not?
- What do other people think about these spaces and how could we find out?

Supposing you could find one thing on your walk that you could bring back to help transform your school grounds – what would it be? Do you have an unsightly area in your locality that would benefit from planting some flowers like in Mia's story?

Both of these books offer starting points to explore similarities, differences and personal responses to place.

Additional resources and links

Digimap for Schools Mapping – the OS website provides maps at all scales across Great Britain as well as maps from the past: print out or annotate online

www.digimapforschools.edina.ac.uk

Everyday Guide to Fieldwork – a teachers' resource book from the GA with guidance and ideas for primary schools on fieldwork in the local area

<https://www.geography.org.uk/Shop/The-Everyday-Guide-to-Primary-Geography-Fieldwork/9781843773672>

Everyday Guide to Story – a teachers' resource book from the GA, with lists of books and many ideas about how to use them

<https://www.geography.org.uk/Shop/The-Everyday-Guide-to-Primary-Geography-Story/9781843773290>

Jeannie Baker's website with further information on her books, artwork and films. The website also includes an interview with Jeannie in which she discusses the inspiration for *Belonging*. <http://www.jeanniebaker.com>

Journey Sticks <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/teachers-tv-journey-sticks-6048401>

Your World, My World – Oxfam resource that focuses on the stories of children from Brazil, Ethiopia, Russia and India, with supporting country information, activities and teachers' notes

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/your-world-my-world>

GLP guide to progression in global learning, with expectations for Key Stage 1 through to GCSE <https://globaldimension.org.uk/glp/page/11098>

World Book Day 2018 <http://worldbookday.com/>

Guidance from NATE: developing global learning through stories

Use the book suggestions (see global learning booklists for EYFS/KS1 and KS2/KS3) in ways that suit the situations and practices in your school. You might want to use one text as a class reader to explore a region or a topic, as the teacher does in the first example below, or to create book boxes or fill library shelves to encourage independent reading, as in the second example.

You could use the texts in class and for private reading in your usual way, highlighting the global dimension when appropriate. These are novels, poems and non-fiction texts to be read for enjoyment, for appreciation of the writers' craft, and to provoke thought, discussion and possibly action. Let the texts do the work, with encouragement, as always, by sensitive questioning that invites your students to consider aspects they might otherwise miss.

If you are looking for support materials, you might look at the range of *Rooted in Reading* materials – passports, reading diaries and more. See the contact details at the end.

Example 1: Using a class reader

A teacher in North West England writes: *'My Year 8 class have been studying My Sister Lives on a Mantelpiece by Annabel Pitcher. This produced fantastic discussions on islamophobia in Britain and globally. The novel is about a young boy who loses his sister in the London bombings and befriends a Muslim girl behind the back of his racist father. He feels really conflicted as he has always been taught to hate Muslims and in fact realises the religion or people are not evil and it was only some individuals who caused his sister's death. He instead realises it is in fact his alcoholic father that is the problem!'*

Example 2: Independent reading using reading passports

A secondary teacher in Wales describes her approach: *'I have put a large map of the world up and then placed stickers on the countries from where pupils have read books. We usually start in the UK and Ireland and branch out to Europe, the USA and the rest of the world. I have given the students passport-style reading record books and if they read a book from an unusual country they get extra stamps or points. This can also be tied in to the Olympic Games or other sporting event where pupils read their way around the countries taking part and get extra rewards for reading a novel from the most unusual country or from the host country.'*

Contact NATE

For suggested additions to these lists, further global learning resources or to order *Rooted in Reading* resources, find NATE at www.nate.org.uk or call 0114 2823545.

For more information on *Rooted in Reading* resources, please contact Mrs M. Walker: mwalker@poryacademies.co.uk