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STTORMM

FORECAST

Early Reading: we all need to know!

The world of teacher training is littered with acronyms, and APP or Assessing Pupils' Progress must have been one of the most popular this year; but what about ER or Early Reading? Do all of us involved in Graduate Teacher training know about ER? Ah! ER is for those who teach EYFS (Early Years/ Foundation Stage) I hear some of you say; ER is not for me! Well, it's time to be clear about what ER is, and for which trainees and which mentors it is relevant. The answers? All mentors, both professional and subject; all graduate teachers, both primary and secondary!

The story to date. The Rose Review (2006) recommended that all primary trainees must have the knowledge, skills and understanding to teach Early Reading using the Simple View of Reading. This recommendation, now a requirement, forms part of the evidence base for Q15, but is not limited to Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 teachers. As the definition of Early Reading is related to the ***stage of a pupil's reading development, not their age***, it has implications for secondary teachers who are expected to be aware of this methodology, regardless of subject specialism, and where necessary be able to apply it with appropriate pupils. Remember Early Reading is about the stage in a pupil's development, not his or her age.

All trainee primary teachers can expect ER to be a focus for final assessment; secondary trainees may find their awareness tested. Be prepared!

Teaching children to read involves two distinct but related processes: learning to recognise words and developing language comprehension. Both are essential and are contained in the *Simple View of Reading*.

Remember that pupils who cannot adequately recognise the words on the page are by that fact alone prevented from fully understanding the text; however, recognising and understanding the words on the page is no guarantee that the text will be understood!

Both 'word recognition' and 'language comprehension' require specific kinds of teaching.

As children develop in their reading, attention should be paid to the transition from '*learning to read'* to '*reading to learn*', where the balance of word recognition and language comprehension changes.

As we apply our knowledge of ER to our teaching, the key messages for graduate teachers are, be aware of:

- the new conceptual framework, the 'Simple View of Reading';
- the cognitive processes involved in the development of both accurate word recognition skills and language comprehension; and
- the fact that children may not necessarily show equal performance or progress in each dimension.

Be aware that:

- careful assessment of children's performance and progress in each dimension will help teachers to identify children's learning needs and guide further teaching; and
- different kinds of teaching are needed to develop word recognition skills from those that foster the comprehension of written and spoken language.

•About STTORMM Forecast

- Welcome to the second issue of STTORMM's electronic Newsletter. STTORMM Forecast is published regularly so please keep an eye on the website for this and other news.
- STTORMM Forecast is emailed to all GTs, mentors and tutors, and is posted on the STTORMM website (www.sttormm.co.uk).
- Any suggestions for what you would like to see covered in these pages please let us know by emailing gail.rook@sttormm.co.uk.

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From the EBITT Programmes Manager at MMU

Nearly all graduate teachers will have returned to their lead schools late last term after a contrasting and hopefully enjoyable experience in a second setting, and are now on the home strait to final assessment and the award of qualified teacher status! It's time for some further reflection asking yourself questions about the contrasting practices in your two schools. For instance, if you're a primary trainee, reflect on the differences in the way that phonics is taught; if secondary, compare and contrast aspects of professional practice such as differing approaches to the 14 to 19 curriculum or the Key Stage 3 curriculum review, asking whether in your view it is necessarily 'better' here or there.

Similarly, ask yourself, "What sense are you making of the differences in experience encountered? How will your new understandings affect your practice with the classes or groups you have returned to, and your relationships with colleagues for the remainder of your GTP?" Continuing to reflect and record the answers to some of these questions about contrasting experiences in different settings within your REAL, however and whenever they took place, will seriously enhance the quality of your submission. And remember that the second school practice was not an event completed some weeks ago but an ongoing opportunity to reflect on the effectiveness of your current practice.

One GT, recently consulted as part of a small research exercise, described her second school experience as an opportunity to practise without being self-conscious. With less inhibition, she felt able to experiment with the 'new' and consolidate valued messages brought from her lead school. Another returned to her lead school more confident and better informed; she was able to share strategies learned on her second experience with colleagues in her own area. What a boost for all involved! No doubt the lead school mentors reacted by shifting the emphasis of their mentoring approach to something more challenging in consequence. Of course, the experience in a second setting is not always as positive for everybody. If you are one of these few, your positives will lie elsewhere.

If you are now looking for a different kind of challenge, try one of the cross curricular dimensions of the QCA's curriculum 'Big Picture': the 'Global Dimension (GD) and Sustainable Development'. This is high on the Government agenda and linked to Citizenship. For up to date information on the GD go to www.dea.org.uk, or obtain training and resources to support the development of global issues in teaching by visiting the Development Education Project (DEP), Laurel Cottage, 799 Wilmslow Road, M20 2RR. The DEP website is www.dep.org.uk .

Wishing you the very best with your endeavours during the rest of the programme!

Kim Smith

News in brief

Heard of the National Challenge? Know about the Manchester Challenge?

The National Challenge is a programme of support to secure higher standards in all secondary schools so that by 2011, at least 30 per cent of pupils in every school will gain five or more GCSEs at A* to C, including both English and Mathematics.

The Greater Manchester Challenge aims to address problems of under-performing schools, create more outstanding schools, and ensure better results for disadvantaged pupils

If you're applying for a NQT post in Greater Manchester, you should at least be familiar with the ethos of this challenge; it will have implications for your perspectives on teaching in one of the Greater Manchester local authorities in most of which a high proportion of pupils is seen as disadvantaged.

For further information on the Greater Manchester challenge, go to

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/citychallenge/greatermanchester.shtml

NQT job applications!

Yes it's that time already! Two –thirds of the way through your programme and you should be reviewing job advertisements. Most NQT posts are advertised in April and May although some of the local authority pools will already be well established. The best site for identifying potential NQT posts is probably *www.tesjobs.co.uk* where you can set up your job search by locality, age-group, subject specialism etc.

Remember Paul Chidgey's December 08 briefings on how to get yourself the job you really want? GTs have so much convincing evidence of their practice as teachers! Be reflective and use this in your application. By now you should know from the headteacher of your lead school (or maybe your second school) whether they will be making you a job offer. Up to 70% of GTs are retained in the schools in which they train. If you're not one of these, start applying immediately. Remember better five well-prepared applications which address the issues raised by those schools in their contextual statements or job descriptions than twenty identical applications to a range of schools.

The Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) is a new professional qualification for teachers, designed to fulfil the Government's ambition to make teaching a masters-level profession. The MTL programme will be available from September 2009, initially to all newly qualified teachers recruited in the North West of England.

STTORMM's graduate teachers start with an immediate advantage as most will already have completed MMU's masters-level Post Graduate Certificate in Teaching, the PGCertT, as part of their training programmes and will be familiar with a practice-based approach. The MTL will give teachers the opportunity to develop their professional skills and specialist expertise in the workplace with the support of a trained in-school coach as well as a tutor from a higher education institution. The MTL aims to further improve teacher quality to raise standards in education, narrow gaps in attainment and give children better life chances.

For further information, go to the TDA website (http://www.tda.gov.uk/leaders/teachers/mtl.aspx)

Profile: Lamia Cherki .....

… GT in MFL offers her reflections on the GT programme after completion of the first (and longest) term

The first I heard of the Graduate Teacher Programme was during an interview in a teaching supply agency when I arrived in Manchester two years ago. At the time, everything was new. My interviewer was a well-travelled New Zealander, with whom I shared my enthusiasm for far-away countries, as I had come back from a long back-packing trip in South America. I also confessed to him my wish to make a career in teaching; I had just spent six months working in an orphanage in Chile where I realised how important a part education could play in people's lives. Over there, I discovered things about myself. I realised teaching could be the next career step for me because my connections with Chilean teenagers had been so strong and I was given the opportunity to spend time helping them with their homework or teaching them other languages.

The great advantage about being in an Anglo-Saxon country, such as the UK, is the flexibility it offers. What great luck to be able to exploit one's potential to the full. In the UK, I feel that any additional experience is truly valued, which is why the GTP sounded perfect to me! Before taking some time off in South America, I had worked for ten years as a producer for French Television (TF1) in London, Washington and Berlin.

Although I was keen to start a new career I was not willing to go back to university full time; I felt too mature and too experienced. I applied for the GTP through STTORMM and six months after starting my placement this decision has proven to be perfect.

At the beginning of the term I was placed in a language specialist school in Salford to be trained as a Modern Foreign Languages teacher. I am amazed by the amount of support I have received within and outside the school and the progress I have made in just a few months. It is a challenge to be standing in front of a class using a foreign language. Sometimes I do not recognise the person I have become with these new skills; teaching does require a bit of acting, especially for behaviour management.

Lately, my school welcomed some students from MMU and this is when I realised how right I was to have chosen the GTP option. As they came to the school, they naturally turned to me for advice, as we are all trainee teachers, albeit on different routes. Although I am a learner myself, they felt they could ask me questions and sought tips from me. I realised how much more advanced I was in terms of practice as I was trained on the job. I felt more experienced but also more stable because I had more time to learn and also to develop relationships with the members of the staff. I sometimes felt a bit of envy towards the connection I had with my subject mentor. It is true we have a particular bond, which increases as time passes. Time allows relationships to develop and I felt that the MMU students, who were on shorter placements, had a different time scale and did not feel they could get the same quality of support.

I have heard several times, "I wish I had done the GTP like you" and each time, as much as it embarrassed me, I also felt happy that I had made the right decision. Starting a new career is already such a big challenge and I am glad I gave myself the right tools to be successful in my choice.

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