



Effective EAL practice in Milton Keynes

Unlocking non-fiction text

Using DARTs activities to support pupils with English as an additional language

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A number of teachers in Milton Keynes' schools are increasingly using DARTs activities as a strategy for ensuring EAL pupils access to non-fiction texts. This leaflet will support teachers to develop effective use of DARTs in their classroom practice.

What are Directed Activities Related to the Text (DARTs)?

DARTs are activities which encourage pupils to interact with non-fiction texts. Pupils become critical readers by locating, organising and re-constructing information. DARTs are activities which get students to interact with texts. They can be done by individual pupils, pairs or groups.

Which non-fiction texts can DARTs be used with?

DARTs can be used with any form of non-fiction texts:

Newspapers, magazines, text-books, diaries, e-mails, notes, letters, text messages, explanations, pamphlets, catalogues, advertisements, recipes, labels, captions, dictionaries, glossaries, posters and so on.

How do DARTs support EAL pupils?

Interacting with texts in an engaging way:

- improves understanding
- facilitates reflection on the language used in texts
- develops awareness of how texts are constructed
- aides pupils' own writing attempts of similar texts in future
- prepares pupils for the types of tasks and texts used in other subjects

What do DARTs look like?

DARTs can be divided into two groups: Reconstruction activities and Analysis activities.

	Reconstruction activities	Analysis activities
Definition	Activities that require pupils to reconstruct a text or diagram by filling in missing words, phrases or sentences, or by sequencing text that has been jumbled.	Activities that require students to find and categorize information by marking or labelling a text or diagram.
Texts used	Modified texts: The teacher modifies the original text, taking out words, phrases or sentences, or cutting the text into segments.	Unmodified texts: Texts are used in their original form.
Types of activities	<p><u>Text completion</u> Fill in missing words, phrases or sentences, e.g. Cloze activities.</p> <p><u>Sequencing</u> Arrange jumbled segments of text in a logical or time sequence.</p> <p><u>Grouping</u> Group segments of text according to categories.</p> <p><u>Table completion</u> Fill in the cells of a table that has row and column headings, or provide row and column headings where cells have already been filled in.</p> <p><u>Diagram completion</u> Complete an unfinished diagram or label a finished diagram.</p> <p><u>Prediction activities</u> Write the next step or stage of a text, or end the text.</p>	<p><u>Text marking</u> Find and underline parts of the text that have a particular meaning or contain particular information.</p> <p><u>Text segmenting and labelling</u> Break the text into meaningful chunks and label each chunk.</p> <p><u>Table construction</u> Draw a table. Use the information in the text to decide on row and column headings and to fill in the cells.</p> <p><u>Key Visual construction</u> Construct a Key Visual that explains the meaning of the text. For example, draw a flow chart for a text that explains a process, or a branch diagram for a text that describes how something is classified.</p> <p><u>Questioning</u> Answer the teacher's questions or develop questions about the text.</p> <p><u>Summarising</u> Identify key aspects of the text to use on note-taking.</p>

Examples of good practice in Milton Keynes

Junior School in Milton Keynes

Following training from EMA Network, staff developed a number of DARTs activities to encourage engagement with topics in History, Geography and Science to support the writing of EAL pupils. Texts were modelled through:

- text marking,
- cloze activities,
- matching keywords and definitions to build up bilingual glossaries,
- diagram completion, and
- key visuals.

The writing produced by EAL pupils at the end of these topics achieved a Level 3.

Secondary School in Milton Keynes

EAL pupils at Key Stage 3 and 4 are supported extensively through the use of DARTs in preparation for course work. Support staff provide appropriately scaffolded reading activities based on medium term plans. Exemplary texts are modelled for pupils by:

- sequencing text, both at sentence and text level
- grouping chunks of text into categories
- summarising text into appropriate key visuals
- text marking in skimming, scanning and close reading activities
- asking questions about texts

Pupils' range of strategies for extracting information from text improved as a result of DARTs activities.

Further copies of this publication are available from The EMA Network:

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