

Drawing Club in Early Years



What is Drawing Club?

Drawing Club is the approach we use in Reception in our school to teach Literacy. It was created by a practitioner called Greg Bottrill and it brings the magic of story into the classroom. It is a way to share skills including fine motor, maths, early writing, vocabulary and most importantly, imagination and excitement!

<https://www.canigoandplaynow.com/drawing-club.html>

How do we teach it?

At the beginning of each week, we use a new quality text to grab the interest of the children. This could be a written text, a cartoon or a short film. When we use a book, we read the story and talk about the front cover, the title and make predictions about what the story could be about. We talk about the beginning, middle and end and we may sequence events to help them to familiarise themselves with what happens. If using a short film or cartoon, we would watch it together and have conversation about it. The texts we use will link to our topic whenever appropriate. We try to make sure that most of our Drawing Club stimuli comes from texts as we are aware our children already exceed recommended screen time.



We learn around 5 words each week which link to the text. To help the children to remember them, we choose actions together as a class for each word. This is a way of developing new and exciting vocabulary in context that the children may not otherwise hear. We then encourage the children to use these words in their play.

On day one, we talk about the character and what might happen when we press the magic button on our drawings. For example, they might change in appearance, develop a superpower to help them to solve their problem, become invisible...the ideas are endless!

For day two, we draw a setting from the story and generate ideas about how it could change. For example, in the story of The Gingerbread Man, the river might part so that he can cross.

On the third day we go on an imaginary adventure, changing parts of the story - anything can happen when the magic is added!

How does Drawing Club link to writing?

Each time the children draw they have to add a 'magic button'. To make the magic work, they have to add a secret code. This could be the sound they are learning that day, a word, a caption or full sentences - whatever we feel they need to reinforce. The secret code could also be a number or a maths fact.

What about non-fiction texts?

Alongside the fictional element of drawing club, we also make sure the children are exposed to quality information books that link to our topics.

They will be taught how to write lists, captions and simple pieces of factual information. This could be done through Drawing Club if appropriate.



Why have we chosen Drawing Club?

Drawing Club is all about doing what is right for our children, to meet their needs and develop their interests. It is not a scheme. It is meant to be fun and exciting and give children the opportunity to explore a world of adventure so that they are fuelled ready to develop their writing skills as they move up through school.



The great thing about Drawing Club is that anything can happen. The more the children hear different ideas, think of their own and talk about stories in a 'What if...' way, the more their imagination will ignite and they will become amazing little storytellers.