

ORAL LANGUAGE & POETRY



Scoil na mBuachaillí

(Clonakilty Boys National School)

ENGLISH



Scoil na mBuachaillí, Cloich na Coillte

AIMS / PURPOSES OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

- a) To promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of language, spoken, read and written.
- b) To create, foster and maintain the child's interest in expression and communication.
- c) To develop the child's ability to engage appropriately in listener/speaker relationships.
- d) To develop confidence and competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- e) To develop cognitive ability and the capacity to clarify thinking through oral language, writing and reading.
- f) To enable the child to read and write independently.
- g) To enhance emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development through oral, reading and writing experiences.

Taken from the 'New 'Curriculum Book pages 10 & 11

- h) To ensure a balanced and broad curriculum.
- i) To ensure that oral language is given a central place throughout the entire curriculum.
- j) To maximise the use of oral language in developing children's comprehension and reader response skills.
- k) To ensure the use of oral language activity as a teaching strategy in every area of the curriculum.

PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

Junior and Senior Infants

Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language

Strand Unit: Oral: Developing receptiveness to oral language.

The child should be enabled to

- Experience, recognise and observe simple commands - *look, listen, watch.*
- Listen to a story or description and respond to it.
- Hear, repeat and elaborate words, phrases and sentences modelled by the teacher.
- Use and interpret tone of voice expressing various emotions.
- Learn to adopt appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviour to secure and maintain the attention of a partner
 - *Establishing eye contact*
 - *Using appropriate head movements, gestures and facial expressions.*
 - *Ensuring audibility and clarity*
- Mime and interpret gesture, movement and attitude conveying various emotions.

Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language

Strand Unit: Oral language: developing competence and confidence in using oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Talk about past and present experiences, and plan, predict and speculate about future and imaginary experiences.

- Choose appropriate words to name and describe things and events.
- Experiment with descriptive words to add elaborative detail.
- Combine simple sentences through the use of connecting words.
- Initiate and sustain a conversation on a particular topic.
- Use language to perform common social functions-
 - *Introducing oneself and others*
 - *Greeting others and saying goodbye*
 - *Giving and receiving messages*
 - *Expressing concern and appreciation.*

Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing cognitive abilities through oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Provide further information in response to the teacher’s prompting.
- Listen to a story or a narrative and ask questions about it.
- Focus on descriptive detail and begin to be explicit in relation to people, places, times, processes, events, colour, shape, size, position.
- Discuss different possible solutions to simple problems.
- Ask questions in order to satisfy curiosity about the world.
- Show understanding of text.
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Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing emotional and imaginative life through oral language

The child should be enabled to

	individual speech sounds
Phonological awareness	A range of skills such as the ability to analyse words into their constituent speech sounds, the ability to combine speech sounds, and the ability to detect rhyme and alliteration.
Representational text	Text in the form of diagrams, pictures, graphs etc
Scanning	Reading quickly in order to establish the organisation and principal features of a text
Semantic cues	The contextual information in a text that will help to predict a word or words
Skimming	Reading quickly in order to find the gist of a text
Syntactic cues	The information contained in grammar and language use that facilitates the interpretation of text
syntax	The totality of facts about the arrangement of words in a language
Text	The entirety of a linguistic communication in written or printed form or through sign, gesture or situation
Writing genres	The various forms appropriate to different types of written communication - story, essay, letter, dialogue, recipe etc.

Digraph	A combination of two letters used to represent a single sound.
Engagement with text	Reading, comprehending, reflecting on and responding to a piece of text.
Expository text	Text that describes or explains
Grammar	The abstract system of rules in terms of which a person's mastery of a language can be explained
Grapho/phonic cues	The information provided in sounds and in combinations of sounds represented by letters and groups of letters that helps to predict words
Language-experience material	The creation of text by the teacher in collaboration with the pupils in order to facilitate early reading
Large-format books	Books that are produced in a format large enough for collaborative reading with groups
Literacy	The ability to read and write
Morpheme	A speech element having a meaning or grammatical function that cannot be subdivided into further such elements
Narrative text	An account of events, experiences
Onset and Rime	Onset is the part of a syllable that precedes the vowel and the rime is the remainder of the syllable.
Phoneme	One of the set of speech sounds in a language that serve to distinguish one word from another.
Phonemic awareness	The knowledge that words are composed of

GLOSSARY

- Reflect on and talk about a wide range of everyday experience and feelings.
- Create and tell stories.
- Listen to, learn and retell a rich variety of stories, rhymes and songs.
- Respond through discussion, mime and role-playing to stories, rhymes and songs heard and learnt.
- Use language to create and sustain imaginary situations in play.
- Listen to, learn and recite rhymes, including nonsense rhymes.
- Listen to, learn and ask riddles.
- Create real and imaginary sound words.
- Recognise and re-create sounds in the immediate environment.
- Experiment with different voices in role-playing
 - *A favourite story, a cartoon character.*

First and Second Classes

Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing receptiveness to oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Experience challenging vocabulary and sentence structure from the teacher.
- Listen to stories, descriptions, instructions and directions and respond to them.
- Listen to sounds and respond to them.
- Become more adept in using appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviour in order to secure and maintain the attention of the listener -
 - *Eye contact, facial expression, audibility and*

clarity of enunciation, tone of voice

- Use gesture and movement to extend the meaning of what he is saying.
- Express in mime various emotions and reactions, and interpret the emotions and reactions of others.

Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing competence and confidence in using oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Talk about and reflect on past and present experiences, and plan, predict, anticipate and speculate about future and imaginary experiences.
- Experiment with more elaborate vocabulary and sentence structure in order to extend and explore meaning
 - *Experimenting with descriptive words*
 - *Combining simple sentences.*
 - *Elaborating simple sentences.*
- Experiment with word order and examine its implications for meaning and clarity.
- Focus on the subject under discussion and sustain a conversation on it.
- Initiate discussions, respond to the initiatives of others, and have practice in taking turns.
- Engage in real and imaginary situations to perform different social functions
 - *Greeting others*
 - *Receiving and giving compliments.*
 - *Using the telephone.*
 - *Making requests for information.*

- allow children to use language in a variety of social groupings and contexts.
- give more opportunities for individual contributions.

Book companies e.g. Fallons, Folens, Educational Company have produced Oral Language ‘packs’ - these will be assessed and purchased for the teacher’s use if considered worthwhile.

MONITORING/EVALUATION/REVIEW

The following assessment tools will be used in English, however it is neither desirable nor practicable that all these tools be used in every learning situation or within a particular time span:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
- Curriculum Profiles
- Diagnostic Tests
- Standardised tests

The primary aim of all assessment is to enhance the learning experiences of the child, and it will be important that the assessment techniques employed are worthwhile and do not detract from teaching time.

A record of pupils work will be kept - e.g. assessment results, etc where appropriate and worthwhile. Teachers will keep their own records on the children’s progress. Reporting to parents on children will be carried out as usual through Parent/Teacher Meetings and Reports.

This policy will be reviewed at intervals to assess its effectiveness.

April 2002

Glossary of terms on following pages.

- Parents will **always** be consulted when a child enters or leaves the service.
- If parents refuse to give permission a written note must be obtained.

CLASSROOM PLANNING FOR ENGLISH

When planning the English Curriculum the teacher will take account of the integrated nature of the curriculum i.e. in terms of the 4 strands -

- Receptiveness to language
- Competence and confidence in using language
- Developing Cognitive abilities through language
- Emotional and Imaginative development through language.

Oral Language will have a significant role to play in

- Developing reading skills
- Developing comprehension skills
- Developing children's response to fiction
- Developing their response to poetry
- Preparing a topic for writing
- Editing and redrafting writing.

In this way oral language skills can be developed simultaneously with other skills. Oral language activity will also be an integral part of the teaching and learning process in all areas of the curriculum.

It should also be remembered that much oral language development can be accomplished informally. Children's talk should be valued, but of course some limits must be set for the smooth running of the classroom.

The approach to oral language should be flexible and should incorporate the regular use of a variety of groupings within the class. These will include whole-class, small-group and one-to-one groupings that will

- provide a variety of organisational settings to serve the needs of different activities.

Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing cognitive abilities through oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Give a description, recount a narrative or describe a process, and answer questions about it.
- Listen to other children describe experiences and ask questions about their reactions to them.
- Become increasingly explicit in relation to people, places, times, processes and events by adding elaborative detail to what he describes and narrates.
- Listen to a story or narrative and ask questions about it.
- Engage in real and imaginary situations involving language use
 - *Explain, persuade, enquire, report, agree, dissent, discuss a point of view, justify opinions*
 - *Provide solutions to problems*
- Ask questions that will satisfy his curiosity
 - *Who? Where? What? When? Why? How? What if?*

Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing emotional and imaginative life through oral language.

The child should be enabled to

- Describe everyday experiences and events.
- Express feelings in order to clarify them and explain to others.
- Tell stories in his own words and answer questions about them.
- Listen to, read, learn and recite a varied and appropriate repertoire of rhymes and poems
- Re-create stories and poems in improvisational drama.

- Use play and improvisational drama to sustain imaginary situations.
- Listen and say nonsense words and unusual words.
- Listen to, learn and tell riddles and jokes.
- Clap the rhythms of poems and rhymes.
- Listen to, read, learn and recite more sophisticated nonsense verse and rhymes.
- Recognise and re-create sounds in the environment.
- Create real and imaginary sound words.
- Use imaginative play to create humorous characters and situations.

Third and Fourth Classes

Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing receptiveness to oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Experience the teacher's use of challenging vocabulary and sentence structure.
- Listen to, retell and tape a narrative or a description, taking turns giving the account.
- Give and follow instructions on how to perform a particular task or process.
- Become increasingly aware of the importance of gesture, facial expression, tone of voice, audibility and clarity of enunciation in communicating with others.
- Use mime to convey ideas, reactions, emotions, desires and attitudes.
- Discuss the use and effect of music, sound effects and non-verbal clues in audio tapes, video tapes and film clips.

- Encouraging the child to read.
- Paired reading activities.
- Ask children about their day in school.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND REMEDIATION OF READING DIFFICULTIES

Children in Senior Infants are identified by the class teacher if they are experiencing difficulty with reading and then if appropriate the children are then taken by the **Learning Support Teacher**. No formal assessment is carried out in Junior Infants or Senior Infants by the class teacher.

Formal assessment begins in Rang 1. All the children in Rang 1 - Rang 6 are assessed in October each year using the **Micra-T** test. The results of all tests are kept by the teacher, Learning Support Teacher and in the class file (kept in the office).

- The children will be withdrawn for Learning Support teaching.
- In order to minimise the disruption to the rest of the class organisation and with the child's own engagement with the rest of the curriculum there will be greater liaison between class teacher and Learning Support Teacher.
- Remediation be done in groups of 4/5.
- In order to evaluate the school's system of remediation there will be regular meetings with class teachers (at least once a term), learning support teacher and principal (once a month) .
- When appropriate the Learning Support Teacher could take the body of the class occasionally, while the class teacher works with the group of children with reading difficulties.
- Parents will be encouraged to support the work of the Learning Support Teacher at home.
- There will be a review at the end of each term - at this review, the issue of withdrawing children from the service will be discussed. Children will be withdrawn using the following criteria - standardised test results, discretion of the principal, class teacher and learning support teacher.

through choral verse-speaking.

Writing poetry

- Children will be given the opportunity to write poetry and verse.
- Even though the child will be aware, particularly by the senior classes, of the functions of rhyme and rhythm in poetry, he will be encouraged to perceive accuracy and sincerity of expression as the most important requirements in a poem.

RESOURCES/IMPLICATIONS

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

- Computers are a major contributor to a print-rich environment. Using programmes inevitably involves reading on-screen instructions etc. Children's use of computers will therefore foster their awareness of print and encourage the development of reading skills.
- Computer programmes - needed to support the development of word identification, spelling and other reading skills.
- Encyclopaedias and reference books are now available in multi-media format.
- Word processing packages.
- Desk top publishing packages to enhance the presentation of the child's work.
- Connectivity to the internet and email.
- Use of multimedia authoring packages such as Hyperstudio and Opus Pro.

ROLE OF PARENTS

- Parents have a crucial role to play in the child's language development.
- Talking to the child, hearing the child talk.
- Reading stories aloud or telling stories to the child.

Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing competence and confidence in using oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Give and take turns in speaking and experience a classroom environment in which tolerance for the views of others is fostered.
- Initiate conversations and respond to the initiatives of others in talking about experiences and activities.
- Present ideas that are relevant to the subject in a logical sequence.
- Summarise and prioritise ideas.
- Discuss the meanings and origins of words, phrases and expressions with the teacher.
- Become aware of new words and new connotations of words through his reading and writing experience.
- Play synonym and antonym games.
- Become familiar with the functions of words without necessarily using technical grammatical terms
 - *Noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition.*
- Practise the common social functions in the everyday context of class and school and through improvisational drama
 - *Introducing others to the class group or another pupil*
 - *Expressing appreciation*
 - *Expressing approval and disapproval*
 - *Engaging in simple commercial transactions*
 - *Expressing concern*
 - *Asking questions to elicit views and feelings*
 - *Expressing support*
 - *Giving directions*
- Make lists of local expressions and words.
- Use improvisational drama to re-create well-known characters.
- Hear, discuss and react to local storytellers.

Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing cognitive abilities through oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Discuss issues that directly affect his life
 - *In school*
 - *Outside school*
 - *In other areas of the curriculum*
- Discuss a story being read and predict future events and likely outcomes in it.
- Discuss different possible solutions to problems.
- Discuss what he knows of a particular topic or process as a basis for encountering new concepts.
- Discuss causes and effects in relation to processes and events and predict possible outcomes.
- Listen to a presentation and discuss and decide which are the most important questions to ask.
- Learn how to use the basic key questions
 - *Why?*
 - *How?*
 - *Where?*
 - *When?*
 - *What?*
 - *What if?*
- Make presentations to the class about his own particular interests.
- Justify personal likes and dislikes.
- Argue a point of view and try to persuade others to support it.
- Explore historical events through improvisational drama.
- Explore reactions to ideas through improvisational drama.

- *They can listen to a professional reading it on a recording.*
- *They can listen the teacher reading it aloud while they look at the text.*

Pupil's response

- Sometimes it is better to read a poem without any comment or discussion.
- One of the most effective ways in which children can respond to a poem is through discussion. The teacher has an important role in initiating this activity and in encouraging, guiding and prompting children to
 - *Look for the thrust of the poem.*
 - *Distinguish the deeper meaning under the surface meaning.*
 - *Appreciate how words are used to achieve particular effects.*
 - *Appreciate the effects of rhythm and rhyme.*
 - *Examine the functions of repetition.*
 - *Recognise the effects of simile and metaphor.*
 - *Examine the effects of alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance, imagery.*
- It is sometimes useful to compare two or more poems on a similar subject.
- Other important modes of response would include
 - *Making anthologies of favourite poems: they can be made by the class, a group or individual pupils.*
 - *Art work: many poems, particularly in the imagery they contain, lend themselves to pictorial representation.*
 - *Dance: this is particularly appropriate in the junior classes.*
 - *Memorisation: children should be encouraged to memorise short poems that they like and stanzas in longer poems.*
 - *Recitation: this can be done individually and*

The repertoire of poetry

- In early years the emphasis will be on rhymes, riddles, nursery rhymes and jingles.
- As they grow older they should become more familiar with a wider range of poetry - humorous, narrative (including traditional ballads, modern ballads and folk-songs) and lyric. The content of poems should touch on every area of children's experience and engage their imaginations as well.
- In senior class there should be a particular emphasis on 20th/21st century Irish writing appropriate to their age.
- The classroom library should contain wide selection of poetry collections and anthologies.
- Children should be encouraged read and choose poems themselves.

Choosing Poems

- The choice of poems can be influenced by many factors:
 - *Time of year*
 - *Weather*
 - *Children's preoccupations and interests.*
 - *Other areas of the curriculum.*
 - *A concern for broadening and deepening children's tastes.*
 - *Events in the world at large.*
- The poems that are chosen and the variety of ways in which children are encouraged to respond to them should help develop their sense of taste and discrimination and foster a conviction that poetry is a great source of pleasure.
- Poetry also lends itself to integration with other areas of the curriculum.

Developing children's responses

Approaching a poem

- Children can approach a poem in a number of ways:
 - *They can read it silently.*
 - *They can listen to another pupil reading it.*
 - *The teacher can read it aloud.*

Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing emotional and imaginative life through oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Describe everyday experiences to the class or group and discuss them.
- Discuss favourite moments, important events and exciting characters in a story, play or poem.
- Express reactions to events and characters in stories.
- Discuss reactions to poems.
- Create and tell stories to the class or group, and retell them after questioning, comparing the versions.
- Express feelings and attitudes through improvisational drama.
- Create and sustain imaginary contexts through improvisational drama.
- React to poems through improvisational drama.
- Dramatise stories.
- Experience and enjoy playful aspects of language
 - *Asking riddles and telling jokes*
 - *Experimenting with funny-sounding words*
 - *Playing word association games*
 - *Reading and listening to examples of humorous literature*
 - *Composing rhymes and verses*
 - *Appreciating how words interact - how a word can trigger a humorous reaction.*

Fifth and Sixth Classes

Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing receptiveness to oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Experience from the teacher a growing elaboration and sophistication in the use of vocabulary and sentence structure.
- Listen to expressions, reactions, opinions and interpretations and re-tell or summarise them.
- Listen to radio broadcasts and discuss what has been learned.
- Follow detailed instructions or directions from others in order to test their accuracy.
- Take part in games in which unseen objects are identified from descriptions given by other pupils.
- Be continually aware of the importance of gesture, facial expression, audibility and clarity of enunciation in communicating with others.
- Use mime to convey ideas, reactions, emotions, desires and attitudes.
- Interpret mood, attitude, emotion and atmosphere in video extracts, advertisements, paintings and photographs.
- Listen to or watch sound tapes, videos and films and discuss how sound effects enhance the content.
- Listen to authors reading and discussing their own work.

Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language

Strand Unit: Oral Language: developing competence and confidence in using language

The child should be enabled to

Drama

- Drama is a holistic activity. It involves every aspect of the child's personality: spiritual, moral, emotional, mental and physical.
- Drama is an open-ended, creative activity. In a drama lesson certain situations, contexts, characters, conflicts, dilemmas etc may be suggested to the children. The teacher may indeed prompt the children towards a particular facet of the exploration but essentially the development should spring from their own creativity and imagination.
- Drama has a fictional focus. It is in its imaginative dimension that the essence of improvisational drama lies. A dimension of experience denied to them in normal life becomes available to them in the only way possible - though living it in their imagination.
- Drama is a quest for knowledge. Children can attain new knowledge and learn new skills through drama. Every drama lesson has the potential for language development.

Drama and the development of skills

- Cognitive, emotional and imaginative skills can be developed through drama.
- Children
 - *should think and feel themselves into the situation.*
 - *Imagine and play the characters as they really might be.*
 - *Express emotions and actions in detail and with conviction.*

POETRY AND RHYME

The Role of Poetry

- Poetry should have a special place in the children's language experience.
- It is important that the children experience and enjoy a rich and varied repertoire of poetry appropriate to their age and stage of development throughout their years in primary school.
- Hearing and reading poetry should be an intrinsic element in their language experience and one that is a source of joy and fulfilment.

- *Take turns retelling it*
 - *Choose the most important features of the story and compare their choices with those of others*
 - *Discuss words or phrases that are particularly colourful, striking or informative*
 - *Mime the story to stress mood and emotion*
 - *Recall details of characters and events*
 - *Summarise the story*
 - *Compare it with other stories heard or read.*
- **Other activities - writing activities in which children**
 - *Write the story in their own words*
 - *Write about the character*
 - *Write about what they liked best in the story*
 - *Write the story from the point of view of one of the characters*
 - *Write a new ending to the story*
 - *Write a sequel*
 - *Write what happened before the story began*
- **Listening to stories can encourage children**
 - *To tell their own stories, choosing their own subject*
 - *To tell a story about given characters*
 - *To listen to the beginning of a story and develop it themselves*
 - *To tell or write a story in collaboration with others*
 - *To tell or write a story about characters they have encountered in their reading.*

- Acquire the ability to give detailed instructions and directions.
- Converse freely and confidently on a range of topics.
- Give and take turns in an environment where tolerance for the views of others is fostered.
- Practise and use improvisational drama to acquire a facility in performing more elaborate social functions.
 - *Welcoming visitors*
 - *Showing them the work of the class*
 - *Making formal introductions*
 - *Proposing a vote of thanks*
 - *Expressing sympathy*
 - *Making a complaint*
- Discuss the positive and negative effects of jargon, slang and cliché, and express examples of them in his own language.
- Understand the functions and know the names of the parts of speech
 - *Noun, verb, adverb, pronoun, conjunction, preposition, article, interjection*
- Learn about and name the basic properties of nouns and verbs
 - *Common, proper, gender, case*
 - *Tense, voice, person, number*
- Become familiar with compound and complex sentences, and know and understand the terms 'phrase' and 'clause'.
- Explore the possibilities of language and sentence structure in expressing increasingly complex thoughts.
- Discuss the meaning, effect and diversity of local words and expressions.
- Hear accents and dialects other than his own on tape and on video and discuss them.
- Use improvisational drama to learn how local idiom, accent and dialect can influence the effect of language in particular situations.

IMPROVISATIONAL DRAMA

The Role of Drama

Drama has a number of specific characteristics which mean it can make a unique contribution to the development of the child.

Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language

Strand Unit: Oral language: developing cognitive abilities through oral language

The child should be enabled to

- Discuss issues of major concern.
- Discuss ideas and concepts encountered in other areas of the curriculum.
- Use a discussion of the familiar as the basis of a more formal or objective grasp of a topic or concept.
- Use the basic key questions and checking questions as a means of extending knowledge.
- Listen to a presentation on a particular topic, decide through discussion which are the most appropriate questions to ask, and then prioritise them.
- Argue points of view from the perspective of agreement and disagreement through informal discussion and in the context of formal debates.
- Justify and defend particular opinions or attitudes and try to persuade others to support a particular point of view.
- Respond to arguments presented by the teacher.
- Discuss the value, truth or relevance of popular ideas, causes and proverbs.
- Explore and express conflicts of opinion through improvisational drama.
- Explore historical contexts through improvisational drama.

Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language

Strand Unit: Oral language: developing emotional and imaginative life through oral language

The child should be enabled to

Storytelling

When engaging in storytelling consideration should be given to

- *The narrative flow*
- *The mood of the story*
- *The dramatic highlights and climaxes*
- *Dialogue, if any*
- *Appropriate variations of voice and pace.*
- Occasionally children could listen to recordings of professional readers and storytellers or a local storyteller could be invited into the classroom.
- A variety of response - writing, drawing etc will be encouraged.
- Children could also be encouraged to find similar or contrasting stories in books in the class library and to read them silently or aloud to the class.

Language activities and stories

- ***Children should engage in a variety of responses such as***
 - *Asking questions*
 - *Answering questions*
 - *Repeating appropriate line of dialogue*
 - *Using tone of voice to highlight moods and particular events*
 - *Re-creating characters, events and emotions in role playing*
 - *Miming stories and parts of stories*
 - *Describing different characters*
 - *Re-telling the story*
 - *Re-telling particular incidents in the story*
 - *Recalling different words and phrases*
 - *Recalling lines of dialogue*
 - *Discussing why characters said certain things*
 - *Acting out incidents in the story*
 - *Miming the story*
- ***More sophisticated responses can be expected from older children who could***
 - *Retell the story, concentrating on its most important elements*

which would be

- *Labelling - naming objects, parts of objects and the functions of objects*
- *Making choices*
- *Co-operating and sharing*
- *Considering problems*
- *Negotiating with others*
- *Arriving at and justifying decisions*
- *Developing and sustaining an idea*
- *Experimenting with relationships*
- *Adopting different roles*
- *Exploring feelings*
- *Re-creating their concept of the world imaginatively.*

STORY

The telling and reading of a rich and varied selection of stories will be a feature of children's experience in every class.

The importance of story

- Listening to stories is important in a number of ways:
 - *For young children it is their first and principal access to the world of literature and the imagination.*
 - *Through listening to stories they gain an awareness and an appreciation of the structure of narrative, learning about sequence and cause and effect.*
 - *If told in language that is colourful and challenging or read from works of good writers, stories can help expand vocabulary.*
 - *Stories can give children an appreciation of the potential of language and develop their own use of language.*
 - *Listening to stories can help them with their own storytelling.*
 - *Listening to stories improves listening and reading skills.*
 - *Discussing events, characters, motives and consequences in stories assists cognitive, imaginative and emotional development.*

- Discuss with others his reactions to everyday experiences and to local, national and world events.
- Discuss the concerns of other children.
- Discuss ideas, concepts and images encountered in literature.
- Discuss personal reading and writing.
- Express individual responses to poems and literature and discuss different interpretations.
- Discuss plays, films and television programmes.
- Experience and enjoy playful aspects of language
 - *Experimenting with sequences of words*
 - *Discussing the origins and effects of unusual words*
 - *Hearing and reading aloud humorous literature*
 - *Telling riddles and jokes*
 - *Playing word association games*

APPROACHES

CONTEXTS FOR ORAL LANGUAGE

Oral language activity can be approached through five principal contexts:

- *Talk and discussion*
- *Play and games*
- *Story*
- *Improvisational drama*
- *Poetry and rhyme*

TALK AND DISCUSSION

- Talk and discussion should be characterised by a relaxed atmosphere.
- A well thought out approach to the language needs of children will consist of providing a range of contexts and strategies in which appropriate language skills will be acquired.
- Children will be given practice in
 - *Listening attentively*
 - *Taking turns to speak*

- *Offering information most essential to the listener*
- *Making comments and responses that are appropriate.*

The role of the teacher in developing active listening

- It is important that contexts for language are created by the teacher in which the children are encouraged to listen and respond. These may include:
 - *Learning to respond to simple instructions and directions*
 - *Story-based activities such as listening to and re-telling stories, recalling particular events in a story, asking questions, communicating the narrative through role-playing.*
 - *Language games, rhymes, songs, poems and jingles through which an awareness of sounds may be fostered.*
 - *Clapping and dancing to syllabic rhythms in order to further enhance the child's awareness of sounds.*

A Classroom Framework

- The teacher should adopt a collaborative, supportive and interactive role in facilitating these activities. The teacher will
 - *Encourage children to engage in conversations in a purposeful manner.*
 - *Ensure that the children's contributions are valued.*
 - *Act as facilitator and mentor, helping the children to be explicit in what they say through modelling responses, thinking aloud, questioning, prompting, clarifying and extending vocabulary.*
 - *Point out possible areas of meaning that the topic might embrace.*
 - *Help children to analyse and categorise these.*
 - *Provide appropriate vocabulary, sentence structures, phrases and descriptive language.*
 - *Create contexts with agreed rules for discussion in which contributions are listened to and valued.*
 - *Model different types of response.*

Talk and discussion in other areas of the Curriculum

- Many opportunities will arise for talk and discussion as part of the

learning process in other areas of the curriculum e.g. SPHE, Mathematics etc.

PLAY AND GAMES

As a learning medium play is crucial in the Junior Classes.

Factors affecting the content of play

- There are a number of factors that will affect the content of children's play and have an influence on the range of experiences they can derive from it.

Among these are:

- *Their experience to date and their framework of reference*
- *The competence with which they can use language to create play contexts*
- *Their ability to communicate ideas in play*
- *Their ability to sustain play and extend it.*

The role of the teacher in play

- It is important for the teacher to provide a wide variety of materials and contexts which will facilitate children's play in the infant classroom.
- Even though children will play spontaneously it is important that the teacher influence and direct it. The teacher can achieve this enrichment of language by
 - *Asking questions*
 - *Prompting new directions for the play*
 - *Suggesting possibilities*
 - *Initiating dialogue*
 - *Introducing a new child into the particular activity*
 - *Encouraging individual children to co-operate in play activity*
 - *Encouraging role-playing*
 - *Encouraging children to talk about what they are doing and to discuss it with other children.*

Learning activities in role-playing

- The children will be encouraged to involve themselves in role-playing, to talk about what they are doing and to discuss it with others. In this way a number of learning activities can be created, the most obvious of