

Unit 5 application practice examples

Shares by teachers on the Scots CPD programme

Unit 5:

Scots Language in Literature and Creative Writing

Quotes from your lessons and observations:



Previous attempts at creative writing in Scots have gone with mixed success; the children enjoyed the concept of it, but did not yet have the confidence to write 'freely', that is they didn't know where to start. Consequently, a more structured approach was taken this time, with more scaffolding, in the hope that it will lead to further creative writing opportunities. I chose to start with a familiar text (Fantastic Mr Fox) that has been translated into Scots (The Sleekit Mr Tod), although there was some confusion around the literal translation of 'Fantastic' with 'Sleekit'. Discussion ensued around the work *sleekit*, with one pupil recognising that it is a better word to describe a fox 'because Mr Fox is sneaky'. This lead nicely to the ideology that writing in Scots can help us to express ourselves more clearly, that writing in Scots allows us to 'write it as we say it'.

Reply posted from a peer:

I enjoyed reading your post and many of your points echoed with my own experience. I chose to base my writing around the novel Geordies Mingin Medicine. The Matthew Fitt translations of Roald Dahl classics are highly engaging and by choosing The Sleekit Mr Todd, the film adaptation would also be a great hook.

The discussion of the translation of and upgrading of the word 'Fantastic' to 'Sleekit' echoed my own experience of the translation of 'Marvellous' to 'Mingin'. I chose Geordies Mingin Medicine so that children could create their ingredients for their own Mingin medicine.

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Continued....



As this was not a book we had read in English, I chose to read the first three chapters as a lesson stimulus. This took some time, especially as Scots is not a language I hear spoken by our children or their families. It also meant that we regularly stopped to discuss the plot and discuss vocabulary which would be useful to us for our task. We also started by revisiting the languages tree. My writing lesson focused on combining adjectives to make descriptive recipe ingredients; quantities, colours and size. To do this we used a vocabulary list and used it to create cracking ingredients. As all pupils from P4 have iPads, and children with barriers to writing use voice to text (which translates into English), I chose to keep this lesson oral, and collaborative with children working in groups of three/four. The follow up to this lesson would be to add in/expand the use of Scots verbs and nouns, and then to write in the format of a recipe. This would then lead on nicely to persuasive writing, writing about the recipe itself.

Reply to the reply...

I would agree with you that the children need to build up their confidence. I have a P1-7 class and for my lesson I only worked with P1-3. My Primary 1 and Primary 2 children recorded their 'writing' using their iPads. The Primary 2 children did not feel confident to write sentences but they wrote the names of their animals in Scots. My Primary 3 child was a wee star and had a go at writing a sentence. 'The wee moosey wis eatin a bit o cheese.' This was totally independent so I was very proud of her. We are reading The Ejits by Roald Dahl as a whole P1-7 class and I intend to use this to do some writing with the older children.

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Quotes from your lessons and observations:



I have been working with P7 on a series of poetry lessons. We began by looking at 'fast poetry' and then started to turn our fast poems into more rhyming prose. The key to the success of creating poetry that rhymes is in using the 'key word > associated words > words that rhyme' concept.

For example: Key word: eyes. Associated words: lash, brow, blue, pupil

Words that rhyme: lash, clash, smash, bash, flash; brow, how, allow, now; blue, stew, you, two; pupil - this is a difficult word to rhyme, so we'd maybe use it in the middle of a line where it won't need a rhyming partner, or just not use it at all.

From this, we wrote rhyming couplets. Some were silly, some were very clever, but crucially, all rhymed. Once we had a pair of rhyming couplets, we had a 4 line verse. Eventually, over one or two separate lessons, the learners created three verses of poetry.

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Using this framework I addressed the idea of writing Scots rhyming poetry. Using a series of humorous faces on the smartboard as stimulus, I had the learners draw their own silly face on paper. Without realising, this drawing would be their plan for writing. I asked the learners to name the facial features, but in Scots.

"What's a Scots word meaning eye? Ears? Nose?" - 'een', 'lugs', 'neb', 'beak', 'snout' even (and so on).

Focusing on the nose, we then created a list of associated words in English (nostril, snot, smell) and turned these associated words into Scots - neb hole, snotters/bogies, whiff/sniff etc. (Sometimes it was difficult to find Scots words, but we persevered.)

The learners then created lists of words that rhymed with those associated Scots words; snotters, rotters, hotter, bought her; whiff, sniff, squiff, quiff, lift... ...and from this we started building rhyming couplets. eg. His neb wis fu' o' snotters, an' he wipet' them oan his daughters, he snortit an' he snift, he wipedt' thum oan his quiff. (silly stuff like that...but rhyming...and in Scots). The children struggled with creating a rhythm for their poems, something I'd need to work on another time. They also had difficulty coming up with enough Scots words that made their poem Scots rather than English with a smattering of local dialect. I showed them how turning eg 'wiped' into 'wipet' or 'them' into 'thum' made it sound more Scots when read back, and the learners became quite fond of Scotty-fying their English prose. There's definite scope for following up and expecting better results, but as a first attempt I was quite pleased with what was produced.