

Sequencing a scheme of work - Early Years

By Maria Craster

Once you have assessed the pupils' current level, any prior knowledge they have linked to the topic, their current skill set in both prime and specific areas that are linked to the scheme of work, understood where you want them to get to, the foundational knowledge to be obtained and progression of key skills, you can work out how best to get them there.

We know that pupils need many opportunities for daily and weekly retrieval, so this is key when sequencing a scheme of work. In addition to this, crucially for younger pupils, we also need to consider their attention span and think carefully about using every moment effectively and referring to material as frequently as possible throughout the day, not just during the core lessons, to help build up their schema.

When thinking about sequencing in English specifically, I think about first ensuring the key building block or central information for the given theme. In the context of this scheme of work, it was knowledge of the text. Once we had established "The Leopard's Drum" as our new story then it was easier to link everything else back to that e.g. our story is set in Ghana, let's find out some more information about that, in the story Name wears a patterned cloak I wonder if we can discover more about Ghanaian patterns? Having the story cemented first allows everything else to flow together a lot more and helps maintain the holistic element without it becoming too disjointed for the pupils.

Crucially, I think it's important to remember that you can't cover everything, especially when working in EYFS! As discussed earlier, one of my favourite things about the EYFS is how it is so unpredictable. I have always carefully designed my curriculum to cover the EYFS and introduce my pupils to a wide range of life experiences, however, sometimes a tooth falls out in the middle of your lesson and it's okay to stop the lesson and use their enthusiasm to introduce letter writing and compose a note to the Tooth Fairy altogether instead! I find that I often see the best learning happen during their play and it is the job of a skilled practitioner to take the key learning to them by sometimes ignoring planning and following the children's interests.