

Evaluation of the 'Creative Writing through the Arts' (CWttA) programme for Early Career Teachers

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Who is involved?

- Royal Opera House Bridge (funded by Arts Council England) arranging specialist training and the opportunity to work alongside cultural providers to develop music, drama and visual art activities that support the new National Curriculum, with a particular focus on writing
- 18 early career primary school teachers, from 13 schools, supported by Billericay Teaching Schools Alliance, Billericay Educational Consortium and Billericay Community Trust
- Anglia Ruskin University, Department of Education, Chelmsford.



Aims of the CWttA project:

- Develop children's creative writing skills
- Provide structured support for early career teachers to lead action research on an area of learning for their school
- Build the case and articulate the value of creative learning in schools
- Raise schools' awareness of the value of working in partnership with the cultural sector to develop both curriculum and pedagogy

September 2014-July 2015

Anglia Ruskin University is evaluating the CWttA project

- To support the teachers to reflect on the value of the programme through undertaking action research
- To evaluate the project and the extent to which the four stated aims of the project are met

Teacher action research evaluations

Support includes:

An educational action research day led by Dr P Luff and Dr G Davis. To plan the projects, generate research questions, identify baseline data and evidence sources. The teachers have three project cycles, one each term, with the opportunity to engage with a different type of cultural activity for each of the cycles. To evaluate the project and the extent to which the four stated aims of the project are met

Action research twilight sessions, each term, to support reflections on progress, analysis of evidence and sharing of ideas. The final twilight session will include an overall evaluation and preparation for a summative celebratory event.

Evaluation

A range of data is being collected for use in evaluating the CWttA project. This data includes: school self-evaluation forms at the start and end of the project; initial and final questionnaires to ECTs; notes of school visits from the cultural providers; teacher blog posts reporting the action research (three per term); plus participant observation notes from twilight sessions and the summative event.

Initial feedback suggests:

Teachers are inspired by the opportunities for creative engagement, are already developing confidence and using music in different ways to support development of writing;

Children display enjoyment of the activities, they appear to be more engaged in lessons used to support development of writing, and demonstrate being 'inspired', with generation of a greater range of ideas, evidence of imagination, and use of wider, richer vocabulary;

Schools are benefitting through shared planning across year groups and key stages and staff are developing confidence in using and integrating music within learning and teaching.

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