

What is Drawing Club?

Drawing Club is the approach we use in Reception in St Anthony's to teach English. 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, early writing, vocabulary, maths and most importantly, imagination and excitement!

How do we teach it?

At the beginning of each week, we use a new quality text to grab the interest of the children. 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. The texts we use will link to our topic whenever appropriate. We learn at least 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.

Each Monday, 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, do something funny...the ideas are endless!

On Tuesday, 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 Wednesday we go on an imaginary adventure, changing parts of the story - anything can happen when the magic is added! These adventures also continue on Thursday and Friday and are based on an 'I wonder' type of sentence.

How does Drawing Club link to writing?

Children are encouraged to write in Drawing Club from the very start. This could be in the form of writing an initial sound to begin with and develop into writing cvc words and eventually a sentence. Children might write the sound they are learning that day, a word, a caption or full sentences - whatever we feel they need to reinforce. 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.