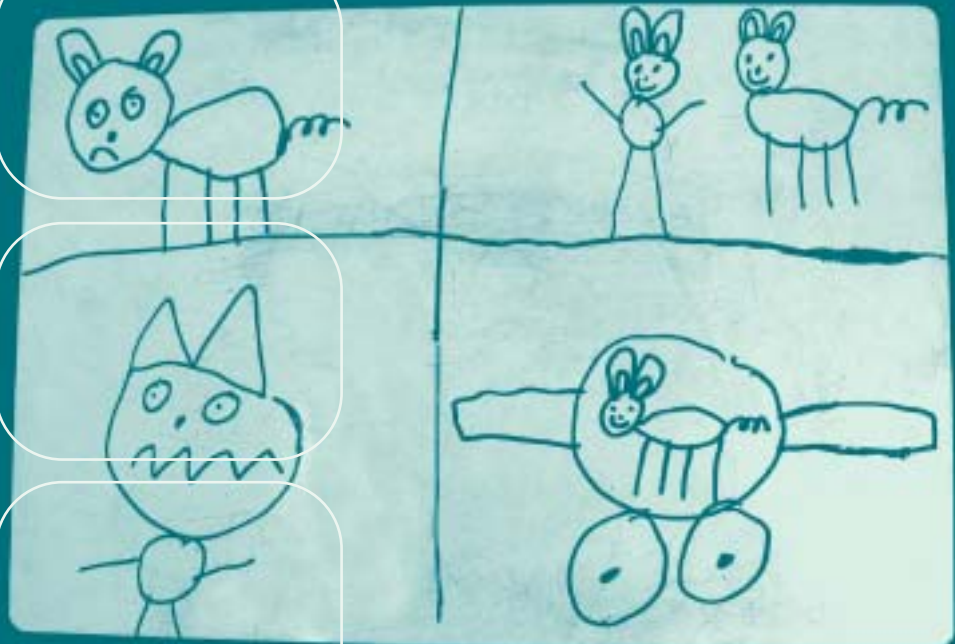


Moving Literacy On

Evaluation of the BFI Lead Practitioner Scheme
for moving image media literacy



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January 2008



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UKLA

Executive Summary

CONTEXT

The BFI scheme was developed in order to establish 'lead practitioners'¹ for moving image media literacy, eventually in all Local Authorities (LAs) in England. A pilot was run in February 2004 for 10 LAs. Thirty-five LAs were subsequently involved in the first cohort of the scheme, beginning in October, 2005. A further 16 LAs then became involved in the scheme. The BFI are also involved with an additional 9 Local Authorities in relation to work on their materials for schools, thereby bringing the total of LAs involved in work on moving image education with the BFI to 70 in total, i.e. almost half of all authorities in England. For the purposes of this evaluation, however, the number of LAs involved was 35, constituting those authorities involved in the scheme in October 2005. The lead practitioners in these authorities were trained by the BFI and costs met by LAs. This evaluation was undertaken in order to evaluate the first two years of the scheme, from October 2005 - August 2007.

In October 2006, an Interim Evaluation of this scheme was produced. This final evaluation report draws from the Interim Evaluation and has been updated with data from the second year of the project.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

The BFI had five key objectives for the scheme:

- Build an infrastructure at local authority level that will help to ensure the long term sustainability of moving image media education from Early Years through to KS3.
- Develop a cohort of lead practitioners who are confident in designing and disseminating curricula, resources, and training for other practitioners.
- Identify and explore specific learning outcomes and pedagogies related to moving image work in classrooms across Early Years and KS 1-3.
- Explore ways of integrating moving image media education into mainstream literacy practice.
- Develop ways of integrating the three sometimes separate dimensions of moving image media education (that is the creative, the critical, and the cultural).

¹ The BFI defined all LA participants in the project as 'lead practitioners', regardless of their role. However, in this report, we distinguish between advisers, literacy consultants and lead practitioners, who were classroom teachers.

ACHIEVEMENT OF BFI OBJECTIVES

Excellent progress was made in relation to all of the stated objectives across the authorities who contributed to the evaluation process. In this section, the extent of the progress made against each objective will be outlined.

Objective 1:

Build a local infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability of moving image media education from Early Years through to KS3

In all participating authorities, a local infrastructure has been put into place in order to achieve this objective. All LAs developed action plans which outlined the nature and scope of this infrastructure. In some authorities, developments were focused on specific key stages, rather than including Foundation Stage to Key Stage 3. These infrastructures should ensure long-term sustainability of moving image media education in LAs. The majority of authorities approached the development of these infrastructures as an incremental task, in that they developed small pockets of excellence that were then subsequently drawn upon to expand the work. In addition, in most authorities there was also a large-scale, 'light-touch' approach, which involved the promotion of moving image media education and related resources at LA meetings for schools, lead practitioners and subject co-ordinators.

Objective 2:

Develop a cohort of lead practitioners to design and disseminate curricula, resources and training.

In the majority of authorities, lead practitioners were involved in the scheme. Where they have not been, literacy and English advisers and consultants designed and disseminated curricula, resources and training. In many authorities, a wider cohort of lead practitioners was progressively introduced to the work. The BFI were able to draw on this enhanced capacity and involve more individuals in the production of further materials for schools.

Objective 3:

Explore specific learning outcomes and pedagogies related to moving image work in settings and classrooms across Early Years to KS 1-3.

Across the LAs, a range of innovative work was undertaken in relation to this objective. There is still some work to be done in developing a stage model in order to ensure that children do not repeat similar

activities across different year groups. This is not to suggest that a narrow developmental model should be established; children do not progress in moving image media education in a linear fashion and need opportunities to experience a spiral curriculum.

However, because work in this area is in an emergent phase, there is some danger of developing inappropriate and/or repetitive practice. Nevertheless, across the LAs, a wide range of innovative and exciting work has taken place.

Objective 4:

Explore ways of integrating moving image media education into mainstream literacy practice.

The introduction of the renewed primary literacy framework during the life of this project, in which work on moving image texts is embedded, means that this objective has been achieved across all authorities. The majority of the moving image media education work that occurred took place in literacy lessons. Involvement in the BFI project meant that LAs were well-placed to implement the changes introduced in the renewed framework.

However, there is still further work to be done in order to clarify the distinctions between moving image media education and literacy education. They have overlapping, but distinct, concerns. The distinction to be drawn is between film as a vehicle for developing literacy and literacy as a means of understanding film or film as a type of text in its own right. In the absence of a specific media education subject strand at Key Stages 1 - 3, the literacy/ English curriculum is the most appropriate place for focused work on moving image, given that it should be concerned with multimodal texts. However, moving image work can also take place across the curriculum. Some authorities did begin to develop cross-curricular approaches.

Objective 5:

Develop ways of integrating the creative, the critical and the cultural dimension of moving image media education.

LAs have focused in the main on analysis of moving image texts, thus have placed emphasis on the 'critical' element of these three 'C's. There could be more attention paid to broadening the cultural dimension by extending the range of texts used. In addition, in some LAs there was an emphasis on film making, which had a beneficial effect on literacy and other learning, but this attention to the creative dimension of moving image media education was not significant in all LAs.

KEY SUCCESSES²

The scheme has enjoyed a number of successes, outlined below:

Extensive range and high quality of activities undertaken in relation to moving image media education: across the LAs, some highly innovative and creative work was undertaken in relation to moving image media education.

Number of schools and practitioners targeted: the scheme has had a significant impact on the capacity of LAs to initiate and develop work on moving image media education.

Impact on teachers: the work has made an important contribution to teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in relation to moving image media education.

Impact on pupils' learning: pupils involved in the scheme have shown significant improvements in motivation, engagement and attainment.

Opportunity offered to engage with debates about literacy, moving image education, multimodality: the scheme has enabled practitioners to explore issues relating to the nature of literacy in a new media age and to engage in work which will significantly inform the development of educational practice in relation to moving image media education.

KEY CHALLENGES

There have been a number of key challenges, outlined below:

Limited funding: lack of central government funding for this work means that the developments that have taken place have done so primarily because of the motivation and commitment of individuals within the BFI and participating LAs.

Time and resources constraints for LAs: because LAs generally operated projects on fairly limited funding, the constraints of time and resources served to impede more rapid progress.

² See Section 5 for fuller analysis.

Executive Summary

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Curriculum constraints: the work that was undertaken in schools was generally located within the literacy/ English curriculum. Whilst this has ensured that wider definitions of texts and literacy have permeated practice, it does not resolve the tensions inherent in work that crosses subject boundaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for future developments are made in relation to research, policy and practice.

Research

- There needs to be a research project developed that is focused on continuity and progression in moving image education, linked to the primary and secondary literacy strategies. There was evidence of lack of attention to issues of continuity and progression across authorities and a number of authorities identified this as a future need. This work could include the development of assessment criteria appropriate for moving image analysis and production.
- Whilst there are data that provide evidence of the impact of work on moving image media education on attainment and achievement in a range of areas, further research is needed on the long-term impact of this work. There is a need, therefore, for longitudinal studies that can explore this ground in addition to experimental studies, which can offer additional insights into the value of work on moving image media.
- The BFI should seek funding for the collection of systematic data on the impact of the scheme in those authorities that have not been involved in this evaluation. It could include in this study any follow-up data collected in the authorities that have participated in this evaluation.

Policy

- Given the changing nature of communication and literacy in a new media age, national policy needs to focus on ensuring that all schools are able to take forward work on moving image media education. There is currently a range of national activity focused on digital media literacy, involving Ofcom and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It is important that the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has a central role in these developments in order that work

such as that developed in this project can be taken forward.

- The BFI should seek funding from the DCSF for an extension of this scheme. Given its successes, despite limited funding, it is clear that a properly-funded extension of the scheme would have a significant impact on moving image media education from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 3 in England. The development of such a scheme would contribute to raising attainment in literacy, given the findings in some LAs in this scheme and the outcomes of previous research that work on moving image media can improve attainment in reading, writing and speaking and listening³. Funding should include the costs of an evaluation of the scheme.
- It is important that pre-service teachers are given appropriate training in moving image media education and a national baseline survey of current provision should be undertaken in order to identify future needs.
- There needs to be further national training offered for advisers and lead practitioners on moving image education in order that they can continue to lead practice in their authorities.

Practice

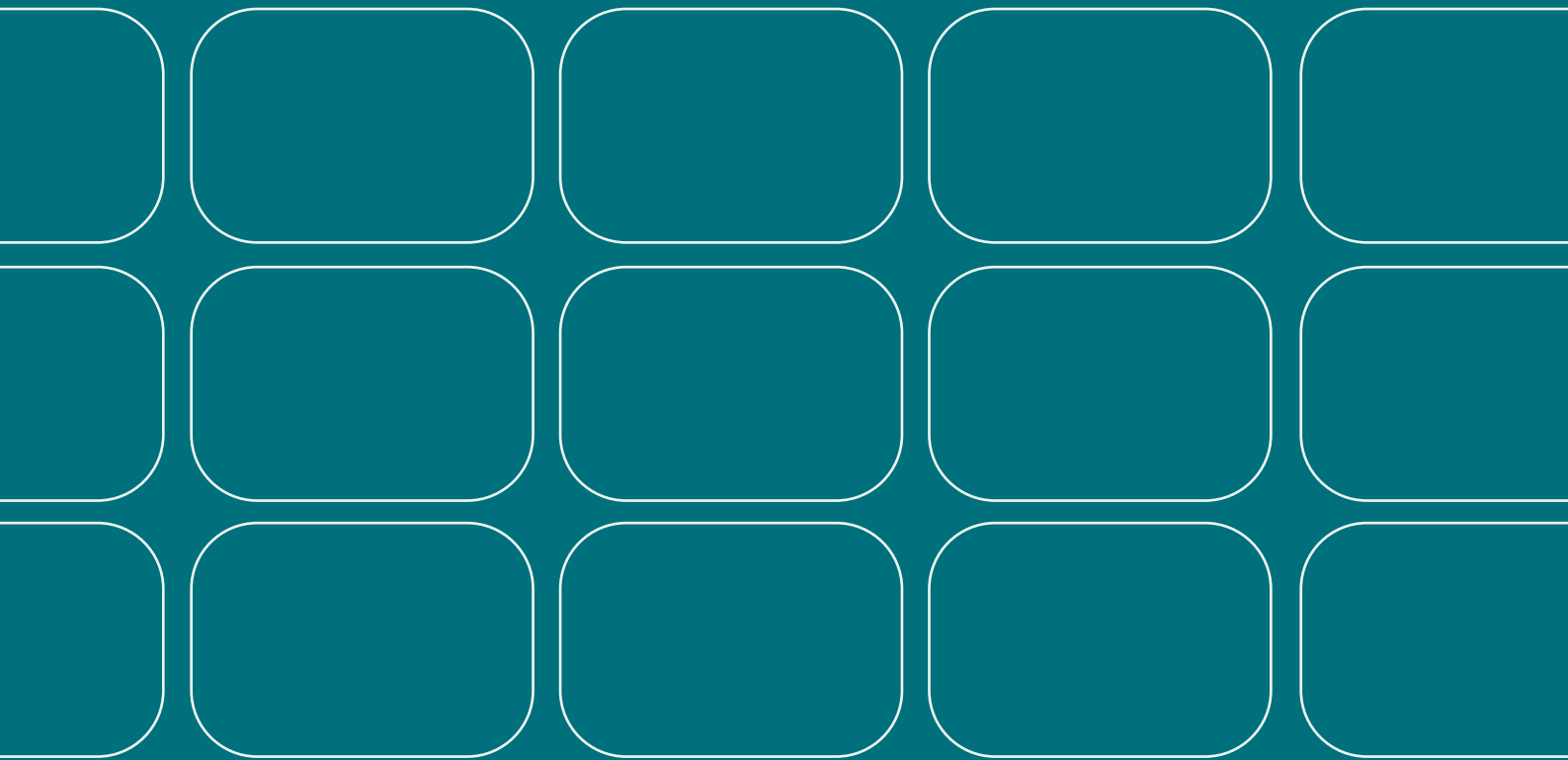
- In any future schemes, the 'Criteria for the Evaluation of Local Authorities' Action Plans' and 'Best practice in Case Study Local Authorities' could be circulated to potential participants in order to inform their action planning.
- Authorities involved in any future extension of this scheme should be encouraged to create their project teams before the completion of the action plan. The constitution of these teams will vary according to the needs of authorities, but could include ICT specialists in addition to literacy and English advisers, consultants and lead practitioners, given the noted strengths of work in authorities in which this structure has been in place.
- Authorities involved in any future extension of this scheme should be encouraged to ensure that they have clear criteria for assessing the impact of the scheme, including both quantitative and qualitative data. Contracts between the BFI and participating LAs could include a requirement to supply measures of impact at various intervals throughout the scheme.
- Clearer guidance could be given to LAs in relation to the relationship between moving image media education and literacy education.

- Perhaps inevitably, given that this project was led by the BFI, the key focus of this project has been on film. However, there are other forms of moving image media (e.g. computer games) that should be incorporated into future projects.
- Schools could extend their work on moving image education by the use of Web 2.0 social software sites which would allow wide dissemination of children's films and enable peers to comment on them e.g. through the use of blogging sites.
- Future BFI moving image media education workshops could offer more time to discuss the definitions and the differences between literacy and moving image media education across the key stages.
- Authorities have focused in the main on the development of critical approaches to moving image media education. In future developments of this work, there could be more focused attention paid to the cultural and creative dimensions of moving image media education. It would be useful to develop the capacity of schools to work on the production of moving image texts.
- Authorities should extend the work undertaken to include more Foundation Stage classes and special schools.
- LAs need to ensure that they further develop ways of benchmarking and evaluating the impact of work on moving image media education at an individual, class and whole-school level.
- LAs should ensure that all lead practitioners trained by the BFI extend their work beyond their own individual schools if capacity building is to be sustained.
- LAs should ensure that the headteachers of schools of all lead practitioners are clear about the commitment required in order to fulfil the action plan and that this commitment has been agreed before involving the lead practitioner.
- LAs could focus more on involving parents and carers in their work on moving image media education.

CONCLUSION

This evaluation suggests that the *BFI Lead Practitioner Scheme for Moving Image Media Education* has been highly successful in making progress towards its objectives. There has been some outstanding work conducted in LAs, work which is at the leading edge of moving image media education in an international context. Some LAs have reported the strong impact of the scheme on pupils' achievement and teachers' subject knowledge. These authorities have been able to meet the challenges of the renewed literacy framework in a confident and creative manner and developed a significant body of lead practitioners who can take this work forward. This level of success is particularly remarkable given the limited resources the BFI had available to allocate to the scheme.

³ Research indicates that work on moving image media can raise attainment in aspects of writing including composition and effect, text structure and organisation and sentence structure and punctuation (PNS/UKLA, 2004). Work on moving image texts can also enhance inferential reading skills (Oldbam, 1999), understanding of narrative (Parker, 1999) and raise motivation for reading (Marsh et al., 2005), in addition to impacting positively on speaking and listening skills (Marsh et al., 2005).



ISBN 978 1 897638 43 9

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