

QCA – An exploration of the use of Mantle of The Expert to explore the Year 6 National Tests (SATs)

Context:

For their second Mantle, 26 Year Six children worked as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and were commissioned to provide advice and feedback to teachers and Headteachers on improving children's achievement in maths statutory tests. The children used their own maths mock papers (anonymous) as the basis for their discussions and advice. The mantle ran over about three weeks, with typically two whole afternoon sessions spent each week (around 8 hours work).

Learning Intentions:

To familiarise the children with the layout and question types found in the maths National Tests.

For children to identify areas for development in maths, across the whole class.

For children to take ownership of the assessment process, and to understand what was being sought by the tests.

To demystify the National Tests.

Introduction:

The children had been asking for a couple of weeks when the next mantle would begin and so they when we sat down as a class to introduce the new scenario they were already eager to contribute. I talked about their forthcoming National Tests (SATs) and how they were feeling about them. Most children expressed worry or nerves, mostly based on parental concerns or hearing from older siblings and friends. I explained that the people who set the tests were called the QCA, and what this stood for, and briefly explained the process of setting and marking the tests.

I suggested that the children might like to look at their recent mock papers as if they were examiners for the QCA; the children responded enthusiastically as they realised that this was why they had been allocated a code number to write on their mock papers not their name. Several children started to draw out the themes of confidentiality and in particular not trying to identify who had completed which paper, but instead the need to work as if the papers did not belong to them.

The children were eager to start signposting the classroom, so after a brief discussion they began work on the creation of the name badges and signs that they felt would become part of the office. Previously, a child had brought in a cdrom of photos from his mum's office, so we displayed a montage of these on the IWB. In the previous mantle children had found that 'meeting in progress' signs were an effective way of telling others outside the class when the space was being used in role, so these were also elements the children wanted in place before they started work in role. Discussion took place as to what use could be made of the whiteboard, and it was agreed in collaboration with the teacher that half should be permanently set aside for the QCA, and half left clear for other curriculum use.

Moving into role:

The class had adopted the technique in the previous mantle of starting the day outside the classroom, and entering upon a given signal through all the available doors, greeting each other as colleagues. This initial interaction served to focus the children into role, and gave them the chance to adopt adult speech patterns and focus on behaving 'as if' they are adults in the office. Typical conversations included questions about the journey in, the health of colleagues' children, and what social activities had taken place the night before.

Working in Role:

Some children found a letter, pre-prepared by the teacher, asking the QCA to provide feedback to a Headteacher on the quality of their children's answers and overall areas of strength and weakness, alongside ideas to improve the teaching of maths in their school.

Consensus was quickly reached that the work was best done in teams, so all the papers could be analysed. The children moved into examination 'teams' and the secretary (Teacher-in-role) distributed piles of completed and marked Paper A (non-calculator) tests to each team. The children devised recording methods so that over the course of the sessions an overview was built up of what questions had and hadn't been answered, and common misconceptions. Although the tests had been marked previously by the class teacher, children in role queried some of the marking, and the teacher-in-role as company secretary helped them to find and understand the markscheme for the test in question. The class quickly built up an understanding of what constituted 'allowable' answers, and interesting discussions took place as to why marks had or hadn't been awarded for various questions.

The class through trial and error decided that tally marks were the most effective way of recording which questions had been answered correctly, and the large whiteboard was used for teams to record their group findings. It was quite a challenging exercise in terms of handling large volumes of data, and methods were refined over the course of the sessions. Children learnt about the importance of accuracy in recording.

Once the analysis of the papers had been completed (a teacher decision was taken to only look at paper A), the teams moved back into one group, to re-look at what their client, the Headteacher, had asked them to produce. Separate to the mantle, the class had been working on creating their own revision website (wiki) so the process of analysing their own learning (metacognition) was not entirely unfamiliar to them. The children worked to look at the areas where the whole class had scored less well, and at the type of questions that had gone wrong for the group as a whole. Through this process, they prepared a report (one report from each team) which identified an area of weakness and suggested an alternate method for answering the question or others like it.

The dramatic tension for the project came from letters and phone calls from the client asking about the progress, or commenting on early drafts of the reports, challenging the feasibility or clarity of the suggestions provided. There was also a natural impetus from the children as they knew that it was their own work and understanding that they were improving.

Although the work came to a natural conclusion, the children continued to make reference to their findings during their daily maths lessons. I also noticed a greater sense of ownership over the papers, with children appearing more confident in handling and annotating their papers than in previous years. To impact on test scores, I would have started the mantle earlier in the year, so that children could move in and out of role throughout their year six maths learning, looking at their learning from the point of view of question-setters as well as question-answerers. However, the stated learning intentions did not include trying to improve scores through use of the mantle, but instead worked towards improving the children's sense of ownership over the assessment process -doing things 'with' children rather than 'to' them.



DT

- to generate ideas for products thinking about who will use them and what they will be used for
 - communicate design ideas in different way, thinking about product use and aesthetic qualities
 - follow safe procedures for food safety and hygiene (conference food)
 - follow make design and evaluate process
 - how materials can be combined and mixed to create more useful properties
- See QCA make an instrument module

Making musical instruments

Literacy - Persuasive Writing

- vary writing to suit reader
- identify use & effect of specialist vocab
- identify words associated with persuasion, -argument and reason
- write in and letter form
- text types include newspapers and magazines
- choose form and content for appropriate purpose
- use language and style appropriate to the reader
- use the plan/ draft/review model

Write persuasive posters to attract audience
Respond to concerns of wildlife group by letter / discussion

Science

- make systematic observations & measurements inc ICT for datalogging
- sounds are made when objects vibrate
- how to change the pitch & loudness of sounds
- vibrations require a medium through which to travel to the ear

Investigate how far sound travels using a data logger (noise pollution aspect)

Concert Productions

PSHE

- talk and write about own opinions and explain views
- face new challenges positively by collecting info, looking for help, making responsible choices and taking action
- resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and making choices
- recognise the role of voluntary, community and pressure groups
- explore how the media present information

Planning and execution of project as a team

ICT

- See QCA datahandling module
- Data handling linked with numeracy

Geography

- identify and explain views that people hold about topical geographical issues
 - communicate in ways appropriate to the task and audience
 - to draw plans and maps in a variety of scales
 - identify how and why places change, and how they may change in the future
 - recognise how people can improve the environment or damage it
 - recognise how and why people may seek to manage environments sustainably
 - to identify opportunities for own involvement
- See QCA making the news module

Music

To rehearse and play musical instruments made in DT

Playing instruments for concert

Looking at environmental impact of concert

Numeracy

- Select and use handling data skills when solving problems
- interpret tables, lists and charts in everyday life
- represent and interpret discrete data
- mode and range
- using maths in work in other subjects
- explore and use a variety of materials

Data handling for budgets, revenue etc for concert

Key skills:
Use all four operations when solving problems
Carry out column addition and subtraction for intergers up to 10000

Farafield Tour Operator – Mantle of the Expert Project, September 2007, KS2, Millfield Primary School, Cambridgeshire, Caroline Stamp-Dod

Premise:

“Farafield Tours research and market holiday tours, with a focus on the family market. We work mainly in Europe, and have a specialism in cultural tours.”

We need to establish:

- What countries we have expertise in/knowledge about.
- How we market our tours to our clients.
- How our clients can contact us.

Next establish the mantle of expertise:

Talk through the details of the company, share name, look at staff notice board. *A key stage meeting in the hall, followed by class session introducing the premise and deciding what a tour operator is, what they would need to know about, and making & placing items around the room which reflect the imagined company office (eg change table layout, ‘meeting in progress signs’, travel brochures). See paragraphs below for further content.*

Task:

Sign the office appropriately

- Mantle ‘earned’ by learning what the tasks of the organisation and team are
- Perform tasks through dramatic action.

Key elements of the scenario are:

- We have very responsible jobs. We are responsible for our clients’ safety and enjoyment, and they pay a lot of money to travel with us.
- We have to be profitable as a company.
- We need to collate and process information from a wide variety of sources.

Establish the following:

- The name of the company
- The agency’s HQ
- The agency’s branches in other towns (other classrooms)
- Travel related equipment needed
- Office layout
- Office software/computers

Establish history of the Agency:

- Design the logo, which has to reflect the aims and image of the company.

Task:

To design and present a logo for the business, with accompanying explanation of how it meets the aims and image of the company. Logos are presented at a board of directors meeting (one per class), where they are discussed and the group decide on and take ownership of the core values of the business. Probably two sessions – design and meeting Focus on creating a group vision of the agency. Focus on handing the power to the children – perhaps using teacher in role as a new member of staff who can question about the company & how it works, without providing any answers.

Situation 1:

Using dramatic action, colleagues come into the office and find a client brief form. Perhaps teacher in role as new colleague took the phone message but doesn't know what to do next, or client (teaching assistant) could call the office using the school internal phone system. It is a last minute booking, and the family want to fly out next week.

Task:

To investigate destinations and match against the client brief. Y3/4 guided research using pre-prepared client sheet, looking for closest country match. Y5/6 open research to compare destinations and provide client with alternative itineraries and a recommendation. All to consider travel safety 3 – 4 sessions including work in ICT suite.

**Outcomes: Leaflet or brochure on destination
Country database for later use
Letter to client
Travel safety guidance**

Geography 3a to identify and describe what places are like, 3b the location of places they study, 3c to describe where places are, 3f to describe and explain how and why places are similar to and different from other places in the same country and elsewhere in the world

Art 1a explore ideas for different purposes

Literacy 6a how standard written English varies in degrees of formality

Y5/6 Numeracy measuring – read timetables using 24 hour clock notation, use a calendar to calculate time intervals

PSHE staying safe modules

ECM stay safe

Situation 2:

Client enquiry received... they know which country they wish to visit but are unsure whether to stay in a city or a village. (alternately client complaint letter received as wrong itinerary sent).

Task:

To compare and contrast village and city life within one country 2 or more sessions each of music and dance, 4 sessions of information gathering and presenting, one session of sharing to another class in role as clients.

**Outcomes: Video presentation or drama or powerpoint promoting village or city holiday
Jingle / company song for promotional video
Dance to accompany jingle, to be used at holiday clubs**

Geography 3f to describe and explain how and why places are similar to and different from other places in the same country and elsewhere in the world

ICT, 1b gathering information and verifying sources, 3b to be sensitive to the needs of the audience and think carefully about the content and quality when communicating information)

Music 2a improvise, developing rhythmic and melodic material when performing, 2b explore, choose, combine and organise musical ideas within musical structures

PE Dance 6a create and perform dances using a variety of movement patterns, 6b respond to a range of stimuli and accompaniment

ECM – Be healthy

Situation 3:

An opportunity arises to buy land at a preferential rate to develop as a leisure complex. The council have strict guidelines (see sheet to be provided) on land use and development, a key criteria of which is a balance of accommodation for all budgets. *Work expected to carry over into second half term*

Task:

To create a proposal for development of the land, taking into account profitability of development

Outcomes: large scale model village (land divided into four zones, each branch developing one, children identified as g&t in design and communication meet to co-ordinate the areas.

Artists impressions of the development

CAD site layout

Letters/emails/phone calls to and from the council planning department

DT - full programme of study

Art 2c use a variety of methods to communicate observations, ideas and feeling, and to design and make artefacts, 5b working on their own and with others, on projects in two and three dimensions and on different scales

ICT 3a how to share and exchange information in a variety of forms

Numeracy nets, scale, ratio, 3d shape, area and perimeter, costings

Literacy formal letters, emails, persuasive writing, advertising

ECM – achieve economic well-being

ECM overarching in project: Enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution.

**Wild Willow Concert Productions – Mantle of the Expert Project, February 2006 Year 4/5
Millfield Primary School, Cambridgeshire, Scott Horsley and Caroline Stamp-Dod**

Premise:

“WWCP are planning a pop concert to take place in Welney, aimed at local 16-25 year olds”

We need to establish:

- What the content of the concert will be / local bands
- Where the concert will take place
- What equipment would be needed
- How to promote this to local young people

Next establish the mantle of expertise:

Talk through the details of the company, share name and logo, look at staff notice board.

Task:

Sign the office appropriately

Decide on how office is to be laid out and what would this company's office look like. Move furniture to create the room. Set as homework the task of creating items (signs etc) for the office.

- Mantle 'earned' by learning what the of tasks of the organisation and team are
- Perform tasks through dramatic action.

Key elements of the scenario are:

- We have very responsible jobs. We are responsible the financial success of the company. We do not want to lose money but to maximise profit.
- We have to respond quickly to challenges, but with the right decision.
- We need to collate and process information from a wide variety of sources.

Establish the following:

- The name of the agency
- The agency's HQ
- Health & Safety regs
- History of company, previous concerts
- Relationship with clients
- Concert related equipment needed
- Office layout
- Office software/computers

Establish history of the Agency:

- Use dramatic action to build the company's beginnings with a pop star's ambition.

Task:

To imagine and role play the initial meeting where the company was formed. Perhaps based on a one hit wonder's attempt to stay in the industry.

- 1) talk through ideas for how the company was formed, use children's input to build a cohesive consensus of the initial history.
- 2) Explain that everyone will work in role to re-enact the formative event
- 3) Work in role to show and explore the company's founding event.

Situation 1:

Interrupt meeting about Cambridge concert with news that venue has burnt down. Team need to rebook everything for the 2nd choice venue which is in Welney. Only 4 weeks to get new audience and to reschedule acts etc.

Task:

To book Welney as a venue and to locate on map, looking at venue access.

(geography & literacy)

Task: to draw scale maps of venue including seating, stage plan and access. (geography)

Task: to budget for the concert (discussion out of role), taking into account accommodating previous ticket holders, new costs of equipment (adec) hire etc (numeracy, data handling, column addition and subtraction)

Task: to promote the concert at the new venue & to make instruments (out of role) (literacy, DT)

Situation 2:

Welney residents have written to a newspaper complaining about the noise pollution from the concert and the effect on the local wildlife

Task:

To investigate sound travels and ways to minimise noise pollution (Science)

Task:

To prepare a plan of action to ensure the concert goes ahead (science – noise minimisation, PSHE – making choices and resolving decisions, geog – recognise how people can improve the environment or damage it, DT – make refreshments for meeting)

- letter writing to residents, holding a residents' meeting, explore similar concerts and problems (on line)

Situation 3:

Run the concert, using the children's musical instruments.

Task:

To rehearse and play instruments for the concert (music)

Task:

To measure the noise produced by the concert (science)

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Mountain Mammal Foundation – Mantle of the Expert Project, January 2006 Year 6, Millfield Primary School, Cambridgeshire, Caroline Stamp-Dod

Premise:

“The Scottish wildlife Trust <http://www.swt.org.uk/> want to introduce mammals from other mountain habitats to the Cairngorms. They employ MMF to investigate which mammals would be suitable.”

We need to establish:

- What other mountainous areas would host suitable mammals (compare habitat, weather)
- What the mammals would need to thrive (do the Cairngorms provide it)
- What would be the effect on the current wildlife (use of food webs)

Next establish the mantle of expertise:

Talk through the details of the company, share name and logo, look at staff notice board.

Task:

Sign the office appropriately

- Mantle ‘earned’ by learning what the of tasks of the organisation and team are
- Perform tasks through dramatic action.

Key elements of the scenario are:

- We have very responsible jobs. We are responsible for the welfare of wild animals and changes we make can impact on them and the local environment.
- We have to respond quickly to challenges, but with the right decision.
- We need to collate and process information from a wide variety of sources.

Establish the following:

- The name of the agency
- The agency’s HQ
- The agency’s offices in other countries
- Animal related equipment needed
- Office layout
- Office software/computers

Establish history of the Agency:

- Use dramatic action to build the agency’s beginnings with the founders’ dreams.

Task:

To imagine and role play the initial meeting where the agency was formed. Perhaps based on a critical incident for wildlife.

Situation 1:

Interrupt meeting with message from office in _____ mountain area. They have a _____ which needs urgent re-homing due to local trouble. Is the Cairngorms a suitable new habitat? We have been given the job of investigating the possibility of rehoming X. You have ____ hours to make a decision, using the information packs, internet and staff noticeboard.

Task:

To investigate the animal, its previous habitat and make a recommendation as to whether rehoming to Scotland would be in the best interests of the animal and of the habitat. (geography mountainous regions; science habitats, living processes)

Task: to arrange for transportation of the animal to Scotland (numeracy, time zones, distance, 2-step calculations)

Situation 2:

SWT require a shortlist of 3 mammals to propose for introduction into the Cairngorms mountain range.

Task:

To investigate different mountain animals, creating a factfile on current habitat, characteristics and survival needs. (geography mountainous regions; science habitats, living processes; ICT, gathering information and verifying sources)

Task:

To debate as a team the proposed animals and decide on a shortlist of 3, taking into account the effects on the local habitat esp on possible predators and prey (science, food webs and chains, habitats; Literacy – argument and persuasion S&L, ICT; gathering information and verifying sources)

Situation 3:

Receive a letter from the local council informing agency of a proposed tourism development on their patch.

Task:

To investigate the proposals, defining the key arguments and their impact on the local environment. (geography, the impact of tourism; Literacy – argument and persuasion how arguments are composed)

Task:

To organise a meeting with local councillors to express their concerns – as a result councillors (TiR) challenge group to come up with an alternate proposal which combines the need to extend tourism in the area (raising local economy) and to protect the local habitat. (geography, the impact of tourism; Literacy – argument and persuasion how arguments are composed, writing persuasive letters)

Situation 4:

Plan for the implementation of a new enterprise which combines the needs of wildlife and the local tourist economy.

Task:

To draw maps, plans and proposals for the new enterprise, taking into account the needs of visitors, the target audience and locals as well as the wildlife. (Science, keeping warm – clothing; DT, making shelters; Literacy, producing promotional materials; Geography, tourism; ICT, creating resources)