Traction Man is Here by Mini Grey

This witty story is certain to catch the attention of all the children in your classroom. It is written in exactly the way that boys (mostly) play with their action figures and the narrative voice captures that of a boy creating the adventures of his treasured toy: Traction Man. This is a humorous and hugely enjoyable book, teeming with action and detail.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence
- To explore, interpret and respond to a picture book
- To explore characters and draw inferences to aid our understanding of them
- To explore narrative plots and characters through role-play and play
- To broaden understanding and use of appropriate vocabulary
- To write character descriptions
- To write a short narrative episode

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 1 or Year 2 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.
This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread out over 15 sessions. The book supports teachers to teach about character development, familiar settings and plot in adventure fiction. The images and text are carefully crafted and the characters and settings are well drawn and fun, offering young readers a good model for their own story planning and writing.

National Curriculum 2014 Links

Reading: (Word reading / Comprehension)
- Increase familiarity with a range of books;
- Explain and discuss understanding of books;
- Discuss the sequence of events in books;
- Answer and ask questions;
- Predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read;
- Draw inferences on the basis of what is being said and done;
- Express views and opinions about reading.

Writing: (Transcription / Composition)
- Draft and write by composing and rehearsing sentences orally;
- Sequence sentences to form short narratives;
- In narrative create settings, characters and plot;
- Write for different purposes including about fictional personal experiences and fictional narratives;
- Re-read writing to check it makes sense and make simple revisions.

Speaking and Listening:
- Participate in discussion about what is read, taking turns and listening to what others say;
- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and peers;
- Articulate and justify answers and opinions;
- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English;
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas in discussion, role-play and drama.

Cross Curricular Links
Develop the classroom environment (reading and writing areas) linked to a toys or superheroes theme. Make available a range of related stories, information, comics, artefacts and appropriate websites and recreate the role-play area as the little boy's den or bedroom. Within the writing area, provide prompts and writing materials to encourage independent and imaginative responses for example: drawing materials to make sketches of favourite superheroes or superhero adventures; pads to make lists of equipment needed by Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush; labels to create incredible names for ordinary items; blank comic strips. This area could include digital sound recorders for children to record observations and respond to characters and events in the story etc. Create small world play opportunities in the classroom; provide everyday objects to become villains, victims and heroes in imaginary Traction Man adventures and props for each of Traction Man's adventures: the defeat of the evil pillows, the kitchen sink drama, the garden dollies etc. to encourage oral story making and retelling.

Author website: http://minigrey.com/

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Art and design
KS1 subject content: to use a range of materials creatively to design and make products; to use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination.

Computing
KS1 subject content: use technology purposefully to create, organise, store, manipulate and retrieve digital content.

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| Links to other resources on the Power of Reading Website |
Teaching Sessions

Session 1: Reading aloud, shared writing, drama, book talk
Learning Objectives:
Children listen with sustained concentration.
Children make simple inferences of characters’ feelings and behaviour.

- Prepare a large class reading journal to capture the children’s responses and examples of their work throughout the teaching sequence.
- Read this book straight through so that children can clearly hear the way that the story is written as if it is being played out with story props, until the page where the family are unwrapping their presents at granny’s.
- Encourage the children to explore the images and the text. Talk about your initial thoughts and impressions as you read and encourage the children to point out things that are of interest to them and talk about them.
- When you reach the point where the family are unwrapping their presents, discuss what they think each of the family is thinking in this illustration. In pairs, encourage the children to talk about their ideas, looking closely at the image. What is it about the picture which is giving them the clue? Explain that thought bubbles are often added to a text to illustrate what a character is thinking. Through shared writing, write some of the children’s ideas as thought bubbles, focusing on writing in first person, spelling of familiar words and punctuation. Display these.
- In pairs, encourage the children to work in role as Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush to put on the green romper suit. You may wish to model this beforehand. Ask them to freeze as this is completed and consider what their character is thinking at this point. Tap individuals on the shoulder and encourage them to share their thought. Make a note of good ideas in thought bubbles and display. You may wish to take digital images of children in role to place in the writing area or as part of the class journal.
- Finish reading the story to the end, discussing parts and characters that interest the children.
- Though discussion, paired and group work, encourage children to gather their first responses to the book using the ‘Tell Me’ approach.
- As shared writing, write down some of what they say into the class journal that you have already prepared.
- Reread the book.

Session 2: Drama, role-play, book talk
Learning Objectives:
Children are able to articulate the answer to a question.
Children express simple views of the story giving reasons for their answers.

- Cast different groups of children into each of Traction Man’s adventures and sitting in a large circle read the story again, with each group of children coming into the centre of the circle to act out their part of the book.
- Through modelling, identify your favourite part of the story or the most exciting or memorable part of the story. Provide the children with an oral scaffold for example: my favourite part of the story is... because... The most exciting part of the story is... because... and in pairs ask them to identify their favourite part. Encourage children to give the reasons for their choices. Invite some children to share their opinions with the class and talk about reasoning.

Session 3-4: Re-enactment through play, story mapping
Learning Objectives:
Children explore familiar themes through improvisation and role-play.
Children are able to orally compose short narratives, describing incidents in sequence.
Children write down key words and use story language to help plan writing.

- Take one of the play settings from the story and recreate it within a storybox. Fill the box with a collection of appropriate models and props. Include a wider collection than those included within the book so that children can innovate their own stories. For example a range of familiar settings such as a classroom, a beach, an office, playground etc..
- Model how you might engage with the storybox (or small world) creating your own scenario for Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush, developing a mini-adventure with a simple plot and characterisation. Explicitly model sequential language, change in tone of voice to indicate what the character is thinking and the addition of repeated refrains adapted from the original text. Give the children time to engage with the storyboxes in small groups.
- Demonstrate how to create a simple story map or storyboard with an appropriate number of parts. Retell your
narrative and add appropriate story language to your plan. Ask children to make a story map of a finished story as a plan for writing a book of their story.

- Following this, set up stills of the story in the box to photograph and use to illustrate the children's narratives.

### Session 5: Talking books
**Learning Objectives:**
- Children are able to orally compose short narratives, describing incidents in sequence.
- Children speak audibly and fluently to retell composed stories in sequence.

- Make electronic versions of the finished storybox stories combining children's digital images and recorded oral stories using suitable IT programs for example, PowerPoint, stop-frame animation, iPad Book Creator. These can be stored in a folder on the school network and made into CDs for children to take home.

### Session 6: Drawing and annotating, shared writing
**Learning Objectives:**
- Children are able to use appropriate vocabulary to describe a character.
- Children are able to write labels and fact files.

- Have an action man open day when children are encouraged to bring their favourite toy into school and introduce them to the class. Give each child timed slots for talking about their heroes and take photos of them both together.

- Using your own action man or toy, model how to describe them. Provide prompts to support descriptions for example, name, age, what they look like, what they like doing, special powers. In pairs children describe their toys. Collect good language use and display this for later use in writing.

- Invite children to draw their toy. Expect the children to label their toys with language to describe them. Support children to think of new ideas and vocabulary.

- Through shared writing approaches, create a fact file for your toy in the style of a 'Top Trumps' card or an ID permit. Encourage use of vocabulary gathered during the session.

- Children who do not have a figure of their own can create the one they would ideally like. Bind these into books and place them in the book corner.

### Sessions 7-8: Book talk, drawing and annotation
**Learning Objectives:**
- Children are able to use appropriate vocabulary to describe a character.
- Children are able to plan and rehearse a sentence orally before writing.
- Children compose a sentence.

- Talk with children about what a hero is and whether they think Traction Man is one.

- What other stories about heroes do they know? You may wish to share another story with the children involving a hero or superhero.

- Put children in pairs to tell each other about a favourite hero, and what they think he or she does that makes him/her heroic. Provide the children with an oral scaffold for example, my favourite hero is... because...

- Encourage children to give the reasons for their choices. Invite some children to share their opinions with the class. Make a top ten heroes list for the class in the class journal.

- Through shared writing, demonstrate how to label a drawing of your hero with appropriate vocabulary. Model how to write a caption to describe your hero underneath your drawing, orally rehearsing before writing and considering spelling and punctuation. Invite the children to draw and label their favourite hero and add a caption to describe them.

- Encourage children to revisit writing to check that it makes sense, meaning is clear and it is grammatically correct.

- Make a collection of stories about other superheroes including comics available in the classroom for children to read and talk about together.

### Session 9: Role-play, drama, book talk
**Learning Objectives:**
- Children are able to plan a short narrative through drama.

- Children are able to make simple evaluations of their own and others' performances.

- Explain to the class that they are going to write a sequel to *Traction Man is Here*. They will compose the next mini-adventure for the characters. This could be a graphic novel page (in the style of the Grey's text) or as a play script.
- Explore images of Mini Grey’s sketch books and discuss with the children the writing process writers undertake.
- Reread the end of the narrative. Discuss what might happen next using the clues in the text and our understanding of Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush. Make a note of interesting ideas.
- Put children into small groups or pairs to improvise what happens next, building on the discussion and using the last picture in the book as the starting point for their drama: they know they are ready for anything. These improvised role-plays will form the narrative adventure for the children’s writing.
- Encourage the children to share their work in turn to the class for them to comment on what they liked about each others’ ideas. Use prompts to support articulation of evaluations: I liked it when... because... Model this for the class.
- Take digital images of children in role.

**Session 10: Reading, book talk, shared writing**

**Learning Objective:**
Children make simple inferences of characters’ feelings and behaviour.

**Children are able to compose sentences.**
- Reread the story again, this time focusing on the ways in which pictures, graphics and text combine to tell the story. Talk about the use of speech bubbles and captions and consider font and the shape and size of the frames. How do these elements impact on meaning?
- Explore how Mini Grey has developed the characterisation through the use of different elements of the text. Ask: what do we know about the characters? How do we know?
- Model creating thought or speech bubbles in role as the characters.
- Through shared writing, demonstrate how to use speech and thought bubbles to add to a mini-adventure drafted in the previous session.
- Children create the speech and thought bubbles for their role-play using Post Its and add this to their digital images.

**Sessions 11-12: Shared writing**

**Learning Objectives:**
Children draft and write by composing and rehearsing sentences orally.

**Children compose sentences to create a short narrative.**
- Use a digital image to support writing the short adventure. Demonstrate how you use story language and ideas taken from activities throughout the teaching sequence. Orally rehearse sentences before writing.
- Give the children time to retell their mini-adventure in their pairs using digital images and speech/thought bubbles. Support children as necessary.
- Supported through modelled, shared and guided writing the children write their mini-adventure.
- Encourage children to reread sections of their text to check it makes sense and make simple revisions.

**Sessions 13-15: Shared writing**

**Learning Objective:**
Children draft and write by composing and rehearsing sentences orally.  **or** Children are able to create a comic strip.

**Children reread writing to check it makes sense and make simple revisions.**
- Reintroduce the writing outcome: the children’s mini-adventure written as a play script or a page in the style of Mini Grey’s Traction Man.
- **Play script**
  - Model how to transfer narrative writing into a play script. Watch clips of familiar productions first to engage children in the text type. Give the children prompts to direct their viewing and talk about what the actors need to know. Introduce vocabulary for example, actors, director, stage directions, speech.
  - Remind the children of their role-play adventures. Use digital images to consider what information the actors needed to know. Collect ideas under simple headings: what characters do; what characters say. Model how to use stage directions, characters' speech and actions to compose a short play script of the mini-adventure. Decide together how much of the story can be told by the characters, and how much by the narrator.
  - Supported through modelled, shared and guided writing the children write their mini-adventure.
  - Encourage children to reread sections of their text to check it makes sense and make simple revisions.
  - Finished scripts can be used to support performances as part of an assembly. Using tuned and percussive
instruments improvise the ‘film score’ to accompany the performance.

**Comic style mini-adventure**

- Children work individually, drafting their mini-adventures as a double page spread for the book. You may wish to use Post Its or paper cut to different sizes to help plan frames and focus on captions, action, images, speech.
- Encourage children to revisit writing to make simple revisions as appropriate.
- These might be published using an appropriate computer program for example, iPad’s Comic Book! app.

### Use and Application of Phonics and Spelling:

The following words could be used to exemplify learning at phonic phases:

#### Phase 2:
- man, red, can, pet, ten, back, sock, let

#### Phase 3:
- farm, for, been, deep, down, book,

#### Phase 4:
- held, trainer, jumps, toast, sink, brush, pond, vest, think, stand, trees, green, cliff, spoons, broom, dust, hoist, thank, waists

#### Phase 5: /ai/ alternatives:
- trainer, space, duvet, away, hooray, suffocate, spade, repay, brave, take, day, waists
  - Animation, cupcake
- /oa/ alternatives:
  - pillows, toast, overgrown, toes, oh, no,
- /ee/ alternatives:
  - he, foamy, been, be, deep, sea, stealing, trees, journey, Granny, very, lovely, green, hurry, these, ready
- /oo/ alternatives:
  - suit, duvet, shoes, rescue, spoons, huge, blue
  - Split digraphs:
    - space, suffocate, brave, spade, brave, cupcake

#### High Frequency Words:
- here, is, some, he, be, my, are, people, everyone, you

#### Spelling:
- ‘ed’ endings: crashed, helped
- ‘double consonant then +ed’ endings: grabbed
- ‘change y to i then +ed’ endings: buried
- ‘ing’ endings: wearing, zooming, speeding, doing, stealing
- ‘double consonant then +ing’ endings: scrubbing
- ‘-e then +ing’ endings: coming
- ‘+s’ plurals: spoons
- ‘change y to i then +es’ plurals: dollies, ladies