

TASC Evaluation

Activity: Linguistic ability
How did the children respond to each segment of the TASC Wheel? Gather/Organise and Identify: It was obvious that few children knew what 'Letters to the Editor' were and so the activity needed explanation and careful structuring. Lower-ability children in all years, together with the younger children, needed help with the letter format, opening sentence, appropriate language. Generate and Decide: Most teachers worked as a class to generate ideas and then moved into groups, but many children wanted to work independently since they wanted to express their personal thoughts and feelings. Once the task was outlined clearly, and the necessary structure given, the children were able to suggest a wide range of ideas. It was interesting that Year 3 had to be reminded of what had happened in the first week of their new school. Implement: Most children worked independently, but some groups supported each other through the writing. Time was an issue since many children find a written language task difficult. The lower-ability children struggled to produce short letters. Evaluate and Communicate: The children enjoyed working as editorial teams and made constructive comments, although they had to be reminded to be tactful! In the whole school, only seven children said that the writing task was their most favourite activity. Learn from experience: Children said that they appreciated all the exciting things that were happening in school. They understood the role of an editorial team and how they needed to offer criticism in a helpful way.
How independent were the children? Did they need much support? This activity highlighted the problems children have with a written activity. As always, a great deal of support and structure was needed by lower-ability children. These children also needed a lot of help to develop their ideas. The higher-ability children obviously coped better with greater independence and skill.
What did staff learn about the children? Children were far more competent in discussion than in writing, and group leaders were obvious.
What did the children learn about themselves? Since the children are grouped in sets, they found it easier to contribute and to share ideas. They said that by listening and sharing ideas, they found the task easier.
Any other comments? This was the only writing activity and the children needed a lot of guidance and help with structure and layout. In the speaking, listening, and drama activities, the children were very confident and they obviously enjoyed these activities far more.