

How to be an **in**



Not all children will grow to be an entrepreneur, says **Will Ryan**, but we all need to be enterprising...

They say a good article should keep the readers guessing until the end. Oh well, what the heck. I will give you the answer now. What is it that inspirational teachers do? In short, they plan for their pupils to be inspirational. This series of four articles will tell you about the wonderful things that creative teachers do to make such a difference to children.

Young children are naturally enterprising. It is one of their most striking features. Seven- and eight-year-olds during school holidays through play will quickly turn their home into a restaurant or a television studio or a school. Resources are made, roles allocated and a business plan devised. Older children (often boys) will create their own football tournaments, decide how long each game will last, organise league tables, cup draws and maybe even a transfer system. Inspirational teachers fully recognise the value of enhancing learning through developing activities that allow the children to be enterprising.

This is important because children growing up in the twenty first century will need to be more enterprising than ever before. A recent analysis of job adverts in *The Guardian* newspaper revealed that employers were looking for the following qualities:

- Capacity to motivate others
- High quality communicator, negotiator and networker
- Ability to thrive in a fast paced environment
- Confidence within a team
- Flexibility to react to external circumstances
- Confidence, resilience, with superb communication, interpersonal and social skills
- Ability to think creatively and strategically

Taking an enterprising approach to the curriculum and lessons allows you to instil these qualities in your learners. Before we proceed it is probably necessary to dispel the myth that enterprise education is about money and making profit.

Whilst it may be a key element on some occasions it doesn't have to be. It is simply about turning young people into enterprising individuals. The second great myth is that it is a 'bolt on' element to the curriculum. It can be used to bring real life learning and the skills of enterprise to a range of subjects. Here are three classic examples of inspirational practice from my new book. Take them and adapt them to your own theme or circumstances. Try them whilst Ofsted are around, it may make the hairs tingle on the back of their necks.

1 Set up a museum

In his brilliant book *What's the Point of School?*, Guy Claxton talks about the conflict between 'just in case learning' and 'just in time learning'. The first of these is a traditional model that exists in many schools. An example would be teaching the children the six wives of Henry VIII just in case they will need it in later life. And to be fair it might be helpful in the pub quiz. However, using the just in time learning model the teacher may say to the class, 'Next term we are going to study the Tudors and at the end of the term you will be required to run a museum for the day with key exhibits which will inform others about Tudor life. We will need examples of your writing and research, we could include interactive presentations and a digital film to show the visitors or perform a Tudor play. Now children, what do we need to learn and when do we need

to learn it?' This format will work because it is real-life learning based upon the notion of getting something exciting and interesting done.

2 Make £5 blossom

What do Simon Cowell, Richard Branson, Duncan Bannatyne and James Khan have in common? They are all entrepreneurs who feature on lists of school failures. They later turned out to be highly successful but how many other potential business gurus fell by the wayside because they didn't experience an element of enterprise education? Having said that enterprise education isn't simply about children creating businesses, we should not ignore the importance of this work. To achieve success in life we need to be financially literate and enterprise education can help. Some people say that money will not buy happiness, but I say they just don't know where to shop.

Over recent years the highly acclaimed 'Rotherham Ready' team has operated a project entitled 'Make £5 Blossom'. It is built around the notion that children in a class link with a local business and take out a loan £5 for each pupil, who then proceed to set up their own businesses. This could be as individuals, groups or as a whole class. Within this project nothing should be provided for free and if the children



spiring teacher

need resources from the school they must be paid for. The range of businesses set up have included the more predictable car washing and making of smoothies but have also included some wonderfully ingenious ideas.

Before reading on, just pause and think of some of the key life skills in this project. They include team work, negotiating with and influencing others, creative thinking to produce an ingenious design, understanding how to make money work, and maybe even an ethical dimension through considering what is a reasonable profit to make.

3 Open a transfer market

"As of now those pesky football stickers are banned in this school!" pronounced the headteacher at the height of last summer's World Cup finals. Teachers had now grown tired of children trading their stickers at inopportune times and the arguments that ensued. It was a pupil who spoke next, and suggested that, "There could be an alternative. The children should be allowed to attend a properly organised club where the stickers can be traded, bought and sold. The school fund could claim 10% of any cash changed. Not only that but we could

get the class to do some really exciting mathematics work with them. We should find out the minimum cost of completing the album and then a realistic cost of completing the album. We should look at the probability of getting repeat cards if you buy five packs or ten packs at a time or even try to find out if they make the same number of each of the cards. We could find out which country has had to travel furthest to play in the tournament and I am sure there are loads more things we could do, especially with geography."

Most likely you're a teacher so perhaps you might have some other ideas. The beauty of this type of project is that it brought a resolution to an issue that was annoying both the children and teachers and we should remember that some of the most enterprising people arrived in

that position though solving a problem that 'bugged' them.

Additionally this project related to the popular culture of the children (who naturally love collecting things) and it made them wiser as consumers. So go on and make it an enterprising 2011. Good luck.

Will Ryan's new book *Inspirational Teachers Inspirational Learners* will be published by Crown House on February 28th 2011, ISBN 1845904435

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