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# Introduction

## About the series

*Literacy Challenges* is a series of six books specifically targeted at developing cross-curricular work from levels 1–6 across the 5–14 age range. Each book contains ‘Challenges’ with differentiated ability ‘Choices’.

The teacher can introduce these to the children who can then work independently, in pairs, or small groups to complete a series of set tasks. Each Challenge encourages the development of time management skills, thinking skills and independent research, which culminates in a specific end product such as a written report, a prepared presentation, a radio programme, or a short film, that helps show and assess the literacy and cross-curricular learning that has taken place.

The Challenges in each book are literacy projects where the pupils are encouraged to explore different curriculum areas in a variety of ways. These cross-curricular Challenges are designed to develop the pupils’ reasoning, cognitive skills and understanding of how subjects can link together and how the skills we learn in one area can be applied in another.

Each Challenge is designed to take three to six weeks, if timetabled on a twice-weekly basis, or as part of extra-curricular work if the children decide to carry out Challenges that result in different types of productions shared with others. The Challenges do not need to be carried out in any particular order and can therefore be chosen in accordance with the required curriculum planned for each term.

The books have links with the National Curriculum levels and Literacy Framework years 1–6, as a guide for teachers as to where they fit in the curriculum range. The challenges work well with children across the 5–14 age range as they can be used with the children who are working at the particular levels regardless of the year that they are currently in.

Book 1: NC levels 1/2  
Book 2: NC levels 1/2  
Book 3: NC levels 3 plus  
Book 4: NC levels 4 plus  
Book 5: NC levels 5 plus  
Book 6: NC levels 6 plus

## About each book

Each unit contains two Challenges that are presented in a specific format: a section of **Teachers’ notes**, the **Challenges** (each with three **Choices**) and **Activity sheets**. The teacher can choose which Choice the pupils do. Challenge 1 introduces the subject and Challenge 2 develops understanding of it further and encourages the children to develop their ideas about the area covered.

## The Challenge

Each Challenge is divided into two parts: **Challenge 1** and **Challenge 2**. Challenge 1 will contain three Choices/activities that prepare the pupil for moving on to Challenge 2. These Choices often involve reading, discussion and research. Challenge 2 generally requires the pupils to use the information gathered in Challenge 1 to write, make or prepare something such as an advertising poster, a talk for younger children or a story.

The teacher will need to discuss each stage of the Challenge and Choice with the children making sure they understand what they need to do and how they are going to do it.

## Teachers’ notes

These aim to support the teacher with the skills information they need for assessing and assigning levels. They are intended as a guide to the way the Challenges can be presented to children in the classroom or as cross-curricular extra activities.

The Teachers’ notes include the following information:

**Purpose:** this outlines the expected learning outcomes for each challenge and the skills opportunities in the Challenge that cover literacy and the different subject areas.

**Preparation:** this links to helpful hints in the Challenges and identifies some of the resources the teacher may need to provide for the children.

**Main activities:** these aim to show how the work can be organised and carried out. The guide also suggests which groups of ability could be directed to which Choice in each of the Challenges that form the unit. Teachers can plan the time they wish to take with each Challenge, when to introduce it to the children and how the Challenges can link with their curriculum planning and ‘Assessing Pupils’ Progress’.

## Activity sheets

The Activity sheets are intended to be used by the children. They could be given out with the **Challenge cover sheet** to make a booklet for the pupil (with the **Challenge cover sheet** used as a cover page), thereby keeping all the materials together.

## Action plan sheet

For Books 3–6, action planning can be included as part of each Challenge if desired. The completion of the Challenge

may take about three to six weeks if the pupils are given only set times each week for working on their tasks.

The sheet provides an opportunity for pupils to plan their work with definite starts, tasks and deadlines. The teacher needs to ensure that the pupils have planned out the tasks they are carrying out in a manner that is logical and will lead to successful completion of the unit.

Completing the sheet immediately after the Choices have been read and discussed allows the pupil and teacher to plan a suitable sequence of work to agreed deadlines. The teacher is also able to plan visits and visitors using this sheet with the pupils.

The teacher's role is to help the children to understand that action plans often need modification as the work progresses and that this is good practice, not a sign of failure. Children who are able to assess their own progress and adapt their planning tend to be those who have more success with completing the set tasks within each Choice. Once they have planned their work, the real work (as they will see it) can begin!

**IMPORTANT:** The teacher will need to ensure the pupils understand that they should not write to, contact or visit a potential source of information without the teacher's consent and guidance.

## The Skills sheets

These enable the children and teacher to identify the skills developed and practised while completing the Challenges. They are generic documents that cover all the Challenges and include subject areas that apply to the various tasks set.

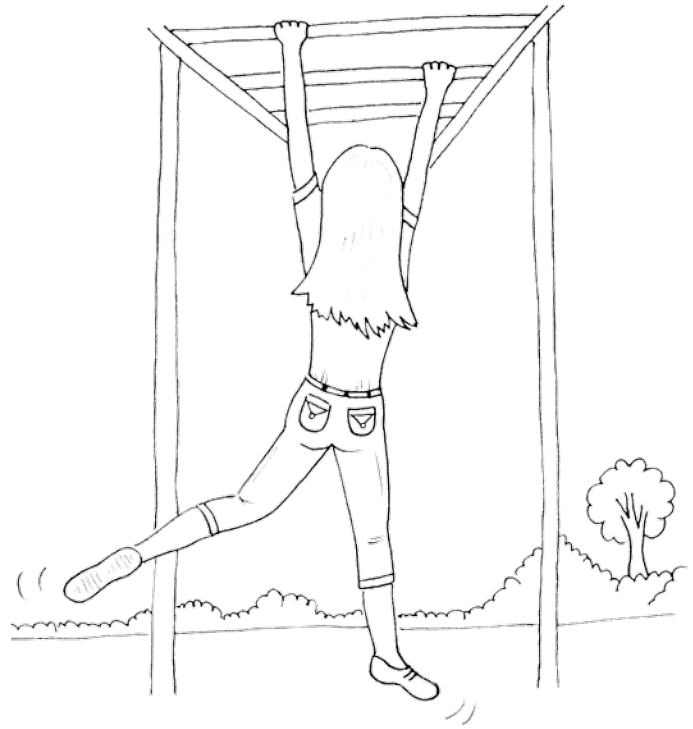
The children can read the sheets and identify the skills they feel have been demonstrated. The children may feel that they have successfully demonstrated the skill or that they need more help with this type of skill. They can use the skills sheets to discuss their progress with their teacher. The teacher can record the level achieved as part of their ongoing assessment of the children's progress.

## Organisation

Although the Challenges are designed to provide children with self-contained units of work that they can manage independently, it is essential that the teacher guides them through the whole process and tells them how much time will be allocated to the tasks each week.

Each Challenge could form part of a whole class topic with separate work being set where necessary to cover subject knowledge and skills. Alternatively it could form part of a regular weekly time slot allocated to the children in order for them to carry out more independent work.

They will, however, need the teacher to guide them through the research work and help them make contact with those



who can give them the help they need. The children should be encouraged to do their research and make any outside contacts under supervision in school.

Special consideration needs to be given to Internet research to ensure that only child-suitable sites are used. Internet sites recommended need to be looked at by the teacher in case they have been altered or changed. Sites can be put into the teacher's favourites and accessed with his/her supervision.

## About the CD

This contains the **Challenges** and **Activity sheets** in colour so that so that they can be used on the Interactive Whiteboard, displayed to the children and used online if desired by teachers. The **Challenge cover sheet** and **Skills sheets** could be used as an online record if teachers wish to save printing out paper although the cover sheet is a good idea if the children's work is being saved for evaluation or progress comparison at a later time in the year.

## General comments

Children working on the Challenges may well find that they want to develop a particular aspect of the work that interests them. This should be negotiated with the teacher and put into their planning so that they can ensure they complete the tasks set in the Challenge Choice as well.

The Challenges can be used to develop aspects of the curriculum that the pupils are studying in more depth and from a different perspective. The cross-curricular approach enables the pupils to see that their literacy skills can be applied effectively in other areas of the curriculum and that there are connections between different subjects that help them to understand them better.

# Making a radio programme

## Teachers' notes

The purpose of this Challenge is to encourage the children to develop good listening skills and to understand how language can be used in different situations. They will also learn to plan and develop their original ideas into a finished piece of work that shows their creativity.

## Skills opportunities in this Challenge

### Literacy:

The children demonstrate how to use cues such as repetition, humour or recap in their programmes. They plan and manage their task and show understanding of the process of decision-making. Their vocabulary is extended through the use of specialist language. They can adapt their scripts to a particular audience and articulate their responses to each other's scripts and programmes. They can use a range of ICT programs and electronic tools to present their ideas.

### English:

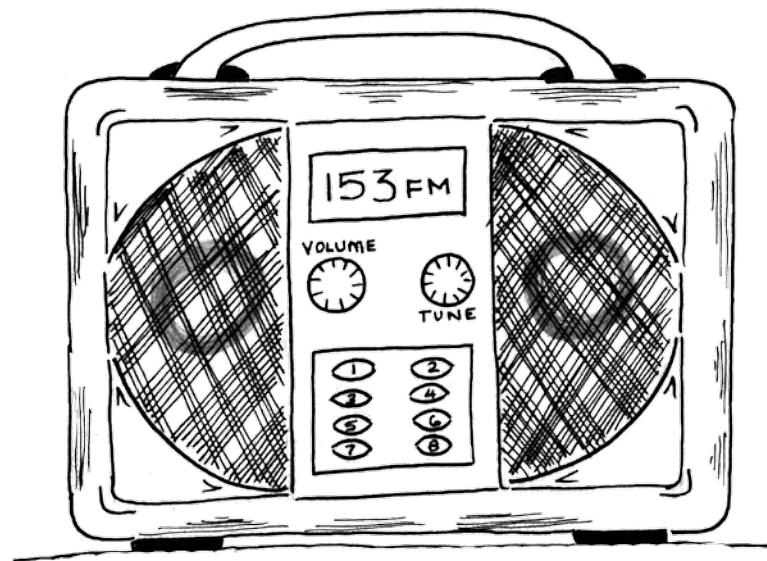
- Speaking and Listening – The children can talk confidently in a range of contexts, paying close attention to what others say and using their input to form their own ideas. They can recognise when to use standard and non-standard English. The children can adapt their talk to the demands of different contexts. They use a wide variety of vocabulary and expressions. They take an active part in discussion and use language appropriate to the situation.
- Reading – The children can select essential points when researching; they can identify key features and use relevant information to support their ideas. They can identify different layers of meanings in scripts and identify how language is used to effect.
- Writing – The children's scripts are interesting and varied. Sentences and paragraphs are coherent, clear and well developed. Words with regular patterns are usually spelt correctly. Writing is clear, joined and legible.

### ICT:

The children can use ICT to structure, refine and present their radio programmes in forms and styles specific for their audience. They can organise, store and retrieve their programmes. They can assess, improve, develop and refine their work according to audience needs, thereby showing their ICT competency.

### Music:

The children can identify and explore musical devices and develop their own music for a purpose using melodic and



rhythmic material. They can select and make expressive use of tempo, dynamics, phrasing and timbre when developing and using music for their radio programmes.

## Guide to teaching Challenge 1

### Preparation

Listen to and select a variety of programmes that the children can listen to in order to learn what type of programmes are on the radio.

Older programmes and records such as *Sparky's magic piano* – on Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3etiNLAfi0> may show them what sort of items children listened to before there were many television programmes for them. Vinyl records for children often involved the story of a ballet or musical piece such as *Peter and the Wolf* that were listened to by their elders. BBC broadcasts such as 'Music and Movement' and 'Listen with Mother' were also broadcast and may be in their archives.

They may notice that now there are not many radio programmes designed for them. Invite a local radio station broadcaster into school to talk to them about how programmes are made and what they need to consider when making their own programmes – the programme itself, and jingles and adverts if they are a commercial station. Sometimes, the local FE college has a media course and will help if approached in advance. A local hospital radio station might allow the children to broadcast their programme to children in the hospital. This would help develop the school's community work in a real and practical way.

### Introduction

Carry out the **Everyone** activity tasks after the listening exercise and the speaker have visited.

## Main activities

**Choice 1** – Most children will be able to achieve this. The children can visit a class of 5/6-year-olds and ask the audience that the programme is to be for, about what they like to listen to. They can plan their programme around the responses they get from the 5/6-year-olds.

**Choice 2** – This is for the less able children and those especially interested in how sounds are made or jingles are developed. Those who enjoy making and doing will enjoy this choice! They can listen and note the sounds they hear on the different programmes and try and work out how to reproduce them. Some helpful sites:

- [http://www.brucevanpatter.com/sound\\_effects.html](http://www.brucevanpatter.com/sound_effects.html)
- [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4451158\\_create-sound-effects.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4451158_create-sound-effects.html)

**Remember** with these sites you need to check them out first and if necessary select the information you think will be useful for the children.

**Choice 3** – For the more able child who enjoys reading. They can select a text they have enjoyed reading. It will need to have a good storyline and interesting characters. They will need to choose an extract that has the characters talking to each other and some text that the narrator can read so that the listeners will understand what the story is about.

### Discussion

When the children have shared their ideas and learnt how sound effects can be made, ask the class to share their ideas about how to plan and make the actual programmes. Make sure they have asked for their sound effects to be made and you have allocated a sound effect engineer from **Choice 2** to their group.

### Conclusion

Put up the recording plan and timetable for making the final programmes.

## Guide to teaching Challenge 2

### Preparation

Check that you have working equipment for the children to use to make their programmes, and if possible, the speaker who told them how to make programmes, can be invited to help with the groups and to listen to the final outputs and give feedback. You might consider having a 'making a radio programme day' for this Challenge.

### Introduction

Revisit the previous work and check that groups know what they are going to do.

### Main activities

**Everyone** – All the groups prepare and record their programmes according to the plan developed by the class for this activity. After the programmes have been

heard let the class choose which Choice they wish to do. You may wish to guide them in their Choices.

**Choice 1** – Talk to the children about how they could address the producer of the programme and how they might begin and end their email. They need to understand that this type of email is very much like a short letter and needs to be written correctly without spelling mistakes. Point out that a spell-checker may not find all their mistakes so having a friend proofread their email might be a good idea. Have them send their emails to you as the producer and print and display good examples.

**Choice 2** – For the more able child. You want them to write an informal letter but one that is properly set out and details what the programme was about—using paragraphs to develop ideas, a good introduction and correct ending.

**Choice 3** – This group work can be done by less able children who can support each other and work with an adult if necessary to produce their feedback sheet for the class. Display good feedback sheets.

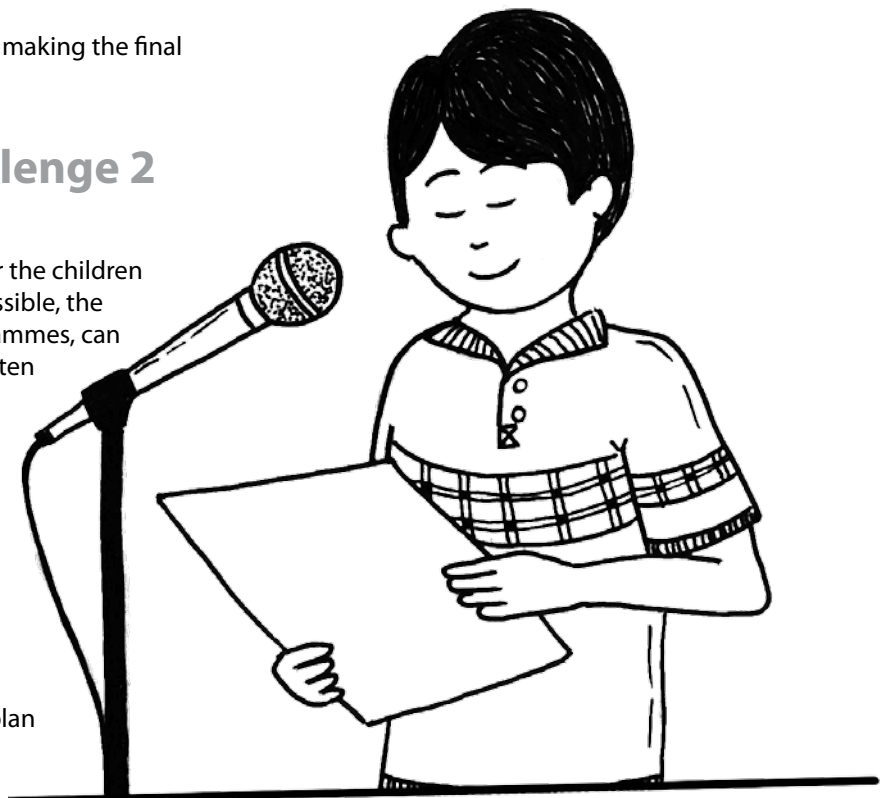
### Discussion

Discuss what the class has learnt about making radio programmes and listening to them.

### Conclusion

If possible ask them to run a radio club for the school that can give out school news, and have a couple of programmes that involve the listeners each month. The other option is to see if they can make a programme for a local hospital radio that can be downloaded for the younger children in the children's wards.

This is a Challenge which, with preparation, could be carried out on a school media day.





# Programme planning sheet

<b>Research</b> – Plan a survey to find out the types of programmes	<b>Think about:</b> The questions you want to ask in your survey How to record the answers How you will use the results of your survey
<b>Type of programme audience it is aimed at:</b>	
<b>Opening</b> How are you going to start? With a jingle, a voice introducing your programme? How will the audience know what sort of programme it is?	
<b>Main content of your programme</b> Think about timing, sound effects, sort of voices you need to use. Are there any adverts in your programme?	
<b>Closing</b> How do you plan to end your programme? With music/a comment on what is coming next?	
<b>Draft your ideas</b> and share them with another group. What do they think about your ideas for a radio programme?  <b>Edit your plans</b>  The <b>Script guide</b> may help you to develop your ideas into a radio programme.	