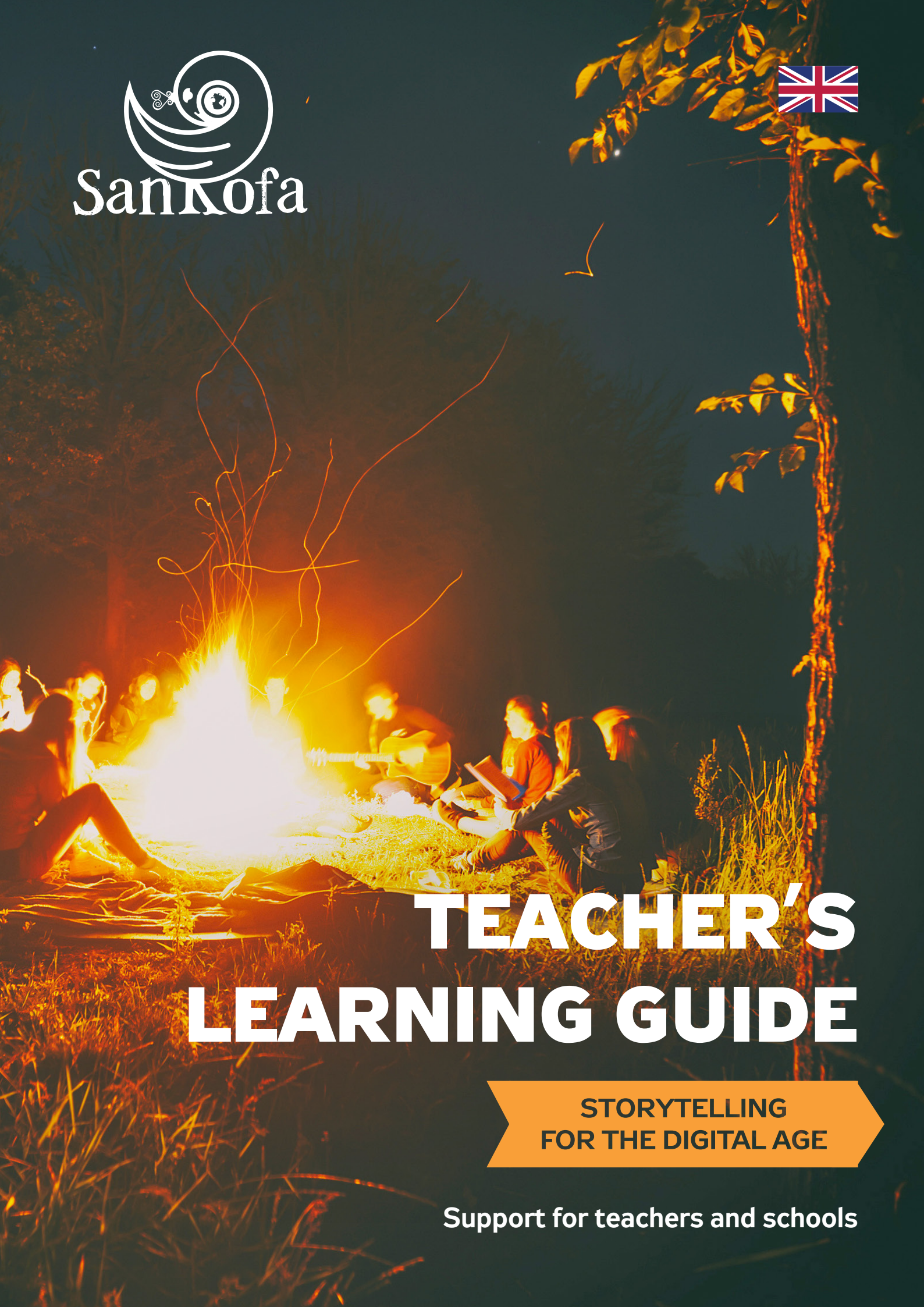

Sankofa

TEACHER'S LEARNING GUIDE

STORYTELLING FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

Support for teachers and schools

Let's start with a story by Evan Turk...

Long long ago, like a pearl around a grain of sand, the fertile Kingdom of Morocco was formed near the edge of the great, dry Sahara. It had fountains of cool, delicious water to quench the dangerous thirst of the desert and storytellers to bring people together.

But as the kingdom grew and life became easier, the people forgot their fear of the desert. Soon they forgot the fountains and storytellers too. One by one, the voices of the storytellers were drowned out by noise and silenced by age and one by one the fountains dried up.

As the last fountain dried, far away in the Sahara a great wind began to stir.

At that same moment, in the hot dry south of the kingdom, a thirsty young boy made his way through the clamour and smoke of the Great Square to look for a drink, but no one had any water to give.

"Our fountains have run dry,'" the last water-seller said. "But have one of my brass cups. If you find water you can drink and share it with others."

As the boy walked home a voice called out to him, "My boy, are you looking for something to drink?"

A withered old man was perched on the edge of a dry fountain.
"That fountain doesn't have any water!" the boy said.

The man's face cracked like mud to reveal a toothless grin.
'Sit down my boy and your thirst will be quenched..."

The ***Sankofa*** project partners are delighted that you have chosen to be part of this exciting and innovative storytelling project – ***Sankofa: storytelling for a digital age***.
This Teacher's Learning Guide has been designed to support you in your ***Sankofa*** journey into storytelling for a digital age. It will give you a wealth of ideas for practical classroom lessons and activities to inspire the imaginations of your learners, and develop their story-making and storytelling skills.
This guide will build your understanding of storytelling for the digital age. It contains the main ideas and thinking informing the Sankofa project and explains the underlying theoretical approach. The Teacher's Learning Guide will help you to cascade learning within your own school and we invite you to spread the word.

Sankofa - Storytelling for the digital world is a partnership between four organisations:

>>> Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) :
www.cdec.org.uk

>>> Global Learning London:
www.globallearninglondon.org

>>> SEVER from the Czech Republic:
sever.ekologickavychova.cz

>>> SOSNA in Slovakia:
www.sosna.sk

This transnational approach allows us to grow and share stories and learn across countries and cultures. We chartered new territory together and teachers' feedback and experiences helped to improve and develop this Teacher's Learning Guide, so it can be shared with new teachers beyond the ***Sankofa*** project. We hope this Teacher's Learning Guide will become a touch-stone for your ***Sankofa*** project. Together we can achieve amazing things!

With many best wishes from the collective authors:

CDEC: Laura Goad, Debbie Watson, Jane Yates
Global Learning London: Alia Alzougbi, Linda Barker, Triny Diaz
SEVER: Hana Kulichová, Simona Máslová, Jáchym Škoda
SOSNA: Silvia Szabó, Štefan Szabó, Daniel Szabó

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Introduction

Background to the Sankofa project

Young people today are growing up in an increasingly globalised and media-rich world. This project is designed to help teachers gain skills and competences to enable children to critically engage with and make sense of the modern world. Today we are faced with complex challenges and new patterns of working life, including increased mobility and integration of ICT. Teachers are required to balance the need for core competences (e.g. reading, writing and speaking) along with helping children develop as independent and motivated critical learners, who are media literate and able to understand and learn from multiple perspectives.

Sankofa combines traditional storytelling techniques with digital technologies so that pupils gain skills in both storytelling and digital literacy, such as online recording, editing and sharing their stories across national borders.

Children worked with stories from their own and other cultures, to create new stories that will contribute to a sustainable future in our interconnected world. The themes explored through this storytelling process included migration, gender, biodiversity, climate change and are linked to the United Nations Sustainable DevelopmentGoals – also known as the **GlobalGoals**.

Sankofa also developed teachers' skills to prepare children for thinking critically about local-to-global themes and provided opportunities to develop language skills, digital competencies and global competencies by:

Sankofa

SANKOFA is a word in the Twi language from Ghana, which can be translated as "go back and get it". Our project looks back to one of the most ancient forms of human communication – storytelling; it is a vessel our ancestors used to pass on wisdom and values for a better life for all on this Earth. We look back to stories from across the world, many of which share strikingly similar values and prize similar skills, to find solutions for our most urgent challenges today, towards a more sustainable future for all.

>>> using storytelling to improve children's **literacy and oracy** skills
>>> embedding the use of storytelling to improve children's **critical thinking, self-efficacy**, self-confidence, creativity, presentation skills and IT skills
>>> enhancing children's **ICT skills** through a range of digital technologies
>>> enabling transfer of knowledge and skills between teachers and pupils across countries, giving **multiple perspectives** and an increased understanding of other cultures
>>> equipping teachers to support children better with **intercultural competences** for sustainable development.

Research shows storytelling can...

>>> increase reading writing and speaking test results in pupils' own language (Lyle & Bolt 2013; Coleman, 2001)
>>> support multicultural awareness through telling stories from other cultures (McCabe, 1997) and can influence children's understanding of diversity and equity (Mello, 2001)
>>> be fun! It engages and motivates (Yang & Wu, 2012)
>>> improve children's critical thinking and conceptual skills by engaging deeply in storytelling (Yang & Wu, 2012)
>>> provide powerful media literacy learning opportunities through engaging with digital stories; when students do the hard work of marrying story and technology to express themselves to others, they clearly see the persuasive nature of the e-culture in which we live (Ohler, 2006)
>>> have a positive impact on second language learning (Normann, 2011).

The underlying values of *Sankofa*

In the ***Sankofa*** project we have identified the values that under-pin our work:

Story is like an intricate sea shell that passes human understanding across time and space. What is inside that shell is informed and determined by the values of the story-maker or story-teller. It also shapes the form of human understanding they wish to convey to others. These values will determine the types of story we will engage with in the project, the purpose of those stories and the values we wish them to inculcate – summed up in the simple act of **storytelling for a better world**.

What are the Global Goals?

The Global Goals were launched in 2015 and are a set of 17 aspirational goals for the world to be more sustainable, in terms of combined human development and planetary concerns, by 2030. They are led by the United Nations, and involve 194 member states and other members of global civil society. The Goals apply to all countries and they encourage everyone to take responsibility for their achievement locally in our own communities.

The Global Goals are an excellent way of introducing active global citizenship to young learners who are seen as key to the successful achievement of the Goals.

The natural progression from 'values' *(what we hold dear)* through 'rights' (*the legislation underpinning those universal values*) to the Global Goals (*the way the global community will ensure all people can access those 'Rights'*) is one which is empowering to young people. The Global Goals offer young people an outlet for their desire to be active global citizens and to be able to contribute and work towards solutions to our world's complex problems.

Find out more:

http://www.globalgoals.org/
http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

Resources for children:

http://globaldimension.org.uk/worldslargestlesson
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5bti_B6mLc

Practice and learning model

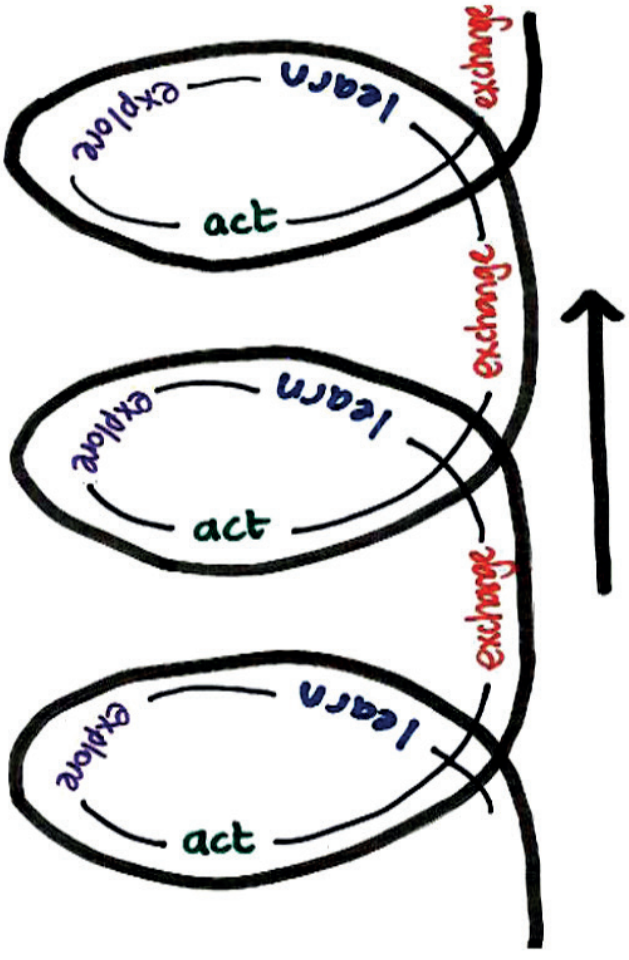
Sankofa project activity involves four types of learning in the classroom:

Type of activity	Relationship to the Global Goals	Relationship to story
Learn	Learn about the Global Goals	Learn what story is and what makes a good story
Explore	Explore the values and the meaning of the Global Goals	Learn the techniques and skills of story building
Act	Take responsible action regarding the Global Goals	Story making and storytelling
Exchange and share	Exchange and share understanding and local activity about the Global Goals	Story exchanging and sharing

The classroom activities in this guide have been organised under the headings LEARN, EXPLORE and ACT. The project website will be the place to EXCHANGE and SHARE. Teachers can approach the activities in one of two ways:

Like a caterpillar: munching through each activity in the order it appears in the guide.

Like a butterfly: engaging learners in a holistic experience rather than a linear one. By mixing Learn, Explore and Act activities, as demonstrated by this image, learners can progress in a cyclical way, revisiting and learning new things as required, rather than having to fully learn everything in each section before moving on to the next.



Teacher Support

Global learning offers teachers a range of tools, or methodologies, to help teach about local/global issues, explore values and attitudes and to develop the skills of critical and creative thinking in learners. The ***Sankofa*** project highly recommends Philosophy for Children (P4C) and the Development Compass Rose (adapted version). These, and other global learning methodologies, such as Continuum Lines and Discussion Cards, have been included in the activities in the Learn, Explore and Act sections of this guide. In the ***Sankofa*** project, teachers are invited to be creative with global learning methodologies to develop new and innovative activities for the classroom.

The Sankofa model for developing critical thinkers

Critical thinking is...	Critical thinking is not...
Skepticism	Memorising
Examining assumptions	Group thinking
Challenging reasoning	Blind acceptance of authority
Uncovering biases	A way of getting a certain view accepted as true
Open-ended	Finding the right answer

The five standards of critical thinking:

1. Invite learners to BE CLEAR by asking for explanations and examples when they don't understand something. Let children know it is okay to be confused and to ask questions.
2. Urge learners to BE ACCURATE, to check to see if something is true by researching the facts.
3. Encourage children to BE RELEVANT by discussing other topics that are pertinent to the discussion or problem at hand. Help them stay on track by linking related and meaningful information to the question they are trying to answer or the topic they are learning about.

4. Support learners' ability to BE LOGICAL. Help them to see how things fit together. Question how they came to conclusions and whether their assumptions are correct.
5. Set expectations that children BE FAIR. Promote empathy in thinking processes and make sure others are considered when drawing conclusions.

In a classroom that is developing critical readers and critical thinking, teachers will assist children to:

>>> create their own questions about the story
>>> discuss issues/problems that were presented in the text
>>> retell and summarise a text in the student's own words
>>> create an alternative problem or ending to the story
>>> make connections to other books, their own lives and the world around them (text to text, text to self and text to world connections)
>>> write responses to a story to allow engagement with the events in the text.

Levels of questioning in critical thinking

Level	Description	Form of question
First level: Starter	Students ask the teacher about something not clear in the text	Questions that seek to understand information
Second level: Intermediate	Students ask questions directed to the writer (narrator) of the story	Questions cause the reader to analyse, critically examine, and appraise the information presented by recognizing what is missing or only implied
Third level: Advanced	Students ask tough questions about the author's position, decisions, biases, or agenda.	Questions judge the author's position or formulate an alternative—or even contrary—hypothesis.

Advanced critical question-asking relies and builds on learners' ability to ask starter and intermediate questions. These third level questions take students to the level of critical or even sceptical reading. Sceptical readers in class should be appreciated, because they are constantly evaluating instead of only trying to understand. Other children will learn from them as well as from the teacher.

Quick-fire activities for critical thinking and story

Brainstorm

One of the easiest and most effective ways to get young children to think critically is to brainstorm. Regardless of subject, have students think about what they'll be doing, learning, or reading— before actually starting each activity. Ask a lot questions, like "What do you think this book will be about?"

Classify and categorize

Classification plays an important role in critical thinking because it requires students to understand and apply a set of rules. Give students a variety of stories, books, movies, jokes and ask them to identify them and sort it into a category. Questions: is this a funny or sad story? It is true or fantasy? Is XY a good person or a bad person?

Compare and contrast

Much like classifying, students will need to look closely at each topic or object they are comparing and really think about the significance of each one. You can have students compare and contrast the book your class is reading now and last time, like two fairy tales, different kinds of comics...

Make connections

Encouraging students to make connections to a real-life situation and to identify patterns is a great way to practice their critical-thinking skills. Ask students to look for these connections in various stories, and let them explain the pattern (model) they have found there.

Provide group opportunities

Group settings are the perfect way to get your students thinking. When children are around their classmates working together, they get exposed to the thought processes of their peers. They learn to understand how other people think and that their way is not the only route to explore. When this valuable skill is introduced to students early on in the education process, students will be capable of having complex thoughts and become better problem solvers. Analyse the same short story or part of book by several groups in class and compare the results.

Sources:

>>> https://dl.sps.northwestern.edu/blog/2015/09/using-technology-to-develop-students-critical-thinking-skills/
>>> https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-collegesuccess-lumen1/chapter/critical-thinking-skills/

Philosophy for Children (P4C)

Philosophy for Children is a way of learning and teaching, where children become more thoughtful and reflective and go beyond information to seek understanding. Children learn how to participate in meaningful discussions, where their ideas and those of others are valued and listened to. Children ask and discuss philosophical questions in a structured context. It is particularly useful in developing **critical thinking** and skills in **asking deeper questions** about the stories they hear in the media, news and in this project! What follows is a brief outline of a basic P4C session.

Community building activity (5–15 mins)

Sessions start with a community building activity.

Stimulus (15–30 mins)

This can be a story, case study, photograph, artefact or anything else that will engage the children in philosophical questioning.

Thinking as individuals, discussion in pairs (5 mins)

The pupils are asked to take 30 seconds to think individually about what the stimulus made them think and feel which might lead them to think of a question they would like to ask. You might ask them to close their eyes. They should then turn to the person next to them and swap their initial thoughts – for about 2-3 minutes. This should be a noisy time! It is important to give pupils time to think as individuals before they hear from others. Speaking in pairs gives even the quietest pupils the chance to express their thoughts.

Question setting in groups (5 mins)

Pupils are asked to form groups (say of 4). The teacher should ensure that there is a competent writer in each group. In their groups, they discuss and agree on a question arising from the stimulus that the whole group (class) might discuss together. It is to be a philosophical question – one that is interesting and will lead to deep thinking (and perhaps other questions). Over time (and with additional activities) pupils learn to develop philosophical questions (as opposed to a closed question or one that requires factual research).

Voting for one question (5 mins)

Each group is asked to read out its question and to clarify it where needed. Pupils (as individuals) now have to vote for one question. Some dialogue can take place – pupils can be asked to volunteer reasons for their choices and/or differing views (with reasons) can be sought. Sometimes similar questions can be merged (with agreement). If there is a tie (or almost a tie), pupils can "sell" their favoured question and see if others will vote for it. One question is chosen. There are lots of ways of voting.

Dialogue (30 mins)

Everyone sits in a circle. To start the dialogue, the chosen question is read out and the group that wrote it is asked to provide some of the thinking behind it. The job of the facilitator is to encourage all the pupils to contribute thoughts (voluntarily) and seek other ways of looking at the issues, probing for reasons and seeking meaning. Thinking can be stimulated by the development of 'effective questions'. Some of these are provided at the end of this section. Sometimes an interim summary of the dialogue will be useful (and, of course, a summary is useful at the end, with a reflection on how far the question has been answered). A facilitator will try to anticipate where the stimulus might lead bearing in mind that this might lead into unanticipated areas.

Reflection/debrief (5 mins)

There are many debrief techniques. For example, each pupil is encouraged to give a few words about his/her impressions of the dialogue – something that surprised them, or they learned, or if they changed their mind about something during the session. If struggling, they can say "Pass". The pupils and facilitator might discuss concepts that need further exploration, perhaps during the following session. Any concepts, ideas or questions should be 'stored' for follow-up work by writing them down and putting them on the wall as part of a display. This will help keep the questions fresh in the mind and will allow other thoughts and ideas to flow and be discussed outside of the philosophy session.

P4C - Questions to aid facilitation

Clarifying

>>> What reasons do you have for saying that?
>>> What do you mean by that?
>>> Can you explain more about that?
>>> Have you an example of that?
>>> What makes you so sure of that?

Exploring alternative views

>>> Is there another point of view?
>>> Can you put it another way?
>>> Are you and s/he contradicting each other?
>>> What is the difference between your view and...?

Probing the superficial

>>> Why do you think that?
>>> What is the cause of that?
>>> What makes you say that?
>>> Why...Why...Why...?

Scaffolding

>>> What do you think about...?
>>> What is the reason for...?
>>> If..., then what do you think about..?
>>> You said..., but what about...?

Seeking evidence

>>> How do you know that?
>>> What makes you say that?
>>> What is your evidence?
>>> What are your reasons?
>>> What makes you so sure?

Evaluating

>>> Who can summarise the main points for us?
>>> Can anyone say where our thinking has taken us?
>>> What new ideas have developed?
>>> If...why...?

Testing implications

>>> Is that consistent with...?
>>> What would be the consequences of...?
>>> How would we know if that is true?
>>> How can we test that in practice?

Development Compass Rose

The Development Compass Rose is a valuable tool for asking deeper, open-ended questions with a global learning focus. This version has been adapted for the Sankofa project in order to promote asking critical questions about the stories we hear in the digital age.

Nature of the story

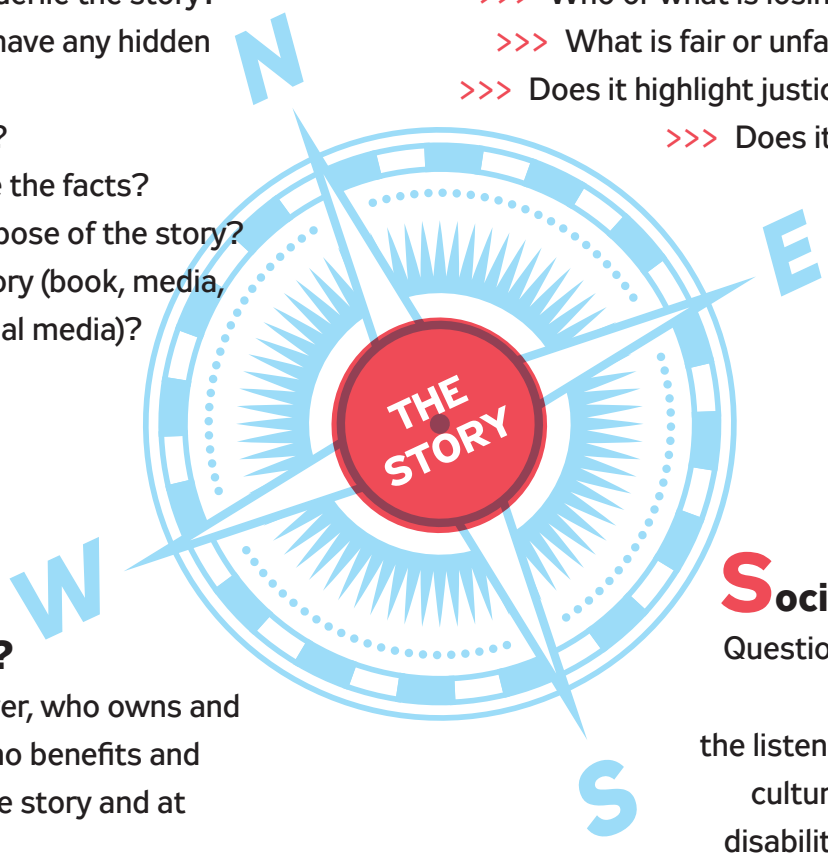
Questions about the type and meaning of the story.

>>> What are the big ideas?
>>> What values underlie the story?
>>> Does the story have any hidden meanings?
>>> Is it fact/fiction?
>>> How reliable are the facts?
>>> What is the purpose of the story?
>>> Where is the story (book, media, newspaper, social media)?

Equality questions

Questions about fairness and justice (environment as well as people).

>>> Who or what is benefitting in the story?
>>> Who or what is losing in the story?
>>> What is fair or unfair in the story?
>>> Does it highlight justice or injustice?
>>> Does it discriminate?



Who decides?

Questions about power, who owns and controls the story; who benefits and loses as a result of the story and at what cost.

>>> Who is telling the story?
>>> Who owns the story?
>>> Why are they telling this story?
>>> Who is using this story?
>>> Who is benefiting from the story?
>>> Who is losing from the story?

Social questions

Questions about people and behaviours; the listener, relationships, cultures, gender, race, disability, class and age.

>>> What effect does the story have on me?
>>> What have I learned from the story?
>>> What effect does the story have on other people?
>>> How persuasive or powerful is the story?
>>> Does it change my thinking, inspire me to act?
>>> Is it changing other peoples' thinking or behaviours?
>>> Is it affecting a particular group or culture?

Rose – TIDE global learning toolkit

Grid of stories, values and themes

The following grid offers example stories, listed with the global themes and values the story explores.

TITLE	AUTHOR	Refugees	Migration	Friendship	Gender issues	Immagination	Gender equality	Identity	LGBTQA+	Race	Diversity	Prejudice	Cultural issues	P4C	Mental illness	Enviromental sustainability	Multicultural	Sustainable development	Global warming	Citizenship	Global issues	Waste	Environmental impact	Climate change
Aani and the Tree Huggers	Jeannine Atkins															X	X							
Comfort Herself	Geraldine Kaye								X		X		X											
Dear Olly	Michael Morpourgo		X																					
Funny Frank	Dick King-Smith							X																
Halo	Zizou Corder						X																	
Homless Bird	Gloria Whelan								X															
Changing Place	Narinder Dhami					X		X																
Juice Box and Scandal: Three stories on the environment	Hazel D. Campbell																				X	X	X	X
Panther	David Owen								X								X							
The Boy in the Dress	David Walliams								X	X														
The Carbon Diaries 2015	Saci Lloyd																			X				
The Colour Blind Boy	Islamic Foundation – – Mohammed Yaseen								X		X	X	X											
The Everything Machine	Ally Kennen								X						X									
The Green Bicycle	Haifaa Al-Masour				X																			
The Jungle	Pooja Puri	X	X	X																				
The Lorax	Dr Seuss																		X			X		
The Star of Kazan	Eva Ibbotson											X												
What's Ukranian for Football?	Helena Pielichaty				X	X																		

SanKofa

LEARN: Classroom Activities

This section contains LEARN activities for learning about the Global Goals and for learning what story is and what makes a good story.

Learn about the Global Goals

In the ***Sankofa*** project the themes of the stories that the learners create will be based on local to global themes that they, the learners, think are important. They may be based on something they see in their own area, for example local poverty and food banks, a new road being built across a wildlife area, flooding, or a local farmer going out of business because he cannot get a fair price for his food. All these subjects have global implications once learners start to see their local area with 'global glasses'.

Some children may have some awareness of global issues already such as climate change, plastic pollution, migration and inequality. The act of creating and sharing their stories through the ***Sankofa*** project is a way for learners to actively engage with the world as a young citizen, raising awareness about local-global issues, being creative and encouraging others to see a new vision for the world. ***Sankofa*** encourages learners to look not to the predictable future, but to a preferable future. Their story may also inspire themselves and others to act practically and this could be a spring board for further sustainability work.

By raising awareness, learners need to know that they are joining many people across the planet who are trying to create a better world for all – the Global Goals provide an important framework for positive change and for this project.

Introductory activity

Show learners the film from the world's largest lesson:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBxN9E5f7pc

Give them the questions below and ask them to focus on these questions during the film, making notes if necessary.

1. What does the film say are the three most important things that we need to live?
2. What does the film say are the most important areas that we need to tackle?
3. How many Global Goals are there?
4. When are we going to try to achieve them by?
5. Can you give some examples of what the film says we can do to help?

Ask learners what their initial reaction to the film is – did it make them feel sad or angry or hopeful for the future or anything else? Why do they think they have those feelings?

If learners have already done work on 'rights', ask them which UN Rights of the Child they think are covered by the Global Goals.

Familiarisation of the Global Goals – what is important to them?

As a whole class, look at the numbers of the Global Goals together with the descriptors and ensure, through whole class discussion, that learners have a good understanding of what the different Global Goals actually mean.
In partners, give learners a quiz pack (resource page) which contains:

1. a copy of the Global Goals - numbers and descriptors only
2. the symbols for the goals cut up into squares

Ask learners to match the right symbols to the right numbers and descriptors. Time will be needed to sort out difficulties and recap what the titles mean.

Next, ask them to pick out the three Global Goals that they think are the most important and explain why to their partner.

For their top most important Global Goal they make notes of why they think this is important. Use an A5 piece of paper and stick the symbol and title of the Global Goal at the top.

Ask learners to consider if this goal was achieved, how would the world be a better place? Share ideas with a partner.

As an inspirational end to this activity show the film below. It focuses on examples of young people making a difference: inventing, innovating and campaigning. These young people had a vision of how they could make their world a better place and then they set about 'making a difference'.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx0AVjtdq_Q

www.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/

Learn about 'values'

In order to set the scene for exploring values through storytelling and story making, the ***Sankofa*** project provides some opportunities for learners to build knowledge and understanding about values. These activities are aimed at 9–12 year olds, the core age group of the ***Sankofa*** project, and are flexible enough to be adapted for younger or older learners.

Activity 1: What are 'values'? Individual reflection

This session supports learners to think about what we mean by 'values' and to begin to consider what their own values maybe.

First explain to the learners that everything we think and do involves our values. Values are our own internal rules – they help us decide how to act and what we think about things. Our values can change over time, although some of our values will be what we believe all our lives. Values help us decide what is important in life to us – that could be kindness, enjoying life, wanting to win (ambition), believing everyone is equal or being creative. Everyone is different and individual.

Sometimes we don't manage to fully live by our values – this is a hope, or an aspiration and some thing we strive to do as useful members of society. In that way, everyone is the same! After the discussion, ask learners to spend some time in quiet reflection and list the things that are important to them in life. This could be words, drawings or a mixture of both.

Activity 2: What are my values?

Print the grid onto thin card, and cut up, making one set for each pair or group of three learners. Ask the learners to add any of their own ideas on the blank cards and then choose the six most important cards that reflect their values. Placing the chosen cards together, take a photograph. This activity could lead to a group discussion, where decisions are explained and justified. You could use P4C, circle time or similar approaches for the discussion.

KINDNESS	**EQUALITY**	**AMBITION**	**ENJOYING LIFE**
PEACE	**LOVING NATURE**	**RESPECT**	**WEALTH**
DARING	**CURIOSITY**	**CREATIVITY**	**WISDOM**

Mapping values from stories

Combine all the values thought of by the learners in Activity 2, along with the values on the grid above. You could record these in a larger grid and display this prominently in the classroom. Nearby, provide post-it notes or other sticky papers. Over a half- term or longer, encourage the learners to make a record of the values that feature in the stories they read, hear or create. To begin with this could be a formal exercise recording the values cropping up in stories you share with the class or group. Over time the learners can be encouraged to add to the display more informally. This will build an awareness of the values being explored in the stories the learners encounter and it will create a dynamic classroom display, mapping learning and ideas.

To take this activity to a higher level, ask learners to sort the values they identify according to de Bono's Six Values Medals* (adapted here for education use):

Gold Medal: Human values including pride, achievement, belonging, hope, trust, growth	**Silver Medal:** our goals as a school community and what helps us meet them	**Steel Medal:** our strengths as individuals and what helps us develop
Glass Medal: beauty and useful change, creativity and curiosity	**Wood Medal:** positive or negative impact on the environment	**Brass Medal:** examines appearances, perceptions and consequences

*http://debonothinkingsystems.com/tools/valuemedals.htm

Once identified, learners can consider how these values have played out in a story, any conflicts between values, what the message of the story is regarding values and the impact values have for the story outcome.

Learn about stories

The seven story lines

Stories can be grouped according to their plots. These groupings, or types of stories, will vary according to world views and cultural heritage. For the purposes of this project, we decided to use those commonly found in Indo-European storytelling traditions to establish story groupings. Accordingly, there are seven story plot types, that we recommend you use for this project, at least as your starting point.

Overcoming the monster

The main character must defeat an antagonistic force (often evil) which poses a threat to the land or people related to the protagonist. Examples your children may be familiar with are *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Three Little Pigs* and *Harry Potter*.

Rags to riches

A poor protagonist acquires power and wealth, usually through their wit and their wiles, or through pure luck. Sometimes this protagonist loses it all and manages to gain it back, growing in character as a result. Examples your children may be familiar with are *Cinderella, Jane Eyre* and *Les Miserables*.

The quest

The main character(s) set(s) out on an arduous journey, which often translates into an adventure with obstacles and challenges. Their aim is to find or return an object that will resolve a problem, or to reach a desirable place. Examples your children may be familiar with are *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Odyssey* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Voyage and return

The main character goes to an unfamiliar place, either far away or not so far away. They overcome the obstacles that arise as a result of their visit, and often return a transformed person. Examples your children may be familiar with are *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and *Little Red Riding Hood.*

Comedy

This storyline centres around a light and humorous protagonist and often has a happy ending. The central motif is the triumph over adverse circumstance, often the result of misunderstanding and miscommunication, and resulting in a successful or happy conclusion. Examples your children may be familiar with are *Adrian Mole* and *Hitchhikers Guide to theGalaxy*.

Tragedy

This storyline centres around a protagonist who has a character flaw that leads to their undoing. Their unfortunate end evokes pity and sadness. Examples your children may be familiar with are *The Little Prince*, *The Red Shoes*, and *The Little Match Girl*.

Rebirth

A character is subjected to trying circumstances which result in them changing their ways, often becoming a better person. Examples your children may be familiar with are *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Frog Prince*.

The rule of three

Have you noticed how so many stories rely on events happening three times, or people/things appearing three times? The rule of three is a widely-held principle that suggests that repetition, often in the form of a trio of events or characters, has a satisfying effect on audiences, listeners and readers. Whether or not there is truth in this rule, oral storytellers rely heavily on it, often to great success. In children's stories, you only need to look at *Goldilocks, Three Billy Goats Gruff* and *Three Little Pigs* to start making the connections.

Asking questions about stories

After reading stories to the class, it is a good idea to start inculcating good habits regarding asking questions. First, you can practice asking learners questions following a reading. Then progress to getting the learners to compose questions themselves. You can use any of the stories in the grid table of values, themes and stories in the Teachers Learning Guide, and following P4C practice will offer plenty of opportunities for learners to hone the skill of asking good questions.

Drawing out the main idea of stories

Ask learners to identify the most important or relevant points from a story to identify the main ideas. The following questions can be used:

Who? Identify the person or people the text is about.
What? Identify the topic or underlying theme of the text.
When? Identify a reference to a specific time or period.
Where? Identify a specific place or a setting.
Why? Identify a reason or explanation for what happens in the text.
How? Identify a method or theory in the text.

A shorter version of this can be done with the two most important questions: **who?** and **what?** To check learners' understanding, ask them to summarise the main points of a story – the litmus test of understanding. This could be two sentences or 10 or 15 words, for example, within which to express the main ideas, or to get the gist.

This process can be scaffolded for learners by being modelled by the teacher, then done in small groups and finally as an individual piece of work. As an extension activity learners could critique each other's work, give feedback and edit accordingly. Through these processes, students will improve their ability to identify a main idea and express it in a clear and concise manner.

Getting the gist of longer works, such as books, can be more difficult. The following process provides for an effective approach, with the opportunity to highlight, underline, or circle the keywords and phrases:

>>> Look at the title – often the title provides a good indication of the topic of the text, or at least helps to orientate the reader in the direction of the main idea.
>>> Look at the first and last sentences/paragraphs of the extract – often the main idea will be introduced and summarised respectively in these parts of the text.
>>> Look for repeated words and phrases in the extract – the frequency with which they occur will be a strong indicator of their relative importance and will point learners in the direction of that elusive main idea.
>>> Instruct learners to ask themselves, "*What does the writer want me to know?*". Answering this question successfully will require them to uncover the main idea of the text.

As an extension activity learners can be provided with texts where the main idea is implied. This will require more conscious effort to uncover the main topic of the writing and requires analysis of the text at a higher level.

Source: https://www.literacyideas.com/getting-the-main-idea

Learning about story structure

Sorting pictures

For this activity, we need a set of pictures (or photographs) that together make up a story (one picture = part of a story). It is recommended that the images should be simple, clear and understandable.

Ask learners to sort the images to form a story. At the beginning we can start with a well-known story (such as a famous fairy tale) and then include a story that participants do not know. It works well in pairs or in small groups.

Next ask the learners to tell their story to the rest of the class, according to the pictures. It can happen that, while working with the same pictures, children can come to different interpretations of the story.

Round this activity off with a class discussion. Introduce the story bell structure – the **story bell mountain**. (This will be explored much more in the ACT section of classroom activities.) Briefly, the

story bell mountain idea is that stories have a beginning, middle and end and the excitement in a story builds and resolves in a bell shape over those stages of time.

Extension activities: working with text

This activity is similar to the previous one, but we do not work with pictures, but with pieces of text that together make up a story. Participants are again asked to sort the text samples to form a story.

To make it harder for older children, throw in some samples from different texts i.e. not all the texts included are from their story. The learners should then exclude parts of text that do not fit the story.

Heroes of the story

It's good to play with the idea of the 'hero', the main character of any story, using these questions:

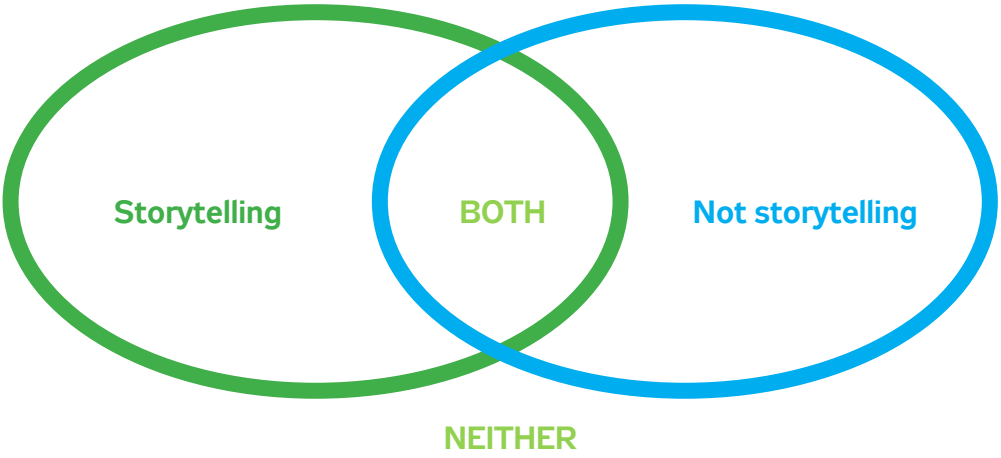
>>> What do they look like?
>>> Where can I find them? (On the old yellowed photo – on a mobile picture, sketched in a sketch, in an old picture in a gilded frame...)
>>> What is their expression?
>>> What are they wearing?
>>> How do they speak? (Quickly, slowly, what kind of voice, what words s/he uses, dialects)
>>> How do they smell?
>>> What is in their pocket?
>>> What is their greatest wish?
>>> What are they afraid of?
>>> What is their secret?
>>> How do they behave when someone gets angry?
>>> Where do they go to relax? How do they rest?
>>> What is their motto?
>>> What do they dream of?

EXPLORE: Classroom Activities

This section contains EXPLORE activities for exploring the values behind and the meaning of the Global Goals and for exploring the techniques and skills of story building.

Explore the concept of story itself

On large pieces of paper (e.g. flipchart), create a Venn diagram outline, one per group of learners. One circle is 'storytelling' and the other is 'not storytelling'.



Provide a set of cards for each group.

Instagram post	News	Picture book	Films
Telling your parents about your day	**Pepsi advert***	**History book**	**Song lyrics**

* or another well known commercial product

Ask each group to discuss and agree on where they think each card should be placed on the Venn diagram.

Once the learners have completed the task, they can circulate around the room to see how other groups have placed their cards. What decisions were the same? Which cards were placed in a different way? Debrief as a whole class.

Exploring multiple perspectives for a digital age

Multiple perspectives can be used to help learners think critically in relation to their own perspective and values through exploring the contestable statements. Learners think critically about whether they agree or disagree, give reasons and justify them.

Multiple perspectives can also be used to help learners think creatively in relation to different perspectives, presented as genuine and valid statements, leading to open-mindedness, curiosity and empathy.

The digital age is not real.

The digital age will save the future.

Children understand the digital age better than adults.

The digital age is wasteful.

The digital age makes better friendships and connections.

The digital age helps us learn better.

The digital age is for entertainment, not education.

It's not possible to live outside the digital age.

The digital age is damaging childhood.

The digital age is changing the way we think.

Everyone lives in the digital age, no one is excluded.

The digital age can teach us more than a teacher can.

The digital age is damaging nature.

These statements can be used in a variety of ways:

Critical thinking

Perspective statements can be used individually, or as a set. Learners can group them: agree/disagree, true/false, adult/child, teacher/parent, teacher/child; or arrange them as a continuum line: most strongly agree, agree, disagree, most strongly disagree. Further exploration can be done by questioning the placements on the continuum, or by deliberately bringing together learners with opposing points of view for paired dialogue. Learners can vote on which statement is most interesting and generate questions for a P4C enquiry.

Creative thinking

One different perspective statement is given out to each learner on a card. They walk around the room and share with others in a 'market place' of multiple perspectives. Learners are encouraged to listen to many perspectives in a non-judgemental way, being genuinely open to other perspectives. This activity can be deepened by getting learners to give reasons and justify the perspective they are holding. Learners can then create statements to describe their own perspectives on the digital age.

Teachers might consider the values associated with these perspectives. Would a young person rank these differently to a parent, teacher or other adults? Does that make a difference? Is that important? Should we adults be listening to the opinions of young people more?

Exploring digital worlds and real worlds

Sort these activities into a Venn diagram, as in the previous activity, but this time use the headings 'Digital' and 'Real'.

Telling the time

Watching a film

Telling a story

Making friends

Drawing a picture

Booking a holiday

Learning how to read

Taking a photograph

Making a memory

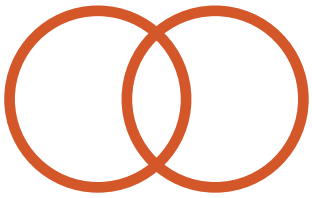
Reading a story

Buying a train ticket

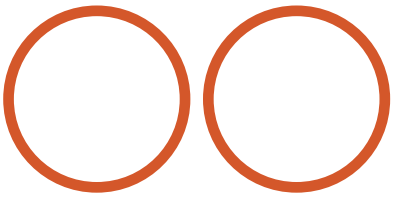
Visiting friends

This activity opens up opportunity for enquiry about the concepts of digital and real worlds. It allows children to contest whether these two things are separate or not.

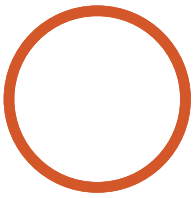
Next consider the diagrams below in relation to the notion of a digital world and real world. How is the digital world the same as the real world? How it is different? Which one do you think best describes the relationship?



A
Venn diagram



B
Completely different



C
Exactly the same

D
One part of other

The light and shade of storytelling in a digital world

Use the image to consider the range of digital tools available for storytelling in a digital age. Choose three that you think are in the light (beneficial) for young people. Choose three that are more in the shade (problematic) for young people.
This could also be done as a continuum line from beneficial/problematic, effective/not effective or other combinations.
Rather than creating consensus, highlight that choices will be informed by their values and personal experience. Be prepared and open for the students having different ideas to your own!

Illustration by Lynn Bates. Find out more at lynnjbates.org

ACT: Classroom Activities

This section contains ACT activities for taking responsible action on the Global Goals and for story making and storytelling.

Visioning Global Goals in our community

Start 'local' and go on a walk round your local community. You could ask learners to make maps of your local area, or make a guide to visitors, or make a community collage. Take photos and videos during the walk. Your learners could interview people (such as shop-keepers or librarians) or take a survey, stopping passers-by, if appropriate. Your map, guide or collage can be presented however your learners wish, encourage creativity and engagement with digital technologies.

Following the walk, ask learners these questions: What makes up our community? Exploring connections – who makes up our community?

Reflections and discussion

How would they like to see their community in 20 years time (when they are a young adult)? What wider global issues does this vision link into? Which Global Goals does this connect with?

Probable and preferable futures

David Hicks created this tool to support looking at the likely future ahead if nothing changes and comparing and contrasting that to preferable futures the learners can envisage. In small groups, ask learners to create their own version in the gap between past and present.

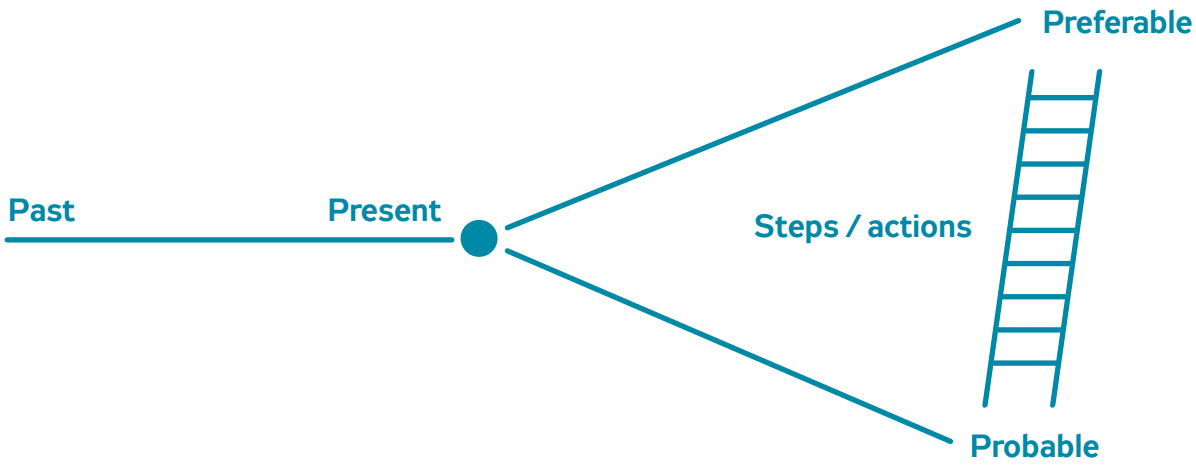


Diagram adapted from David Hicks (2002) 'Lesson for the Future'

Learners can use words, drawings or a mixture of each; encourage creativity and colour. Some may wish to include photographs or memorabilia. This stage could be set as homework, to involve families and community.

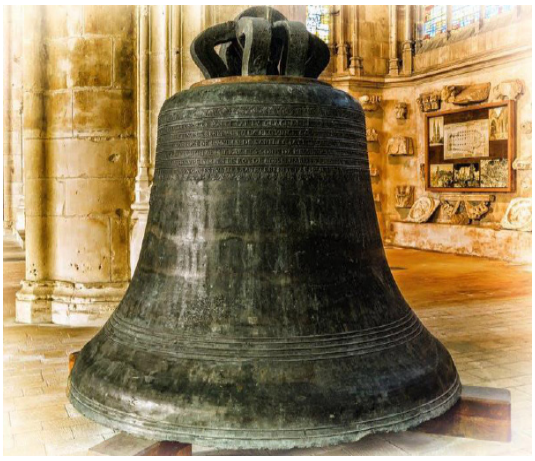
Learners then go on to consider the steps needs for a preferable future and this task is a great way to link real life to the Global Goals. It may be important to balance the mood if things become too optimistic or too pessimistic.

What steps do we need to build from where our community/world is now to where we want it to be?

Many of the steps identified will link to the Global Goals, or the UN Rights of the Child. It may be that the learners research this aspect themselves or it becomes the basis of a follow-up lesson devised by the teacher.

Creating new stories

Creating a new story can be a daunting task, even for the most prolific of storytellers. Before asking children to create their own stories it is prudent to start by creating stories in larger groups. Here children will have lots of support including the opportunity to observe and learn from their more confident peers, safety in numbers and the ability to 'pass' if they don't feel ready to share. Especially in the initial inception phases, it is important to use props and illustrations to help scaffold story – building. The groups can then become gradually smaller as the children grow in confidence and skill.



The **story bell** follows the classic Indo-European story structure, which consists of:

BEGINNING: The introduction to the story, where the scene is set, the lead character(s) is/are presented, and the tone is established.

MIDDLE: This is where a problem, or a 'story knot' arises. The lead character(s) face a challenge, a dilemma or a difficult situation that must be resolved. It is often referred to as the 'climax' of the story, where tensions are high. It is important to ensure the stakes have been clarified before reaching this point to maximise its effect.

END: The 'story knot' is resolved, a stage often referred to as the 'denouement' – literally 'the unravelling' of the conflict.

As a first step in the classroom, we can see how the story bell model applies to stories that are popular in the children's day-to-day story-scapes (that is, their landscape of stories). These may be folktales from their cultural folklore, picture books you have read as a whole class, or a popular culture novel that most of your young people are likely to have read (or seen as a film). The important thing is that the point of reference is known to most of thechildren.

Work together as a whole class to identify which parts of the sample stories fall into which stage of the story bell.

Warming up

Start by warming the children up. Imagination is like a muscle – the more we use it, the stronger it grows. Screenwriters, playwrights, novelists and journalists know this, and will tell you that just as some people go to the gym to become stronger and faster, storytellers must also 'exercise' their imagination and storytelling skills on a regular basis. Many of them will wake up very early in the morning to ensure they get enough daily 'exercise' to keep their storytelling muscle strong.

It is therefore important to warm up, especially with budding storytellers. Play games that stretch the imagination. For example, place a bag in the middle of the room. Choose a colourful bag, or a bag that is striking, and ask the children to imagine what might be inside the bag. The propositions will get wilder and wilder! You may want to actually have an item in the bag...a scarf, or a jewel or a mug...something striking that the children have not seen before. This object could be the starting point for your story.

Story building as a group

Starting by recalling the different stages of storytelling again – the story bell mountain.

Sitting in a circle, use the object from the bag to start telling a story. You might ask if any of the children would like to begin. From that point, you could go in order to the left or to the right. Variations could be that the children put their hands up if they feel ready to continue the story or the last child to contribute selects the next child from among the children with their hands up.

In the beginning, it is important to structure the contribution into the three stages of the story bell mountain. You can give the children an indication by dividing the class equally into three groups, and signposting, either orally or with placards, the different stages as they build their story. A visual illustration of the mountain would be useful as you signpost the children, especially the younger ones.

The same exercise can be done in writing form. Each child has a large piece of paper and begins their story, passing it on to the next child who continues writing, and so on until each child's story has gone around the class and is returned to them. Once again, signposting the different stages of the story will help the children build it.

An alternative warm up to the written version could be that each child carefully folds their section, so that the next child can only see the previous sentence, with just enough information to build on it. It is vital for some information to be available to the next storyteller.

With the written exercises, teachers may want to break the class into small groups to prevent the exercise becoming time-consuming.

Individual story creation

Once you have tried group story creating a few times, encourage the children to create their own individual stories. Remember that asking a child to come up with all the ideas on their own can be a daunting task, so introduce imagination-inducers and props that can help. For example:

Story beads

Offer a wide selection of beads to the class. Each bead can represent a section of the story. Selecting a bead from a variety of sizes, colours and shapes will encourage children to think more deeply about what the mood and content of the different 'chapters' of the story.

Story dice

These are fantastic props for story making and can be purchased or made. Story dice have an image on each side. You can give one die to each child and ask them to role it three times. They may get a dog, a cloud, and a bowl of spaghetti. Now they must make a story out of it, with a beginning, a middle and an end. Can they add a Global Goal theme to the story? Ask them if they think of other ways they can use the dice to make up stories. Ask learners if they have any ideas of what they might need to build stories from scratch. Giving them ownership over the creation process will yield more enthusiasm and effort, especially if they feel that their needs are being received and honoured.

Contextualising our stories with the Global Goals

In the ***Sankofa*** project we wish to specifically create new stories based on the Global Goals.

Encourage a joined-up approach with the activities included in this guide and remind learners to use their own passions regarding the sustainable development agenda to inspire their new stories. This may be something they have learnt at school, on the news or online, or from their family or friends.

Some guiding questions may be:

>>> What values and 'big ideas' would be needed to underpin any changes occurring in your story? How will these be shown in your new story? (The basis for the story)
>>> What actions would be needed to bring this about? (The plot for a new story)
>>> Who would be involved? (The characters for your new story)
>>> What might be some difficulties on the way? (The tension in your story)
>>> What would success look like? How will this have 'changed the world'? (The ending of your story)

Creative block – getting unstuck

Every storyteller will have a creative block at some point in their story-making process. They will feel stuck, not know where to go next, lose their grip over what their story was about in the first place, or just suddenly experience a drop in confidence. Here are some ideas for getting unstuck:

>>> Listen to a song. This may or may not be related to the children's story, and they may want to listen to it over and over again before they experience a 'reveal'.
>>> Get sensory. Children can be encouraged to take a walk barefoot on the grass, tickle their faces with a feather, taste something sharp or acidic that will sharpen their senses. Bodily experiences can open the mind and lead to cognitive expansion in more ways than one.
>>> Find inspiration in existing storyline(s). The arts are full of 'borrowed' ideas. Finding inspiration from the work of another artist is fair game, and even encouraged, as long as the lines of ownership are clear. Be careful not to veer into the realms of plagiarism, a serious and undignified offense. Building on someone else's ideas is one thing. Stealing them is another.

Final thoughts

As children create new stories, they will be going through a journey of self-discovery. They will be grappling to find their unique voice and connecting with what really matters to them. They will be entering the realm of the imagination where everything is possible. They will be putting dreams to paper, and mining experiences into words. Be sure to create a space that is safe and encouraging as they go through their journey of discovering the storyteller within.

This handbook was written and compiled by
Linda Barker from Global Learning London for the Sankofa project,
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