

Relay

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Nottingham Stylistics Toolkit:

Analysing texts



Edu-blog Spotlight:

Nathan Burns on colour-blind support



Tried and Tested:

Mystery Book for parents and carers

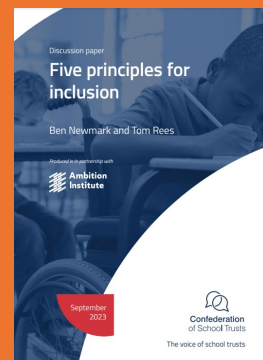
5 Principles for Inclusion

In Summer 2022, Ben Newmark and Tom Rees co-authored a paper in response to the then government's SEND Review and Green Paper consultation: '[A good life: Towards greater dignity for people with learning disability](#)'. Following this, they worked with specialists, schools and trusts to develop five principles which they hope can 'underpin better inclusion in schools', which were published in October 2023 by the Confederation of School Trusts in association with Ambition Institute.

The principles are an attempt to capture the ideas and practices that were shared, with a hope to 'stimulate discussions that might help to improve the educational experience and outcomes of children with SEND' and guide future policy. As educators and parents of children with SEND, their experience has helped drive their central message that SEND should not be viewed through a deficit or medical lens, but a more 'affirmative version of inclusion.'

The full report details each of the five principles and includes case studies from specialist settings, mainstream settings and multi-academy trusts, to offer examples of best practice and a starting point for schools on their journey to inclusion and what that means day-to-day.

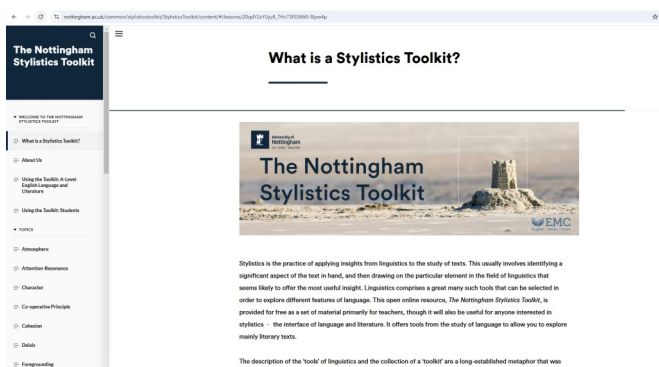
- Dignity, not deficit
- Greater complexity merits greater expertise
- Different, but not apart
- Success in all its forms
- Action at all levels



<https://bit.ly/4ghqGag>

The Nottingham Stylistics Toolkit

The Nottingham Stylistics Toolkit is an open online resource from the English and Media Centre at the University of Nottingham. Intended as a resource for teachers, and of use to students of English Literature and Language at A Level and beyond, the toolkit offers an insight into stylistics as professional development to anyone teaching at earlier levels of the curriculum.



'Stylistics' is the practice of using ideas from linguistics (the study of language) to analyse texts. This means focusing on an important part of a text and using the relevant tools from linguistics to understand it better. Stylistics goes beyond labelling linguistic features and helps understand the craft of writing. Linguistics has many tools to help study different features of language and the Toolkit provides detailed information on key features.

Alongside an alphabetical list of 'key notions' drawn from the wider field of linguistics, the online Toolkit also includes the following resources for each entry:

- Key summary definition of the term
- A video analysis
- Classroom activity handout
- Further reading

The videos demonstrate each concept in a practical analysis with text, and are around 5-6 minutes long. Handouts are provided in Word format so that you can adapt them to your own needs; particularly useful if you want to take the essence of an activity that is presented at a level that is too complex for your cohort.

Entries include key features of language, such as metaphor or register; aspects of language and discourse, like atmosphere and character; literary effects and key words, such as humour and alienation; and terms that relate to particular approaches or frameworks common in stylistics. In addition to this, there is a glossary of all the terms and terminology from the explanations.

<https://bit.ly/4imzbm9>

The Metaphor Game

One of the resources under the entry for 'metaphor' in the Nottingham Stylistics Toolkit is the Metaphor Game. This could be used during a staff meeting to explore metaphor on a deeper level, or adapted to use with pupils to support their writing and analysis of text.

From the list of words below, or your own, randomly select items to fit into the following constructions (you might have to add plurals, articles or morphemes such as 'ish' or '-ly' to make the sentence grammatical):

A is B

There is A in the B of C

A is not B

There is A in every B

A is like B

A-B

A is the B of C

When you have made at least three constructions, try to answer the following questions:

What does the metaphor mean?

Which elements of the conceptual domains are mapped?

What is the effect of reversing any of the elements in the sentence?

Does the metaphor create a new idea or is there just a poetic effect?

Are all the sentences metaphorical, or can some be read literally?

Which metaphors are 'better' than others? How can you decide this systematically?

LOVE

STARS

ROCK

WAR

TELEVISION

WATER

CHAIR

TABLE

LIFE

DEATH

HAND

JOURNEY

GARDEN

BOOK

FIELD

COMFORT

ICE

GRIEF

CARPET

HOUSE

Edu-blog Spotlight

Nathan Burns is an educator and author with an expertise in metacognition. He blogs at <https://www.mrmetacognition.com/> and tweets as [@MrMetacognition\(.bsky.social\)](https://twitter.com/MrMetacognition(.bsky.social))



In this post, Nathan Burns, Mr Metacognition, discusses from a personal perspective how we can support colour-blind students.

He gives an account of how he found out that he is colour blind himself at the age of around 8 when presented with a maths problem in which he was asked to count the number of dots in a particular colour. Despite a set back in this sort of task, he doesn't feel that he has been particularly impacted by his colour blindness and describes his 'first big colour-blind moment' when he recently saw a green dog. Not only did it turn out, understandably, that the dog was in fact brown, but he then got a surprise that the lovely green coat he had worn all winter was, fact, also brown.

Whilst his experience hasn't been hindered, there are some students in our schools who have a different experience. Using guidance from the WJEC and Colour Blind Awareness Society, Nathan suggests several ways to make the classroom more inclusive:

1. Only use distinguishing colours where integral to content understanding.
2. Avoid using a range of font colours, again where not integral (for example, often seeing red words within black text is very difficult, myself included).
3. There is no one colour palette that works for all (unfortunately).
4. Avoid conveying information by colour alone.
5. Utilise black and white texture, such as dots, lines and hatching as alternatives.
6. Do not rely on one student or member of staff, who are colour-blind, to advise, as they only will have one type of colour-blindness.
7. If colour is being used, incorporate it with line design (e.g. dots, hatch) so there are multiple ways to decode the information.
8. Strongly mark boundaries between different colours (for example in choropleth maps) and explode segments where possible (for example in a pie chart).
9. Print pictures in greyscale if possible.
10. Avoid low contrast between two colours which overlay or sit next to each other.

Full post available here: <https://bit.ly/3VzPFgS>

Cognitive Bias of the Half-term

Cognitive biases are shortcuts in our thinking but they can make us lose objectivity. Each issue we introduce a new bias to help you avoid its pitfalls.

Survivorship Bias

Survivorship bias is where we focus on successful examples to guide decisions rather than taking account of non-successful examples.

A famous illustration of this is a WW2 study of how to protect aeroplanes from being shot down, but there are more everyday examples such as a gym advertising members who have toned up rather than the majority who never go.

Tried and Tested

Following success with running a Mystery Book with their class; where an unknown book is placed in an opaque folder with a small exercise book and pupils take it in turns to read the book and write a comment in secret, Jon Bidle has tweaked it slightly and included parents and carers.

Interested parents and carers signed up to take one of two mystery books (short novels that could be read in a couple of hours and are accessible), and their plan is to invite parents and carers in to enjoy some refreshments and discuss the books at the end of the year.

40 parents signed up initially and responses so far are positive, with parents and carers commenting that they have been able to discuss issues in the books with their children and have asked for more book suggestions.

More information: <https://bit.ly/3DenwFW>

