

Teaching notes

The writer of this resource originally wrote this as a scheme of work for a class of new year 7 students who were not big fans of spiders! It includes:

- a scheme of learning, with supporting notes for the teacher
- suggestions for literacy and/or SEN support
- worksheets
- extension tasks.

The resource is designed to support teachers who are familiarising themselves with a new class, to identify areas of strength and concern, so the supporting notes highlight opportunities to make and record these observations in **bold**.

You can choose the most suitable outcome for the unit to do as a whole class, offer these as options for students, or ask students to complete more than one. These are:

- Activities 3-4: narrative writing task based on a day out
- Activity 5: advertisements for Arachnocure
- Activity 6: radio interview with Great Aunt Helen.

Activity 1: Arachnophobia

- Ask students in pairs to list the most common phobias they know about or experience and record the most commonly listed. (If possible, ask a student to sort them into 'rational' and 'irrational' phobias.)
- Tell students that arachnophobia - the fear of spiders - is one of the most common phobias in the UK, and their project is about a fictional character who invents the cure for arachnophobia: Arachnocure.
- Ask students to spell the word arachnophobia on a piece of scrap paper (NOT in their exercise book!) **Keep an eye out for unusual spellings which might indicate an undiagnosed SpLD.**
- Ask for a volunteer to try to spell arachnophobia on the board. If it is not correct, ask for another volunteer. If you don't get there, write the correct spelling on the board and ask students to copy the heading carefully. **Observe students carefully while they do this, to identify any problems copying from the board.** Explain that the word comes from 'arachnid' meaning spider plus 'phobia', which comes from the Greek word meaning fear. The word derivations reinforces spelling patterns.
- Ask the students to guess what percentage of women and men are thought to suffer from arachnophobia, according to a recent estimate. Tell them the answers will be revealed when every student has made a guess. **Identify students who are not comfortable volunteering guesses, despite the relatively safe no-stakes environment.**
- Let students know the answer: half of women and a quarter of men. **Identify any immediate issues regarding 50% (half) and 25% (quarter) if there are obvious numeracy challenges.** If possible, draw attention to the ways in which this statistical data might be unreliable - for instance, some people lied when answering the question!
- Throughout the project, look for ways to focus on students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development: SMSC and cross-curricular. As some students may not have a problem with spiders, raise the issue of whether a problem is only worth thinking about if it affects them as individuals. Link to contemporary events which they may feel do not affect them e.g. the war in Syria. Introduce the concept of the project: a fantasy project based on the fictional discovery of an instant cure for arachnophobia. Stress that this is the fear of spiders.

Activity 2: Great Aunt Helen character profile

- Introduce the next activity which will be to create the character profile for the Australian scientist who has just invented an instant cure for arachnophobia. Explain that this is not yet true, but is the dream of many people around the UK!
- Ask students what type of information they would expect to see on the character profile. They may well have created character profiles before either at primary school, or during online games. What information is essential/optional? This information could be used to adapt the profile template. Explain that you would like them to make notes in their books before they start their final draft.
- Tell the students they will be inventing the character profile of a great aunt who emigrated to Australia on the day they were born. Great Aunt Helen is a scientist and is now very rich after inventing the cure for arachnophobia. Ask students to guess why the country of Australia was chosen for this project - some may already know about red-back and funnel web spiders!
- Ask the students to copy the headings into their books, and to note down some ideas under each heading. Advise them to leave enough space in their notes to add in extra ideas.
- Encourage the students to share their ideas with their classmates - actively encourage imaginative responses. The character must be human! Explain again that you and they will be checking ideas, spelling and punctuation first.
- Give the students several minutes to discuss their ideas, then ask for feedback. Be aware that many students may want to draw on stereotypes e.g. the 'mad' male scientist. Challenge stereotypes if you can. (At some point, you may want to challenge any stereotypes explicitly e.g. by showing images of accomplished female scientists (Mae Jemison, Gelareh Zadeh, Carol Greider, Katherine Johnson etc.)
- When all students have shared at least one idea, ask them to draw a sketch of Great Aunt Helen on white paper to cut and stick in the box. **Watch out for any students who struggle with this: spatial awareness / motor skills.**
- While the students are sketching, check students' drafts for missing capital letters in proper nouns, and inaccurate spelling of words which follow rules. **Check for inaccuracies in these areas to monitor students with problems.**
- When all notes are checked, ask students to complete the character profile in their neatest handwriting. **Check these carefully afterwards for letter formation.**

Resource: Great Aunt Helen profile

Name: Helen

Date of birth:

Address:

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Occupation: Scientist: invented Arachnocure

Appearance:

Distinguishing mark:

Ambition:

Role model:

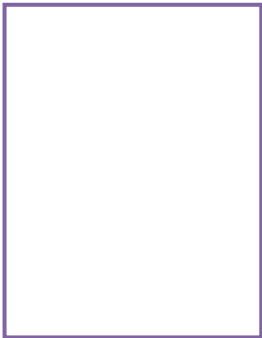
Religion:

Favourite sport:

Favourite book:

Favourite food:

Favourite hobby:



Activity 3: A day out with Great Aunt Helen

Please note that you will need a selection of tourist leaflets for this activity: try to get hold of several copies for a few chosen attractions. It will also help to have a local map, access to the internet or app such as Googlemaps.

Phone conversation

- The first task is for students to improvise a phone conversation in role as Great Aunt Helen and her niece/nephew, in pairs. In this conversation, Helen will offer her young relative an expenses paid day out together to a local attraction.
- Using the example in the resource below, model an improvised conversation with the teaching assistant or a volunteer student. Make sure students reflect on their conversation to assess whether they have a plan in place. **This task will be particularly difficult for any students on the Asperger's spectrum - support may be needed to anticipate the questions of the invitee.**
- Place students in pairs and ensure each student gets the opportunity to play Helen. While the students are practising, monitor, and ensure that no one is verbally 'blocking' their partner so that the conversation cannot flow. If possible, ask all pairs to perform at least one of their conversations.

Planning the day out

- Each student should then choose a local attraction from the available leaflets. Using their leaflet, students should complete the research notes, to include basic information about the attraction.
- Observe students while they do this task, as some may struggle. If possible, have access to an app or website for distances, e.g. Googlemaps. Also have a local map available for students to consult, if possible. Draw attention to health and safety and access issues, especially as their great aunt is ancient!
- Students will now start the planning process for the day out. Ask each student to prepare a draft timetable on the planning sheet for the morning of their day out. Before they start, they will need to know at least an approximate journey time from their home to their chosen attraction. **Some students will find this incredibly difficult, and the task needs to be monitored as closely as possible. Difficulties in this type of planning can indicate a SpLD, and many dyslexic students would find this tricky.** It may help students to leave a gap between each item on their plan so that they can edit their ideas more easily. Encourage all students to use the infinitive/imperative form of the verb or phrasal verb in the present tense, e.g. get up, pick up, have, pack, set off. Ask students to check each other's plans for timings, ideas and capital letters on proper nouns.
- Students should copy their final drafts into their books. They will need to refer to them later.



Resource: Improvised phone conversation

Here's an example of how the conversation could begin. Use this if it helps to start your imagined conversation, and then continue the conversation to include Great Aunt Helen's invitation to take out her niece or nephew.

Me:	(irritated)	Yep?
Helen:	(cheerily)	Hello, guess who?
Me:	(sighing)	Who?
Helen:	(enthusiastically)	ME! Your long lost Great Aunt! I'm here!
Me:	(confused)	Where?
Helen:		Here! I'm in a taxi outside your house!
Me:	(curiously)	I thought you were in Australia?
Helen:	(laughing)	Well, I was. But I'm here now. And I'm rich!
Me:	(perking up)	Are you actually? How rich?
Helen:	(confidently)	Super-rich. Do you remember the Arachnocure experiments I was doing?
Me:	(bluntly)	But I thought they went horribly wrong?

Now continue the conversation in your pair.

While you are speaking, try to include at least three adjacency pairs. An adjacency pair is an example of turn-taking in conversation, when a speaker's words is linked to the other speaker's response. For example, the question

Would you like to come with me?

is answered with

I'll have to think about it.



Resource: Planning the day out

Research notes



Complete the grid below with information from your chosen tourist attraction's leaflet.

Name of attraction	
Location of attraction	
Postcode of attraction	
Email address for enquiries	
Contact phone number of attraction	
Distance from my school	
Cost of entry for one adult and a teenager	
Opening hours	
Highlight of the attraction	
Most interesting image on leaflet	
Gift shop?	
Café / food stalls	
Availability of wi-fi	
Recommended clothing	
Health and safety issues?	
Disabled access required?	

Planning a timetable for the day out

Here's an example of how you could list the events for your day out.

7.00	Get up and have shower.
7:30	Have fry-up for breakfast.
8:15	Get dressed and do my hair, etc.
8:45	Pack bag, including snacks and rain jacket.
9:10	Meet Great Aunt Helen outside the house.
9:20	Set off for Treetops Adventure Park (8.7 miles / 13 minutes).
9:35	Arrive at Treetops and park.
9:45	Queue up to collect tickets.
10:00	Start the activities: first, the zip wire.
11:00	Next activity: canoeing.
12:30	Lunch

Plan your own timetable below for the day, up until at least lunchtime. When you have checked it carefully, copy it into your book.

Time	Activity

Activity 4: Planning narrative writing

- Students can now start planning the first part of their narrative writing: a recount of the day out. The level of support for this will depend on the ability of the students within the group, so some students may require the planning resource below. All students should include:
 - a disaster at the beginning of the day which affects the timings on their plan
 - no serious injuries so the day out goes ahead!
- Before they start writing, tell the students that they will have the opportunity to read out - or have read out - their narrative writing if they think it's gone well, and will entertain others. This awareness of a possible audience for their writing may motivate some students to produce more interesting/humorous narratives.
- Share with students the literacy focus you will be looking for, as relevant to your class, e.g. capital letters for proper nouns, end of sentence punctuation and commas, the organisation of ideas into paragraphs, the punctuation of direct speech, the use of Standard English in the narrative or a relevant spelling focus.
- If possible, allow time in the lesson for a few students to read out all or part of their narrative. This will provide them with immediate feedback on the content/ideas. Encourage the listeners to make specific **positive** comments e.g. 'I liked that image', 'the bit with the car made me laugh'. Remind students that they should encourage each other to do more of what they do well.
- Before completing the piece of writing, the students can explore their ideas in a number of ways. These activities would work well as starter activities for subsequent lessons if and when students need more time on the narrative writing:
 - in pairs, students read each other's writing and play 'Unfortunately ... / Fortunately ...'

Student: Unfortunately, Great Aunt Helen fell from the zipwire.

Partner: Fortunately, she landed in a muddy stream which broke her fall.
 - In pairs, students discuss each other's narratives by playing 'would have / could have / should have'

Student: If Great Aunt Helen **had attached** the safety harness properly ...

Partner: ... she **wouldn't have fallen** into the stream.

Resource: Planning your narrative writing

Great Aunt Helen has invited you to the Treetops Adventure Park for the day. You have now planned your timetable for the day and are ready to go.

What are your feelings when you wake up on the morning of the trip?

Circle three answers:

happy	horrified	excited	surprised	anxious	enthusiastic
disappointed	apprehensive	overjoyed	nervous	energetic	
hopeful	lethargic	annoyed	amused	exhausted	curious

List three things that you feel optimistic about e.g. sunshine.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three things that you feel pessimistic about e.g. it's the first time you've been on such high ropes.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

It is the morning of the trip, and you are waiting for Great Aunt Helen.

What day of the week is it?

What is the weather like?

What time is it?

What are you doing while you're waiting for Great Aunt Helen to arrive?

How are you feeling?



Planning your narrative writing

Then write the first paragraph of your story in the past tense.

Here is an example to show you what to do:

It was a warm sunny Saturday morning in September and I could hear the church clock striking in the distance. It was 9am, so Great Aunt Helen should be arriving in the next few minutes. Smiling to myself, I started to tuck into another bowl of breakfast to calm my nerves. Although I was feeling excited about the day ahead, I was also apprehensive, as I hadn't seen Great Aunt Helen for years. Most of all, I was looking forward to trying out that zip wire!

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However, before she even walks through the door, things start to go wrong. What happens?

List three possible ideas of what could go wrong.

1.
2.
3.

Here is an example of how the story continues:

Suddenly, I heard a loud crash, and the dog started barking. I looked out of the window. To my horror, I saw that a hired car had crashed into the wall outside our house. I couldn't believe it! Was Helen hurt?

I rushed outside and met Helen on the doorstep.
'Hello, dear,' she said, cheerfully.
'Auntie,' I screamed. 'Are you all right?'
'Yes, I'm fine, thank you,' she replied, brushing a bit of metal off her skirt. 'But the car is a write-off. We'll have to move this wreck out of the way, and then go to Treetops in your dad's van.'
'OK, then,' I muttered, doubtfully.

Continue your story about the day out.

Activity 5: Advertisements for Arachnocure

Please note that you will need a selection of advertisements for medicines or medicine boxes for this activity. Find a selection of advertisements which contain some clever or humorous text. Parenting and family health magazines are a useful source.

This activity has a media focus for promoting Arachnocure, Great Aunt Helen's miracle cure for arachnophobia.

Analysing existing advertisements

- Ask students to work in groups of three, if possible. Hand out four advertisements to each group and ask them to evaluate them, using the resource below to make notes. Ensure that each group appoints: a scribe, a spokesperson and analysts to examine the advertisements. Get groups to feed back on their findings.
- Ask the student from each group who is responsible for feedback to present their findings to the group: best and worst advertisement only.

Designing an advertisement for Arachnocure

- Students start working on their own advert for Arachnocure using the planning sheet below. Students should then begin a draft of an advertisement. Focus on the literacy aspects of the advert when talking to individual students. Many of them will want to focus on the design and use of colour. Emphasise that their target audience is people who are terrified of spiders, and have enough money to be able to afford to buy a product to tackle their arachnophobia.
- If there is time, students often enjoy designing the Arachnocure box. If used as a homework task, it is worth getting the students to make the actual box on white card in a lesson, as some find this very difficult and would need support and/or don't have resources at home.

Resource: Evaluate the advertisement: how successful is it?

Name of product	
Visual design colour images	
Text slogan alliteration rhyme humour	
Intended audience?	
Score / 10

Resource: Advertisement for Arachnocure

Make notes by answering the questions below. These will help you plan for the promotion of your product.

Who exactly is your target audience?

What will you say about the product itself?

How much space will you give to your picture of the product?

Will you actually show spiders in the advert?

Will you give any statistics in the advert?

Will you mention a price?

Will you include any special offers or discount coupons?

Will you give a website address?

Will you say where the product can be purchased?

Will you include any rhetorical questions in the advert?

Will you include a catchy slogan in the advert?

Will you include any alliteration/rhyme/humour?

Activity 6: Interview with Great Aunt Helen for a local radio show

This works well as a group speaking and listening task. The resource below includes a number of supporting prompts for lower attaining students.

Extension activities: further reading

The internet is a goldmine of non-fiction articles linked to spiders! Here is a selection of articles:

- 'Scared of spiders? Take this pill'

theguardian.com/uk/2003/nov/30/health.healthandwellbeing

- '7 of the scariest spiders in existence'

theweek.com/article/index/234931/7-of-the-scariest-spiders-in-existence

- 'Thousands watch spider 'wake up''

news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/merseyside/7599960.stm

You could also get students to research the sculpture 'Maman' by Louise Bourgeois to discuss or write about the symbolism and representations of spiders in art.

Resource: Great Aunt Helen radio interview

It's time to interview Great Aunt Helen about Arachnocure!

In your groups, decide who is going to do what:

Presenter(s):

Great Aunt Helen:

People who phone in:

What questions will you ask Great Aunt Helen?

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How will Great Aunt Helen answer the questions?

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