

Superb planning tools support teaching excellence of the new curriculum



School name:	Lixwm Primary	School type:	Primary (3-11 years)
Region:	Flintshire	Estyn rating:	Good (February 2012)
Area type:	Rural	Pupil premium %:	6%
Number of pupils:	70	EAL %:	0%

Why Wordsmith? Lixwm Primary is part of a local school partnership of 17 schools, and last year they were given some money by the LEA to invest in new resources. The school was originally only looking for phonics resources, but their consultant told them about Wordsmith; once they saw it they decided to go for it. What most appealed to them was the interactivity and the focus on grammar. The school found the structure and planning in Wordsmith really useful too, especially as they give the teaching assistants something to work through.

Key points to take away

- Planning tools **provide a recommended or customisable route** to work through for teachers and TAs.
- Bank of time saving resources offers flexibility to **support struggling learners while progressing confident children**.
- A rich and **wide selection of books to visually capture and academically engage** children.
- Programme structure **ensures grammar is discreetly built in** and embedded in the activities.

Background

Lixwm Primary is a small rural school in a relatively economically advantaged area of North-East Wales. Classes are mixed-age and I teach Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 in my class. On some days we also have Nursery and Early Entitlement (Rising 3s) with us too, so I am teaching five different ages. One of the biggest challenges is trying to keep the class calm – especially the younger ones. I have four teaching assistants to help me, but that means I have to keep on top of the planning for them. I also have to ensure they are confident with what they need to teach, and arrange for training when it is needed.

How have you implemented Wordsmith?

At Lixwm, I'm the only one using Wordsmith at the moment. However, we are planning internal training to help the Key Stage 2 staff to get up to speed so they can start using it as soon as possible.

We also introduced Abacus at the same time as Wordsmith, so the other members of staff have been getting to grips with that. Of course, their experience with Abacus will make it much easier to use Wordsmith because it's all on the same website.

The format of the worksheets is helpful for struggling Year 1s – the key words are there and everything is simplified. However, for the older children we prefer them to work independently into their notebooks. I've also turned the topics model on its head; I've been linking my topics to the books, rather than the other way around.

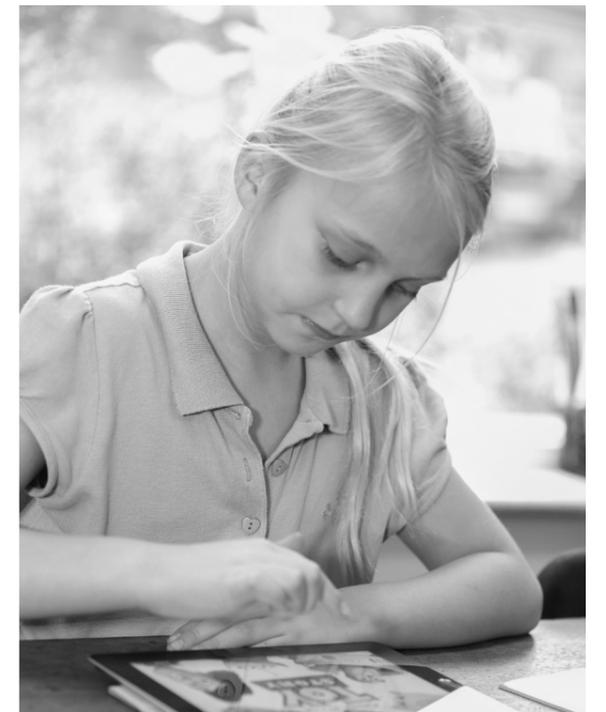
“The Professional Development is very useful; the programme has so much to it.”

What advice would you give to other schools thinking about using Wordsmith?

For those new to Wordsmith I would suggest following the recommended route until you get more confident. The Professional Development is very useful; the programme has so much to it. It can seem like there's a lot there, but once you've had the training you can see it's really easy to use.

I also think it is easier to approach it in bite-size pieces and not to download the entire lesson bank from the outset. Sessions can also take longer than you anticipate because they generate lots of dialogue which is fantastic, but also something to be aware of when planning your time.

“I love the fact that the grammar is built in.”



The outcome – engaging children by making learning fun

The best thing for me is the oracy that comes out. We're currently working on the Year 1 fiction unit and I love the fact that the grammar is built in – it pulls out things then and there that I might otherwise overlook. I can already see that the children's understanding of the structure of sentences is showing improvement.

The children really enjoy it too and the books look great on the whiteboard; it really captures them. The boys particularly liked *The Man on the Moon*. The assessment is good; I've printed off the termly assessments which will be very useful in tracking and monitoring progress and easily identifying areas for additional support. I've used the pilot's licences too, and they generate a lot of good dialogue within the group about the right or wrong answers.

Find out more

To contact your local Pearson Primary representative email primaryappointments@pearson.com or visit pearsonprimary.co.uk/impact to see more impact case studies.