**Primary Specialism**

**Summer Term 2013**

**Literacy from Scratch**

**Reflection on this collaborative Maths project**

**Name:** Aileen Phair

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**Title of Brunel Scratch Project:** Maths World

**Others working in your group:** Olivia Doogan, Aine O Connor, Kate Power

**Subject matter of Scratch Project:** Maths (four number operations)

**Age range of audience:** Year 1 or year 2 (5-6 years)

**Description of the project:** The project has been designed in four parts, each showing children simple ways of working out addition, subtraction, multiplication and division problems. The project is designed to help children understand the four operations in a simple but fun effective way that they can relate to and understand.

1. How has this project impacted on your personal learning?

“Literacy from Scratch” has helped develop my skills in computer programming while also developing and opening my eyes to creative and collaborative writhing skills. It has shown me how to effectively include art and music throughout a range of subjects and imperatively, within ICT.

During our ICT specialism, I have been given the opportunity to explore creative links across the primary curriculum. I have learned how to devise and implement different strategies to not only engage the learners, but to meet their educational needs. Scratch has enabled me to include and implement significant information that I see as being relevant for the students in mind. In addition, it has helped me make those well informed choices that teachers have to make on a daily basis for the benefit of their students.

Scratch would be an effective tool and asset to any school. Children would thoroughly enjoy creating their own projects. It would be effective to use Scratch as a project for students for any subject or even as a plenary/starter/main input of a lesson. its flexibility is extremely effective and a quick demonstration to staff members, I believe would entice them to use it in their classrooms. Although timings and certain controls were difficult for us, but I would not underestimate the children’s abilities in achieving this!

Scratch has also highlighted the importance of using ICT within the classroom and it has shown me how children can get be motivated as a result of its use.

1. What problems did you encounter, and how did you resolve them?

The timing was a major problem. Going back to the very start to replay the project caused frustration from time to time along with wasting precious time. My group members and I discussed how it is a pity about not being able to pause and replay at certain points. Initially, moving scratch scripts from one point to another, ie specific positions was a problem. However my group partners assisted in showing me how to do this by typing in the degree positioning. I found some other problems like importing pictures, adding sound etc. easy to resolve by again asking the other members in my group for help and also other members of the specialism. The end of session plenaries where extremely effective for highlighting issues and difficulties and providing a solution or new ideas for each other’s work

* A critical analysis of theoretical and empirical research relating to the specialism

ICT is crucial to children’s learning. Its use must not be underestimated as it not only acts as a visual, kinaesthetic resource but it also is the catalyst for effective learning for many children. Michael Gove’s new move towards computer science will have a very negative effect on learning in not only primary but also secondary schools in this country. I think he wants the change because he feels that ICT is not a subject which he feels is important enough for children in comparison to English, Mathematics etc. However, I feel he is wrong in this belief because the core subjects can be taught very effectively through the use of ICT. This cross-curricular link will encourage visual learners to relate to and understand the subject matter. It encompasses creativity and promotes an enjoyable, fun and rich learning experience for children.

* A critical reflection on personal learning, development and an understanding of appropriate application of pedagogy through effective planning, preparation and teaching

As mentioned above, “Literacy from Scratch” has helped develop my skills in computer programming while also developing and opening my eyes to creative and collaborative writhing skills. It has shown me how to effectively include art and music throughout a range of subjects and imperatively, within ICT. It is, and can be an effective resource across all subjects and using it throughout a range of subjects positively influences students learning experience greatly.

I enjoyed using scratch and although I experienced some difficulties, I managed to overcome them through perseverance and help from my peers. It is a very effective tool for the classroom that can be made personal and effective to all subject areas.

To improve certain aspects, I would ensure that the students develop their ideas within the first lecture or two. I would recommend that everybody must present their ideas and what they are going to do early on as this would give those who are generally laid back, an incentive to complete their mind mapping early on, enabling them to get started. Perhaps have mini plenaries throughout the lesson as sometimes at the end, some people may forget before the next class!