



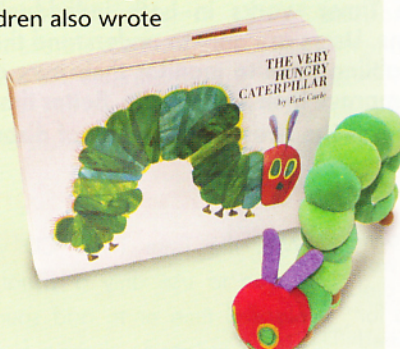
# I would be

Which resources couldn't you live without at school?

**E**very teacher keeps something in their classroom that they come to rely upon. *Junior Education* tracked down a group of soon-to-be NQTs to find out which classroom resources had helped them survive their final teaching practice.

## 1 ...The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was crawling across classroom bookshelves before any of these NQTs were born, but they still rate it as an essential text: 'I've used this book to make cross-curricular links in every subject: studying life cycles in science, creating dances and movements in PE, and discussing feelings about health, change and loneliness in PSHE. The children also wrote wonderful stories about what the caterpillar did once he turned into a butterfly... the list is endless!' **Hannah Hayes**



## 2 ...beanbags

Beanbags have been thrown around school halls for even longer than hungry caterpillars have been crawling – but some have now escaped from the PE cupboard and landed in numeracy lessons: 'Our **number-bond beanbags** have numbers written on them and we use them for quick mental maths starters. For example, children sit in a circle while the teacher throws beanbags at them! Children then have to think of two numbers that, when added together, make the number on the bag.'

**Nicola Weekes and Jackie Silcock**



## 3 ...Bob Marley's Greatest hits

Persuading children to tidy up a classroom is a task to tire any teacher – try putting an extra spring into children's steps with a favourite CD: 'I've experimented with different music for different moods, but **Bob Marley's Greatest hits** is ideal when it comes to getting the children to sort out the classroom at the end of a busy day. It somehow succeeds in calming the children down, but at the same time gives them the energy to get the job done!'

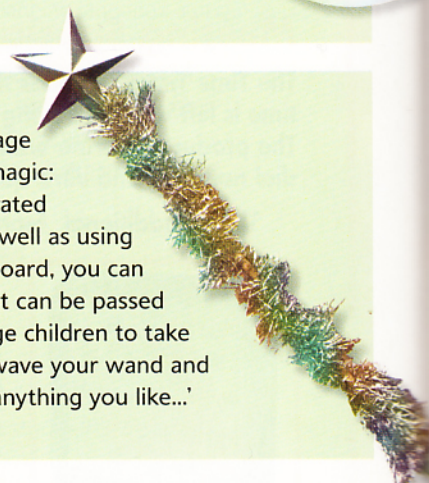
**Sabrina Prabhu-Naik**



## 4 ...a magic wand

If music doesn't soothe your savage class, then it may be time to resort to magic: 'A **magic wand** (actually a fancily decorated chopstick) is our favourite resource. As well as using it as a pointer for the interactive whiteboard, you can conduct children during music lessons, it can be passed around in PSHE discussions to encourage children to take turns to speak and, of course, you can wave your wand and instantly transform the classroom into anything you like...'

**Mandi Nichols and Caroline Pick**



## 5 ...www.nationalgallery.org.uk/education

The **National Gallery website** is a great resource, especially if you have access to an interactive whiteboard. Children can zoom in to study details of some of the gallery's most accessible works, and are invited to submit their own masterpieces for exhibition at the annual 'Take One Picture' show at the gallery. 'In the Art Action Zone the children love the "noisy paintings", where they can select a personal soundtrack to accompany each of the images. The experience of looking at Uccello's epic *Battle of San Romano* will never be quite the same once you've heard its soundtrack of "Oohs" and "Ouches"!' **Angela Morris**





# lost without...

Ten teachers share their favourite teaching tools

## 6 ...recycled junk

While some favourite resources are hi-tech, others are refreshingly, umm, low-tech: 'My favourite resource is **recycled junk** – it really prompts children to be creative with a limited range of resources. You can do so much with egg boxes, plastic bottles, cardboard rolls, and so on. My class recently worked together to make a brilliant huge dinosaur, as well as in pairs to make smaller versions.'

Amy Arthur



## 7 ...sand

**Sand** is a resource that is sometimes confined to the Foundation Stage, but its potential for Key Stage 2 shouldn't be overlooked: 'I've used sand a lot – it's my favourite resource. In history, we talked about how children used to learn to write in sand; we investigated its properties as a material in science; we experimented with it in weights and measures in maths; and we used it for thickening paint in art (as well as for weighing down dinosaur models to prevent them from toppling over!).'

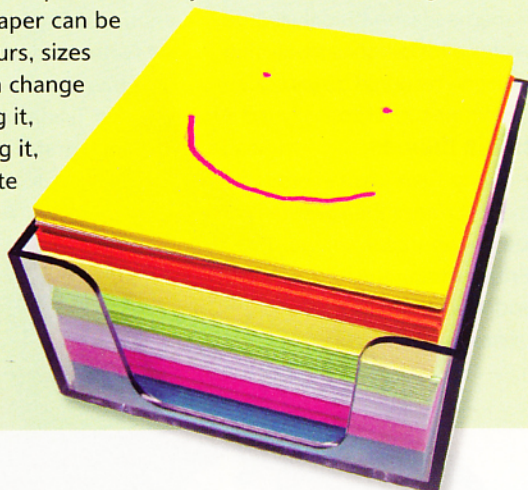
Tara Callow



## 8 ...paper

The potential of some familiar resources can often be easily overlooked. **Paper**, for example, need not just be used for writing, painting and drawing: 'Paper can be found in all sorts of colours, sizes and thicknesses. You can change it by rolling it, scrunching it, tearing it and rearranging it, or collage pieces to create fantastic textures. I'd rather give children a blank sheet of paper than a worksheet – it encourages free expression!'

Debbie-Ann McKenzie



## 9 ...laminating machines

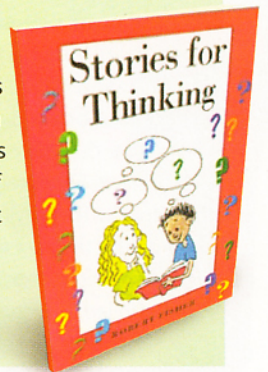
The combination of a **laminator and ring-binding machine** allows teachers to preserve children's work quickly and easily. 'The laminator allows things to be reused many times – children's work doesn't get damaged on displays. The ring-binding machine allows children to make and use their own resources that can be passed on to the next class as inspiration – it really helps to give children ownership of their work.'

Lynette O'Reilly and Parmjit Rupra



## 10 ...Stories for Thinking

Finally, any teacher interested in encouraging their children to listen attentively, to think reflectively and to express their thoughts and opinions in discussion, should not be without one of several books by Robert Fisher. *Stories for Thinking* (published by Nash Pollock) is an excellent collection of traditional stories on various themes and from a range of cultures. Each story is accompanied by a selection of questions designed to prompt children to reflect on ideas raised in the story – ideal for young thinkers in classrooms and assemblies. ■



**Robert Watts**, curriculum coordinator for Art and Design Education at Roehampton University. With thanks to BA Primary Education Art and Design specialists at Roehampton University, London.

**What's your favourite resource? Tell us and we'll feature it in Junior Ed!**