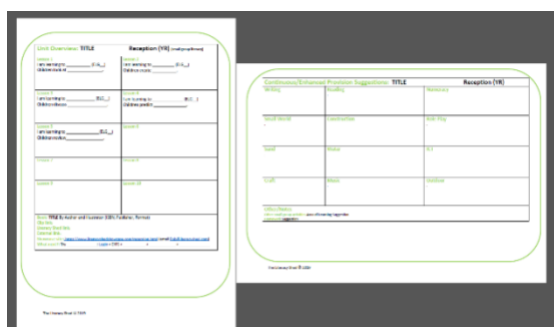


# Using Literacy Shed Concepts in the Early Years

By Clare Henrys

I have to admit, before I became a 'Sheditor' I'd had little contact with The Literacy Shed. I spent most of my teaching career in the Early Years and there was little content on the site that was relevant to my classes. I am happy to report that this is no longer the case. With the launch of the new Literacy Shed Plus units for Reception (Year R) the site can be used to inspire literacy planning across the Key Stages including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Sometimes planning for the Early Years can seem isolated from 'The Whole School Approach' as it tends to be more thematic than older years. However, [the Bold Beginning Report by Ofsted \(2017\)](#) suggests planning for reception is most successful when it is both linked to Key Stage One (KS1) and routed in the suggested progression set out in paragraphs 1.6 and 1.8 of the [Statutory Framework for the EYFS](#) (page nine).



This is what using the Literacy Shed Plus Reception Planning for small group literacy sessions could facilitate. Visually, the planning is the same as higher Key Stages, but additions, such as the Continuous Provision Suggestions on page two of the overview, ensure there is sufficient consideration to the underlying EYFS principles.

The introduction of key Literacy Shed concepts, such as VIPERS and Inspiration Stations, from the existing KS1 material is very important in the goal of linking the Reception into the 'Whole School Plan'. [The Bold Beginnings report](#) suggests the KS1 teachers interviewed felt they needed more specific information about what children could and couldn't do in order to plan successfully (page 26, paragraph 73).

By introducing the Literacy Shed concepts in Reception, the KS1 teachers will know the children are used to the concepts, and they simply need to progress the children to the KS1 versions of these resources rather than having to introduce them from scratch.

## **VIPERS**

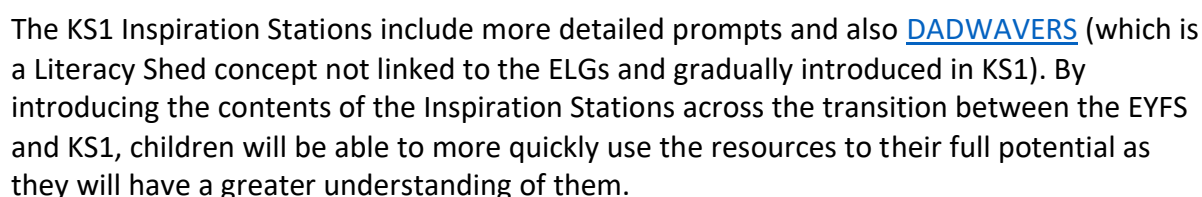
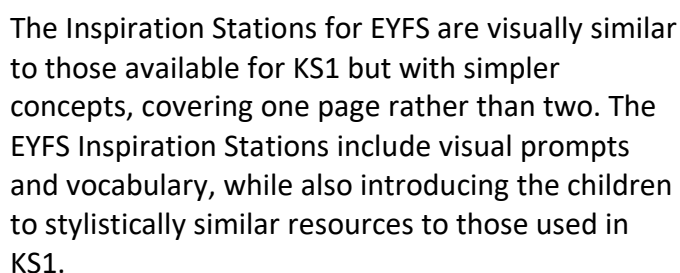
[VIPERS](#) are introduced in the "Goodnight Gorilla" Unit and the skills can be transferred into other units (some of which have ready-to-use links to VIPERS).

Once teachers and children are introduced to VIPERS the process can be used when reading, looking at pictures and watching films, in order to get the most out of them from a literacy perspective.

Teachers may find this [blog](#) a useful prompt to encourage the use of VIPERS both during small group sessions and in the wider EYFS setting. The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) for

By making the introduction physical as well as [visual](#), the children will begin to recognise the key skills linked to VIPERS and therefore be confident in using them more independently by the time they reach KS1.

“The Train Ride” (which also has optional references to VIPERS) introduces Inspiration Stations.



The transition from EYFS to KS1 is historically difficult as the difference between the more formal National Curriculum and the more child led EYFS Framework is difficult to bridge.

Using the Literacy Shed Plus planning can help ease the transition as it introduces the children to more formal learning through their small group time and allows them to use specific concepts they have learnt in Reception when they move to KS1.

I hope you see the benefits of using the Literacy Shed Plus planning in your Reception classes and as part of a whole school approach to literacy. I have really enjoyed working on the content created so far and hope you enjoy teaching it just as much.