

Introduction to the Thematic Units Year 5



Thematic Units

The Ideas for Connecting Learning (ICLs) provide teachers with a large menu of teaching and learning suggestions. However, it is recognised that teachers still need to select, adapt and plan specific teaching and learning opportunities for their class.

These thematic units have been developed to show teachers how flexible the Ideas for Connecting Learning are. Each unit offers structured learning and teaching opportunities.

It is anticipated that each unit is delivered over a period of six weeks.

Each thematic unit focuses on:

- one of the objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum; and
- one aspect of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

They:

- encourage children to make connections across the Areas of Learning;
- use active learning strategies;
- provide opportunities for the assessment of the skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT; and
- incorporate the principles of Assessment for Learning.

The thematic units are underpinned by key questions that help focus children's learning.

The thematic unit booklets also include a number of case studies, that show how schools around Northern Ireland have adapted this resource.



The Thematic Units and the Northern Ireland Curriculum Objectives

The objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum are to help young people develop as individuals, contributors to society and contributors to the economy and the environment.

These thematic units provide learning opportunities for children to develop as:

- individuals (*Me Inc.*);
- contributors to society (*Being & Belonging*);
- contributors to the economy (*The Dream Train*); and
- contributors to the environment (*Liquid Gold*).

The table below gives a brief outline of each of the thematic units:

Thematic Unit	Ideas for Connecting the Learning	Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Areas of Learning
Me Inc.	Mighty Me	To develop the young person as an individual.	<i>Self-management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Arts • Language and Literacy • The World Around Us • Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Strand 1
Being and Belonging	Where I Live	To develop the young person as a contributor to society.	<i>Working With Others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Arts • The World Around Us • Mathematics and Numeracy • Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Strand 2
The Dream Train	Journeys	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy.	<i>Being Creative</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Arts • Language and Literacy • The World Around Us
Liquid Gold	The Blue Planet	To develop the young person as a contributor to the environment.	<i>Problem-Solving</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Arts • Mathematics and Numeracy • The World Around Us • Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Strand 1

Me Inc. Thematic Unit

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 4/5 ICL *Mighty Me*. In this thematic unit, children develop a greater sense of self-awareness. They are encouraged to think critically about the events and circumstances that have shaped their lives and reflect on what is important to them.

This thematic unit presents children with opportunities to develop some of the skills that meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as an individual.
Key Element	<i>Personal Understanding</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	<p>This thematic unit focuses on <i>Self-management</i>. Children have opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become more self directed by working independently or within a group; • become more confident through developing knowledge of their personal strengths and weaknesses; and • work towards personal targets (identified individually or jointly with the teacher).
Cross-Curricular Skills	<p>Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to the Cross-Curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (Comm) • Using Mathematics (UMaths) • Using ICT (UICT)
Connecting the Learning	<p>This thematic unit provides teachers with the opportunities to connect learning across the following Areas of Learning:</p> <p><i>Personal Development and Mutual Understanding</i> Pupils should be enabled to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their self-esteem and self-confidence; and • effective learning strategies. <p><i>The Arts (Art and Design)</i> Pupils should be enabled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigate and respond to direct sensory experience and memory; and • use a range of materials, tools and processes to realise their ideas and intentions (this includes 3D construction). <p><i>The World Around Us</i> Pupils should be enabled to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change over time; and • place (materials).
Aim	<p>The aim of this thematic unit is to encourage children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise their worth as individuals, by identifying positive things about themselves and their achievements to date; • develop a deeper sense of their identity; • reflect on their own strengths as learners; and • increase their responsibility for their own learning.

Being and Belonging Thematic Unit

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 5/6 ICL *Where I Live*. In this thematic unit, children become aware of the community in which they live.

They examine:

- the life they lead compared to the lives of others in the community;
- their role in everything that happens in their community (from individual, collective and interdependent perspectives); and
- their responsibility to protect and care for their community.

This thematic unit helps children to develop self-respect, respect for others and respect for the differences between people. It presents children with opportunities to develop some of the skills that meet the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as a contributor to society.
Key Element	<i>Citizenship and Cultural Understanding</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	<p>This thematic unit focuses on <i>Working with Others</i>.</p> <p>Children have opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become more confident in social and interpersonal situations; • experience different roles in group situations and take responsibility for a range of tasks; and • work with peers to reach agreements and begin to manage disagreements.
Cross-Curricular Skills	<p>Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to the Cross-Curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (Comm) • Using Mathematics (UMaths) • Using ICT (UICT)
Connecting the Learning	<p>This thematic unit provides teachers with the opportunities to connect learning across the following Areas of Learning:</p> <p><i>Personal Development and Mutual Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing and celebrating cultural difference and diversity; and • Playing an active and meaningful part in the life of the community. <p><i>The World Around Us</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect of people on the natural and built environment over time; • How place influences the nature of life; and • Change over time in places.
Aim	<p>The aim of this thematic unit is to encourage children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop skills for working in groups; • develop self-respect and respect for others (by recognising the goodness in other people and developing an appreciation of the good things they do for others); • explore their community and what it means to them; • recognise that they are part of their community; and • develop a sense of individual and group responsibility for their community.

The Dream Train Thematic Unit

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 4/5 ICL *Journeys*.

In this thematic unit, children have the opportunity to recognise the pride that comes from having ideas and making them real. The fantasy element aims to influence and develop the quality and uniqueness of children’s innate curiosity and creativity.

They learn about:

- the innovative power of generating as many ideas and options as possible; and
- the possibilities that can be created from building and combining these ideas.

By adopting an enterprising approach, children develop the confidence to think beyond the boundaries of their everyday nature.

They take an active part in a journey that is:

- relevant and appropriate to their age and ability; and
- innovative, interactive and experiential.

Before children begin inventing their imaginative journey, it is important that they explore a wide variety of real journeys.

This thematic unit presents children with opportunities to develop some of the skills that meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and environment.
Key Element	<i>Employability</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	This thematic unit focuses on <i>Being Creative</i> . Children have opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use their imagination for enjoyment; • listen to and share ideas and experiences; • generate, build and combine ideas; and • experience the unexpected, unusual and surprising.
Cross-Curricular Skills	Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to the Cross-Curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (Comm) • Using Mathematics (UMaths) • Using ICT (UICT)
Connecting the Learning	This Thematic Unit provides teachers with the opportunities to connect learning across the following Areas of Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The World Around Us;</i> • <i>The Arts; and</i> • <i>Language and Literacy.</i>
Aim	The aim of this thematic unit is to encourage children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inspire creativity in their everyday learning; • develop an understanding of what it means to be enterprising; • develop an awareness of the stimulating power of imagination; and • present and communicate their work in a variety of ways showing some awareness of audience and purpose.

Liquid Gold Thematic Unit

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 5/6 ICL, *The Blue Planet*. Water is often referred to as *Liquid Gold*. In this thematic unit, children develop an understanding of the value of water and why they must not take this precious resource for granted.

Children begin to recognise that their choices about water can have both a local and global impact. They learn that by using water wisely they can ensure that there is enough for everyone, now and in the future.

Children explore:

- the importance of water in their own lives; and
- the importance of water for people in other parts of the world;
- the similarities and differences between people and places; and
- how water is vital to sustaining communities.

The teaching methodologies presented in this thematic unit support active and enquiry based learning both through individual learning and group work. Children participate in a range of thinking, problem-solving and decision-making challenges.

This thematic unit presents children with opportunities to develop some of the skills that meet the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and environment.
Key Element	<i>Education for Sustainable Development</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	<p>This thematic unit focuses on <i>Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making</i>.</p> <p>Children have opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sequence, order and rank along different dimensions; • identify similarities and differences by making simple comparisons and connections; • make decisions and generate options; • suggest possible solutions to problems; • explain methods and opinions and the reasons for choices and actions.
Cross-Curricular Skills	<p>Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to the Cross-Curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (Comm) • Using Mathematics (UMaths) • Using ICT (UICT)
Connecting the Learning	<p>This thematic unit provides teachers with opportunities to connect learning across the following Areas of Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The World Around Us</i>; • <i>Personal Development and Mutual Understanding</i>; and
Aim	<p>The aim of this thematic unit is to encourage children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to understand what it means to live sustainably; • develop their thinking through a range of problem-solving and decision-making challenges (which make connections from their own experience to a global issue); • build up their knowledge of the wider world and of diverse societies and cultures, through identifying similarities and differences between people and places; • understand that their choices can have a global and local impact; and • consider how they can make a difference.

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