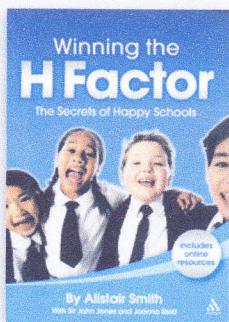


WHAT'S NEW?

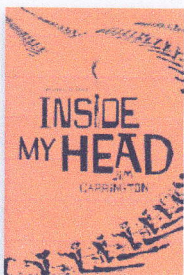
The latest products, books and teaching resources

Winning the H Factor: the secrets of happy schools

By Alistair Smith,
Sir John Jones and
Joanna Reid
Continuum
Price: £27.99



Authors Alistair Smith, Sir John Jones and Joanna Reid – a trainer, a former headteacher turned academic and a teacher, respectively – open their book with a discussion of what happiness is before moving on to the ‘H Factor’ model. They also outline current thinking on what makes some individuals happier than others. The book is laid out in a straightforward fashion with plenty of subheadings, while each chapter starts with a handy topic guide to make it easy to navigate through the material. This is particularly useful given that there’s a lot of background material alongside the practical hints and tips.



Inside my head

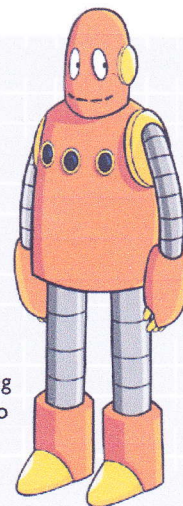
By Jim Carrington
Bloomsbury
Price: £6.99

In Carrington’s debut novel for teenagers, ‘farmer’ is a term of abuse, mothers ‘go mental’ and teachers threaten detention but don’t follow through because it would mean giving up their break-time cigarettes. It grew out of a short story that the author, a teacher, originally wrote for an anti-bullying week. In it, he weaves together the stories of three young people: newcomer Zoe who resents having to move from London to rural Norfolk; bullying victim Gary, who struggles to control his own anger; and David, who is friends with the bully and does not know how to tell him that his behaviour is wrong. The tension between the three narrators, who are all in Year 10, builds nicely as the story progresses.

Once you BrainPop, you just can’t stop

Multi-award winning website BrainPop has a huge resource of curriculum-based content for students aged 7-14. Featuring recurring characters such as schoolboy Tim and Moby the robot, this interactive site offers videos in English, French and Spanish as well as free tips, tools and best-practice advice by and for educators. Ideal for both group and one-on-one settings, BrainPop can be used when introducing a difficult lesson or topic by illustrating complex subject matter, such as grammar or chemistry. Best of all, no downloading, installation, or special hardware is needed.

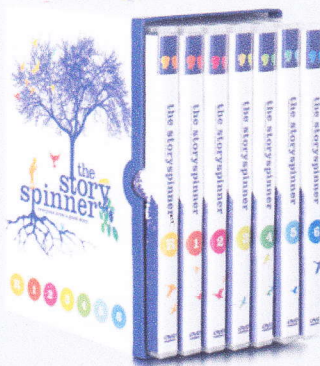
For a free trial go to www.brainpop.com



A lifeline for literacy skills

Just imagine that you are a little girl called Rose, and a Blitz survivor. That is just one of the stories being brought to schoolchildren by award-winning author Kate Pullinger and educational publisher Rising Stars to aid 11 to 14-year-olds with their literacy skills. It may be difficult at first for children to imagine experiences such as living in Britain during WWII, but these short films bring together audio descriptions and visual imagery to help kick-start classroom discussions and ideas. Although primarily an English resource for stimulating creative writing in the classroom, Lifelines also makes links across the curriculum to history and geography. And for any budding filmmakers, each CD includes a collection of pictures, text and sound files for pupils to create their own stories.

For more information, go to www.risingstars-uk.com



It’s the way that you tell them

When was the last time you heard a good story? You may have been lucky enough to have been read to as a child, but schoolchildren today might not be as willing to be wrenched away from their PSP consoles – until the Story Spinner project, that is. Rolled out in the Birmingham area as part of the National Year of Reading in 2008, the scheme was designed to revive the ancient oral tradition of story telling. A collection of 42 stories

told on film by veteran storyteller Phil McDermott and rated ‘Excellent’ by Ofsted were created especially for use in primary schools. It was a resounding success, the results of which can be seen in a study conducted by educational researchers from the universities of Cambridge and Birmingham. Teachers said that the DVDs fitted in well with the revised Literacy Framework and offered a variety of assessment opportunities in reading, speaking, listening and writing. Researchers also noticed a raised attainment in reading and ‘noticeable gains’ in writing. Story Spinner is now available nationally. There are seven DVDs in each box set, with six stories for each year, from reception to Year 6. Boxsets are priced at £399 and individual DVDs at £99.

Listen to a free story at www.thestoryspinner.co.uk