

Introduction to the Thematic Units Years 3 & 4



Thematic Units

Thematic Units are structured learning and teaching opportunities that can be targeted over a period of six weeks. They develop the *Ideas for Connected Learning (ICLs)* further by selecting, adapting and planning specific teaching and learning opportunities for a class.

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 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.

The table below gives a brief outline of each of the Thematic Units and how they relate to the objectives of the curriculum:

Thematic Unit	Ideas for Connecting Learning	Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Areas of Learning
Celebrations and Good Times!	Let's Celebrate	To develop the young person as an individual	<i>Being Creative</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Literacy • Physical Education • The Arts • The World Around Us
Money at Home	Houses and Homes Let's Celebrate	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and society	<i>Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making</i> <i>Managing Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics and Numeracy • Personal Development and Mutual Understanding • The World Around Us
My Place and Yours	Houses and Homes	To develop the young person as a contributor to society	<i>Working with Others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Development and Mutual Understanding • Physical Education • The World Around Us • The Arts
What's the Forecast?	Whatever the Weather	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and environment	<i>Working with Others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Literacy • Mathematics and Numeracy • The Arts • The World Around Us

Celebrations and Good Times!

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 3/4 Ideas for Connected Learning (ICL) *Let’s Celebrate*. Within this unit, children will have the opportunity to explore their experiences of celebrations at home, with friends, in school and in the local and wider community. They will begin to appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural and religious groups.

Children will have the opportunity to develop some of the skills that meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 1. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as an individual
Aim	The aim of this Thematic Unit is to enable children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become aware of their own strengths, abilities, qualities and achievements; • Be aware of their own and others’ cultural heritage, traditions and celebrations; • Appreciate the importance of taking time to celebrate together; • Appreciate some similarities and differences between people and places; and • Engage in a variety of active learning strategies.
Key Element	<i>Mutual Understanding and Cultural Understanding</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC)	This thematic unit focuses on Being Creative . Children have opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have experiences with all the senses;</i> • <i>Enjoy the unexpected, unusual and surprising;</i> • <i>Listen to and share ideas and experiences; and</i> • <i>Generate as many ideas and options as possible, building and combining ideas.</i> There will also be opportunities for children to develop the skills of Managing Information, Working with Others, Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision Making and Self-Management.

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Cross-Curricular Skills	Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to cross-curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication (Comm);• Using Mathematics (UMaths); and• Using ICT (UICT).
Connecting the Learning	This Thematic Unit provides teachers with opportunities to connect learning across the following areas: The World Around Us: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making comparisons between celebrations in the local area and places around the world; The Arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoying and appreciating the food and costumes used in celebrations in their own and other cultures;• Participating in dramatic activity and sharing ideas with others;• Using creative design skills to create pieces of art related to various celebrations; Physical Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating, practising, remembering and performing dance in response to dances used in celebrations from around the world; and Language and Literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expressing themselves creatively and communicating confidently using a variety of skills and media;• Telling their own stories about celebrations based on personal experiences and imagination; and• Writing for a variety of purposes and audiences, for example writing a speech about their school.

Money at Home

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 3/4 Ideas for Connected Learning (ICLs) *Houses and Homes* and *Let’s Celebrate*. In this unit, children will learn about financial planning at home. They will consider how to spend money wisely and how having to budget is important in their home life.

A range of activities will illustrate how we use money in everyday life. The children will explore different types of money and how they can save their own money for the future. They will consider their own financial decision-making and its effect on others.

Money at Home presents a variety of teaching methodologies to support active, enquiry-based learning both by individuals and by groups of children.

Children will have the opportunity to participate in a range of thinking, problem-solving and decision-making challenges which make connections from their own experience to their local school and wider community.

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 1. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and society
Aim	The aim of this unit is to encourage children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to understand how money is used at home; • Develop their thinking through a range of problem-solving and decision-making challenges; and • Understand how financial decisions can affect not only themselves but also their school, community and family.
Key Element	<i>Economic Awareness</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC)	There is a focus on Managing Information, Thinking Skills and Decision Making : <p>Managing Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use the children’s own and others’ ideas to locate sources of information; and</i> • <i>Select, classify, compare and evaluate information.</i> <p>Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Generate possible solutions, try out alternative approaches and evaluate outcomes;</i> • <i>Examine options and weigh up pros and cons; and</i> • <i>Listen actively and share options.</i> There will also be opportunities to develop the skills of Being Creative and Working with Others.

Continued overleaf

Cross-Curricular Skills	Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to cross-curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication (Comm);• Using Mathematics (UMaths); and• Using ICT (UICT).
Connecting the Learning	This Thematic Unit provides teachers with the opportunities to connect learning across the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Development and Mutual Understanding;• Mathematics and Numeracy; and• The World Around Us.

My Place and Yours

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 3/4 Ideas for Connected Learning (ICL) *Houses and Homes*.

It gives pupils the opportunity to explore their local area and begin to appreciate similarities and differences between people in their own and in another country. It enables them to engage in collaborative activities, to develop skills of working with their peers and to demonstrate their learning through creative activities.

The unit also introduces the children to a modern language and provides access to digital resources to enhance their learning.

Children will have the opportunity to develop some of the skills that meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 1. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective	To develop the young person as a contributor to society
<p>Aim</p>	<p>The aim of this Thematic Unit is to enable children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the skills and strategies they need to work effectively together; • Appreciate some similarities and differences between people and places; • Engage in a variety of active learning strategies; and • Experience a modern language through non-specialist teaching and digital resources.
<p>Key Element</p>	<p><i>Citizenship and Cultural Understanding</i></p>
<p>Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC)</p>	<p>This Thematic Unit focuses on Working with Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Being collaborative;</i> • <i>Being sensitive to others' feelings; and</i> • <i>Being fair and responsible.</i> <p>There will also be opportunities for children to develop the skills of Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making and Managing Information.</p>

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Cross-Curricular Skills	Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to cross-curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication (Comm);• Using Mathematics (UMaths); and• Using ICT (UICT).
Connecting the Learning	This Thematic Unit provides teachers with opportunities to connect learning across the following areas: Personal Development and Mutual Understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appreciating ways we are similar and different;• Being aware of the diversity of people around the world; The World Around Us: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making comparisons between the local area and a contrasting place;• Exploring the range of materials used in the local area; The Arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoying and appreciating the work of artists from their own and other cultures;• Participating in dramatic activity and sharing ideas with others; and Physical Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating, practising, remembering and performing movement ideas in response to a story.

What's the Forecast?

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 3/4 Idea for Connected Learning (ICL) *Whatever the Weather*. Within this unit, children explore the weather: how we learn about it, how we measure aspects of it, and how important it is in life and the world of nature.

Children will have the opportunity to develop some of the skills that meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 1. 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
Aim	The aim of this Thematic Unit is to encourage children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an awareness of our weather and the aspects that make up our weather; and • Learn how the weather can impact on our own and other people's lives.
Key Element	<i>Education for Sustainable Development</i>
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC)	This Thematic Unit focuses on Working With Others . Children have opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Value contributions from their peers;</i> • <i>Work together to use geographical language;</i> • <i>Share out activities and roles; and</i> • <i>Generate appropriate questions to ask.</i> There will also be opportunities for children to develop the skills of Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making and Managing Information.
Cross-Curricular Skills	Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to cross-curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (Comm); • Using Mathematics (UMaths); and • Using ICT (UICT).
Connecting the Learning	This Thematic Unit provides teachers with the opportunities to connect learning across the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Literacy; • Mathematics and Numeracy; • The Arts; and • The World Around Us.

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