

C2k NEWSDESK GUIDANCE

Supporting Digital Literacy through C2k NewsDesk



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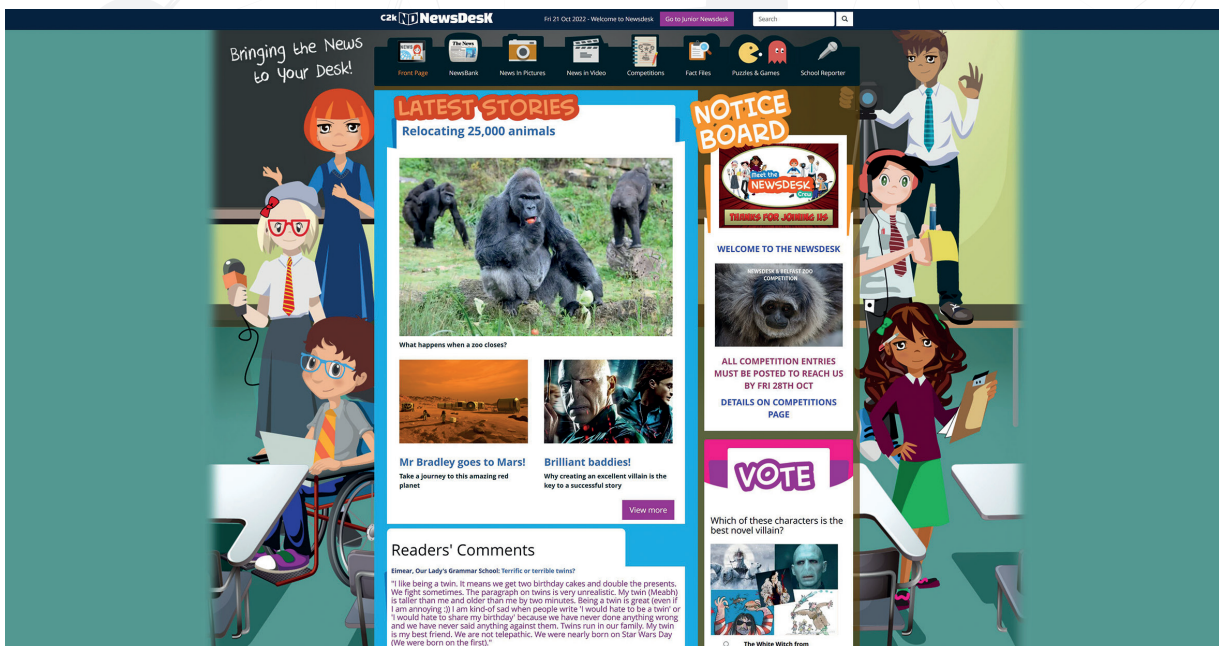
Section 1

NewsDesk as a Digital Literacy Tool

Digital Literacy is the ability to use information technology and the internet to find, create, share and evaluate information and content.

Digital tools play a vital role in preparing pupils for the digital world. They are an everyday part of pupils' lives. Using digital tools gives pupils an opportunity to experience literacy in a range of forms, including audio, video and text.

C2k NewsDesk is a digital literacy resource **available free** to all teachers and pupils in Northern Ireland with a C2k account. They can access NewsDesk via a link on the My School home page. NewsDesk gives pupils an opportunity to engage with current news stories in a digital environment. Pupils can be active users with opportunities to comment on stories and submit their own topical writing to a ready-made audience. NewsDesk also gives pupils opportunities to practise talking and listening and reading and writing skills that they have learned in the classroom.



Section 2

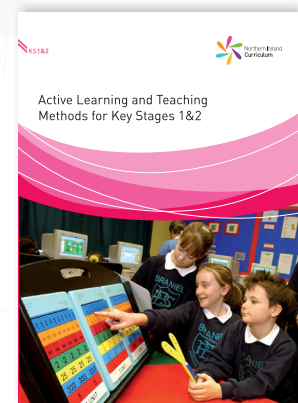
NewsDesk and the Northern Ireland Curriculum

You can use NewsDesk to support pupils to develop a range of skills across the Northern Ireland Curriculum. NewsDesk can help your topic planning, for example in The World around Us or Personal Development and Mutual Understanding.

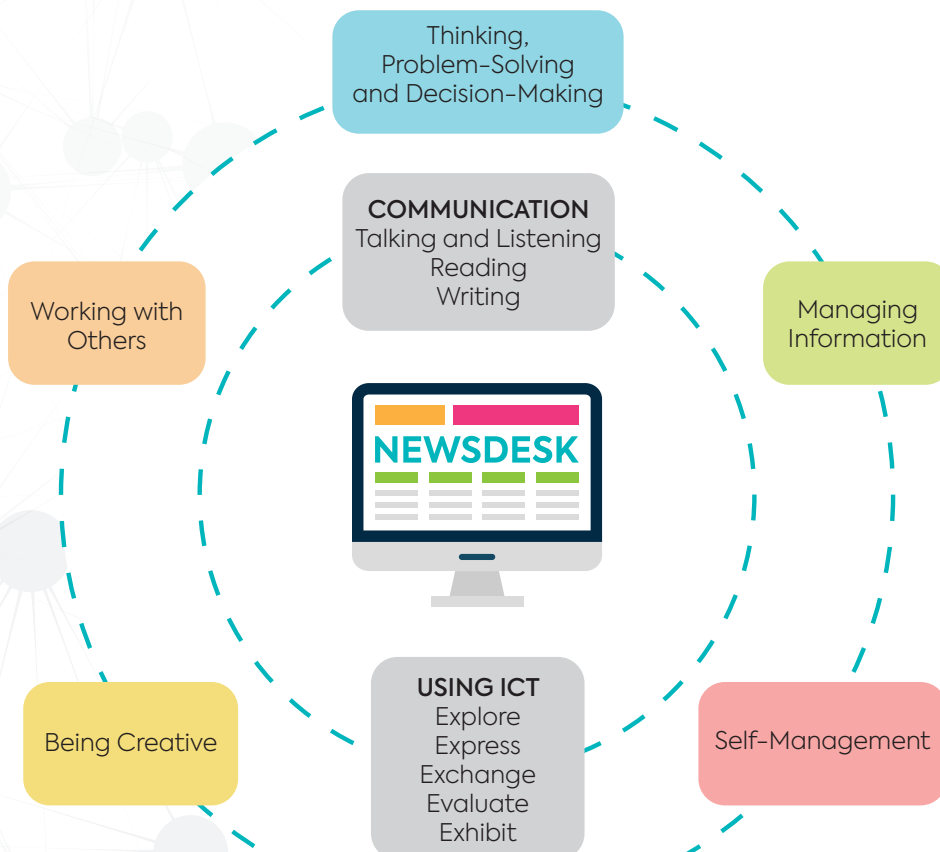
NewsDesk also enables you to integrate the Cross-Curricular Skills of Communication and Using ICT in a digital environment.

This resource is a quick guide to using NewsDesk. It will help you to use NewsDesk to its maximum potential and to encourage your pupils to become actively engaged in their own learning.

We have incorporated Active Teaching and Learning Methods and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities into the suggested activities. Our [Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 and 2](#) is available on our website.

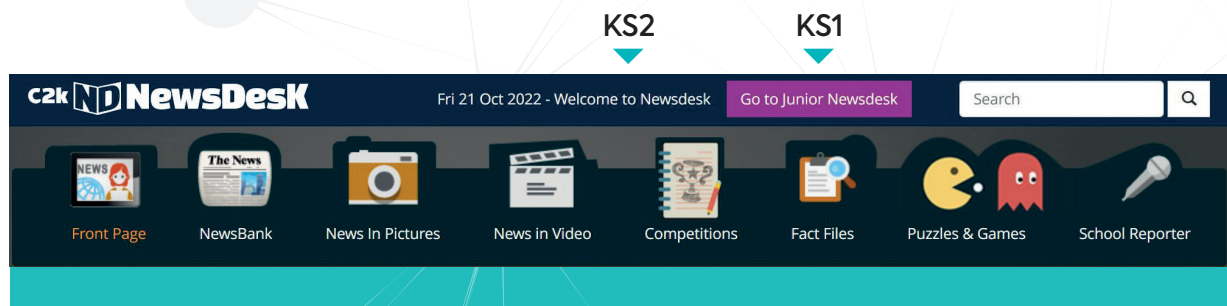


Using NewsDesk to develop Communication, Using ICT and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities across the Curriculum



Section 3

NewsDesk Front Page



The icons across the top of the Front Page will take you to these pages. It helps pupils to navigate the NewsDesk site. Its **Latest Stories** section, voting facility and Notice Board are updated daily.

Front Page is the landing page of NewsDesk. It has the most up-to-date articles. It also has a daily vote facility.

NewsBank allows users to view and search the article archive.

News in Pictures allows users to view a diverse range of topical and interesting images.

News in Video allows users to view a range of videos connected to stories, events and much more.

Competitions are available for pupil participation.

Fact Files give pupils information about a wide range of topics.

Puzzles and Games are available for pupils to play.

School Reporter enables pupils to upload their own article and provides some top tips on how to be a successful NewsDesk reporter for writing.

Search Bar allows users to search for a particular topic.

Section 4

Using NewsDesk in the Classroom

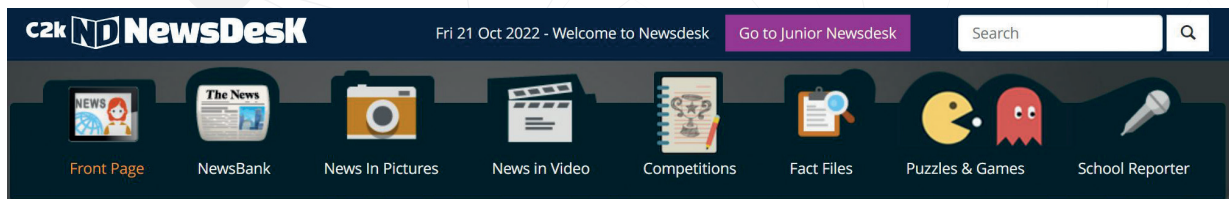
C2k NewsDesk is a popular resource to engage and enthuse your pupils in the classroom and in homework activities.

Use NewsDesk on an interactive whiteboard to show pupils how to:











- » search for topic-based articles and fact files;
- » write a NewsDesk response to a story;
- » launch **Immersive Reader** to help read articles;
- » use the Vote facility;
- » submit a comment about a story, video, photograph or video;
- » view the News in Pictures or News in Video sections to promote discussion;
- » use NewsDesk as part of their We're Reading in Class (WRIC) and Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) sessions;
- » write responses to NewsDesk content either in class or accessed at home;
- » comment on NewsDesk stories and ensure their comments are appropriate;
- » upload their own article in the School Reporter section;
- » use NewsDesk as a search engine;
- » become a NewsDesk champion responsible for leading NewsDesk activities for a day;
- » participate in NewsDesk competitions;
- » select appropriate photos and images to accompany their articles;
- » upload audio to accompany their School Reporter articles; and
- » use NewsDesk to self and peer assess.

Section 5

How can pupils use NewsDesk?



As well as using NewsDesk as a whole-class resource on an IWB, you can also ask your pupils to work independently using NewsDesk. For example, encourage your pupils to:

-  **listen to stories** using the audio narration facility;
-  **read a range of** NewsDesk stories independently and at their own pace (you could also use these stories as a shared text);
-  **use Immersive Reader** (Launch Reader) to help them read stories at their own pace and with support;
-  **use the translate facility** in Immersive Reader to translate texts into a variety of different languages;
-  **access visual resources**, including a wide range of news stories in video and image format;
-  **respond to** NewsDesk and other pupils' stories by posting a comment;
-  **vote** on a discussion topic;
-  **write and upload** their story in the School Reporter section;
-  **research information** using the Article Archive and Fact Files or search facility in NewsDesk; and
-  **enter competitions.**

Section 6

Digital Citizenship and C2k NewsDesk



‘Developing digital skills in childhood is important to ensure children are safely engaging with digital technologies, whether at home, for school, and later on in life in the workplace’

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
21st Century Children as Digital Citizens

Digital Citizenship is about how you think, what you experience and how you behave online. Becoming a good digital citizen is an important concept for young people in today’s digital world. C2k NewsDesk is an excellent classroom resource to promote digital citizenship.

Writing Comments on C2k NewsDesk

Send a Comment

22 Likes

C2k NewsDesk encourages pupils to comment on stories and articles. Pupil comments turn NewsDesk into an interactive space.

Before pupils start to comment ...

- » Ensure pupils are logged on with their personal C2k username to make a comment.
- » Explain that all comments NewsDesk receives are moderated before being published.
- » Tell pupils that their name and school is visible beside their comment.
- » Encourage pupils to read other pupils’ comments and send them a written response to agree or disagree with their views.

Developing Pupil Comments



Rachel

I think zoos are good for some animals but not for animals like a panther because they are wild animals and need more space than just a cage. A panther is a hunting animal, not an animal to keep in a cage, but if you were to keep an animal like a monkey or a giraffe in a zoo it would be better because they would get fed better than if they were out in the wild. They have a better chance on surviving at the zoo.



Adam

I really like this article because it told me lots of stuff. I really think animals should be released and let them live their animal lives. And not put them up for show because so animals are really lonely and are dying in zoo's. However, I also think they are going to be confused and waiting to be feed because they have been in a zoo for show. But I LOVED THIS ARTICLE! 😊



Sarah

I like going to zoos but I don't like seeing animals cages. They should not be locked up for a very long time. It is very unfair on the animals. some could be a rare species and they are keeping the all locked up. Some of them could have died of loneliness. They are some times put in cages by themselves. All animals should be FREE!!!

Here are some tips to help pupils behave responsibly and write appropriate comments online:



No Regrets

The digital world is **permanent**, so think about what you write and how it will **affect** others.



Encouraging

Try to be **positive** and **encouraging** in your comments.



Worth reading

Make your comment **worth** reading. **Think** about your audience.



Say something meaningful

Write about what you **liked**, **learned** or found **interesting** in the article.



Disagree

It's ok to **disagree** but remember to be **polite** about it.



Edit your comment

Read over your comment before you post to **check** your spelling, punctuation and grammar.



Stay on topic

This shows that you have **read** the article.



Kind

Think about the **effect** your comment can have on others.

Comment Starters

Here are some simple comment starters to help pupils:

I loved this article because ...

This report really interested me ...

I found this article very useful because ...

I agree/disagree with this report because ...

I can relate to this report because ...

This article reminded me of ...

In my opinion ...

I can't imagine ...

Section 7

Connecting Learning using NewsDesk

NewsDesk is an ideal digital literacy resource to incorporate into connected learning topics. Here are some suggestions of Key Stage 2 activities that you can incorporate into your existing planning.

C2k NewsDesk and Digital Literacy

Digital Citizens

#Post-it!

After pupils have read an article or watched a video, ask them to:

- » summarise the content in a 200-character post; and
- » add an appropriate hashtag and emoji.

Digital Workers

Researching and Filtering

Encourage pupils to use the search function or Newsbank to filter content to find information about a specific topic they are learning about in class.

Digital Makers

Clickbait – Article Thumbnail

Ask pupils to use a creative tool (such as Keynote, Adobe Express, Pic Collage, Canva or Book Creator) to design a Call-to-Action cover image to attract an audience to click into their article.

Digital Accessibility

Independent Learners

When pupils come across an unfamiliar word, prompt them to Launch Reader and click the word to view the Picture Dictionary and/or listen to it being read aloud. Encourage them to share this tip with their peers.

Digital Wellbeing

Screen Time

Ask pupils, in groups, to:

- » discuss ways to encourage younger pupils to develop healthy habits with technology; and
- » consider presenting these suggestions in a video or infographic format.

C2k NewsDesk and Using ICT

Explore 1 and 2

Navigation Communication

After pupils have interacted and engaged with NewsDesk, encourage them to get into pairs. Ask one of the pair to find an article on the site and write down the pathway or instructions for the other to find it. Make sure pupils use correct terminology such as scroll, move, click, tab or archive.

Express

Radio Style Podcast

Ask pupils to use a voice recording app, such as GarageBand, Audacity or Anchor, to record a podcast of their NewsDesk article complete with sound effects and musical intros, outros and interludes. Consider using Presenter Mode in Pages to act as a teleprompter.

Exchange

'Yes, and ...'

Encourage pupils to add something new to the commentary when commenting on articles in NewsDesk instead of repeating similar comments. 'Yes, and ...' is a structure for pupils to acknowledge someone else's comment and contribute something else.

Evaluate

Proofreading

Encourage pupils to get into the habit of rereading and/or relistening to their work to check for sense and clarity before they upload content, whether it's an article or a comment, to NewsDesk. Using success criteria such as COPS can be helpful for editing and redrafting writing.

Exhibit

School Reporter

Submit an article! Ask pupils to open their planning or draft document and copy and paste their text into School Reporter, adding headlines, captions and images, before publishing for other schools across Northern Ireland to engage with. Demonstrate how to use School Reporter during a Modelled or Shared Writing lesson.

C2k NewsDesk and PDMU

Social
Networks

Human
Rights

Anti-
Bullying

Emotional
Health and
Wellbeing

Internet
Safety

Current
Affairs

Pupil Guidelines

Ask pupils to write guidelines for the appropriate use of social media (or any other issue), thinking about their audience of children.

'Too Much, Too Young' Short Stories

NewDesk's series of short stories deals with a variety of issues, including anxiety, bereavement, transition and death. Encourage pupils to read or listen to a story and use the discussion points as a focus for paired, group or class discussions.

Plus–Minus–Interesting (PMI)

Encourage pupils to find an article relating to the PDMU theme that interests them and to carry out a PMI exercise (Active Learning and Teaching Methods). Ask pupils to present their findings to the class.

Walking Debates

Use NewsDesk articles to create a set of statements about a particular issue or topic.

Hold a Walking Debate or Giant Steps activity (Active Learning and Teaching Methods) to promote pupils' critical thinking and decision making.

Consider All Factors

(CAF: Active Learning and Teaching)

Encourage pupils to search for a current affairs article that interests them. Ask them to carry out a CAF exercise and present their decision to the class.

Let's Persuade!

Encourage pupils to read or listen to a NewsDesk article about social media and list the advantages and disadvantages of a social media network.

C2k NewsDesk and WAU

The Victorians

Rainforests

Titanic

Materials

Environmental Science

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Natural Disasters

Writing

Ask pupils to read or listen to an article related to your WAU topic and use it as a stimulus for writing and editing:

- » Fact files
- » Pros and cons
- » Diary entry
- » Report
- » New headlines
- » Advertisement, leaflet or poster
- » Letter

Drama, Role Play, Tableau or Freeze Frame

(Active Learning and Teaching Methods)

After they read or listen to a NewsDesk story, ask pupils to work in groups to create a snapshot representation of a moment in the story or improvise a role play.

Research and Presentation

Encourage pupils to:

- » use NewsDesk to research a chosen topic for presentation; and
- » use PowerPoint, Sway, Explain Everything or Book Creator to deliver an oral presentation to their class.

Photos or Videos as Primary Evidence

Using photos or videos about a topic in the NewsDesk archive, ask pupils to:

- » discuss what is happening in the photo or video, what might happen next or how it makes them feel;
- » use the photo or video as evidence to support their opinion;
- » write a caption or headline to match the photo;
- » write a set of questions for people in the photo;
- » compare and contrast the photos with their own lives; and
- » similarities and differences.

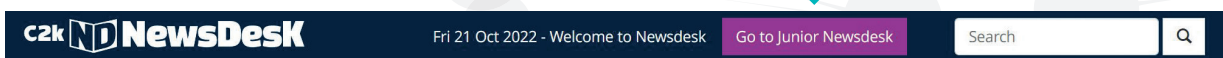
Hot Seating

Ask pupils to read or listen to an article and take on the role of someone in the story. Encourage them to think about the opinions, views and actions of the character. Then hold a **Hot Seat** interview. (Active Learning and Teaching Methods) where pupils can ask questions about the character's actions, feelings and motivations.

Section 8

Making the most of Junior NewsDesk

Junior NewsDesk is aimed at pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. It has a wide range of age-appropriate images, videos and stories. Use the pink button at the top of the NewsDesk front page to access Junior NewsDesk.



Digital Citizenship

Use Junior NewsDesk to encourage pupils:

- » to begin to explore what it means to be a good Digital Citizen;
- » as a first step search engine;
- » to explore articles about online safety;
- » to post Class Comments.

Model writing class comments on articles before pupils write them independently.

Bring NewsDesk Home

Use these sections in Junior NewsDesk as part of your homework schedule:

- » NewsBank research
- » NewsDesk Fact Files
- » Make a comment
- » Vote
- » Puzzles and games

Have your say

Help pupils take their first steps into comment writing using these simple comment starters:

- » I liked this story because ...
- » This story made me feel ...
- » I disagree with this story because ...
- » I think this story is important because ...

News in Pictures

Use an image from the News in Pictures section as a focus for talking and listening.

Each image is a stimulus for children to talk and listen in a meaningful context.

Encourage pupils to give reasons for their thinking and to respond to others' points of view in discussions.

Ask pupils to write a caption or a headline for the image or perhaps write a story behind the picture.

Tell me a Story

Use the Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhymes, the News in Video or the Mini Movies Article Archive sections to tell a story to the class, for example during golden time, as a settler after break or lunch or at the end of the day.

Use the follow-up questions to generate class discussions.

Junior NewsDesk: School Reporter

Read Write Report

Encourage your pupils to write a headline or a frontpage story about your topic or something that interests them.

Can Do Tales

This series of tales covers lots of themes including shyness, fear and friendship. Follow up each tale with a series of questions that will stimulate conversations in the class.

Section 9

Using NewsDesk for self and peer assessment

Pupil Checklist

The statements on these checklists are a guide to encourage independent learning and assessment using NewsDesk as a digital tool.

Pupils can use these 'I can' statements when working with NewsDesk. Although they show progression across Key Stages, you can adapt them to suit your pupils' needs.

Key Stage 1

I can:

- » **log on** to NewsDesk using my My School username and password;
- » **select** the article I want to read;
- » **search** for articles;
- » **comment** on an article;
- » **share** my comments with a partner;
- » **upload** my news story to the School Reporter section; and
- » **take part** in the daily vote.

Key Stage 2

I can:

- » **log on** to NewsDesk using my My School username and password;
- » **comment** on an article and add emojis;
- » **check** my comments to make sure they make sense;
- » **share** my comments with a partner;
- » **take part** in the daily vote;
- » **find and use** Fact Files in NewsDesk to search for information;
- » use NewsDesk to **research** information for my work in school;
- » **upload** my news article to the School Reporter section using a suitable title or headline;
- » **choose** good quality **images** to accompany my article;

- » **self-assess** my work;
- » **peer-assess** a friend's work in the School Reporter session;
- » **clearly explain** my point of view in my comments;
- » **reply** to other pupils' comments; and
- » **add an MP3 podcast** to accompany my article.

You can find a version of these 'I can' statements, which you can use with your pupils, in the Resources section. You can stick these into your pupils' literacy books for reference, during NewsDesk activities or display them near classroom computers for pupils to use.

Section 10

Resources

[Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 and 2](#)

Available on the Curriculum area of the CCEA website: www.ccea.org.uk

[Think Pack \(Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities\)](#)

Available from www.nicurriculum.org.uk

Success Criteria Card

Key Stage 1



I can log on to NewsDesk using my My School username and password.	
I can select the article I want to read.	
I can search for articles.	
I can comment on an article.	
I can share my comments with a partner.	
I can take part in the daily vote.	
I can upload my news story to the NewsDesk School Reporter section.	

Success Criteria Card

Key Stage 2



I can log on to NewsDesk using my My School username and password.	
I can comment on an article and add emojis.	
I can check my comments to make sure they make sense.	
I can share my comments with a partner.	
I can take part in the daily vote.	
I can find and use Fact Files in NewsDesk to search for information.	
I can use NewsDesk to research information for my work in school.	
I can upload my news article to the School Reporter section using a suitable title or headline.	
I can choose good quality images to accompany my article.	
I can self-assess my work.	
I can peer-assess a friend's work in the School Reporter session.	
I can clearly explain my point of view in my comments.	
I can reply to other pupils' comments.	
I can add an MP3 podcast to accompany my article.	

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