

Book title: The Early Years Communication Handbook

Author: Janet Cooper BSC (Hons) Reg, MRCSLT

Publication date: 2010

1. What is your overall impression of the book?

This has been a book I have read a few times, through my studying days on foundation degree, BA and PGCE through to now as an NQT. It gives a clear discussion on how communication is vital from birth through the child's early years. It focuses on a practitioner approach and how we can support children through to families and gives good advice which can help parents and carers.

2. Who do you think would benefit most from reading the book? What will they learn?

I think that the book is accessible to everyone, as it approaches communication with children in a very open way. I have found that Early Years practitioners would enjoy this. The focus of the book is about the different aspects of speech, language and communication and I think people will learn how these impact on a child when they are embedded from an early age.

3. What did you think about the quality of the writing? Please consider the tone, structure and ideas. Does it suit the audience?

The book is a nice read, it approaches all the chapters with a knowledge but relatable way to plan for activities and what to look for in your settings. I would say it's written in a fun way, an easy to read way where you can pick it up, clearly find the page you are looking for and continue to read ahead.

4. Please discuss the research used to underpin the ideas. What evidence does the author use? Is it robust and up-to-date?

Following the Government's Every Child A Talker programme to improve young children's speaking and listening skills, this easy-to-read guide offers expert advice on:

The basics of good communication

Creating a communication-friendly environment

How to observe listening and speaking skills, and what children should be attaining at different ages in the early years

Developing English language skills with speakers of other languages

Involving parents in helping develop their children's communication skills

This book is written by Janet Cooper, a speech and language therapist and Project Lead on the Stoke Speaks Out project, which has successfully improved children's language development throughout Stoke-on-Trent.

5. What did you learn from reading the book? What ideas/approaches/practice will you change or adopt as a result of reading this book?

The book has made me think about how I communicate with parents/carers and what information is accessible to them from me and the school. The book talks about making your welcome areas parent friendly and have notice and information boards.

6. Could you share a quote from the book that particularly resonated with you?

"To support children's communication skills fully, they need to reach their potential in reading and writing. This can only be achieved through a nurturing and stimulating environment which responds to children's needs. Children are like beautiful flowers; they are pre-programmed to grow but need all the right conditions to flourish to their right potential."