

Guest author post: Jonathan Glazzard

Jonathan Glazzard writes about his latest book for Critical Publishing, co-authored with Jane Stokoe, Teaching Systematic Synthetic Phonics and Early English.

Writing a book is always challenging. Balancing the demands of writing with the pressures of a full time teaching post is no easy task . We wanted to provide a text full of practical ideas to support teaching and learning whilst also fostering critical thinking and reflection. The book is published in the midst of the current political focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as the emphasis on systematic synthetic phonics. This week Year 6 pupils in primary schools have, for the first time, completed SPAG tests and no doubt teachers will be waiting with baited breath to see how they have performed. Hopefully months of careful preparation from teachers and pupils alike will result in them performing well. Although many in the teaching profession do not agree with the “back to basics” approach, there are also many who do, and irrespective of our positions we all want our pupils to succeed in whatever is required of them.

Throughout the book we focus on developing creative approaches for teaching all aspects of early English. We believe that pupils learn more effectively when they are motivated, inspired and empowered to be speakers, listeners, readers and writers. Creative approaches to teaching these aspects of primary English help to capture pupils’ interests and imaginations. However, we did not solely want to produce a “tips for teachers” book. In drawing the reader’s attention to the key debates and in raising critical questions and critical points, we hope that we have illustrated the complexities of primary English in addition to producing a resource that will help trainees and teachers to deliver more effective lessons.

Jonathan Glazzard – May 2013.