

Chemistry in primary

Avid readers of *Primary Science* will quickly realise that there is something subtly different about one or two things in Issue 178! Chemistry is all about structure and restructuring, so when the Editorial Board decided that the focus of this issue should be chemistry, it was thought that it might also be good to revisit and restructure some of the more familiar formats of the journal for this issue.

With this in mind, our '*In conversation with...*' piece this time is longer than usual and allows us to take a closer look at an inclusive range of people who have made chemistry their life and to ask them what advice they might have for children and teachers. Interviewed by Alison Eley, the contributors are asked what advice they would give to their younger selves and what they wish their primary teachers had known about them as young learners in order to enhance their experiences and support their personal interests in primary science. There is much food for thought in the personal testimonies from current career scientists here, and also included is a helpful summary of chemistry career information that may be of interest to all potential future chemists sitting in primary classrooms around the country!

Bringing the voice of chemists into the classroom is also featured in the next piece by Ross Cundy and Verity Jones, which focuses on the classroom creation of digital artefacts giving voice to famous and historical chemists. This is an engaging concept and one that will undoubtedly deliver fun into the classroom – as well as scope for interdisciplinary learning, especially within history and literacy.

Although we have brought in some format changes, as always, practical activity in science is at the heart of this issue. In the next article, Ben Rogers offers some interesting and challenging insight into the preparatory 'hinterland' of chemistry in primary

science and how attention to this concept, so prevalent in early years' practice, might be helpfully extended across all primary stages. This is followed up by a suggestion from Jess Strain for a fun, fully practical and immersive chemistry experience involving natural and sustainable plant matter in the familiar chemistry application of fabric dyeing. Investigation into how chemistry is employed in the world of archaeology is the focus of Anita Radini and Kate Sutton's article and they offer both information and really useful links to help support classroom study in this field.

The final article in the chemistry theme in this issue is from John McCullagh and Andrea Doherty. In a slight change from our usual format, this excellent piece about their Royal Society of Chemistry funded project offers evidence and challenge on how schools and initial teacher education establishments might work together to further enhance the science practice of teachers and students alike.

This issue also features an article by Ian Turner and Lewis Morgan presenting a series of lesson ideas that capture the excitement of a forensic investigation in a fun and light-hearted scenario, while the final article, from Nicola Gliddon, suggests a different way of teaching life cycles using dock leaves and dock beetles.

From inclusive reflections on primary science experiences by current chemists, through activities and advice that embrace traditional practical and modern digital literacies, to blue-sky thinking on partnership enhancements in primary science, this issue of *Primary Science* strives to offer a more-than-usual coverage of what's new in primary chemistry. I hope you enjoy it!

Robert Collins