

FORMULA 1



Why is Formula 1 so popular right now?

Well with some people (myself included) Formula 1 is ALWAYS a craze! However, it is likely to be in the news a lot over the next week or two as the battle for the 2016 world title reaches its dramatic climax in Abu Dhabi on 27 November.

Britain's Lewis Hamilton is trailing his Mercedes team mate, Nico Rosberg, by 12 points with 25 points available for the race win. There are various permutations of what could happen (see this [BBC article](#) for a handy guide) but the simplest version is Hamilton must win and hope Rosberg finishes fourth or lower in order to take a historic fourth world title. The odds are stacked against Lewis but stranger things have happened in Formula 1 and this fan still believes...

How can Formula 1 be used for literacy teaching?

We know that tapping into children's interests is a great way of engaging them in learning. Our research shows that children who enjoy writing very much are seven times more likely to write above the level expected for their age compared with children and young people who do not enjoy writing at all. Similarly, children and young people who write outside school daily are five times more likely to be writing above the expected level for their age compared with young people who never write outside school¹.

Our Craze of the Month taps into children's and young people's interests to improve outcomes in literacy. The activities featured here relate to the English Programmes of Study from the National Curriculum in England²:

Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to:

- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.

Writing – composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by:
 - writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional)
 - writing about real events
 - writing for different purposes.

1 Clark, C. (2016). [Children's and Young People's Writing in 2015](#). Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual survey. London: National Literacy Trust
2 DfE (2013). The National Curriculum in England. Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document.

Using it in the classroom

Formula 1 offers a number of opportunities to promote learning, the obvious ones being links to Maths and Physics. Here we'll focus on how it could be used to promote literacy. The activities have been designed so that they could easily be adapted for another sport.

Top trump cards

Ask pupils to put together top trump-style cards for their favourite Formula 1 drivers or other sports stars. They can start with basic information such as their nationality and the team they race for, then research other statistics such as number of races starts, races won and fastest laps achieved.

F1 glossary

Many sports, Formula 1 included, have their own specific language which can sometimes make its way into every day usage. Ask pupils to put together an F1 glossary that explains some of the terms that people outside the sport may not be familiar with. See the activity sheet on page 3 which can be given out to pupils and includes some examples to get them started.

Commentary

Watch a few laps of a grand prix or other sporting event (the recent Brazilian race, in wet conditions, had plenty of action!) and ask pupils to commentate on what's happening. Play them some of Murray Walker's classic commentary for inspiration!

Race review

Ask pupils to write a review of the Brazilian grand prix, which took place in Sao Paulo on 13 November. There was lots of action including two restarts, after the race was stopped due to accidents. Who do they think was the driver of the day? Do they think all the overtaking manoeuvres were fair? (Alonso was certainly not happy with the way Vettel passed him on lap 43!)

Contract negotiations

It's the time of year when teams are finalising their driver line-ups for next year. Ask students to imagine they are a team manager and ask them to write a persuasive letter to their favourite driver outlining why they should race for them next season. The drivers at the front of the grid are paid over £20million per year plus performance bonuses – what will they offer their chosen driver and will there be bonuses available based on their results?

Further reading

Pupils who are interested in Formula 1 might like to try some of these books, which can be used to promote reading for enjoyment:

- Disney Reading Adventures Cars Level 1 by Disney Book Gro
- BBC Sport World Formula 1 Records by Bruce Jones
- The Official BBC Sport Guide Formula One 2016 by Bruce Jones
- Formula One: The Pursuit of Speed by Maurice Hamilton, Jackie Stewart, Paul-Henri Cahier and Nernard Cahier
- Formula One Circuits from Above with Google Earth by Bruce Jones
- Older pupils might also enjoy the autobiographies of current and past drivers including Lewis Hamilton, Damon Hill and Mark Webber

By Gemma Niebieszczanski

Network and Competitions Manager



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