



A Teachers Resource

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Catalogue



Fiona Bailey and Stoke Damerel Primary School | Playroom

image from Add-Text software © limbomedia



Biography

Fiona Bailey is a freelance artist/educator. Her main area of interest is the creative use of new technologies by young children. She has worked extensively over the past ten years in primary schools, nationally, exploring digital imaging, interactive multimedia and the web as creative teaching and learning tools in the classroom.

The Work

Catalogue images often present us with a 'perfect' ready-made, vision of an ideal home and 'perfect' people live in these ideal rooms. These environments can appear too clean and sterile in contrast to the way children really see their rooms. Using a range of catalogue images as a starting point, the Playroom project involved 20 children in the construction of an interactive artwork that explored both the fantasy and reality of children's personal spaces.

Stoke Damerel Primary is a large city primary, located in Plymouth. The school enjoys a good reputation in the community and staff are committed to meeting the needs of all pupils. The use of ICT has been identified as a key way in which pupil's learning can be enhanced.

References

The Add-Text software was designed by limbomedia and can be downloaded for use in the classroom.

Classroom/ICT room Activity | Playroom

Key Stage 2 (adaptable for Key Stages 1, 3 and 4)

Timescale and Organisation

At least six 1hr sessions recommended (e.g. 1 session per week over a _ term). Depending on number of computers available, pupils may have to work in pairs or small groups, which could affect timescale. The activity can be extended or scaled down as appropriate. Larger classes with access to fewer computers could consider organising the activities on a rotational basis.

Recommendations

To ensure activities run to time, preparation of images should be done in advance of certain sessions (as indicated). The class teacher and/or classroom assistant can help with this or, if possible, can be done by pupils during lunchtimes.

Resources

Home furnishings/interior style magazines and catalogues; photographs, paintings and illustrations of interiors; A4 paper; pencils; scissors; glue.

Access to PCs; scanner; digital camera (alternatively, a conventional camera and film); Adobe Photoshop or similar (e.g. Paint Shop Pro from Jasc Software); Add-Text software (supplied)

Activity Summary

The aim of the activity is for pupils to design and create an interactive (image/text) digital portrait, depicting themselves within their ideal room.

Through the activity pupils will:

- explore and discuss a range of media images and artists representations of interior space.
- investigate the significant characteristics of their own personal spaces – what makes each pupil's personal space special to them
- develop visual ideas which draw upon both real and imagined spaces, and explore their relationship to these environments
- use discussion, sketches and collage to produce initial ideas and designs
- adapt and progress ideas and designs using the computer: scanning images, using digital cameras, creating and manipulating images in Photoshop (or similar package)
- devise and create interactive commentaries and stories which extend their images using the Add-Text software

Adaptations | Playroom

In all Key Stages the activity can be scaled down and used across the curriculum. The Add-Text software is versatile, and can be an accessible and engaging way of adding captions and commentary to images, incorporating ICT into a range of subject areas in a realistic and meaningful way. For example, images can be downloaded from the web in relation to a Geography activity and imported into Add-Text, where pupils can develop a topic-based commentary. Also, images from a digital camera can be imported, presenting an opportunity to document and create interactive labelling of a science project, for example.

Curriculum Links: The activity can be linked to the National Curriculum Art and Design, ICT and English:

Art and Design: Exploring and imagining ideas; Investigating and making. If using QCA Scheme of Work, there are links to Portraying Relationships (Unit 3A); Viewpoints (Unit 4A); Objects and meanings (Unit 5A); A sense of place (6C)

ICT: Finding things out; Developing ideas and making things happen; Exchanging and sharing information.
If QCA Schemes of work in use, there is potential for linking to: Combining Text and Graphics (Unit 3A) Writing for different audiences (Unit 4A); Developing images using repeating patterns (Unit 4B); Graphical modelling (Unit 5A); Multimedia presentation (Unit 6A)

English: Speaking and listening – Speaking; Listening; Group discussion and interaction, Language variation
Writing – Composition; Planning and drafting.

Potential connections with NLS Text Level Work include:
Y4:T2:T10; Y5:T1:T24; Y5:T2:T21 & 22; Y5:T3:T18; Y6:T1:T14 & 18.

Extension | Playroom

This activity can be extended or customised to link to other curriculum areas. In History for example, pupils can research and create an historical interior as part of a British, European or World history study.

History: Knowledge, understanding of events, people and changes in the past - including British, European and World History studies. If QCA Scheme of work in use, potential links can be made with: Differences between rich and poor in Tudor time (Unit 8); What was it like for children living in Victorian Britain (Unit 11); Who were the Ancient Greeks? (Unit 14); How can we find out about the [Indus Valley; Ancient Egyptian; Aztec] civilization? (Unit 16)

Key Stage 1: The activity can easily be adapted for Key Stage 1. For example, pupils can use programmes such as KidPix, Dazzle or Paint to create their own backgrounds. The collaging process can be simplified if teachers pre-select and scan a range of images and objects in order to build up a picture library or topic related 'image bank'. Pupils would be able to create collages from a range of ready-to-use pictures, or import selected images directly into Add-Text.

The activity can be linked to the National Curriculum Art and Design, ICT, English and History, and to related Schemes of Work:

Art and Design: Self-portrait (unit 1A); Picture this (Unit 2A); Can Buildings Speak? (Unit 2C)

ICT: Labelling and Classifying (Unit 1D); Creating Pictures (Unit 2B)

English: Possible NLS Links: Y1:T2:T22 &23; Y1:T3:T14, 20 & 21; Y2:T2:T14

History: How are toys different from those in the past? (Unit 1); What were homes like long ago (Unit 2)

Activity Plan - Preparation | Playroom

Prior to the first session, it may be helpful to ask pupils to bring in some objects from home (for example a toy, an ornament, a picture). If pupils have access to digital cameras, they can be asked to take pictures of their favourite room and bring them to school.

Research and select a range of different home-style and catalogue images (including children's/young peoples interiors and furnishings), images of real rooms (these could be photos from your own home) and a selection of artists and photographers' work depicting interiors and/or portraits in rooms. Book illustrations could also be a source of images for discussion.

If you have access to a projector or Smart Board, it would be useful to scan images ready for presentation. Alternatively create enlarged copies for display.

Create a Project Folder on each computer, (this could be in your class's shared folder). Download and 'Un-Zip' the Add-Text software. Save it into the shared Project Folder on each computer in your ICT Room (see Using Add-Text for further detail). Each pupil will need an individual folder containing a copy of this software. Once installed, duplicate the entire software folder as many times as necessary (one copy per pupil) and rename each folder with the name of each participant.

Session 1 - Introduction | Playroom

Show and discuss a range of images, focusing on the interiors, the contents and (where present) the person or people occupying the space. What are the differences or similarities between the catalogues, the artist's images and the 'real life' rooms? What are the differences and similarities to pupils' own rooms? Discuss their favourite room at home. What makes these rooms special for them - the colour, the contents, the atmosphere, the people they share the space with? In what ways do these rooms reflect the personalities of different pupils?

Ask pupils to imagine their ideal room, taking the most important aspects of their real rooms and combining them with their dream ideas. If they could design and furnish their own room what would it be like? What would be the most important features of the room?

Using A4 paper & a pencil, ask pupils to draw a plan of this imaginary room, making notes and captions about their ideas on the sketch. Following this, pupils can spend time looking through a range of catalogues selecting and cutting out* up to 5 items they would like include in their rooms.

(* These images will be scanned. Scanning and 'cutting out' in Photoshop can be very time consuming. The more accurately pictures are cut out with scissors, the easier it will be later.)

[Preparation for following sessions: After Session 1, all the selected catalogue items and images/objects from home need to be scanned or photographed into Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro. Set the scanner to 72 dpi RGB colour. To save time, do not scan items individually – place as many cutouts on the scanner as possible. Once scanned, select each item and then copy and paste into individual files. Name individual files and save into each pupil's named folder, inside a shared project folder. If using Photoshop, click all around item using the Polygonal or Magnetic Lasso Tool, (see Photoshop Reference notes) to select and delete any remaining background. Crop away any excess background using the Crop Tool, and Save]

Session 2 - Designing Backgrounds | Playroom

image from students using Add-Text in the Playroom workshop



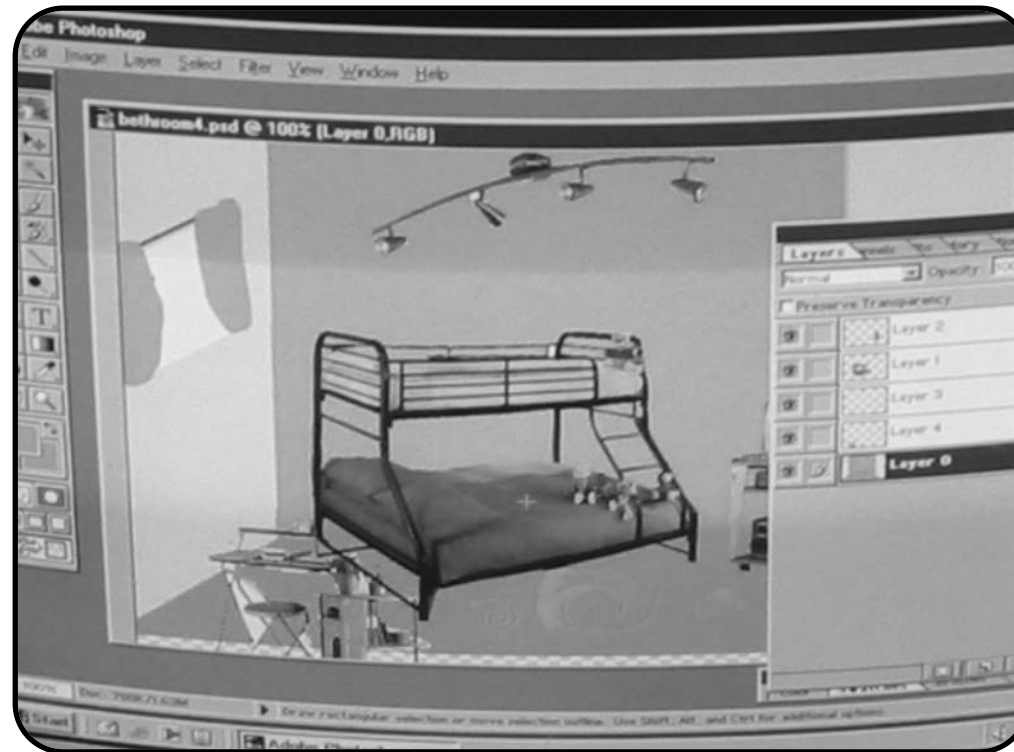
1. Designing backgrounds in Photoshop
(NOTE: see attached notes for a detailed step-by-step guide to all procedures described).

Using the paper plans created in Session 1 as a guide, during this session pupils will begin to design their room background on the computer. Begin with a demonstration of Photoshop or comparable software. Highlight the range of tools and facilities pupils can use to create their background - these can include for example, the Paintbrush, Pencil, Paint Bucket and Gradient Tools, Marquee, Lasso and Magic Wand Tools, Colour Palettes and a range of Filters

Create a new 72 dpi RGB file measuring 640 x 420 pixels. Using the Line Tool, sketch an outline perspective view of the inside of a room (see example template)*. Once complete, you must select Layers > Flatten Image from the Menu Bar before continuing. Using a combination of Paint Tools and Filters, pupils can design and decorate the walls, ceiling and floor of their room, and add features such as windows and doors. Save as Photoshop (.PSD) files into individual folders.

*(Alternatively, you can save time by downloading the supplied background template 'room.jpg')

Session 3 - Pasting and Placing Content | Playroom



2. Pasting content onto the background

This session involves adding the chosen contents and positioning them in the rooms. To begin with, open background images from Session 2 and complete if necessary.

Following an initial demonstration, pupils can copy, paste, scale and position their selected room contents onto the backgrounds. Encourage pupils to consider how scale and perspective can add to the drama and/or realism of the space.

Session 4 - Placing Content and Digital Portraits | Playroom

During this session, it may be helpful for the class to rotate activities as two groups.

Group 1: continue and complete placing content onto backgrounds.

Group 2: decide how they would like to appear within their room, then pose for digital photographs*.

Swap groups round half way through session.

* It is advisable that pupils stand against a plain (preferably white or light) background if possible.

[Preparation for Session 5: All digital portraits need to be selected and any background detail deleted in advance of the next session. If possible, pupils could do this during lunch and/or break times. Images should then be saved into each pupil's folder within the shared Project Folder.]

Session 5 - Introduction to Add-Text | Playroom

image from Add-Text software © limbomedia



4. Creating a text rollover in Add-Text

Begin the session by pasting and positioning digital portraits (following the same procedure as with room contents) within the rooms. Once complete, rooms must be named 'background' and saved as a JPEG (.JPG) file into the Background Folder.

Demonstrate the Add-Text software (see Using Add-Text). Pupils can try out the software for themselves in pairs or groups, and can begin to develop ideas and make notes for their written commentaries. Commentaries can be informal, highlighting personal significance of specific items, and can be descriptive of pupils' ideas, thoughts and sense of place within their space.

Session 6 - Hot-Spots and Text Commentaries | Playroom

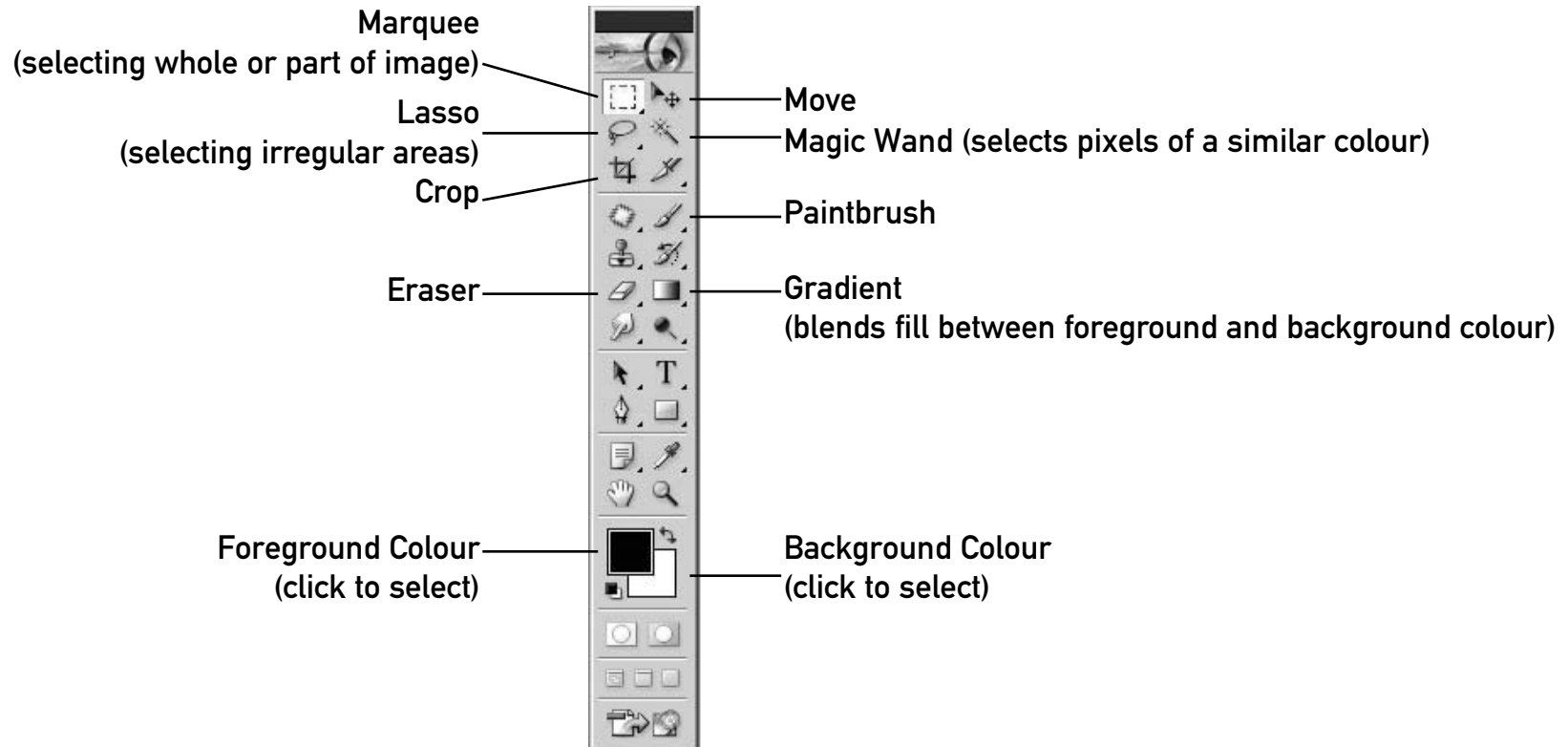
Creating interactive 'hot-spots' in Add-Text (see Using Add-Text), and further developing written commentary linked to items and areas within the space.

Follow-up | Playroom

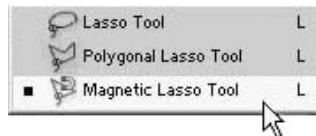
If possible, try to arrange a presentation of the completed work to other classes, or if possible the whole school. If you have access to a data-projector, an assembly may be a good opportunity. Alternatively, other classes could be invited to explore the work on a rotational basis in the ICT room or classroom computer.

Photoshop Reference: Toolbar | Playroom

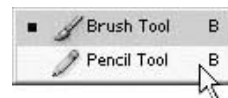
The Tools highlighted below are those used most in the suggested activity



Additional tools can be selected by holding down the mouse button on various tool options. For example:



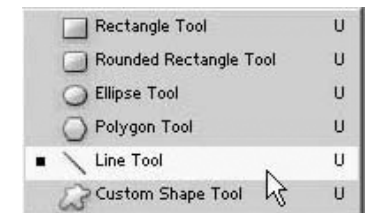
Click and hold down
Lasso to select Polygonal
or Magnetic Lasso option



Click and hold down
Gradient Tool to select
Paint Bucket



Click and hold down
Paintbrush to select
Pencil Tool



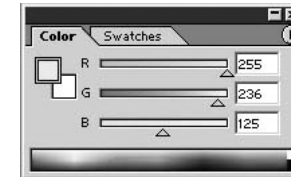
Click and hold down
Rectangle Tool to select
Line Tool

Photoshop Reference: Useful Procedures | Playroom

(NOTE: Procedures here refer to Photoshop 7. If Photoshop 5 or 6 are in use, there may be some slight variations)

1. Designing backgrounds (as used in Session 2)

- Create a new file by choosing File > New from the Menu Bar, to the following specifications: Width 640 Height 420 pixels; Resolution 72dpi; Mode RGB; Content: White
- Save as a Photoshop file, named with the pupil's name, into pupils own folder within the shared Project Folder
- Use the Line Tool to draw a perspective view of the inside of a room (ensuring there are no gaps). When complete choose Layer > Flatten Image from the Menu before continuing. (Or use 'room.jpg', as supplied)
- Select paint colours either by clicking the Foreground Colour picker on the Toolbar, or by using the floating Colour and Swatch Palettes under Window > Colour
- Use the Gradient and/or Paint Bucket Tools to fill wall, floor and ceiling areas with colour. (If using Gradient fills, choose Foreground and Background colours from the colour picker, then click and drag in selected area to create a blend of the two colours).

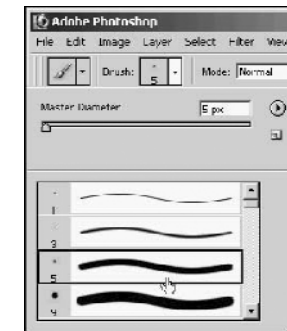


NOTE: You must apply gradient within a selection, or it will cover your entire image

- Use the Paintbrush and Pencil Tools to draw designs on surfaces and add features such as windows and doors. (Brush size can be altered by clicking on the Tool Options Bar just below the Menu Bar at the top of your screen).

NOTE: If using Photoshop 5 or 6, Brushes are located under Window > Show Brushes

- Select areas of painted image using the Marquee or Lasso Tool. Under Filter on the Menu Bar, choose and experiment with a range of different filter effects, e.g. Distort; Pixelate; Sketch; Texture; Brushstrokes.



NOTE: To deselect an area, click on the image outside of the selected area whilst the Marquee or Lasso Tool is still selected, or choose Select > Deselect from the Menu Bar

Photoshop Reference: Useful Procedures | Playroom

2. Preparing imported images using the Polygonal or Magnetic Lasso Tool (as used in Session 3)

You need to use this option in order to delete the background from scanned images and digital photographs (catalogue cut-outs; objects from home; digital portraits) in preparation for placing in your room picture

- Select the preferred tool. (Try both to see which suits you best).
- Click carefully all around the outer edge of the area you wish to select.
- Once the circuit is complete, click once on the first point (a small circle will appear under the tool to indicate closing position). Once complete, the selected image will be surrounded by a moving dotted line ('marching-ants').
- On the Menu Bar, choose Select > Inverse. This will reverse your selection and select the background, rather than the image.
- Press Delete or Backspace on the keyboard to erase the background to white.

3. Selecting, copying and pasting an image using the Magic Wand Tool (as used in Session 3)

You can use this procedure when copying and pasting catalogue items and digital portraits onto the room backgrounds. The Magic Wand automatically selects all pixels of a similar colour, therefore makes selecting item for copying easy, once backgrounds have being deleted. (NOTE: The default 'tolerance' of the Magic Wand is 32. You can change this number to select a smaller or wider range of pixel colours on the Options Bar (Photoshop 7), or by double clicking on the Wand icon in Photoshop 5 or 6).

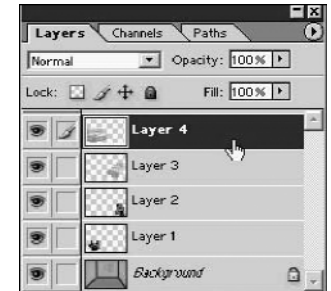
- Select the Magic Wand Tool
- Click on the white (deleted) background area of the image you want to copy and paste. This action will automatically select the whole background for you.
- Once selected, choose Select > Inverse. This will reverse the selection and select the image, rather than the background.
- With the item still selected, choose Edit > Copy from the Menu Bar.
- Open the room picture you are working on.
- Choose Edit > Paste form the Menu to paste image into the room.
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Photoshop Reference: Useful Procedures | Playroom

4. Scaling and positioning pasted items

You will use this procedure to position and scale pasted items (furnishings and portraits) on the room background.

- Each time a new item is copied and pasted onto the room image, a new layer is created. Keep track of the layers you are working on by opening the Layer Palette under Window > Layers on the Menu Bar
- Ensure the correct layer is selected by clicking on that layer in the Layer Palette
- Select the Move Tool and move pasted items into position
- Re-size each item by choosing Edit > Transform > Scale from the Menu Bar
- Click and drag the corner handles that appear around the edge of the pasted item, and hold down Shift Key to ensure scaling is in proportion
- Press Enter (or Return) on your keyboard when complete
- Continue copying, pasting scaling and positioning until all items are in place.
- When complete save as a Photoshop (.PSD) file, then do a Save As version called 'background' as a JPEG (.JPG) file into the Background folder of Add-Text



3. Selecting, copying and pasting an image using the Magic Wand Tool (as used in Session 3)

- Create a project folder where all the work created during the project can be saved.
- Save your files during the activity as Photoshop (.PSD) files. This format retains all the layers you are working on, which enables you to go back and edit whenever you need to.
- Make sure files are saved into the right place (pupil's named folder), so it is not lost
- Save regularly to avoid losing a lot of hard work.
- Only save as a JPEG (.JPG) when the work is complete. Saving in this format flattens all the layers, meaning you will no longer be able to make changes.
- You must save the file as a JPEG and name it 'background'. The Photoshop format will not be recognised by the Add-Text software.
- It is always advisable to keep a copy of your editable Photoshop file even after completion - you never know when you may need it!

Photoshop Reference: Useful Procedures | Playroom

6. If things go wrong

- You can undo the last thing you did by using the Edit > Undo option on the Menu Bar. You can select multiple Undos by stepping backwards through the History Palette, located under Window > History on the Menu Bar

Important Note: When working with Add-Text, only one background can be saved into each programme folder. You must therefore make a copy of the programme folder for each participating pupil. The guide below will take you through this procedure step-by-step.

1. Installing and duplicating the software

- Download Add-Text from the Architecture Week Education website. Un-Zip it and Save into the shared Project Folder
- Inside the shared Project Folder, right click on the Add-Text folder and make a copy of it.
- Rename the folder with the first pupil's name
- Continue to copy, paste and rename the Add-Text folder until all pupils have their own copy inside the shared Project Folder.

2. Using the Software

- The programme folder contains four items – 'background', 'libs' and 'prefs' folders, and the Add-Text programme icon. Ensure the 'background. JPEG' is saved into the background folder. (Replacing the file already in the folder with your own file).
- Double click on the Add-Text icon to launch the programme
- The programme will open with the completed room image already in place. (If it doesn't, check that the image is a JPEG, is named 'background', and is in the background folder).
- Click on the black area immediately below the image to activate menu options
- Click on 'Add New Text Box'. A small green square will appear on screen. This is the rollover 'hot-spot'. Position this hotspot over the area of the image you want text to appear by clicking and dragging into place. You can change the shape and size of the hot-spot by pressing down the shift key then clicking and dragging the edge of the square
- Once positioned and resized, click 'Add Text'. A small text field will be activated at the bottom of the hotspot. Type your commentary here.
- To view the completed rollover, click 'View'
- Continue to add as many text rollovers as required by repeating the procedure above, saving regularly by clicking 'Save' at the bottom right hand side of the screen.

(NOTE: the Save option will not ask you to name the file, but will automatically save the work into the programme folder)

Example Template for Room Layout | Playroom

