

Enquiry Schools

Case Study Slides

Project Name: **St George and the Dragon**

School(s): **Standlake**

CE Primary School

Partner(s): Joe Butler

Richard Frost

Local Authority: Oxfordshire



Start Date: June 2008

End Date: September 2008

“He lives in a castle surrounded by lava and with lots of webs, bats and spiders.”

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“How can sensory learning through creating sculpture and metalwork have a positive impact on children’s creative literacy?”

Project focused on much of the school – yrs 1 to 5

School arrived at this question because:

- Keen to develop creative learning, particularly with new Primary Frameworks
- Children learn through play, exploration talk, through different learning styles
- Good provision of kinaesthetic learning in KS1, less so in upper KS2



Standlake Church

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The following objectives feature highly on Standlake's School Improvement Plan for the academic years 07/08 and 08/09:

- The teaching of a creative curriculum whereby children take a lead in their own learning
- Raising children's awareness of different styles of learning and helping them to identify theirs.
- The continuation of creative writing workshop across the school

The Creative Partnership project was an ideal opportunity to enable children to have access to creative skills which the teachers alone could not provide

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Two Creative Practitioners and George & Dragon:

Joe Butler, blacksmith and poet, worked in summer

- worked on role play with his story chair (opposite) for introductions and to trigger creative writing
- inspired the children with his mobile forge (below) to develop creative material



- enabled children to create 3D art in copper, which they had never done before
- provided much of the material for subsequent creative writing with teachers

...and Richard Frost, a sculptor and poet, worked in September

- began his work with visit to nearby White Horse at Uffington, and tour by National Trust Staff (see opposite, below opposite)
- worked with paper and other materials on collage (with a relatively free structure)



- facilitated creation of mod-roc dragon sculptures (see above)
- contrasted the soft curves and flowing contours of the dragon with the hard, rigid shield the children made with Joe

The White Horse for real...



...and in the classroom!



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Lots of creativity and lots of creative writing!

Thorough Preparation:

- Children created a clay shield to prepare for creations in copper (see opposite)

Carefully crafted final product:

- Children created sculptures both in mod-roc and copper and wrote poems on a metal's journey (below)



“Hi I’m Rusty and I’m a piece of steel. Through the past few years I’ve been waiting to be turned into something. You know I’ve always wanted to be a robot to see who would buy me as well as who would play me. Or I might be a shield because I would be held with nice firm hands or I would ride on a horse...”

Spontaneous, more ephemeral work, with relatively little structure

- some work developed spontaneously with less planning, and structure (see below), but no less impressive for it
- all work in materials fed the children's creative writing

“Her favourite food is mashed eyeballs with blood and the meat of an ugly amphibian”



“He looks like a sea snake and he has sharp claws to rip his prey. He has a slithery tail to whip his enemies with. He's covered in prickles”

- this incorporated work in-role, to explore how a dragon or princess might feel (see below)



“He is a fierce dragon with a very long Mohican”

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Exposure to new experiences, less structure, fascination:

- children's involvement in the recruitment process
- children's confidence in taking on new skills: loose, open ended briefs enabled some pupils to increase risk taking: one child with a serious stammer actively volunteered to read poetry, and be hot-seated
- other children found it more difficult to work with no pre-defined way of working



- fascination in learning often clear:
Monday morning on 2nd week, children asked: "Is Joe with us today?" No, in Wednesday." Tuesday morning "Is it today that Joe is starting working with us?" "No, remember I said it would be Wednesday!"



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Adult Learning:

- “The knowledge and acceptance that there is not always a right way of doing something and that different lines of enquiry can lead to different results that are valued.”
- “Working outside one’s comfort zone and taking a risk as a class teacher or practitioner.”
- “Working across different art disciplines in a themed way presented challenges from which I have learnt” Joe
- “Use of new medium”. Class teacher

“The 'Dragon Profiles' created by pupils showed diversity and originality of ideas, which were recognisably related to earlier work, and showed marked development of ideas.” Richard Frost

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Whole School change

- Staff would be confident in not only delivering creative sculpture based activities involving metal work and Mod-Roc to inspire creative writing, but also cascading them to others.
- “This project has reinforced my belief in the value and importance of children learning through a creative curriculum. It has also raised my awareness, yet again, of the pressures placed upon a class teacher to deliver such a broad curriculum within a structured week. The one thing the creative project allowed was for a decent amount of time to be spent on pursuing a line of enquiry. Having said this, we still ran out of time!!” Class Teacher



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Learning from the Work

- From the project we have learned that our curriculum is more creative than perhaps we had previously given ourselves credit for, although we will encourage more 3D modelling in the future.

- Staff have been inspired to use some new medium.

- Staff believe that the enquiry question was worth visiting as it has proven to some extent that children need to be taught using a variety of styles. Certainly the kinaesthetic hands-on learning does promote creative writing for those pupils who are hands-on learners.

“I lived in the central heap of a junk yard, a giant massive bar of steel as long as a jumbo jet and as thick as your car is long”

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Revisiting the Enquiry Question

- The school feels that the enquiry question itself was perhaps rather ambitious. The possible impact that sculpture can have on children's creative writing cannot possibly be answered in the short space of time that this project has been run over. Having said this, as the case study slides show, there was an immediate impact on some children's work but will this be sustained without further use of sculpture work?
- We feel that in order to measure the impact, further use of sculpture will need to be built into the curriculum over the next six months to encourage creative writing and examples of children's work assessed periodically.

Copper Shield



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- To monitor pupils' creative writing, collating data appropriately
- To consider further enquiry as to whether there is a gender divide
- To further embed the use of 3D sculpture work to enhance pupil's creative writing

